Dear Calum,

In its Stage 1 report on the Railway Policing (Scotland) Bill the Justice Committee requested that the Scottish Government provide 6 monthly progress reports on the work of the BTP Integration Joint Programme Board.

The first report was received from the Minister for Transport and the Islands on 31 October 2017. The Convener responded to Mr Yousaf on 6 November to request clarification on union representation for officers who transfer from the British Transport Police to Police Scotland, as they are under a contract of employment and are not employed under police regulations.

In the Minister’s response Mr Yousaf indicated that the “planning assumption” is that officers will transfer to Police Scotland with their existing dual status as police constables and employees. The Minister explained that discussions are ongoing with the Scottish Police Federation (SPF) and the British Transport Police Federation (BTPF) with regards to employment and pensions arrangements.

Ernst & Young have been appointed as the Mobilisation, Transition and Transformation (MTT) Change Management provider for the BTP integration into Police Scotland. In an update paper, which is to be considered by the Scottish Police Authority at its meeting of 18 December, the MTT project identified BTP Officers – Terms and Conditions of Service as “currently scoring higher than the
agreed risk appetite developed by the MTT and are therefore the subject of particular focus in establishing mitigation actions”.

As you will be aware the Committee considered reaching agreement on the terms, conditions, benefits and pensions of British Transport Police staff and officers as critical to achieving a seamless transfer of railway policing to Police Scotland.

The Committee should therefore be grateful to receive an update on the progress of the negotiations on these issues. In particular confirmation of whether the SPF and the BTPF are the only associations involved or whether all necessary representative bodies are included in the process.

In relation to discussions on the preferred pension scheme it would be appreciated if you could confirm whether you are also negotiating on behalf of retired police officers who might normally be expected to be represented by the Association for Retired British Transport Police Officers. If this is the case can you confirm whether your role includes negotiating pension terms for retired offices of all ranks, for example including Superintendents, Chief Superintendents and Assistant Chief Constables?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes

Margaret Mitchell MSP
Convener, Justice Committee