



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Justice Committee

Humza Yousaf
Cabinet Secretary for Justice
Scottish Government

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20 August 2020

Dear Humza,

Update on the impact of Covid-19 on the justice sector and policing

Thank you for attending the Justice Committee meeting of 17 August and providing an update on the impact of Covid-19 on the justice sector and policing. During the evidence session you indicated that you would provide some follow-up information in writing.

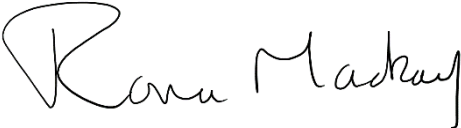
In response to a question on the number of crimes committed during the pandemic, you agreed to provide data on crime numbers and to check with Police Scotland if there is up-to-date information available on the number of fixed penalty notices issued, and if so, to provide that data. It would also be helpful to receive data on those crimes which are now subject to fixed penalty notices due to the introduction of emergency coronavirus legislation.

You are also to provide any forecasting information the Scottish Government has on modelling work for short- and longer-term options to reduce the backlog of cases within the court system, taking into account the recent modelling work undertaken by the Scottish Government and the Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service.

The Scottish Government has allocated £5m to support those in the criminal justice system to access technology to provide support to them and aid their rehabilitation and recovery. You indicated that further work is being undertaken on this initiative and agreed to provide details of that work. Also, could you please provide details of the costs of issuing mobile phones to prisoners, including any additional on-costs, such as licences.

Finally, as social work services have had to evolve and develop new ways of working, could you please confirm whether there is scope to embed any changes to practice, policy and culture permanently into criminal justice social work in the future.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rona Mackay". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial 'R'.

Rona Mackay MSP
Deputy Convener, Justice Committee