



OFFICIAL REPORT
AITHISG OIFIGEIL

Justice Committee

Tuesday 22 January 2019

Session 5



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Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

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JUSTICE COMMITTEE

3rd Meeting 2019, Session 5

CONVENER

*Margaret Mitchell (Central Scotland) (Con)

DEPUTY CONVENER

*Rona Mackay (Strathkelvin and Bearsden) (SNP)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (Green)

*Jenny Gilruth (Mid Fife and Glenrothes) (SNP)

*Daniel Johnson (Edinburgh Southern) (Lab)

*Liam Kerr (North East Scotland) (Con)

*Fulton MacGregor (Coatbridge and Chryston) (SNP)

*Liam McArthur (Orkney Islands) (LD)

*Shona Robison (Dundee City East) (SNP)

*attended

CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE

Stephen Imrie

LOCATION

The Mary Fairfax Somerville Room (CR2)

Scottish Parliament

Justice Committee

Tuesday 22 January 2019

[The Convener opened the meeting at 10:00]

Subordinate Legislation

Multilingual Standard Forms (Fees) (Scotland) Regulations 2018 (SSI 2018/373)

Multilingual Standard Forms (Consequential Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2018 (SSI 2018/374)

The Convener (Margaret Mitchell): Good morning and welcome to the third meeting in 2019 of the Justice Committee. We have received no apologies.

Agenda item 1 is consideration of two negative instruments. I refer members to paper 1, which is a note by the clerk.

If members have no comments to make, does the committee agree that it does not wish to make any recommendations in relation to the two instruments?

Members *indicated agreement.*

Justice Sub-Committee on Policing (Report Back)

10:00

The Convener: Agenda item 2 is feedback from the Justice Sub-Committee on Policing on its meeting of 17 January 2019. I refer members to paper 2, which is a note by the clerk. Following the verbal report, members will have an opportunity to make brief comments or ask questions, and I invite John Finnie to provide the feedback.

John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (Green): Thank you, convener. As you will know, the Justice Sub-Committee on Policing met on 17 January when it took evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for Justice on the policing aspects of the Scottish Government's draft budget for 2019-20.

The sub-committee asked the cabinet secretary to respond to the view expressed by the Scottish Police Authority and Police Scotland that the draft budget falls short of what the police service requires to meet the demands placed upon it. For example, the capital budget is insufficient to fund the agreed digital, data and information and communications technology strategy and to maintain its fleet and estate. The cabinet secretary told the sub-committee that he expects the additional £12 million of capital funding to be used by Police Scotland to implement its digital, data and ICT strategy, and he explained that the strategy includes several individual elements, the costs of which will not be known until Police Scotland produces a full business case for each.

The remaining capital funding is to be used by Police Scotland to maintain its fleet and estate. The sub-committee queried whether the figure was sufficient, as it was the same as that for the previous financial year, when Police Scotland overspent on its fleet management by around £6 million. The cabinet secretary acknowledged that that was an issue and committed to considering how to address it before the next spending review.

The cabinet secretary confirmed that the revenue funding would cover the increase in staff numbers at the SPA and the agreed pay award for police officers. He also confirmed that, due to ongoing uncertainty around Brexit, the current assumptions underpinning the overall budget for policing remained subject to review in light of the Brexit-related planning being undertaken by Police Scotland and the SPA.

The sub-committee will next meet on 31 January, when we will hear from the chief constable on the draft policing budget and his priorities for 2019-20.

The Convener: It was a good evidence-taking session, and we were certainly able to express our concerns about the digital budget and the need to arm our police or to ensure that they have the tools that they need. We also flagged up the fleet and infrastructure issues. As I have said, it was a very worthwhile session.

As there are no more comments, I close the public part of today's meeting. Our next meeting will be on 29 January 2019, when we will seek to finalise our stage 1 report on the Management of Offenders (Scotland) Bill.

10:03

Meeting continued in private until 12:41.

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