



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## Official Report

# JUSTICE SUB-COMMITTEE ON POLICING

Thursday 6 March 2014

© Parliamentary copyright. Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body

Information on the Scottish Parliament's copyright policy can be found on the website - [www.scottish.parliament.uk](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk) or by contacting Public Information on 0131 348 5000

---

**Thursday 6 March 2014**

**CONTENTS**

**Col.**

**INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ..... 351**

---

**JUSTICE SUB-COMMITTEE ON POLICING**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting 2014, Session 3**

**CONVENER**

\*Christine Grahame (Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale) (SNP)

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

\*John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (Ind)

\*Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (LD)

\*Margaret Mitchell (Central Scotland) (Con)

\*Graeme Pearson (South Scotland) (Lab)

\*Kevin Stewart (Aberdeen Central) (SNP)

\*attended

**THE FOLLOWING ALSO PARTICIPATED:**

Chief Superintendent Alec Hippman (Police Scotland)

Martin Leven (Police Scotland)

Deputy Chief Constable Neil Richardson (Police Scotland)

**CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE**

Joanne Clinton

**LOCATION**

Committee Room 6



## Scottish Parliament

### Justice Sub-Committee on Policing

Thursday 6 March 2014

[The Convener opened the meeting at 13:02]

### Information and Communication Technology

**The Convener (Christine Grahame):** Welcome to the third meeting in 2014 of the Justice Sub-Committee on Policing. I ask everyone to switch off mobile phones and other electronic devices, as they interfere with the sound system even when switched to silent. We have received no apologies and all members are present.

The only item on the agenda is an evidence-taking session on information and communication technology provision. We expect the meeting to go on until 2.15 pm at the latest, because Parliament will resume about that time.

I thank Police Scotland for its latest response on the i6 programme, which is dated 3 March and can be found on our public website. I welcome from Police Scotland Deputy Chief Constable Neil Richardson; Chief Superintendent Alec Hippman, the i6 programme manager; and Martin Leven, the ICT director.

We will start with questions from members.

**Graeme Pearson (South Scotland) (Lab):** I have a fairly simple question to begin with. Who is ultimately responsible for i6, and who drives the project's delivery?

**Deputy Chief Constable Neil Richardson (Police Scotland):** As you are well aware, i6 is a long-term programme of work that existed and was well under way long before Police Scotland and, indeed, the Scottish Police Authority came into being. It is a collective responsibility and a project of strategic importance for all concerned.

In contractual terms, the authority effectively has the ultimate responsibility for the programme, but on a practical programme delivery level it is driven through a programme board, of which I am the senior responsible officer. There is also a higher escalated level of governance that takes the matter up into the SPA for reporting purposes. As you know, an item associated with i6 was on the agenda of our most recent Police Authority meeting, and it will continue to be a consistent feature.

**Graeme Pearson:** Although you are the SRO, you do not see yourself as driving the project on

your own account. Instead, a whole panoply of other people is also involved.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** No. I am absolutely the SRO and have responsibility. However, I exercise that responsibility in a more joined-up way and have, for example, extended the programme board to ensure that the relevant interests and the good learning from the delivery of other programmes are being taken into account.

**Graeme Pearson:** In your latest letter, you indicate that the gateway reviews have not delivered on time; in fact, I think that you are two gateway reviews behind, and there are two benchmark periods that you had hoped to achieve by now. I forget the language that you use to describe them—[*Interruption.*]

**The Convener:** Excuse me, but there is a rustling noise. It could be the microphones. We will suspend the meeting briefly to sort it out.

13:05

*Meeting suspended.*

13:06

*On resuming—*

**The Convener:** We can resume now that the technical issues have been resolved.

**Graeme Pearson:** Deputy chief constable, your timetable for deliverables indicated that three of the elements would be in place by now, but you have achieved only one. Why has there been a delay and what are the implications?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** We talk about milestones rather than gateways. The programme plan incorporates a number of milestones, each of which represents not just a single piece of work but a series of pieces of work. To achieve good governance and to ensure that we learn lessons from the successful and, more important, unsuccessful delivery of past projects, we have adhered to a strict approach to the delivery of activities that we require. In consequence, the position is that complete delivery of all the elements that make up the milestones has not been achieved in a couple of areas and, as a result, that milestone payment has not been paid.

That is the reason for the delay. However, although that explains some of the context, I do not want to give the impression that, because a payment milestone has not been met, that means that considerable work has not been done or that significant progress has not been made towards the delivery of what we require. It would be wrong to say that. A significant amount of work has been

carried out, but the stipulated requirements for completion have not been met.

**Graeme Pearson:** Is the project now behind time because those milestones have not been achieved?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** It is fair to say that it is behind schedule. I am not in a position to identify the exact details of that, simply because that work is currently being scoped and we are in negotiations right now to determine the impact. In summary, however, the missed milestones will have a knock-on effect on the next phase of the work, and there will be some delay.

**Graeme Pearson:** Do you see that as having a significant or marginal impact on the project? Does it concern you at this stage?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** It absolutely concerns us. It would be reasonable to say that a programme of such size, scale and strategic importance is never easy. Plans never go absolutely seamlessly; there are always adjustments and things that happen, which is why tight governance arrangements are required. We want to ensure that we are on top of and managing things, so that if something starts to go off track we can respond accordingly.

However, although that is a concern, we are more concerned with ensuring that we do not continue down a particular road and allow that to encroach on scope, to reduce the requirements that we set out when the process was agreed in the first place or, indeed, to allow costs to run away.

In essence, I propose that our ability to identify such a delay and areas that we have not completed in the way that we thought we would have by this point is evidence of a good tight grip and governance. Once we recut the planning phase and know exactly what it means, we will be in a position to report on that.

**Graeme Pearson:** Presumably, those who supply the contractors will not be particularly comfortable with the current arrangement in which payments are withheld. Will that involve you in some legal process thereafter?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** At the moment, we are collectively focused on the delivery of the i6 requirements. There are all kinds of possibilities with regard to what might happen. Clearly, we need to ensure that we progress in an appropriate way that is in line with the contractual arrangements that both parties agreed to at the outset of this journey. I would expect the supplier to protect its position but, in turn, so must we. I cannot give the committee any guarantees that we will not end up in some kind of dispute further

down the road but I have to say that that is not my expectation.

**Graeme Pearson:** So the situation is not impacting on work at the moment. It is still going on in a positive fashion.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** Absolutely. There is a collective understanding of the issues that have caused the slippage, and we are working constructively to find the best way of recutting the plan and to move forward with as little impact as possible on the final i6 requirement.

**Graeme Pearson:** You mentioned SCOPE in your response. As I understand it, SCOPE is the personnel management side of the system. Is that the element that you are speaking about or is it a different part?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** No. When I said "scope" I was referring to the elements contained within i6 and what we are seeking to deliver. SCOPE is perhaps an unfortunate name, but it is a separate entity.

**Graeme Pearson:** Okay. One of the elements of the technology is the SCOPE element dealing with personnel and command and control. It was to be ready for use in the lead-up to the Commonwealth games. I understand that SCOPE is no longer deliverable in that timescale. Is that the case? Do you have a fallback position? If so, what is it?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** Absolutely. As you would expect, as part of all of the change activities, we are monitoring progress closely. Everybody will be well aware that the Commonwealth games are an important high-impact event that we need to manage. As a consequence, we want to minimise risk. We had intended to move towards a single instance of SCOPE in appropriate timelines to enable us effectively to know exactly where our people are and have a means by which to manage their deployment throughout the games.

It became apparent with the passage of time that our completion of the work was too close to the start of the games and, as a consequence, presented us with significant risk. Colleagues will be well aware of what happened during the Olympic games, when ostensibly a similar event played out in which the people were there but what caused difficulties was the ability to manage them through a database equivalent to SCOPE. We certainly do not want to find ourselves in that position.

For operational and practical reasons, we have sought to elongate the intended move to that single instance of SCOPE. There is a safe workaround—Martin Leven might want to give a little more detail about that—in which we use the

Strathclyde network, which has the capacity and is fit enough to be able to cope with the requirements around the games, to give us a safe environment during the games.

**Martin Leven (Police Scotland):** The original finish date for the development of SCOPE was April. It is still on target for April, but we recognised that we also have to put into the system and manage a lot of resources that are coming from outwith Police Scotland. A correct validation period for such an important piece of technology would have taken us very close to the start of the Commonwealth games. It was a risk management decision to put off the official roll-out of SCOPE until the end of the games.

13:15

Leading up to the games, we will operate from what was the Strathclyde legacy system, which has the capacity to cope with the extra resources that are coming into it. Any officers who are deployed from forces that were not Strathclyde Police previously will be registered on the Strathclyde system. Again, that is purely for duty management purposes, so that we know exactly where all the resources are throughout the games. Members will be aware of the numbers of resources that we are talking about on the peak days of the games.

**Graeme Pearson:** I am conscious that others will want in, so perhaps I will come back to that later on.

**The Convener:** I am itching to get in.

**Graeme Pearson:** I presume that the solution that you have come up with is a band aid and that you would have much preferred to deliver with SCOPE and have the tailored solution.

**The Convener:** You ignored what I said.

**Martin Leven:** I would not describe it as a “band aid”; I would say that it was always an option that we looked at all the way through as we brought the solution near the validation point. It is absolutely not a band aid; rather, it is one of the two options that we had. The question was whether we should launch prior to or after the Commonwealth games.

**The Convener:** I want to ask a question about the contract. I take it that the contract document says that it is a contract between the SPA and Accenture. When was it signed?

**Chief Superintendent Alec Hippman (Police Scotland):** On 28 June.

**The Convener:** Right. What is the cost at the end of the contract? What is the price tag on the contract for the work to be delivered?

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** The contract value is £39 million over 10 years.

**The Convener:** I know that it is over 10 years, but is that on the contract? Does it say over 10 years? Is that on the end of that contract?

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** Yes.

**The Convener:** With my background in the legal profession, I cannot understand this line in Neil Richardson’s letter:

“Differences have emerged as to what the contract required the supplier to deliver which have contributed to these delays.”

The contract is huge, and it is extremely concerning that, when it was drawn up—whether the lawyers did that for you or whatever—the contracting parties did not know what they were to deliver. That seems to me to be at the root of everything that is happening. Is that correct?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** In essence, the issue has been a difference of perception of what the contract required of the supplier.

**The Convener:** It is basic to say in a contract, “I’m paying for this and you will do that,” before it is signed, particularly when £46 million of public money is attached to it. How big are the differences? The differences of perception must be big if those delays are happening.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** In essence, that is exactly what we have been working through to identify the detail of what the differences mean in terms of the requirements that we have set out for delivery. Our position has been consistent all the way through. The issue is clearly the subject of on-going discussion between us and the supplier, and it may not be particularly helpful to those discussions if we get into the detail now.

**The Convener:** We are here to hold the SPA and Police Scotland to account. This matter has been smelling fishy for quite a long time, and it has seemed that something was not quite right. Now we have something that tells us that a contract is quite substantially deficient. Litigation is always costly and delays are costly. Are there penalty clauses in the contract?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** The contract is not a bespoke, specific contract; rather, it is a normal, relatively straightforward public sector contract. I do not want to give an assessment of the degree of the contractual differences. Your assessment is that it is major and significant. My experience of the delivery of major programmes is that issues and challenges always surface once we get into implementation. It is fair to say that we did not see those particular

issues surfacing as we got into the detail. We spent 18 months in competitive dialogue, and I had expected that that would have ensured that there would be no such surprises when we moved into delivery. However, that is exactly the position that we are now in, and we are working through it.

**The Convener:** Is it possible for the committee to see the contract—redacted, if necessary, in places of commercial confidentiality?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** I can take advice on that and share it.

**The Convener:** I would like you to do that. We are being told that this is a serious matter with regard to what the contract required the supplier to deliver and I would like to know what was in the contract, what was supposed to be done at certain times, and whether those defects could not have been seen when the contract was being drawn up. We have been through so many public projects—perhaps we are sitting in one of the worst examples—that it is very concerning to see one in which there are delays and people do not know what the contract actually requires them to do. I will move on and let other members come in, but I have left you with the idea. Do other members wish to see the contract?

**Members:** Yes.

**The Convener:** I understand redacting. We have been here before when we talked about the private prison at Kilmarnock, but we got to see that contract. You might have to take legal advice, but the committee is pressing you on that one.

**Kevin Stewart (Aberdeen Central) (SNP):** You said that the contract was awarded on 28 June 2013. Is that correct?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** Yes.

**Kevin Stewart:** I understand that you are currently undergoing what is termed a “re-planning exercise” and that a contract variation agreement is currently being negotiated. What is that “re-planning exercise”?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** Exactly as the name suggests. We originally had a delivery plan that had fairly aggressive timelines, in which certain things had to be achieved by certain time points. As a consequence of one or two issues, fair progress has been made in line with the original plan in a high number of areas, but in some areas, the time points have not been met. That has a knock-on effect and certain documents that are required before we can move into the subsequent stages of the plan are not yet agreed, so there will be an impact elsewhere. That needs to be looked at carefully to make sure that the order of the work that follows will be properly structured to ensure that we do not have an unnecessary waste of time moving on from here. I

will ask Alec Hippman to give a bit more detail in a second but, in essence, that is what I am describing when I refer to a recap plan. That will, I suggest, have—

**Kevin Stewart:** Can I stop you there, Mr Richardson? Does that replanning exercise include major changes in specification?

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** No. Absolutely none whatsoever.

**Kevin Stewart:** There is no change in specification whatsoever.

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** Our requirements, of which there are 1,000 embedded in the contract, have not changed. We have not reduced our requirements at all.

**Kevin Stewart:** Have there been any changes in what you require i6 to deliver?

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** None at all.

**Kevin Stewart:** So this replanning exercise is all about the fact the company seems to be unable to deliver within the original timelines. Am I correct in saying that?

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** Yes.

**Kevin Stewart:** In that case, why is there a requirement for a contract variation to deal with this matter? Will that contract variation act in your favour, and in favour of the public, whose money is being spent? It seems that the company is unable to fulfil the contract as it was originally signed.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** We are currently working through these issues. The point was made earlier, and it is reasonable to say that we have learned the lessons from experience elsewhere and we have set a direction of travel that is supported by a robust contract, and robust diligence during 18 months of competitive dialogue, which has given us an absolute understanding of what we are asking the supplier to deliver. We have not compromised and will not compromise on the scope of the project. From here on, if any issues with the supplier surface that mean that there are additional costs, that will be a matter for the supplier.

**Kevin Stewart:** Can I stop you again, Mr Richardson? I am sorry to keep coming in at these points, but we need to get this clear. The supplier and Police Scotland have signed a contract. The supplier is unable to deliver within the timescale that was envisaged in that original contract. We now understand that there is to be a contract variation agreement. Given that the supplier is unable to fulfil the timelines that were set out in the original contract, surely the contract variation agreement would be in favour of you guys because the supplier is unable to do what it said it



would do when it signed the contract. Am I right or wrong?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** In summary terms, that is correct.

**The Convener:** I am sorry, but that is not, because you have said in your letter:

“Differences have emerged on what the contract required the supplier to deliver”.

It is not just that there is a delay; there was not agreement. The most important thing about a contract is consensus ad idem, which is an agreement that both sides have agreed that they know what to do. However Mr Richardson’s letter says that the supplier has a difference with the police over what it agreed to do. There is more to it than just that the supplier is in the wrong; there is no agreement about what was to be done.

**Kevin Stewart:** Mr Richardson seems to think that there were agreed timelines and all the rest of it. In that case, the contract variation should be in favour of the police and the public. Am I right?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** That is, in essence, exactly the position that we are trying to get to. I do not want to be evasive in response to your question, but you are asking me to get into detail about issues that are not yet agreed and have not yet been put through our governance and the Police Authority for sign-off. I will be very happy to bring you the detail of what the change contains and represents, but I cannot do that before we have reached that point.

**Kevin Stewart:** Let me change tack a little bit, then. You have already said that there has been no change in the specification of what the police require from Accenture.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** Yes.

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** Yes.

**Kevin Stewart:** Were the timelines in the contract?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** Yes.

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** Yes.

**Kevin Stewart:** The timelines were most definitely in the contract.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** Yes.

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** Yes.

**Kevin Stewart:** So what we have got at this time is a supplier that has been unable to fulfil that contractual obligation. You are saying here that you have not changed the goalposts in any way, shape or form, so the contractor has failed to meet the obligations of the contract. Is that right?

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** We are currently negotiating with the supplier, so we are

unable to answer that question in public just now—we cannot make an assertion as to whether it has failed to fulfil its obligations. That is a matter that is going through a due legal process just now.

**Kevin Stewart:** Convener, I have said before to the committee that I have had dealings with information technology projects in a different life when I was in Aberdeen City Council. It seems to me that my questions are yes or no questions: either the contractor is meeting the contractual obligations, including the timeline—that does not seem to be the case—or it is not. I cannot understand why the witnesses cannot tell us whether the contractor has or has not failed in its contractual obligations.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** My simple answer to that is that it is not that straightforward. We are in the midst of the delivery of an incredibly complex piece of work. As I have said previously, we have a very robust plan and robust governance arrangements. I think that the security that you are looking for is provided through those governance arrangements. Once the detail of the eventual agreed position is available, I am more than happy to share it. At the moment, my view is that entering into a public debate about levels of fault is going to do nothing other than potentially compromise the delivery of the work, as the supplier will undoubtedly seek to defend its position. Similarly, our position would be played out publicly.

We are in the midst of negotiations to try to find the most sensible solution to deliver what we have set out, which is of strategic importance for not just the police service but, indeed, the broader justice sector. As a consequence, I do not think that it is sensible to compromise that activity.

13:30

**Kevin Stewart:** Convener, I understand that IT contracts are often very complex, but one of the things that I have found previously is that timelines are not normally that complex: either someone signs up to completing something by a certain time, or they do not.

You seem to be in a position of strength, and the public are in a position of strength, but you are unable to confirm that. I find that a bit bizarre. Either the timelines were there or they were not. Either the timelines have been fulfilled or they have not—and they have not been fulfilled.

I find this to be something of a round-the-houses situation, with you saying, “We canna really say this in public.” If the issue was one of complexity around delivery, because you have changed specification or something, I could understand that. However, I really do not get why you are

going round the houses over something that has to do with time and nothing else.

**The Convener:** That was a grand finale, rather than a question, but there we are.

Margaret Mitchell is next, followed by Alison McInnes, followed by John Finnie. I might wish to come back in myself if other members do not pick up on certain things—but I am sure you will. Graeme Pearson can wait until later—you had a long haul at it, Graeme.

**Graeme Pearson:** I agree.

**Margaret Mitchell (Central Scotland) (Con):** I appreciate the fact that contracts can be complex. I fully understand that. The key to what the witnesses have been saying is that unforeseen issues arose on both sides.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** Absolutely.

**Margaret Mitchell:** Therefore, there is some delicate negotiation to be carried out. We take that on board. Anything that you can give us to look at about the contract, so that we can understand it better, would be appreciated.

I have listened carefully to what you said. There are five milestones to be completed in 2013-14. Of the three that were due to be completed within this financial year, or by now, one has been completed. As for the other two, some deliverable component parts have been met, whereas other elements have not been achieved. Certain documents have not yet been agreed. An example would really help us to understand the matter.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** I will invite the programme manager, who lives and breathes the detail, to provide that.

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** Examples would include documentation that is crucial to the design of the solution, as well as the detailed implementation plan, which takes us forward in fine detail. Because of the root cause of the issue that we are negotiating with the supplier, those deliverable documents have not as yet been completed to our satisfaction. That is a couple of examples of deliverables.

**Margaret Mitchell:** Does that include things like warranties?

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** No, not warranties. I am describing documentation setting out the detailed design of the ultimate solution. We have to be satisfied that the solution will meet our requirements and we will clearly not approve the documentation until we are indeed fully satisfied that the solution meets our requirements.

**Margaret Mitchell:** So the documentation includes design things, considering what they need to cover and ensuring that they—

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** That they meet users' needs—absolutely.

The root cause of the matter is something that both parties are trying to work their way through. Our position is one of robustness and strength around our requirements. We have not changed our requirements at all. Until Accenture's deliverables meet our requirements, we will obviously not approve them.

**Margaret Mitchell:** Okay, I am beginning to understand that a little bit better.

Let us move on to something else that could be or should be much simpler and easy to answer. You will be aware that three options were originally put before the Scottish Police Authority.

Option 1 was the retention of existing sites, with the roll-out of the Storm Unity software, which would have allowed controllers to establish the location and capability of available officers outside the legacy boundaries.

Option 2 involved the retention of all existing sites, but with full integration through the introduction of a common suite of C3 information and communications technology: telephony, management, Storm Unity, Airwave and integrated communications control systems, or ICCS.

Option 3, which I believe was the only option put to the SPA board, was the closure of the control rooms. Did you have any input into the decision whether to look at the three options or just one?

**The Convener:** Before you get into that, I should say that, next week, we will be talking to Deputy Chief Constable Fitzpatrick about local policing and control rooms, and it might be more appropriate for her to answer that question—

**Margaret Mitchell:** But it would be interesting, convener—

**The Convener:** It is up to the panel members, if they feel that it—

**Margaret Mitchell:** It is quite a technical issue, and I think that it would be worth while hearing the views of the panel members on how the other options would work.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** I will ask Martin Leven to give some of the detail, but I will say that the Police Scotland command team is a relatively small group and all such strategic decisions are taken with clear visibility across the table. We have an input and the decisions are made through discussion. We have been working with the Police Authority on the various scenarios

that are possible and the options that are available.

The simple answer to your question is, yes, I have been involved in that.

**Margaret Mitchell:** What was your opinion when you were involved in considering the options? Did you think that the option to close the control rooms was the best one, or did you think that there was some value in options 1 and 2?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** The simple answer is that, across the change programme, there is a range of possibilities, there are various interests and pressures and there are pros and cons. However, with regard to changing structures in the way that we have, in order to create a national service, the bottom line is that we consistently revisit what we are doing to ensure that it is in line with the objectives of reform. We consistently revisit decisions to ensure that that is the case.

Our firm belief is that we are taking, and will continue to take, decisions that will enable us to provide a better service—not a cheaper or a more centralised service—to communities across Scotland, maximising the opportunities and benefits that come from a national shape and structure. There is no doubt that there are various possibilities that could have come forward. However, as we move from legacy arrangements, where we had a need for control rooms in each of the force areas, to a situation in which we operate as a single organisation, it no longer makes strategic sense to deploy resources in that way. It was always going to be necessary to make some considerable changes.

Again, however, my enduring belief is that an appropriate change plan, supported by the appropriate technologies, will enable us in relatively short measure to be able to provide a better service to the communities of Scotland.

**The Convener:** Right, can we get back to i6 and the problems—

**Margaret Mitchell:** It is still i6.

**The Convener:** Well, sort of-ish.

John Finnie has a question—no, I beg your pardon; it is Alison McInnes. Sorry, I was distracted by trying to remember what the agenda is.

**Alison McInnes (North East Scotland) (LD):** From what I have heard so far, I have not come to the same conclusion as Kevin Stewart, which is that the issue is only about timelines. It sounds to me as if there is a disagreement about the deliverables.

When did it first come to light that there was a divergence of views on that particular issue?

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** It was within the first month after contract award.

**Alison McInnes:** You have been in dispute since May 2013.

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** Since July and August—

**Alison McInnes:** Sorry, July and August.

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** Since then, we have been trying to work our way through these issues.

**Alison McInnes:** Have there been any previous contract variations?

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** None.

**Alison McInnes:** What dispute resolution mechanisms are within the contract?

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** There are standard dispute resolution mechanisms. We are currently going through the early stages of that standard process.

**Alison McInnes:** Who invoked that process? Was it you or Accenture?

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** It was invoked by us, in so far as we notified Accenture that deliverables were not meeting the requirements.

**Alison McInnes:** And when did you formally start the dispute resolution process?

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** That would have been during August.

**Alison McInnes:** That is a long time to be in dispute.

Earlier, you talked about having used a standard public sector contract. Is that right?

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** It is an Office of Government Commerce model ICT contract, which is used widely by the United Kingdom public sector.

**Alison McInnes:** So it is not a tailor-made contract, even though we are talking about a large piece of public procurement.

Her Majesty's inspectorate of constabulary for Scotland's review of the common performance management platform project

"found that the shift away from an 'off the shelf specification to a more tailored solution was a significant issue."

Did we not learn any lessons at all from that?

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** We absolutely learned lessons from that, but the circumstances that we are in are entirely different. This is not a shift in specification or requirements.

We have not changed our requirements at all. We are holding firm to our requirements.

**Alison McInnes:** But you have used a standard contract template.

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** Yes, we have used a model contract.

**Alison McInnes:** That is surprising, given the history that we have had.

I want to ask about the impact of not achieving the milestones, which means that you are not paying the contractor at the moment. I presume that that has resulted in an underspend in the capital plan for this year.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** The matter was discussed with the Police Authority. The clear consequence of the milestones not having been achieved is that there will be an underspend, which has been taken account of already from a financial perspective. A rephasing has taken place to ensure that the available capital is redeployed in other areas so that we do not have an underspend such as you describe. Moving forward, the milestones will be achieved in due course, into the next financial year, and the supplier will be paid at that point.

**Alison McInnes:** Can you tell me the scale of the underspend?

**The Convener:** Perhaps you can tell us how much you have paid out. You have made one payment.

**Alison McInnes:** You must know what was in the budget for the programme this year and what has been paid.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** I do not have the figures in front of me just now. I believe that the payment for achieving the initial milestone was in the region of £700,000. Although the other two milestones have not yet been achieved, I expect that they will be achieved and that we will move to payment in this financial year.

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** That is correct. The £700,000 for achieving the first milestone is the only money that has been paid to the supplier.

**Alison McInnes:** What, in total, was in the capital plan for the programme this year?

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** It would have been in the region of £8 million.

**Alison McInnes:** What will be the impact of moving that £8 million into next year's budget? You said that there has been a rephasing. What will have to fall out of the capital plan for next year, beyond i6, to accommodate that?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** There was a resequencing to bring forward projects that were in a position to be brought forward. You are asking whether there will be casualties as a consequence of that.

**Alison McInnes:** Yes.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** No, that is not the case. There was a rephasing in which some elements were brought forward, and the delay means that we are pushing back the payments for achieving the i6 milestones.

**Alison McInnes:** Was the money for the i6 programme specially ring-fenced money from the Government?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** No.

**John Finnie (Highlands and Islands) (Ind):** You have talked about the programme being complicated, which is certainly true. All the committee members are obliged to try to understand that complication, but you will appreciate that it is only one of a range of things that we must try to get behind. That is why we sometimes seek simple answers to simple questions, such as "Is it delayed or not?", rather than long explanations. None of what we are asking seeks to compromise you; rather, we are trying to understand and, indeed, support if we can.

Mr Richardson, in your letter to the convener you say:

"I was unable to provide information without it having first been reported through internal governance and in particular to the Scottish Police Authority."

Does that remain the position?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** The Police Authority met last week and I reported to it the matters that have been raised by way of the difference of contractual perception and the likely impact on the capital programme. Those matters were reported to the authority at that point.

**John Finnie:** I am trying to understand the process. Does it remain your position that the committee will not hear anything unless you have first reported it

"through internal governance and in particular to the Scottish Police Authority"?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** If it is a matter of significance that may impact on the success of the programme, that will be the case. If judgments need to be made that must be supported by the Police Authority, or the contracting authority in the case of the i6 programme, it will be my duty to ensure that it is satisfied that I am acting in its interests first.

**John Finnie:** I hope that I have misunderstood that. Are you saying that, if a matter was significant, you would set aside that process and share the information with the committee?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** No. If a matter has that level of import, I need to take it through the Police Authority before I can make it more widely known—certainly before it can be revealed in the public domain.

**John Finnie:** We need to understand that, convener. Our scrutiny cannot be dictated by internal governance and the timetabling of the Scottish Police Authority's meetings.

Mr Richardson, are you able to tell us simply—in days, hours, weeks or whatever—how long the programme will be delayed?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** I am not in a position to provide detail around that. I am sorry.

**John Finnie:** You have talked about the size, scale and strategic importance of the programme. That has been a factor in the policing of the Commonwealth games. If I noted you correctly, you said that the Strathclyde facility is being used to provide the duty management for the Commonwealth games. Is that correct?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** Yes.

13:45

**John Finnie:** No disrespect to the legacy force, but our understanding was that the Strathclyde system was not always the most advanced of IT systems compared with some of the other systems. Perhaps you can help me with this, as I am not IT-minded. Are there practical implications for policing unconnected to the games as a result of that additional demand being placed on the Strathclyde system?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** I will invite Martin Leven to provide an answer. Part of the difficulty, which you highlighted at the outset, is that there are a number of different realities in relation to the legacy environment. It is not true to say that everything was very poor; it was a mix. One of the difficulties that Martin and his team are trying to grapple with is the fact that there was such a diverse array of systems and applications right across the country, all doing slightly different things.

**John Finnie:** Yes, but specifically referring to Strathclyde, which you—

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** You are aware that it was all in a bad state of order. There is no doubt that part of the Strathclyde capability was very old and ageing, but the bit that you are

referring to was not part of that characterisation. Martin can develop that point further.

**Martin Leven:** I will emphasise that there is a distinct difference between some of the elements that we have been talking about here. We have spoken about i6 and the issues with that. The C3 systems for control rooms are a completely independent set of products—they are not related to i6 at this stage. Again, SCOPE, the duty management and human resources system, is not related to i6. It is an individual system.

To pick up on the point regarding our plans for a national HR duty management system, we are pulling together the combination of the eight different HR duty management systems. That was an in-house developed system, which was built by Tayside Police and rolled out across Scotland. We are turning it into a national solution. We are not going to market to buy a new solution at this stage. The national system is a new version of the systems that are already in place right across Scotland.

The new system, the legacy Strathclyde system and the legacy Tayside system are all in essence the same sort of software; we are just tailoring things because we had eight different sets of terms and conditions and eight different ways of doing things in the different police forces. We are getting the one national suite that will pull together all those systems.

As regards the question whether the Strathclyde system is able to cope, the answer is absolutely. We are doing robust testing at the moment. The issue is not with the database, but the infrastructure. In other words, we might need to put some more juice into the system; we might need to get some more processors and servers. However, the system is more than capable of handling the operational running.

The HR systems are not the prettiest in the world but they are very functional. What we are doing with the national system is putting a little bit of a facelift on it and ensuring that all the data works together. That probably links back to Mr Pearson's earlier point—just using what was the Strathclyde system has no real operational impact on the Commonwealth games. It is in essence the same version of the new system that we were going to roll out. It is just that using the older version reduces the risk.

**John Finnie:** Are there any consequential impacts on operational policing either within the Strathclyde area or outwith it as a result of using this facility, which you had not planned to use because there was going to be a new facility for the Commonwealth games?

**Martin Leven:** There are no consequential impacts. The police service across Scotland is

operating very well at the moment on each individual system. The fact that we will continue using one of the individual systems for three months longer than we were planning to, and through the Commonwealth games, is a risk reduction exercise rather than anything else. There is no cross-impact. It is a good system that is capable of running operations. It will not change how we operate as a police service in any way whatsoever.

**John Finnie:** Can I ask just one question about the contract? I have others, but I know that other members have questions too.

**The Convener:** I have questions about the contract, too. Graeme Pearson is after me this time.

**John Finnie:** Who administered the contract? I understand that the customers will have their say and the customers are the police. Who dealt with the management of the contract?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** One of the significant learning points that came from the platform project, which has already been mentioned, was the need to ensure that specific expertise was available. As a consequence, from the outset—when we started what was then the iM journey and is now i6—we ensured that the skills requirements were appropriately and independently provided. A professional firm of legal advisers was brought in, in the shape of Eversheds LLP. It has been the consistent provider of legal advice throughout the competitive dialogue and into the delivery phase of the work.

**John Finnie:** So a client-customer relationship figures in the situation too.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** Yes.

**John Finnie:** Are you in dispute with your lawyers at all?

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** No.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** Not at all.

**John Finnie:** Do you envisage being in dispute with them about the contract?

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** No.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** I sincerely hope not.

**John Finnie:** Okay, I will leave it at that just now.

**The Convener:** I want to go back to your letter, DCC Richardson. The reason why your milestone targets have not been met is because—to put it in layman's terms—you thought that you were buying something and the suppliers thought that they were delivering something else.

Your letter states that

“Differences have emerged as to what the contract required the supplier to deliver”,

which is why there are delays. Those are not minor differences; you are doing a replanning exercise. In the second-to-last paragraph of your letter, you say:

“This is a significant exercise and detail regarding revised timescales for delivery and any potential impact regarding costs are not yet fully understood.”

Whatever one thinks about the situation, it is not a happy one.

In the third-from-bottom paragraph on the second page of your letter, you state that:

“Robust governance of the programme has been established”

—not that it was in place, but that it “has been established”—

“and includes management of the contract, milestones, supplier performance and delivery of the business requirements.”

When was the robust governance to which you refer established?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** I have been in policing for 28 years, and I have been involved as a chief officer in the delivery of ICT programmes in one shape or another for a number of years, as part of the legacy arrangements and now in Police Scotland. I have never experienced anything that comes close to the structure and governance arrangements for i6, or the almost rigid processes that we went through to ensure that the security that everybody wishes to be there is completely enshrined in i6.

We have exposed ourselves to external assurance on a number of occasions and in a number of ways. Five gateway reviews have now been completed, including one that looked specifically at governance. We have followed all the recommendations and have actioned and completed the majority of them, and we will continue to do that.

**The Convener:** Forgive me, but your letter does not say that

“Robust governance of the programme”

was there from the start. It says that it “has been established”; not that it was, but that it “has been”.

Are you telling me that there has been no change—that robust governance, to use your language, has not changed—as a consequence of the dispute coming into the foray around August, which was about one month after the contract was signed? Was a change made then, and is there a continuing change? It is the wording “has been” that interests me.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** It is a use of language—

**The Convener:** Indeed—it is a very important letter, and the language that you use is very important.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** Let me explain what I meant by that wording. It would be reasonable to say that there is an evolving picture with regard to governance. We did not need escalation procedures until a particular point was reached, but we have now initiated those and are going through the process for the first time. We are all learning, and as we go through the process we will make refinements.

There is no doubt that the Scottish Police Authority—which is still new—is developing its approaches and structures. There is an evolving picture with regard to providing an SPA interface at the top level of governance; that point was discussed at the most recent SPA meeting.

The arrangements to which I refer in the letter for the governance of i6 at programme level have been consistent and strong, and will continue to be so as we move forward.

**The Convener:** I am talking about contract level. What I am trying to get at—I will let someone else in a moment—is the question whether, when you found that out in August, someone said, “Wait a wee minute here—this isn’t what we thought the contract was about, and we now have a fight with Accenture about what it thinks it is delivering and what we thought we were contracting for.” Did you then make changes to the way in which you were looking at the delivery and governance of the contract?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** The contract is the contract, and it has not changed—

**The Convener:** I know that, and it is flawed.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** It is not flawed.

**The Convener:** It must be flawed if there is a dispute. It is flawed in somebody’s eyes—it is certainly flawed in Accenture’s eyes, because Accenture obviously does not agree with you about what it was to do.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** Convener, I do not want to be evasive, and I very much welcome the committee’s interest in these matters, but I feel that I am being drawn into a conversation that is potentially going to do damage by presenting some information that will cause us issues in the negotiations that are currently on-going.

**The Convener:** Well, that puts the committee in a difficult position. We have to hold Police Scotland and the SPA to account in what they do,

and you are telling us that you do not want us to challenge anything in any way.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** That is absolutely not what I am saying. It is simply a matter of timing and is enshrined within the governance arrangements. We have a programme board that includes and involves the Police Authority. I have a responsibility to involve it and to report up to it. We are in the midst of sensitive discussions and we have not reached conclusions. Once we reach the point at which the risk and vulnerability dissipate, I will be absolutely happy—as I am sure the SPA would be—to answer the committee’s questions.

**Graeme Pearson:** It is fair to say that you have before you an unhappy committee. In fairness, there is an element that you can comment on. We met in November to discuss the ICT issues. In January, we got a letter from you about i6, and in February we got another letter from you about it. When was the information that there was a difficulty at the heart of i6 going to be shared with the committee? We are left feeling that all the letters are vague. We wrote to you again because we got a letter full of managementspeak, which left us with no picture of where we were with i6. Why was that information not shared with us in November?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** I tried in a subsequent letter to provide some explanation as to—

**Graeme Pearson:** The one that we received this week.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** Yes.

**Graeme Pearson:** That letter gave us the first indication of a difficulty. Why did we not get some insight into the matter in November?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** The milestones had not been breached at that point.

**Graeme Pearson:** But you were in dispute at that time.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** You have chosen to use the word “dispute”—

**Graeme Pearson:** No—you used it earlier.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** I am not aware that I did.

**The Convener:** Chief Superintendent Hippman did.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** In any event, it becomes an issue.

I do not want to underplay the seriousness of deviations from an initial plan. I am trying to outline to the committee that we have a very tight approach to ensure—

**Graeme Pearson:** I have got that; I am asking why the information was not shared with us in November.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** We were going through a process of seeking to resolve certain issues and, had we been able to do so, we would have retained the original plan and things would have moved ahead. As I suggested at the outset, and as you well know because you have been in my seat, in the delivery of such programmes, that is the type of week-to-week activity that is to be expected; it is part of delivery. If I was to escalate matters every time that something started to deviate or there was a potential issue, we would end up getting locked into governance and escalation processes that would take attention away from the delivery of the programme.

**Graeme Pearson:** Our concern is about the £39 million-worth of public investment. The previous performance management platform project has been mentioned. In that case, almost £9 million was spent with nothing to show for it. I understand that all the bits of that system are lying about in the estate somewhere, almost unused.

There is a duty on us all to be accountable for these steps. In the interests of candour, would it not have been fairer to share with the committee the fact that there were some practical difficulties? You could have given us an assessment of whether they were significant or not, but at least we would have been aware of them. Instead, for six months we were completely unaware that a difficulty lay at the heart of the project.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** I accept your frustration in that regard, but I come back to my original point that there has to be a process to be followed and there has to be an escalation. My point of escalation—and my duty—is to report to the Police Authority. Once I have done that, as I have indicated, I will be very happy to provide the detail of that to the committee.

**Graeme Pearson:** When was the information first shared with the authority?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** This has been on-going as part of the extended programme—

**Graeme Pearson:** So that was not a hurdle—

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** The chief executive and accountable officer is a member of the programme board, and we talk regularly in various fora with the Police Authority.

**Graeme Pearson:** For me, there has always been a difficulty with governance, oversight and accountability in the new set-up. You know that I am in favour of a single force, so that is not the issue; it is about getting the relationships right.

You are here as the senior responsible officer and the person who is ultimately in charge, and the Police Authority is allegedly responsible for Police Scotland. I find it surprising that no hands-on responsibility has been demonstrated to the committee for Police Scotland's most significant project in the coming year.

We are nine or 10 months away from the launch of i6, according to the programme. Do you still think that you will deliver on time?

14:00

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** I have already highlighted that I expect that there will be a delay in the final delivery of i6.

**Graeme Pearson:** But the paperwork says that you anticipate that it will be delivered in early 2015.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** Again, you are asking me to predict things that I am not yet in a position to lock down.

**Graeme Pearson:** It is my job to ask you to predict these things.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** The team, the programme board and I are focused on resolving the current issues and getting us back on track so that we can minimise their impact and move towards successful delivery.

**Graeme Pearson:** Mr Leven, as director of IT, you had oversight of this kind of thing in a previous life, and you know where we are with the project just now. Do you anticipate that it will be delivered early in 2015?

**Martin Leven:** It is way too early to say.

I want to emphasise one thing about the contract. I got the impression from Mr Stewart's comments that there are some serious concerns about the type of contract that we have signed up to. We may have to redact it, but I am sure that we can show that. We are not talking about an off-the-shelf bit of software. It is important to recognise that we have not just gone to the market and said, "Can you give us something that will do this?" We are talking about a system that is based on a template but which is designed for the unique Scottish criminal justice system. It involves merging 135 different operational systems into one suite of applications. The first phase of operation is therefore high-level scoping. The areas in which we have entered into potential disagreement with the supplier involve some of the nuances around high-level scoping, and then into detailed scoping.

We are not talking about a significant, massive disagreement about what the end product will be. Our current discussions with the supplier are about how we will do certain things and which



requirements will do certain things. It is not that we just put out a contract and said, "We want this delivered by that date"; it is an incredibly complicated piece of work and a massive ICT project. At the moment, we are trying to resolve some of the disagreements.

I can be absolutely confident in the governance that we have pulled through because we have spotted mistakes. If you take a look at previous cases, such as the performance management platform project, on which HMIC reported, you will see that they specifically highlight the fact that people missed some very big flags. That has not happened with this project. We have been all over it right from the very start. It has incredibly tight governance at the operational level and at the strategic level. At the moment, we have to be honest and say that we will not know the full impact until we have sorted out the current discussions that we are having with the supplier.

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** Convener, can I raise a language point? Martin Leven referred to the merger of 130-odd systems, but it actually replaces those systems.

**The Convener:** We will move on, because time is passing.

**John Finnie:** I am sorry, Mr Richardson, but I want to return to the issue of process. As you will know, I was dissatisfied with your two previous letters because I am not minded to learn the language—the managementspeak—that is in them. I cannot help but feel that if we wrote to you and you had good news to tell us, you would not say that you had to go through the internal governance process and speak to the SPA before responding. I would like an assurance from you that when the committee, on behalf of the public, continues its scrutiny of this important issue and the significant sums of money that are involved and asks a question, you will quickly share that information with your internal governance—whatever that means—and the SPA and respond timeously and in more succinct terms.

**The Convener:** And in plain English.

**John Finnie:** That would be helpful. Is that assurance forthcoming?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** Again, I apologise if my previous letters missed the mark and caused upset. That is regrettable. I make that point in this week's letter. It is not my intention to be evasive—

**John Finnie:** Let me interrupt you. You mentioned this week's letter. We were really just looking for a yes or no. Is the project delayed? A simple "yes" would have done. We are not trying to crucify people; we are trying to understand the background and the significant sums of public

money that are involved. There is a history of difficulties—I will be nice and say "difficulties"—with IT systems throughout the public sector, including, fairly recently, with the police platform project. That is why the situation has come about.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** I have laid out my position. I accept your desire, and as far as possible I will accommodate that requirement, but my obligation is to ensure that the Police Authority is involved and included and has sight of things.

**John Finnie:** I will show you on my mobile phone.

**The Convener:** Now, now.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** I could not possibly have something articulated to this committee and in the newspapers before it goes to the Police Authority.

**The Convener:** I want to move on. Kevin Stewart has to go to the chamber—the Parliament will be sitting soon—so I will let him in.

**Kevin Stewart:** Thank you, convener.

Mr Leven pointed out the significance and size of the project, which is replacing 135 systems. He also said that the difficulties were about "nuances". I would have thought that a huge amount of the discussion would have taken place at the pre-tender stage, when a supplier is likely to be made aware of the scope of a project and what the current systems are.

I realise that it is not an off-the-shelf system. I have looked at previous pieces of work and I always think that there should be much more rigour when systems that are not off the shelf are involved. The word "nuances" makes the issues sound insignificant. How significant are they?

**Martin Leven:** They are of varying degrees of significance, but I do not want to go into the detail because of the discussions that are taking place. Some of the nuances are simply about phrasing and how words are put down on paper. When you have contractual commitments, you want to ensure that the words are nailed down. There are also some differences in understanding in relation to what the system's end output should be when it goes live.

However, I am very comfortable with the process and the contract because we built in timelines. The timeline payments, which have not been made so far, come at the end of the scoping period. If we are not happy with the scoping, we will not pay at that stage. That is where the incredible amount of governance arrangements that have been put into the project are showing benefits. We are able to intercept potential problems in the system's development at a very

early stage, rather than find out about them two or three years down the line.

**Kevin Stewart:** The strictness about not paying when the thing has not been delivered gives me some consolation, because I have seen payments made and things not delivered in the past.

We have had quite a lengthy discussion about the project. Obviously, we are not the contract holder; the SPA is. It must deal with some of the issues, too, and it is likely that we will speak to it. However, can the witnesses assure us that the delay in the project will not have any effect on front-line policing, service delivery or community safety?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** The programme of work is all about enhancing those things. You could say that the delay means that the benefits will not come on stream as soon as we hoped, depending on how you want to characterise the answer. There should be no impact on what happens daily, but we are seeking to improve what happens. Any delay would push back that improvement, so we want to minimise that.

**Kevin Stewart:** So we are not seeing a backward step; we are seeing service delivery carry on, although there is a delay in the improvement that we would all like to see.

**The Convener:** Thank you, Kevin. If you want to leave now, that is fine.

**Alison McInnes:** Whose signature is on the contract on behalf of the SPA? Who signed the contract?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** The initial contract was signed by the chief constable, for convenience more than anything else, but the contracting authority remains the SPA.

**Alison McInnes:** Has the turmoil and upheaval in the SPA last year, when it changed direction and took a different approach to its management, had any impact on the oversight of the contract?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** No, not in my view.

**Alison McInnes:** You do not think that, with the changes in chief executives and in the management structure, anyone took their eye off the ball at any point.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** No. I do not think that that would be a fair reflection.

**Alison McInnes:** Okay. That is fine.

**John Finnie:** Mr Richardson, I am wondering about the ability of the system to evolve once it is in place and running well, because laws change. For example, if the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Bill

is enacted, we will move from a situation of detention and arrest to one simply of arrest, and there will be issues with the process of investigative liberation for people in custody. There are also issues falling out of the Victims and Witnesses (Scotland) Bill regarding notification to victims and liaison with the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service. Following the signing of the initial contract, will there be capacity to include and absorb those changes in the new system?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** I will invite Alec Hippman to give you some detail, because he has been heavily immersed in some of the criminal justice discussions. From my point of view, at a more general level, we were aware at a very early stage of the proposed changes in the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Bill, which has been developed over a considerable time. Alec Hippman and the team put arrangements in place to ensure that we probably understood what the implications would be. If memory serves me right, I think that there were 18 adjustments to the scope to cater for the likely impact of the bill.

In addition to that, in a more general sense, the entire way in which the i6 structure has been created enables maximum flexibility. We cannot know what we do not know, but we want to ensure that, if new practices or IT possibilities become available and affordable, they are as compatible as we can reasonably make them at this stage of the game. That has been part of the base thinking of i6. As far as possible we have ensured that it would be compatible with partners, with mobile data, if that comes on, and so on.

Alec can refer specifically to the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Bill.

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** There are in excess of 18 requirements as a result of our working closely with project teams who were tracking the Carloway review in its early stages and then the move towards the bill. We tracked that so that we could fold in and future proof the functionality that we would need to discharge for a lot of the new operational processes and procedures. To enable that, they have been embedded in our requirements and in the contractor solution. The same applies to certain elements of the Victims and Witnesses (Scotland) Act 2014 and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill. I will not go into the micro detail or the functionality, but I can certainly provide reassurance that we have tracked that all the way through. At the moment, we think that we have most of the requirements covered.

**John Finnie:** Thank you. That is very reassuring.

**Margaret Mitchell:** More specifically, would the abolition or the retention of corroboration have any meaningful impact on the system?

**The Convener:** You are a delight, Margaret—I like her style. It is not helpful, but I like her style.

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** To be blunt, the outcome of the corroboration issue will have no impact on the i6 programme functionality at all, because it is literally about recording a data field referring to a corroborating officer or witness. That will remain, because if corroborating witnesses are available, they need to be recorded and a report must be sent to the fiscal or the court. We will still do that, so whether corroboration is abolished or not, the data fields will remain to be populated if required.

**Margaret Mitchell:** So it is only time that we are talking about, rather than anything to do with the system.

To what extent will the i6 system link up with other IT systems? Are there any systems that it will not be compatible with?

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** One of the technical requirements for the i6 programme is that the solution has to be agile, as has its approach to integration. I will not go techie, because I am not a techie and I know that members would not enjoy that. It is basically an agile integration piece with any other IT product and is much slicker and more efficient. It is more of a plug-and-play approach than we have been used to in the past, when our systems have been more technically constrained. We have an integration piece with a significant number of other national IT systems—that is part of the contract—as well as those of our partners. In the early stages of our procurement journey, we formed an i6 criminal justice partnership group with the senior business change leads for the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, the Scottish Court Service, the Scottish Prison Service and the like, and they keep us aware of developments in their areas.

The convener asked recently about the integration piece with the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service and the courts, and that is clearly a key element. The future-proofing element is included because we know the direction of travel that we are taking with our criminal justice partners as part of an on-going and maturing justice digital strategy that is likely to move towards greater exchange of electronic documents. Again, all that is covered in the requirements and in the contract.

14:15

**The Convener:** I return to your letter, DCC Richardson, which was very helpful. In the penultimate paragraph, about the replanning exercise, you say:

“This is a significant exercise and detail regarding revised timescales for delivery and any potential impact regarding costs are not yet fully understood. It is anticipated this information will be reported to the Police Scotland i6 Programme Board and Scottish Police Authority by the end of this month.”

We have heard assurances before in a different place, at the Justice Committee, that things would be done by the end of a month, and three or four months afterwards there still seems to be a bit of elasticity. Can you assure us that that deadline is fixed for the end of March and that the committee will also have that information, and can you tell us by when?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** What is fixed is the date for the programme board, which I think is 25 March.

**The Convener:** When will the committee have the privilege of that information?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** I expect that we would have the plan agreed and approved, if we are able to do that, on 25 March. I would then notify the Police Authority and advise it of that outcome, and thereafter I would be happy to share information on that matter with the committee.

**The Convener:** I am trying to determine how long it will take before we know. If it has gone through your systems, how soon will it come to the committee—within days of the agreement?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** As long as it takes me to get an appropriate audience with the Police Authority. I do not have a calendar in front of me.

**The Convener:** I am sure that you have access, DCC Richardson, so can you give us an idea within a week or something? We do not want to wait another month.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** To move things forward, the authority has also expressed a desire to be advised as soon as reasonably possible, so I expect that within a week or two of that date, depending on other diary commitments, the authority will be advised. Thereafter I will be able to share the information with the committee.

**The Convener:** I am advised that the next SPA meeting is on 26 March, and that this committee's next meeting after that is on 3 April. It would be handy to have the information by then. That is a milestone for us, if you will forgive my using that term. I am just putting that on the record. I am not

asking you to fix that, but it would be handy for us to have that information for our meeting on 3 April.

**John Finnie:** Is the authority not represented on the i6 board?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** We have the chief executive and accountable officer on the i6 board, but we do not have a member. In fact, that is one of the issues on which we sought independent advice, and the gateway report made reference to it. The clear guidance was that it was not a desirable state of play. In fact, the authority is there to scrutinise and oversee, not to be part of the decision-making environment. There is specific guidance, and a recommendation along those lines, in the authority's gateway report.

**The Convener:** We hope that the authority pays attention to this committee.

**Graeme Pearson:** You will be pleased to hear that this is not an IT question, and I am sure that you are delighted that you wrote that letter this week. It has been an interesting couple of hours.

My question harks back to the previous evidence session with the Scottish Police Federation, the Association of Scottish Police Superintendents, and the civilian staff association. When i6 was presented to the committee, we heard that the savings and benefits that were to be accrued through the use of i6 were to do with changing the way in which police officers behave and operate out there in the street. I asked the three members of the panel whether they had a grip of that vision of the future, and what changes will take place.

We are within nine months of i6 coming on stream, if it is delivered on time. We did not get a full response about the changes that will take place. The project seemed to be at the heart of the savings that you indicated to us a year ago. Is that work on-going? Can you share any view of the changes that will take place that will make life better for the public, more effective for the service and more efficient in cash terms?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** I am not sure that I fully understand your question.

**Graeme Pearson:** Let me ask it again then.

**The Convener:** Can we have a shorter version please?

**Graeme Pearson:** Well, I thought that his head would be full of IT, so I tried to give him time to think about it.

**The Convener:** You don't half flannel. Just ask a short question.

**Graeme Pearson:** What I said at the outset was we are not talking about an IT project per se. It is about making police officers work more effectively

and efficiently. When I asked the previous panel whether that work had been done and whether they had a clear vision of the future, I got a rather blank stare back. I hope that someone somewhere in the system has that vision. Is it you?

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** There are two strands to that. One is the level of awareness and knowledge that the staff associations have, and the level of integration. I will ask Alec Hippman to touch on that in a second.

The second point is about the kind of difference that the project will make to the working life of cops and staff as we move forward into the brave new world.

**Graeme Pearson:** And the public.

**The Convener:** Yes, and the public.

**Deputy Chief Constable Richardson:** Absolutely but, in essence, the immediate beneficiaries will be the officers who have to populate numerous ICT and paper-based systems as part of their duty so that they can get through an arrest or another process of some description. They will be able to do that in far less time, and in a slicker way that will minimise mistakes.

During 18 months of dialogue, that has been worked through with hundreds of members of the organisation who do the job every day and understand their business. We have built up the requirements around their input. I therefore suggest that there is a widespread understanding of the potential of what we are seeking to deliver.

Alec Hippman can talk about the more formal engagement with the staff associations.

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** Formal engagement commenced just after the contract was awarded with the joint negotiating consultative committee—

**Graeme Pearson:** Can I stop you there? I am not really interested in engagement.

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** No. I did not think so.

**Graeme Pearson:** What difference will it make? When we go to look at the service in a year, what will knock us back on our heels and say that we got value for our £39 million? What differences will we see?

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** Across a whole range of policing activities, we are creating a modern national IT solution that will support how we investigate crime, protect vulnerable persons, investigate missing persons, share information with our key partners, and keep cops out of the back office and in their actual workplace, which is

the community, so that they can continue to be visible and more effective.

**Graeme Pearson:** How will the public see the difference? What will they see?

**Chief Superintendent Hippman:** I would like to think that it will make a significant contribution towards the continued drive to reducing crime.

**The Convener:** Can we stop on that?

**Graeme Pearson:** I am happy with that.

**The Convener:** I think that the panel and the committee are a bit battle-weary. I thank you for your evidence.

That ends this meeting. The next meeting is 20 March and we will take evidence from Deputy Chief Constable Rose Fitzpatrick in relation to the evidence that we have gathered through our calls for views and visits on local policing, and Margaret Mitchell can raise the questions she raises so cleverly each week.

*Meeting closed at 14:24.*



Members who would like a printed copy of the *Official Report* to be forwarded to them should give notice to SPICe.

---

Available in e-format only. Printed Scottish Parliament documentation is published in Edinburgh by APS Group Scotland.

All documents are available on  
the Scottish Parliament website at:

[www.scottish.parliament.uk](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk)

For details of documents available to  
order in hard copy format, please contact:  
APS Scottish Parliament Publications on 0131 629 9941.

For information on the Scottish Parliament contact  
Public Information on:

Telephone: 0131 348 5000  
Textphone: 0800 092 7100  
Email: [sp.info@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:sp.info@scottish.parliament.uk)

e-format first available  
ISBN 978-1-78392-887-3

Revised e-format available  
ISBN 978-1-78392-904-7