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5 April 2019

Your Ref:

Our Ref: DCCLP22 /2019

Susan Deacon, CBE
Chair
Scottish Police Authority
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Glasgow
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**POLICE
SCOTLAND**

Keeping people safe

POILEAS ALBA

Will Kerr OBE
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Dear Chair

The policing response to, and costs associated with, Brexit have been subject to regular discussion at recent public meetings of the SPA Board. Whilst the deployment of officers and staff is the operational responsibility of the Chief Constable, we recognise the significant public and political interest in this matter and the need for transparency on both the operational and resource implications of the UK's exit from the EU on Police Scotland. Therefore, in line with our statutory accountability arrangements, Police Scotland will provide a bi-weekly written update to the SPA which will summarise both the operational use of Brexit additionality and their accumulating costs. In addition, of course, we will continue to report in public at meetings of the SPA Board and to provide more detailed briefings to Board Members as and when the need arises.

To provide some context to this written summary, you will be aware that Police Scotland have stood up 12 PSU's (Public Support Units) from the 18th March 2019. These officers, 300 in total, will be located in various locations across the whole of Scotland, and are supported by another 60 officers in support roles (for example, Logistics, Intelligence and Command and Control). The national policing operation for Scotland will be run from the Police Area Control Room in Bilston Glen (Midlothian) and, up until the point where these officers are required for Brexit related duties, they will be proactively deployed in tackling local Divisional priorities across Scotland. This summary will therefore capture both 'Brexit' and 'default' duties for the 12 PSU's. This National PSU reserve was stood-up initially for a 4 week period but, given the ongoing political uncertainty over Brexit, has now been extended to the 26th April (2019). Given

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the ongoing political uncertainty on how, and when, the UK will leave the EU, Police Scotland have developed a flexible operational response which can, at short notice and where operational circumstances necessitate, either increase the numbers of officers available for Brexit-related duties or stand them down quickly, and revert them to core duties, when they are no longer required.

At last week's public meeting of the SPA Board, I made reference to the number, and increasing likelihood, of 'flash' or spontaneous protests linked to the UK's exit from the EU. The National Reserve have deployed to a number of these spontaneous protests over the past two weeks, for example - on Friday 22nd March 2019 alone – they were tasked to three spontaneous protests in Edinburgh (at the Scottish Parliament, 'March for Europe' at Bristo Square and 'March for Europe wave-off' at Waverley Bridge. This type of protest activity is likely to increase in the next few weeks, and necessitates a flexible and mobile policing response to uphold the law in a way which facilitates peaceful and lawful protest but also minimises disruption to other activity in that area. This type of protest activity is in addition to notified and pre-planned protest or demonstration activity.

During the first week of stand-up, there was also a significant amount of multi-agency testing at the Multi-Agency Co-ordination Centre (Bilston Glen) to ensure that, in the event of significant disruption or disorder, all of the first responder and partner agencies can effectively co-ordinate their resources to prioritise public safety and support.

During the first two weeks of stand-up, when not engaged on policing duties connected to 'Brexit', the National Reserve was deployed to assist local policing colleagues with a range of priority taskings, including: executing warrants; dealing with high risk missing persons; responding to persons in crisis threatening self-harm; deploying at football matches and other sporting events; assisting with the policing of civic events (for example, Dundee Pride); and responding to serious crime, for example knife crime in Edinburgh.

The total costs of these 360 officers currently engaged in the National Reserve and associated duties, is £650K. These are costs for the first two weeks of stand-up since 18th March 2019. As you will be aware, these are unbudgeted costs for Police Scotland and, whilst we will continue to make operational decisions based on the public safety of citizens and communities across Scotland, these accumulating costs will add significantly to Police Scotland's budget deficit for 2019/20.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Will Kerr', with a large loop at the end.

Will Kerr
Deputy Chief Constable
Local Policing

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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES;

1. To maintain law and order and provide a lawful and proportionate policing response to any protest¹.
2. To protect, as far as possible, service delivery at pre Brexit levels.
3. To lead, co-ordinate and support multi-agency responses.
4. To continue to deliver transformational change across the service
5. To support, where appropriate wider UK Policing

¹ In so doing we will balance the needs and rights of protestors with those of others impacted by protest, in accordance with our positive and negative duties under Articles 9, 10 and 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights.