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**SCOTTISH POLICE
AUTHORITY**

1 Pacific Quay
Glasgow
G51 1DZ
SPACHairOffice@spa.pnn.police.uk

Mr John Finnie MSP
Convener
Justice Sub-Committee on Policing
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

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CO/103/2020

Dear Mr Finnie

**Policing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
26th Conference of Parties (COP26) & Euro 2020 Championships**

Thank you for your correspondence of 22 December in relation to the policing of COP26 and re-scheduled Euro 2020 Championships, and for the opportunity to update Sub-Committee members on preparations.

COP26

The Scottish Police Authority (SPA), in dialogue with Police Scotland and the Scottish and UK Governments, continue to plan on the agreed working assumption that the Conference will proceed in-person on the re-scheduled dates of 1 – 12 November 2021. Covid-19 remains a significant risk. Changes to circumstances continue to be reviewed and the final decision to go ahead (and the format) rests with the UK Government.

Ongoing SPA Oversight

The Authority's COP26 Oversight Group, attended by Police Scotland's Gold Commander for the event and other senior staff, the Scottish Government and HMICS, was established in February last year to seek assurances around recovering additional costs to Scottish policing, so there is no detriment to the policing budget; that the impact on day to day policing for communities is minimised; and that staff and officer health, safety and wellbeing are fully considered. The work of the COP26 Oversight Group, Chaired by Authority member Tom Halpin QPM, remains ongoing and will undoubtedly gather pace as we continue to approach the event later this year. In addition, reporting from

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COP26 Oversight Groups is regularly reported to public sessions of Authority meetings.

In addition to this, further assurance and oversight is being provided by HMICS and the Metropolitan Police Service, with additional independent advice being provided by an Independent Advisory Group (IAG) appointed by Police Scotland and led by John Scott QC to consider the widest public and civic engagement around the event with a view to ensuring planning and delivery is compliant with human rights legislation, while peaceful and lawful protest is facilitated as far as public safety considerations allow. The Authority is represented on this Group which is also attended by Police Scotland and Glasgow City Council, among other key stakeholders. The Authority continues to fully engage with these external reviews and the IAG.

Financial Resources

Following confirmation of the revised date for the event, Police Scotland has undertaken detailed operational planning with associated budgetary implications. The Authority considered this work in November 2020 to inform further engagement with the UK Government. Discussions remain ongoing with Police Scotland and the Scottish and UK Governments regarding finalising the budget and we expect to be in a position to update on that by the end of March.

Significant progress has been made in planning for the rescheduled event and welcome clarity has been provided by the UK Government, for example, around the ownership of mutual aid and accommodation costs. There are also a number of important issues subject to detailed discussion with the UK and Scottish Governments in respect of indemnity against civil liability claims and the formal process for transferring cost reimbursement to the SPA.

The Authority is fully engaged with these discussions and we are working on the clear and agreed basis that there is no detriment to the Scottish policing budget and that the impact on day to day policing is minimised as far as possible.

The COP26 budget once set will continue to be subject to audit by Audit Scotland and SPA Internal Audit to provide detailed assurance.

Local Policing

Police Scotland, as a standing item on the monthly Oversight Group agenda, continue to report on how they intend to minimise the impact of the COP26 event on local communities, and how related policing plans will continue to develop and adapt.

A Local Policing COP26 Steering Group has been established which has focused on key themes of: Maximising Public Accessibility; Maximising Resources; Maximising Operational Responsiveness; and Maximising Operational Oversight. Each of these objectives ultimately aim to maintaining public confidence in the policing of the event itself, as well as the impact-the demands of day-to-day policing across Scotland.

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The Oversight Group has received reports that Local Commanders are working in partnership with local scrutiny bodies to ensure clear messages are being communicated and assurances given that a local policing response will be maintained in the run up to, during, and after the event.

Mutual Aid


As part of their efforts to mitigate the impact on local policing, and as part of their Gold Strategy, Police Scotland continue to engage with National Police Operations and Coordination Centre (NPOCC) to discuss mutual aid provision. While there exist well established frameworks for the provision of mutual aid, extensive logistical challenges will arise from what will undoubtedly be the largest mass mobilisation of police officers in the UK in many years. A key focus of the Oversight Group is around officer and staff health, safety and wellbeing, extending to the provision of mutual aid. The Authority will continue to play an active role, through oversight and partnership with the Police Scotland Wellbeing Sub-Group, in the safe deployment and wellbeing of all staff and officers associated with COP26.

Euro 2020 (Re-Scheduled) Championships

The Authority anticipates an update from Police Scotland in March in relation to the planning assumptions for policing the four Euro 2020 matches scheduled in Scotland. The Authority's oversight will seek assurance around resourcing and wider community impact as well as the financial implications as appropriate.

I trust this information will be of assistance to the committee's consideration of these matter.

Yours sincerely,



Martyn Evans
Chair

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