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Margaret Mitchell MSP
Convener Scottish Parliament Justice Committee

5 December 2019

Dear Margaret,

I would like to inform you that on Wednesday 4 December, Susan Deacon CBE tendered her resignation as Chair of the Scottish Police Authority, which I have accepted with immediate effect.

During her tenure there has been significant improvement across many facets of the police service in Scotland, not least due to her role in the appointment of experienced and talented individuals to both the SPA Board and to Police Scotland's leadership team. As Ms Deacon herself, acknowledges, our police service is in a much stronger place now than prior to her appointment.

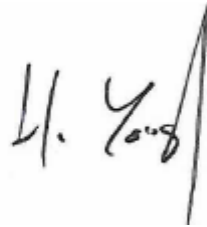
I am pleased to be able to inform the Committee that the Vice Chair, David Crichton, has agreed to provide leadership of the SPA until a new Chair is appointed through the public appointment process. David is a highly respected professional, with many years of service across a range of public, private and third sector organisations. I have spoken to David and I am confident that the important work of the SPA will progress under his leadership.

The Scottish Government remains committed to the principles of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012. I agree with the conclusion of your detailed post-legislative scrutiny which the Committee devoted a year to, that, despite challenges, the reform has led to greater consistency of service across Scotland. I too, welcome the changes being implemented by the SPA to address leadership, governance and accountability concerns which you noted in your report. I also note that the recent HMICS report made clear that there is a consensus from key post holders in the SPA, Police Scotland and other stakeholders that the 2012 Act establishes the right model of centralised governance of police by an independent police authority, and that the functions of the SPA are sound.

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I am pleased that the SPA and its Members remain fully committed to continue taking forward the range of work required within the Authority in order to address the recommendation of the recent HMICS thematic inspection in particular reviewing the governance and accountability framework. I am encouraged that significant progress has been made and remain committed to this going forward.

I am copying this letter to the Vice Chair of SPA and the Chief Constable.



HUMZA YOUSAF

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