

**Bailie Dr Christopher Mason JP
Glasgow City Council
City Chambers
G2 1DU**

12 August 2004

Mr Iain A J McKie
27 Donnini Court
South Beach Road
Ayr
KA7 1JP

Dear Mr McKie

I am replying to the letter dated 14 July that you sent to me and every other member of the Strathclyde Joint Police Board.

I know very little about your daughter's case and I relied to a very large extent on the truthfulness and accuracy of the report submitted jointly by the Chief Constable and the Clerk to the Board meeting on 24 June. I was consequently dismayed by the discrepancies between the officers' report and your account of the matters, particularly on four points:

1. The sum at issue in the first case your daughter brought against the Chief Constable.
2. The report's assertion on page 6 that she had not applied for assistance from the SPF.
3. The fact that the Court had decided the case on a point of law before hearing any evidence.
4. The manner of your daughter's arrest.

I raised these matters when the minute of the Board's June meeting came up for approval at the Board's meeting this morning. The only point on which I got an answer was the first one.

After a certain amount of stonewalling and prevarication, the Clerk admitted that the figure of £750,000 was a mistake, and it should have been £100,000. One other member asked him how the mistake had happened. Mr Blair said it had been the result of a muddle in the drafting process, and that he was sorry. He also said he could not have been expected to know that your daughter had in fact made an approach to the SPF about legal representation in the civil case, and that he stood by the rest of his report. The Chief Constable did not say anything at all.

I said that every member of the Board, including the Convener, had had your letter and that the Clerk must have known about it and that I thought it was shameful that the Clerk and the Chief Constable had not at the start of the meeting volunteered the information about the mistake in their report.

The Convener said that the money had now been paid, the matter was closed and there was no point in going on about it. And that was that.

The second issue was barely mentioned and the other two were not discussed at all.

Having studied your letter, your "Statement of Facts" and the June report by the Chief Constable and the Clerk, I am struck by a number of things:

- The denial of justice to Marion Ross's family, to your daughter and indeed to David Asbury
- The obduracy of the Strathclyde Police and the Crown Office in blocking attempts to bring the full facts out into the open
- The indifference of the majority of the members of the present Strathclyde Joint Police Board to the issues in the case
- The appalling possibility that the pressure brought to bear on your daughter to change her story, the prosecution for perjury and all the subsequent cover-ups, may be manifestations, not of a miscarriage of justice, but of a conspiracy to pervert the course of justice.

There is no prospect of the Police Board taking any action in this matter. But I hope that the Court of Appeal will uphold Lord Wheatley and that the full facts will be brought out in the trial of your daughter's case against Scottish Ministers, and that she will win.

After the trial, there ought to be a full public inquiry conducted by a judge into everything that has happened. After Hutton, one does not feel entirely confident about British judges, so perhaps the inquiry should be by a Canadian or some other Commonwealth or a European judge. I shall willingly support any demand that you or your daughter make for such an inquiry.

I am sorry I have not been able to do more.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Mason
Glasgow City Council