

McKie campaign gathers support

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POLITICIANS and lawyers yesterday backed an appeal to Strathclyde Police to drop plans to claim legal expenses from Shirley McKie, the former policewoman who was accused - and later cleared - of committing perjury.

They pledged their support to Ms McKie after The Herald revealed yesterday her former employer had begun proceedings to recover legal costs of up to (pounds) 20,000 for a failed action she brought against them in the wake of her wrongful arrest.

Ms McKie, 40, was forced to end her career with the police after she became embroiled in a dispute over fingerprint evidence at a murder trial in 1997.

Although cleared of lying on oath, Ms McKie lost a fight for compensation from the force.

However, fresh voices joined the support campaign yesterday to drop the demand for expenses - to which the force is legally entitled - on compassionate grounds.

John Scott, chair of the Scottish Human Rights Centre, said: "This seems to be a case of the law getting in the way of Shirley achieving justice, rather than helping her."

Sandra Osborne, MP for Ayr, said Strathclyde Police should be aware of the moral implications of the move.