



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## Criminal Justice Committee

Elena Whitham MSP  
Minister for Drugs and Alcohol Policy  
The Scottish Government

All correspondence c/o:  
Justice Committee Clerks  
Room T2.60  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

By email

Tel: 0131 348 5195  
Textphone: 0800 092 7100  
justicecommittee@parliament.scot

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Dear Minister,

### **Cross-committee meeting on tackling drug deaths and drug harm**

I am writing to you following the cross-committee meeting on tackling drug deaths and drug harm of 26 September 2023.

I am sorry that you were unable to attend the meeting due to illness and hope that you are fully recovered. We intend to reschedule the evidence session and I will be in touch shortly with a proposed date and time.

It would be appreciated if you could please provide some information ahead of that meeting.

On 27 September, the Glasgow City Integration Joint Board (IJB) approved a proposal from Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership for a safer drugs consumption facility pilot.

I understand that discussions are ongoing between Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership and the Scottish Government about piloting a drug checking service within the facility. During our meeting, witnesses told us that there may be other pilots for drug checking services under consideration. I am aware you made brief reference to the establishment of drug testing facilities in Aberdeen, Dundee and Glasgow in a recent parliamentary debate on drug law reform. However I would be grateful if you could provide any further details of any proposed pilots, an indication of timescales and any plans for evaluation?

Witnesses also told us that safer drug consumption room pilots should be considered as a matter of urgency for other areas in Scotland, and that this should not be postponed until the evaluation has concluded for the pilot of the facility in Glasgow.

Could you please confirm whether the Scottish Government is undertaking any work on proposed pilots for other areas in Scotland, and provide details of any plans to seek the Lord Advocate's view on prosecution policy for those proposals?

Finally, the Lord Advocate made a statement on diversion from prosecution in September 2021 which supported a review of guidance on recorded police warnings for simple possession offences for all classes of drugs. Could you please provide information on any data or analysis undertaken by the Scottish Government on the impact of this change of approach?

I look forward to your response.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Audrey N: CN". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Audrey Nicoll MSP  
Convener, Criminal Justice Committee