

# Police and Crown Office set out Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses



The Standards of Service for Victims and Witnesses in Scotland were published yesterday.

Police Scotland, the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, the Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service, the Scottish Prison Service and the Parole Board for Scotland worked in partnership to update the document which sets out what victims and witnesses can expect from the Scottish criminal justice system over the coming year.

Chief Superintendent John McKenzie of Police Scotland's Safer Communities said: "The importance of supporting victims and witnesses at all stages of the criminal justice process cannot be over emphasised.

"Those affected by crime are at the heart of the Scottish justice system and we want to make sure that their voice is heard.

"The standards that victims and witnesses can expect are clear – they have the right to be treated fairly and with respect,

to receive information about their case, their safety should be ensured and their needs considered, and they should be supported and be able to participate effectively.”

Justice Secretary Michael Matheson said, in support of this publication: “The way in which victims and witnesses are treated should be a key indicator of the quality of our criminal justice system. I want to develop a new victim-centred approach, working with partners to streamline points of contact, improve information flow and ensure victims are treated fairly and feel supported throughout their contact with the system.

“This report demonstrates the commitment to promote the fundamental rights of victims and witnesses and to account publicly for performance. It highlights positive steps that are being taken by all justice partners to place victims and witnesses at the heart of the process and also identifies key areas where support could be further improved. We will continue to work hard with partners to deliver that improvement.”

The publication of this shared document shows our continued collective drive to work together for victims and witnesses