

AC14. PUBLIC SECTOR COUNTER CORRUPTION UNIT

Committee heard a presentation on Police Scotland's Public Sector Counter Corruption Unit.

The Public Sector Counter Corruption Unit was established in April 2013 and was the UK's first dedicated public sector counter corruption unit.

Detective Superintendent Scott outlined the vision behind the creation of the unit and set out its mission. He summarised areas of vulnerability in relation to corruption within the public sector, and the factors which compromise individuals and organisations. Police Scotland has developed proactive and reactive strategies to tackle corruption such as the creation of an independent auditor function to support public sector agencies.

Members recognised the value of the unit, and asked for information on activity within the Falkirk Council area. Detective Superintendent Scott confirmed that issues within Falkirk were on a par with those experienced by similar local authorities, and that there were no significant area specific concerns.

Members then sought information on the performance of the unit in 2013/14. The unit had received 66 referrals with 1 resulting in a conviction. In regard to corruption, Detective Superintendent Scott suggested that the proposed Misconduct in Public Office legislation, similar to that in place in England and Wales would provide clarity on practices which are currently perceived as wrong but not illegal.

Decision

The committee noted the presentation.