



SCOTTISH
CHILDREN'S REPORTER
ADMINISTRATION

18 December 2009

Principal Reporter/Chief Executive:
Netta Maciver OBE

David Utting
Secretary to the Independent Commission on Youth Crime
and Antisocial Behaviour
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Dear David,

**RESPONDING TO YOUTH CRIME AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR – A
CONSULTATION PAPER**

Thank you for contacting the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) in relation to the consultation currently underway on responses to youth crime and antisocial behaviour in England and Wales.

As you know, we were pleased to welcome members of the Commission to our Glasgow Hearings Centre on 5 October 2009, where they were able to observe Children's Hearings and meet with SCRA staff and Panel Members to discuss the Scottish system. We hope that you and your colleagues found the visit useful and of interest.

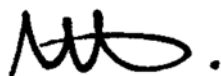
In light of that visit, we were interested to read the consultation document. While we feel it would be inappropriate for us to comment on the operation of the youth justice system in England and Wales, we note that in its consultation paper, the Commission recognises the value of a set of guiding principles similar to those outlined by the Kilbrandon Commission in 1964. Those principles have guided the development of Scotland's Children's Hearings System over the last 40 years and the broad support they command from practitioners, politicians and the public allows debate over youth justice to be set in an appropriate context that recognises the benefit of taking a holistic view of the child's "needs and deeds". I have attached with this letter a copy of the most recent Kilbrandon lecture, delivered by former Scottish Children's Commissioner Kathleen Marshall last month. I trust it will be of interest to you.

We firmly believe that the Children's Hearings System is the best way to deal with children in Scotland who offend. Many of these children also come to the attention of the Reporter due to concerns about their welfare and the Hearings System is able to ensure they get the most appropriate form of intervention and support, while addressing concerning behaviour.

We would be delighted to welcome members of the Commission back to Scotland at any stage to further explore the Children's Hearings model. Likewise, should the Commission

require further information on the Children's Hearings System, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'NH', followed by a period.

Nick Hobbs
Policy Officer