

## **SCOTSMAN 25 JUNE 2004**

### **Cleared perjury-case detective to be sued**

*CHRIS MCAULEY*

A FORMER detective at the centre of a long-running controversy is to be pursued for £13,000 in legal costs incurred while she was suing Strathclyde Police. The move against former Detective Constable Shirley McKie was approved by the joint police board at a meeting in Glasgow City Chambers yesterday.

The saga leading to the decision began in 1997, when Ms McKie was wrongly accused of perjury for maintaining that a fingerprint found at a murder scene in Kilmarnock was not hers. Although she was unanimously cleared of lying on oath at the murder trial, she now faces a legal bill amounting to £13,000.

Yesterday's decision was taken by nine votes to four, despite an amendment from Lib Dem councillors Christopher Mason and John Morrison, who claimed the force should consider the effect of their actions on the reputation of Strathclyde Police.

The former Nationalist MSP, Mike Russell, who has in the past campaigned on behalf of Ms McKie, described the decision as a "travesty of justice". He said: "This decision is simply disgusting. It shames Strathclyde Police board.

"Shirley McKie is the only person who has paid the price for something that was not her fault - in this case her health and her career."

Ms McKie is currently seeking £750,000 in damages against Strathclyde Police board, Scottish ministers and four fingerprint experts involved in her wrongful prosecution.