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The Scottish Conservatives have said the SNP should pass a new law to increase oversight of Scottish policing – and have offered to “donate” their parliamentary time to help.

There is a parliamentary majority for creating a greater role for the Scottish Parliament in the appointment of the chair of the Scottish Police Authority.

If the SNP wanted to, it could bring forward a bill immediately. With the current schedule of legislation, and with the support of all political parties, that could likely be passed this year.

Opposition parties have regular debating slots, and if more time is needed to pass an SPA reform bill, the Scottish Conservatives have offered to lend some of their time.

Scottish Conservative shadow justice secretary Liam Kerr said:

“Susan Deacon is widely respected, but what we’ve learnt is that this goes far deeper than one person – this is an issue about wider governance and structures.

“All opposition parties want to increase the independence of the SPA, and Nicola Sturgeon has hinted that she’s open to the idea.

“But her warning that it would take new laws rings hollow. If the SNP wants to bring forward a bill, then it could do it in days.

“And if it needs more debating time – we’ll donate some of our opposition time to sorting out the mess.

“We’re now putting our money where our mouth is. So should Nicola Sturgeon.”