

Report To: Local Police and Fire Scrutiny Panel
Date: 28 March 2024

Report By: Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development
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Subject: Local Police and Fire Scrutiny Panel Update Report

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 For Decision For Information/Noting
- 1.2 The report informs the panel of local and national initiatives, reviews, consultations and, where appropriate, potential future agenda items relevant to Police Scotland and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) and their local impacts.
- 1.3 This report is intended to draw these elements together with a view to informing and shaping future meeting agendas as appropriate and raising awareness of emerging issues.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the panel notes the current and emerging local and national issues relating to Police and Fire & Rescue matters.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities & Organisational Development

3.0 THE SCOTTISH POLICE AUTHORITY BOARD

3.1 The meeting of SPA Board was held on the 22 February 2024 <https://www.spa.police.uk/what-we-do/governance-meetings/board-meeting/22-february-2024/> and considered several updates, including:

- change to prioritise frontline policing;
- HMICS Thematic Review on Policing Mental Health;
- drug enforcement;
- drink and drug driving enforcement;
- domestic abuse prevention campaign;
- technology to support front line policing; and
- voluntary redundancy/voluntary early retirement (VR/VER)

3.2 Change to prioritise frontline policing

Deputy Chief Constable Jane Connors has been asked to lead a programme of change, focused on delivering service transformation at pace. That work will allow Police Scotland to develop a new operating model to live within projected funding while maintaining service to the public by prioritising the frontline, removing back-office duplication, and creating capacity to deal with new and increasing threats.

The change programme will be a three-year journey that will see Police Scotland design and implement a new sustainable operating model while prioritising service delivery against areas of greatest threat, harm, and risk.

3.3 HMICS Thematic Review on Policing Mental Health

Members of the Policing Performance Committee reflected the HMICS Thematic Review on Policing Mental Health in Scotland was consistent with the call for a whole system approach emerging from the Authority event convened in December 2022. The report recognises the complexity, challenges and interdependencies which need to be addressed when preventing crisis and in supporting those at mental health crisis points. All agreed that a whole system approach is required. Police Scotland will report on progress against the recommendations as part of this system wide partnership approach.

3.4 Drug enforcement

During the early weeks of 2024, Police Scotland officers seized cannabis plants worth a combined total of over £10 million. Action took place right across Scotland including four seven-figure seizures, including cannabis worth £3.6 million recovered in Greenock and a further quantity worth £2.25 million recovered in Dundee. There were also significant recoveries in Falkirk, Dumfries, Ayrshire, Glasgow, Lanarkshire, Aberdeenshire, Inverness and Shetland. Arrests have been made in relation to the majority of the seizures and enquiries are ongoing into the remaining incidents.

3.5 Drink and drug driving enforcement

Police Scotland's festive drink and drug driving campaign took place from 1 December 2023 until 2 January 2024. Officers responded to concerns, carried out targeted patrols and organised road checks. The number of roadside tests carried out by police officers increased by 21 per cent compared to the previous year. There were 3,219 breath tests and 481 drug wipes at the roadside. Detected offences increased by 15% to 831.

3.6 Domestic abuse prevention campaign

Last December, Police Scotland ran the second phase of the Is That Me? Campaign at the end of 16 Days of Activism to Tackle Gender-based Violence, a United Nations initiative they support. Is That Me? targets young men, aged 18 – 25 years, to highlight behaviours that in new

relationships are abusive and might indicate future, escalating abuse. It asks them to reflect on their actions and ask that question Is That Me? Most importantly, it signposts them to support and help to address those abusive behaviour to stop domestic abuse before it happens.

Police Scotland have aligned Is That Me? with a social media campaign about the Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse in Scotland (DSDAS) which enables people to ask if their partner has an abusive past. The scheme gives them the power to make a decision about the future of that relationship. In the eight years since the scheme has been active, more than 20,000 disclosures have been requested (the majority by police officers or other professionals on behalf of people they interact with). Nearly 12,000 people have been provided with information. Thousands have potentially been protected, lives saved, and futures lived free from domestic violence.

This scheme and prevention campaign is part of Police Scotland's commitment to tackle Violence against Women and Girls. They are continuing to develop this approach to the preventative campaigning and expect the next phases of both Is That Me? and The That Guy campaign to launch later this year.

3.7 Technology to support front line policing

Police Scotland has completed a major upgrade by replacing 44 outdated systems with 5 new core systems for case management, crime recording, warrants, direct measures, and productions. This new national crime system streamlines processes, making it easier for officers across Scotland to access and share information. Key benefits include reducing the need to re-enter information, better insights into crimes, and the potential for swifter justice for victims. The system is also designed to work with future technologies like the Digital Evidence Sharing Capability (DESC), aiding prosecutors and courts in their work.

3.8 VR/VER update

A window for applications from eligible staff for voluntary redundancy/voluntary early retirement (VR/VER) was open between 8 January and 9 February 2024. Police Scotland are now assessing which roles could be supported for release. Regular consultation with trade unions is ongoing and they have stated the commitment to no compulsory redundancies remains in place.

4.0 INVITE TO DEMONSTRATE THE 'JOURNEY OF A CALL'

4.1 Police Scotland have issued an invitation to a rescheduled event for the Scrutiny Panel on Wednesday 20 March 2024, at 1:00pm at Helen Street, Glasgow. The focus of the event is to provide an overview of the police service, including:

- operations of the Contact, Command, and Control Division in Glasgow; and
- local policing at Greenock Police Station, including a visit to the cells.

5.0 HMICS THEMATIC INSPECTION OF ROAD POLICING IN SCOTLAND – TERMS OF REFERENCE

5.1 On 29 January HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) published the terms of reference for the first phase of their Operational Support Division (OSD) inspection which will focus on road policing. The document is accessible from the following link

<https://www.hmics.scot/publications/hmics-thematic-inspection-road-policing-scotland-%E2%80%93-terms-reference>.

5.2 The document outlines the thematic inspection of Operational Support Division (OSD) within Police Scotland, focusing on road policing arrangements in Scotland. The inspection aims to assess the state, effectiveness, and efficiency of road policing services, with a phased approach

starting with road policing. It references previous inspections in 2014 and highlights the importance of road safety frameworks and strategic assessments in guiding Police Scotland's efforts. The methodology includes benchmarking activities; self-evaluation; document reviews; interviews with stakeholders; and data analysis to understand the effectiveness of enforcement and preventative approaches in making Scotland's roads safer. The inspection will also assess the governance of road policing issues by the Scottish Police Authority and its oversight of the Chief Constable.

- 5.3 The inspection will specifically look at road policing services in the North East, Greater Glasgow, and Fife Divisions to understand local variations. Exclusions from scope include Events and Emergency Resilience Planning and Specialist Services, but the relationship between the road policing department and other business areas will be considered. The inspection will be conducted under the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012, with a report of findings expected to be published in summer 2024. Overall, the inspection aims to support Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority in delivering high-quality, continually improving, and responsive services that address key road safety priorities and contribute to the overall safety of Scotland's road network.

6.0 SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE FRAMEWORK

- 6.1 The Scottish Government (SG) and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) have published their Service Framework. The purpose of the document is to set out the broad framework within which the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) operates. It defines key roles and responsibilities that underpin the relationship between the SFRS and the Scottish Government. While the document does not confer any legal powers or responsibilities, it plays a crucial role in the accountability and governance framework of the SFRS. The document aims to ensure effective relationships, alignment of SFRS business with SG's Purpose and National Outcomes, and high performance by the SFRS. It also serves as a guide for strategic engagement between the Scottish Government and the SFRS to maintain and improve public services and deliver improved outcomes.
- 6.2 The framework document is distinct from, but linked to, the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland, which is a statutory document made under the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005. The Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland sets out the strategic priorities for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) as determined by the Scottish Ministers. On the other hand, the framework document outlines the broad framework within which the SFRS operates and defines key roles and responsibilities between the SFRS and the Scottish Government.

While the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland establishes the strategic priorities for the SFRS, the framework document provides the structure for governance, accountability, and relationships between the SFRS and the Scottish Government. The two documents work together to guide the operations, priorities, and governance of the SFRS, ensuring alignment with the Scottish Ministers' objectives and priorities

- 6.3 The document can be accessed from the following link <https://www.gov.scot/publications/sfrs-governance-accountability-framework-2024/>.

7.0 HM FIRE SERVICE INSPECTORATE – MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING SUPPORT IN THE SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

- 7.1 In December 2023 HM Fire Service Inspectorate in Scotland published its thematic inspection on Mental Health and Wellbeing Support in the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. The report is accessible from the following link <https://www.hmfsi.scot/publications/mental-health-and-wellbeing-support-in-the-scottish-fire-and-rescue-service/>.

7.2 Some of the key findings outlined in the inspection report include:

- commending the SFRS for its commitment to the mental health of its staff and acknowledges the challenges faced by firefighters and support staff due to exposure to traumatic events;
- a recognition of ongoing work within the Service related to mental health, but a lack of visibility and accessibility of outcomes and governance linking to this work;
- considerations of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the mental health and wellbeing of staff as they return to normal working conditions;
- the methodology of the inspection was risk-based, proportionate, and focused on the provision and utilisation of mental health and wellbeing services within the SFRS; and
- the referencing of academic work on health and wellbeing within UK Fire and Rescue Services providing evidence-based recommendations for comparison with the SFRS arrangements.

7.3 The recommendations from the inspection report include:

- actions to further enhance the mental health support systems and processes within the SFRS, with the goal of creating a more supportive environment for staff;
- the importance of viewing the recommendations as opportunities for growth and refinement rather than shortcomings;
- highlighting areas of good practice within the SFRS while also providing specific recommendations for improvement in mental health support; and
- a focus on building upon the early successes of the Mental Health Strategy and providing a roadmap for continuous improvement in supporting the mental wellbeing of SFRS personnel.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal/Risk		X
Human Resources		X
Strategic (LOIP/Corporate Plan)		X
Equalities & Fairer Scotland Duty		X
Children & Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

8.2 Finance

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

8.3 Legal/Risk

There are no legal/risk implications contained within this report.

8.4 Human Resources

There are no human resource implications contained within this report.

8.5 Strategic

There are no strategic implications contained within this report.

9.0 CONSULTATION

9.1 There were no consultations required outside those noted in the report.

10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None