

Joint Strategy for Policing (2020) Policing for a safe, protected and resilient Scotland

Overview

In December 2019 the Scottish Government updated its Strategic Police Priorities, prompting a refresh of the Scottish Police Authority's and Police Scotland's strategic police plan and long term strategy for policing.

We are pleased to introduce our refreshed Joint Strategy for Policing, Policing for a safe, protected and resilient Scotland, to set the future direction for policing in Scotland.

Significant progress has been made in the three years since our first long-term strategy was published and it is time to take stock and consider the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead in an ever-changing, uncertain and increasingly complex environment.

This Joint Strategy for Policing describes our strategic outcomes and objectives. It recognises the unique role of policing in the communities we serve. The Strategy reflects the need to refocus and redirect resources to ensure that officers and staff are fully supported as they respond with commitment and professionalism to the needs of communities.

Fundamental to our future approach will be the support we provide to our people. Their safety and wellbeing are paramount and we are committed to ensuring they receive the support and assistance they need.

Through our ongoing conversations with the public, partners and our people, we have taken account of feedback provided so far, shaping the design and delivery of policing now and in the future, and considering the opportunities and challenges ahead.

Through this consultation we want to hear from you about what you think about the future vision we have developed and described in this Strategy.

At the bottom of this page you can download and read the full draft document.

Keeping people safe

Threats to public safety and wellbeing are resolved by a proactive and responsive police service

Society is changing. We find ourselves moving at an ever-increasing pace from the physical to the digital world; a move that creates opportunities for new and complex crime types. This shift also affects traditional crime, much of which now has a digital element.

To protect people effectively, Police Scotland will evolve, sharpening its focus on keeping people safe from harm, whilst embracing innovative technologies and partnerships.

Police Scotland, however, cannot achieve its aims in isolation. We must work with partners, including through community planning partnerships which bring together local public services to work effectively to maximise the impact of limited resources. Police Scotland will continue to be a key contributor to local joint planning and delivery, as well as to national cross-sectoral partnerships, helping drive a shift to prevention and early intervention across services. An improved balance of responsibilities across public services will allow Police Scotland to maintain a focus on its core responsibilities.

We will:

- Keep people safe in the physical and digital world
- Design services jointly to tackle complex public safety and wellbeing challenges
- Support policing through proactive prevention

Q. Do these objectives meet your expectations?

(Please add 'X' next to your selection)

Strongly agree <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>
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Comments

Background

The Law Society of Scotland is the professional body for over 11,000 Scottish solicitors. With our overarching objective of leading legal excellence, we strive to excel and to be a world-class professional body, understanding and serving the needs of our members and the public. We set and uphold standards to ensure the provision of excellent legal services and ensure the public can have confidence in Scotland's solicitor profession.

We have a statutory duty to work in the public interest, a duty which we are strongly committed to achieving through our work to promote a strong, varied and effective solicitor profession working in the interests of the public and protecting and promoting the rule of law. We seek to influence the creation of a fairer and more just society through our active engagement with the Scottish and United Kingdom Governments, Parliaments, wider stakeholders and our membership.

Our Criminal Law Committee's members represent academic lawyers, defence and prosecution solicitors. Their work interacts across all the Police Scotland's work. The interests in responding to this consultation reflect our interest too not only as a profession but also in the public interest as outlined above.

Our members are involved with Police Scotland in a number of ways including working with them on various Scottish Government groups and in training roles with officers in working to gather to achieve common objectives that are outlined above.

It may be helpful to refer to our response to the Police Scotland consultation on Strategic Police Priorities for Scotland in October 2020 as attached.



19-10-03 CRIM
Strategic Police Prio

We consider the recognition that Society is changing is fundamental and that underpins the development of the police strategy. We agree that it is a time of rapid change in the Scottish criminal justice system where the Strategic Police Priorities need to reflect these changes, be adaptable and can respond to that changing environment. That includes, by way of examples:

Implications from the UK Exit: The UK has issued its The Future Relationship with the EU The UK's Approach to Negotiation (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/our-approach-to-the-future-relationship-with-the-eu>) that outlines various intentions such as paragraph 49 where they intend not to continue with membership of Eurojust (an EU agency which brings together prosecutors, magistrates and law enforcement officers to assist national authorities in investigating and prosecuting serious cross-border criminal cases.) The UK is not seeking membership of Eurojust. These sorts of changes have significant implications for Police Scotland which will need to be managed.

Different types of court business: We are seeing:

- an increase in historic offending which puts pressure on the number of cases in solemn courts,
- changes in criminal law such as the Hate Crime Bill which is anticipated to be introduced shortly,
- the impact of the Vulnerable Witnesses (Criminal Evidence) (S) Act 2019 and the children's Barnahus scheme.

All will place differing pressure on the police earlier on in the investigation process as well as how investigatory processes are carried out.

Many of our concerns have stemmed round the vulnerable in society. Not only as highlighted above for the vulnerable witnesses but the vulnerable accused. It is vital from their arrival within the Scottish criminal justice system that they need to be dealt with fairly and in a consistent manner. Early and effective identification of vulnerability needs to be carried out at the earliest stage of proceedings so fair consideration can be given to diversion if relevant.

We refer to the Society's work on the Vulnerable Accused project where we published a report in April 2019. <https://www.lawsco.org.uk/media/362501/vulnerable-accused-persons-report-final.pdf> There are a number of recommendations from that report which are pertinent to the Strategic Police priorities. These include:

- The development of a framework of understanding to be shared across the Scottish criminal justice system, following a multi-agency review of definitions and interpretations of vulnerability.

Cybercrime is when technology is used as a tool to commit a crime or is the object of the crime itself. In addition to tackling traditional and visible crime and criminality, we must find different ways to prevent, disrupt and respond to the ever more inventive and complex use of digital tools and new tactics.

Work is under way that will transform Police Scotland's capacity and capability to respond to these digital and cyber threats.

Please provide further comments in the box below.

Please note that if you wish to report an experience of cybercrime you should do so using our standard contact options.

Comments

We consider that this is very important given the developments in criminality going forward. We have highlighted the possible implications from the UK Brexit and that may have implications with regard to terrorism and cyber threats.

The Society responded to the recent Scottish Parliament regarding facial recognition as one example. https://www.parliament.scot/S5_JusticeSubCommitteeOnPolicing/Inquiries/JS519FR15_Law_Society_of_Scotland.pdf and the Report issued by the Scottish Parliament reflect some of the key aspects of our submission which are equally pertinent in this context <https://www.parliament.scot/newsandmediacentre/114524.aspx>

We recognised that developments in this field and the increasing use of AI s are fast moving where there needs to be robust testing.

All frameworks and regulations need to be future proofed too given the speed of development.

Please follow this link and select 'report cybercrime' for further information:

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/contact-us/>

In non-emergencies please dial 101 and in emergencies always call 999.

Communities are at the heart of policing

The needs of local communities are addressed through effective service delivery

The role of policing is to keep people safe, wherever they live. Police Scotland must continue to be responsive to all forms of community. By doing so services will continue to evolve and be designed to meet the needs of individuals and communities.

Police Scotland will continue to provide traditional, visible and accessible policing to local communities, supplemented with new support services that adapt to societal shifts. The pace of technological change means that people increasingly feature or are active participants in a digital world. Policing will reflect this in how resources are allocated, ensuring the services provided are inclusive and proactive in meeting the needs of all communities.

We will:

- Understand our communities and deliver the right mix of services to meet their needs
- Support our communities through a blend of local and national expertise
- Support the changing nature of communities

Q. Do these objectives meet your expectations?

(Please add 'X' next to your selection)

Strongly agree <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>
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Please provide further comments in the box below.

Comments We refer to our observations above regarding the importance of community policing and the identification and appropriate handing of those who are vulnerable in society.
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How we involve you

The public, communities and partners are engaged, involved and have confidence in policing

The principle of policing by consent is fundamental to Scotland’s social fabric. Advances in technology create opportunities for new methods of communication and response. Future developments in technology will require ongoing dialogue with the public about how to strike the right balance between privacy and protection.

Police Scotland understands the diverse nature of the communities it serves. Policing must remain accessible in times of need, whilst working with partners to agree when Police Scotland is not the most appropriate organisation to respond..

We will:

- Embed the ethical and privacy considerations that are integral to policing and protection into every aspect of the service
- Protect the public and promote wellbeing across Scotland by providing services that are relevant, accessible and effective
- Work with local groups and public, third and private sector organisations to support our communities

Q. Do these objectives meet your expectations?

(Please add 'X' next to your selection)

Strongly agree <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>
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Please provide further comments in the box below.

Comments

The Strategic Police Priorities are important; there is a need for robust up to date training to ensure that the officers are aware of these changes and how the Strategies impact on their day to day work

Supporting our people

Our people are supported through a positive working environment, enabling them to serve the public

Officer and staff safety and wellbeing are at the heart of Police Scotland’s commitments. Our people want to deliver sustained change for the better. To make that happen, the service must provide strong support to all to equip them with the skills, knowledge and technology required to police safely and effectively in a changing world.

We will:

- Prioritise wellbeing and keep our people safe, well equipped and protected
- Support our people to be confident leaders, innovative, active contributors and influencers
- Support our people to identify with and demonstrate Police Scotland values and have a strong sense of belonging

Q. Do these objectives meet your expectations?

(Please add 'X' next to your selection)

Strongly agree <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>
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Please provide further comments in the box below.

Comments

It would be useful to ascertain just how often these Strategic Police Priorities will be reviewed and reported on. Obtaining feedback from stakeholders would be useful to factor in and reflect on any changes that need to be accounted for the Strategic Police Priorities. They must remain relevant.

We are interested in the role of the local police officers as we had understood that the Strategic Police priorities has not proved popular within the single police force. How do the Strategic Police Priorities address the rural community concerns which are not necessarily the same as the concerns in an urban environment?

Police officers must have confidence in the communities that they serve and there may be a perception that the Strategic Police priorities are very high level that they do not deal with local issues in the way that previous

Sustainable policing for the future

Police Scotland is sustainable, adaptable and prepared for future challenges.

Policing must continue to evolve. Ongoing political, economic and societal changes require the police service to adapt and respond to future challenges and maximise the benefits of future opportunities. Police Scotland will embrace innovation, challenging ourselves and partners to work collaboratively and sustainably. Transforming operational and support services will maximise the potential of all our assets and help deliver best value.

We will:

- Use innovative approaches to accelerate our capacity and capability for effective service delivery
- Commit to making a positive impact through outstanding environmental sustainability
- Support operational policing through the appropriate digital tools and delivery of best value

Q. Do these objectives meet your expectations?

(Please add 'X' next to your selection)

Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Agree <input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree <input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/>
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Please provide further comments in the box below.

Comments

How do the Strategic Police Priorities address COPS 26 COP26; they need to be flexible enough to demonstrate Scotland at its best regarding criminal justice?