



Meeting	Authority Meeting
Date	23 February 2023
Location	Crowne Plaza, Glasgow
Title of Paper	SPA Chair's Report
Presented By	Martyn Evans
Recommendation to Members	For Approval
Appendix Attached	No

PURPOSE

To update Authority Members on activities carried out by the Chair since the November 2022 Authority meeting.

To seek approval to remove Catriona Stewart as a Member of the Resources Committee.

1 PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH COSLA

- 1.1. I will be attending the COSLA Leaders Forum on Friday 24 February 2023, with the Chief Constable, to discuss a new partnership agreement between our organisations. This is an important step in our joint efforts to reinforce my focus on localism within policing. The agreement describes our shared commitment to working together on our collective purpose of serving, protecting and enhancing local communities. The agreement also describes our shared commitments to local scrutiny and accountability; prevention and early intervention; health and wellbeing; and resource and investment. The agreement will be underpinned by a partnership delivery plan and progressed by officers. Subject to COSLA Leaders endorsement, the agreement will be published and promoted by the Authority and COSLA on our respective websites.

2 DIGITAL EVIDENCE SHARING CAPABILITY (DESC)

- 2.1 DESC is a Scottish Government led justice-wide initiative where Police Scotland have the role of lead delivery partner working in collaboration with other justice partners.
- 2.2 DESC will allow users such as police officers, prosecutors, court staff and defence agents to digitally access evidence (including body worn video evidence). It has the potential to significantly reduce costs involved in managing and transporting evidence such as CCTV footage, video interviews and forensic images in physical form. Changing how digital evidence is collected, viewed and shared across the justice system is intended to allow cases to be resolved faster and improve the experiences of victims and witnesses.
- 2.3 On Tuesday 24 January, a DESC pilot went live in Dundee trialling the capability. The insight and learning from this pilot will be used to develop an effective solution for the justice system. DESC is a key area of focus for the Authority given the criticality to the public interest and justice system, and specifically the roll out of Body Worn Video (BWV) which the Authority expects to see delivered to all frontline officers in Scotland as soon as possible.

3 DRAFT BUDGET 2023/24

- 3.1 The Scottish Government set out its draft budget on 15 December 2022. The funding proposed for policing represents an improved position from the indications contained in last year's Resource Spending Review. The Authority and Police Scotland worked hard to make the case for policing and forensic services and we

acknowledge this support at a time when public spending is facing considerable constraint.

- 3.2 Since December 2022, there have been a number of discussions regarding the budget with the Chief Constable, our Accountable Officer and finance colleagues. We are all clear that there needs to be prioritisation of spending to ensure we set a balanced budget that delivers the best possible service for policing in the year ahead.
- 3.3 It is very clear that the significant financial investment we have been calling on to fundamentally maintain, transform and improve policing cannot be delivered in the current climate. Difficult choices remain in the coming financial year – we cannot invest in the estate, fleet or technology in the way we need or want.

4. CABINET SECRETARY – FORENSIC SERVICES VISIT

- 4.1 On 8 December 2022, Paul Edie and I joined Fiona Douglas, Director of Forensic Services to give the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans, Keith Brown a tour of our Forensic laboratory at Howden Hall. Testing and analysis of drug driving samples is carried out within this facility. It was an informative visit where we had the opportunity to meet some of the staff working hard to address backlogs. We are continuing to see an improving picture in relation to delays with forensic testing and analysis. The findings of the HMICS Inspection is anticipated in the coming month. I expect the findings to inform a longer term solution for tackling the under estimated prevalence of drug driving.

5. SENIOR OFFICER APPOINTMENTS

- 5.1 The Authority has made three senior appointments in recent months to Police Scotland's leadership team. Jane Connors has now joined Police Scotland as Deputy Chief Constable from the Metropolitan Police where she was Deputy Assistant Commissioner.
- 5.2 David Duncan was promoted to Assistant Chief Constable and took up post on 30 January 2023. Wendy Middleton will join Police Scotland as an Assistant Chief Constable on 27 February 2023 from the Police Service of Northern Ireland.
- 5.3 The recruitment of senior officers is a significant undertaking. It is a thorough and challenging process for all involved. I am grateful to my fellow Board Members Fiona McQueen and Katharina Kasper for being on the DCC and ACC appointment panels. I also want to put on record my thanks to Angela Leitch, Chair of Public Health

Scotland, and Sandra Black, former Chief Executive of Renfrewshire Council who fulfilled the roles of independent panel members for the DCC and ACC processes respectively. I also extend my thanks to Martin Hewitt, Chair of the National Police Chiefs' Council, and HMICS Craig Naylor who acted as independent observers. The Chief Constable is an ex officio member of all senior officer appointment panels.

- 5.4 My final thanks goes to all the applicants for both posts. I am delighted we had such a strong pool of candidates competing for these senior positions in the UK's second largest police service. Working with Police Scotland offers an attractive opportunity for some of the UK's best senior officers.

6. COMMUNITY CONFIDENCE PROJECT

- 6.1 Over the last 18-months, I have been Chairing a steering group overseeing our joint community confidence project with Police Scotland. The project aims to better understand the drivers of confidence in policing within different communities. As the project moves in to its final delivery year I have asked Tom Halpin to take over as Chair of the group. The project is progressing well, with community conversations taking place in Letham in February 2023, and project delivery work underway in both North Ayrshire and Fife. Community involvement and interest in the work continues to grow, and lasting local networks are being developed.

7. JOINT RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE FORUM

- 7.1 The Authority and Police Scotland's Research and Evidence Forum, met on 18 January 2023. The group is co-chaired by Tom Halpin on behalf of the Authority. The Forum has undergone a review of its membership and term of reference over recent months, and agreed a focus on developing and delivering a plan of work to realise our shared research and evidence priorities and reflecting the organisation specific commitments of all partners. Early joint work will focus on seldom heard communities' research, creation of a shared evidence and research bank, and re-establishment of the forum newsletter.

8. MENTAL HEALTH IN POLICING CONFERENCE

- 8.1 The Authority hosted a conference on mental health, vulnerability and policing on 9 December 2022, attended by representatives from across the public and third sector. Fiona McQueen chaired the event which focused on the societal-wide impact of poor mental health in

the community, establishing a common understanding of the challenge and current approaches to addressing it, and seeking to identify current best practice which could be adopted across partnership interfaces. Presentations from the event are available on the [Authority website](#) now, with a video summary of the event and conference report on next steps. Following on from that successful event we have committed to a further session in the spring which will focus on workforce trauma across the policing system. The event will explore approaches to preventing, managing and minimising the impact of work based trauma; and consider practice within Police Scotland and Forensic Services and a range of other services.

9. COSLA POLICE SCRUTINY CONVENERS MEETING

- 9.1 I attended the first meeting of the re-established COSLA scrutiny Conveners Forum on 13 December 2022. I took the opportunity to share the Authority's commitment to working closely with our local government colleagues and described some of our shared challenges as I see them. Staff from the Authority and Police Scotland were involved in delivering a number of the agenda items for the session, bringing to life our tripartite work across scrutiny and public confidence activity.
- 9.2 Following our tripartite review of local police plans last year, the Authority has been working with COSLA to develop guidance for locally elected members to support their scrutiny of local policing. [The framework for scrutiny](#) was supported by COSLA's Police Scrutiny Conveners' and we will seek ongoing feedback from elected members and officials to enhance the guidance if required.

10. MEMBER REAPPOINTMENTS

- 10.1 On 20 December 2022, the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans announced the [reappointment of Grant Macrae and Caroline Stuart](#) for a further 2-year period until April 2025. I am delighted the Authority will continue to benefit from their skills and insights and thank them for their continued service.

11. RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

- 11.1 Catriona Stewart, due to other commitments, has requested that she stand down from the Resources Committee.
- 11.2 I have discussed this with Grant Macrae, Chair of the Resources Committee, and we both agree the Committee has appropriate

resilience with the remaining four members. We will keep this under review.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are invited to discuss the contents of this report and approve the change to membership of the Authority's Resources Committee.

