

Meeting	Forensic Services Committee
Date	15 February 2018
Location	Pacific Quay, Glasgow
Title of Paper	Update on HMICS Thematic Inspection of the Scottish Police Authority Forensic Services
Item Number	Item 6
Presented By	Vicki Morton, Head of Scene Examination
Recommendation to Members	For Information
Appendix Attached	No

PURPOSE

To provide FS Committee members with an update on work to implement the improvements set out in the HMICS Thematic Inspection of the Scottish Police Authority Forensic Services and the change in approach to delivering improvement.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 HMICS Published its *Thematic Inspection of the Scottish Police Authority Forensic Services* in June 2017. The review made 23 recommendations. Authority members noted the publication of the review and its recommendations at the Public Board meeting on 22 June 2017 and a progress update was presented to the forensic Services Committee on 7 November 2017.
- 1.2 Forensic Services developed an Improvement Plan to address the recommendations in the review and this was approved by the SPA Board in September 2017.

2. PROGRESS TO DATE

- 2.1 Progress has been made across the recommendation identified in the HMICS report since the last committee update. Key aspects are summarised below.
- 2.2 In line with recommendation 2 the Forensic Services Strategy 2026 is now in draft. It was issued for consultation during December and January with staff sessions held at each of the Forensic Services locations. If the Forensic Services Committee endorses the Strategy

it will go forward to the SPA Board for approval in March 2018. This will then be progressed to HMICS for formal completion.

- 2.3 Recommendation 3 was previously noted as complete with the establishment of the Forensic Services committee.
- 2.4 Recommendation 6 advised the development of capability within Forensic Services to deliver change and improvement. A full-time Programme Manager has now been seconded in from Police Scotland to design and deliver the FS 2026 Strategy programme. Further work is required now to formalise and grow the senior management capacity to ensure strategic delivery.
- 2.5 The Crime Scene Attendance Policy which was the focus of recommendation 13 was launched on 1st November. This policy outlines the national approach to scene attendance across Scotland. The effectiveness of this policy will be evaluated during a period of 6 months.
- 2.6 With the introduction of the Forensic Services 2026 Strategy and underpinning 2-year Business Plan, the cycle of planning has fallen into line with that of the Policing 2026 Strategy which is part of recommendation 17. A business case is being tabled at this committee noting resource requirements to develop this work.
- 2.7 A good deal of work has progressed in line with recommendation 19. Regular union engagement has commenced and will continue on a regular basis and staff engagement sessions were well received around the strategy consultation. Newsletters are now regularly circulated to ensure key messages are being delivered to staff across the organisation. PDCs were launched in 2017 and the opportunity to better align these now to strategic objectives will be a positive outcome from the launch of the strategy. Evidence is being collected of this enhanced engagement and forwarded on to HMICS to allow completion of this recommendation.
- 2.8 In general collaborative working across Forensic Services and Police Scotland has highlighted areas where better joined up working can produce positive results for both organisations and the aim is to enhance this through the delivery approach outlined below.

3. DELIVERY APPROACH

- 3.1 The oversight and delivery arrangements outlined at the last Forensic Services committee for the HMICS improvement work consisted of a Short Life Working Group including representation from Forensic Services, Police Scotland and Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service. Sitting alongside this were a number of sub groups where the collaboration continued among the practitioners.
- 3.2 To date this has worked well and progressed the deliverables noted above. However with the clear direction of the Forensic 2026 Strategy and the accompanying 2-year Business plan an opportunity has arisen to incorporate all the activity into one plan. This provides easier and more agile management of the key priorities within Forensic Services and the deployment of resource to deliver change.
- 3.3 To ensure the HMICS recommendations are not lost, they are explicitly mapped onto the Business Plan. HMICS is aware of this change of emphasis and is content with the new approach. It does not alter their own process of receiving evidence to allow discharge of the recommendations.
- 3.4 The Business Plan is on the agenda for this committee meeting and gives some indicative timescales across the key priorities for Forensic Services which in turn indicates any amended timescales for the implementation of the HMICS recommendations.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications in this report, however, investment is a significant interdependency to deliver all of the recommendations and can be reviewed through the Business Cases.

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are personnel implications associated with this paper.

The work to deliver the improvements detailed within the HMICS report will have a significant impact on the resources within Forensic Services and Police Scotland. Opportunities are being progressed to mitigate this impact.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no legal implications associated with this paper.

7. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are reputational implications associated with this paper.

7.2 It is important that through its delivery of the improvement recommendations that Forensic Services, in collaboration with Police Scotland and COPFS, can show its commitment to continuous improvement both internally and together with key stakeholders.

8. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no social implications associated with this paper.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

9.1 There are no community implications associated with this paper.

10. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no equality implications associated with this paper.

11. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this paper.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are requested to:

Note the progress to date to implement the recommendations set out in the HMICS Thematic Inspection of the Scottish Police Authority Forensic Services and the change in approach to delivery.