SCOTTISH POLICE
AUTHORITY

Agenda Item 5

Meeting	**Forensic Services Committee**
Date	**2nd February 2022**
Location	**MS Teams**
Title of Paper	**Update on HMICS Thematic Inspection of the Scottish Police Authority Forensic Services**
Presented By	**Vicki Morton**
Recommendation to Members	**For Information**
Appendix Attached	**Yes**

PURPOSE

To provide Forensic Services 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.

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. The Forensic Services Committee has a clear remit as per the terms of reference:

"Oversee the implementation of improvement recommendations made in relation to the Forensic Service by scrutiny/inspection bodies or the SPA"

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.

1.3   In addition to the above the Audit Committee has a remit to:

"Assess the Authority's and Police Scotland's response to any recommendations and seek assurance that there is a process in place to implement these recommendations which is being managed appropriately and monitor progress of discharge of related actions." As such the effectiveness of the process and controls is also reported to the Audit Committee.
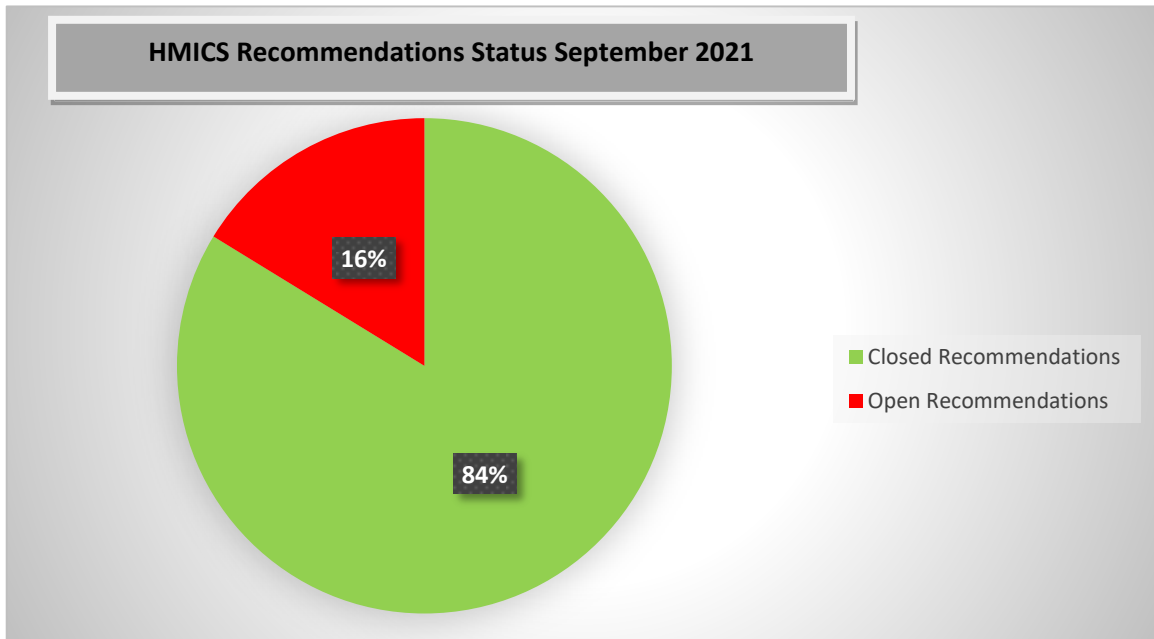
2.   ENGAGEMENT/REPORTING

2.1   The majority of outstanding recommendations align with the Forensic Services 2026 change programme and are discussed at the FS2026 Strategy Programme Board. Engagement with Police Scotland and COPFS has continued as appropriate through specific engagement meetings.

3.   PROGRESS TO DATE

3.1   Of the **23 recommendations**, Forensic Services has had confirmation from HMICS that **20 are now complete** (Recs 5, 11, 15 and 16 have been closed since the previous report). The remaining 3 recommendations have all had evidence provided to support the potential closure by HMICS. Further detail on those which remain open which align to the FS Change Programme are documented in the separate paper (Rec 4 and Rec 18).

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3.2   A summary of current position is shown below:-

HMICS Recommendations Status September 2021

3.3   The full list of closed and ongoing recommendations are included at Appendix A and Appendix B respectively. The RAG status reflects the priorities that are either within or out with management control. Appendix B now also identifies whether the recommendations are within or out with the control of Forensic Services.

4.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1   There are no direct financial implications within this report.

5.   PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

5.1   There are no personnel implications associated with this paper.

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 should there be a failure to deliver the HMICS recommendations in collaboration with Police Scotland and COPFS.

8. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no direct social implications associated with this paper.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

9.1 There are no direct community implications associated with this paper.

10. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no direct equality implications associated with this paper.

11. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no direct environmental implications associated with this paper.

RECOMMENDATIONS
Members are requested to note the content of the paper.

Appendix A – Recommendations closed by HMICS

HMICS No.	Recommendation	Date closed by HMICS
Leadership and Governance		
1	The SPA and SG should engage in the implementation of the Home Office Forensic Science Strategy to inform the approach in Scotland, explore common standards and support future interoperability *(mention of provision of services on commercial basis in future by FS)*	**25/06/2018**
2	The SPA should deliver a forensic strategy, aligned with those of Police Scotland and COPFS and their strategic planning cycles, with a supportive investment plan	**04/07/2018**
3	The SPA should institute a formal Forensic Committee as a matter of urgency *(to support and publicly scrutinise the delivery of forensic services; senior representation from PS and COPFS as observers)*	**25/06/2018**
5	The SPA should review the senior management structure for FS	**24/11/2021**
6	The SPA should develop capability and capacity within FS to deliver change and improvement. This should complement the creation of a specialist Programme Management Office (PMO) within PS and provide dedicated programme and project management expertise to FS	**04/02/2020**
Outcomes		
7	The SPA should work with PS and COPFS to design and implement a new performance management framework for the demand and delivery of Forensic Services	**04/02/2020**
8	The SPA should implement a systematic approach to the gathering and reporting of feedback and complaints on FS delivery	**24/06/2019**
9	PS should consider quality accreditation for digital forensics in line with FSR recommendations, UK Forensic Strategy and wider good practice in order to support effective public performance reporting and assurance. Police Scotland	**05/07/2018**
Management of Demand		
10	PS should review the role and capacity of Portal Gateway Managers to improve local liaison around investigative priorities and ensure greater involvement in tasking and co-ordination processes linked to	**06/07/2021**
11	The SPA and PS should implement a new decision making framework and appropriate guidance to support the prioritisation of forensic examinations. The implementation of this should be formally evaluated.	**21/12/2021**
Planning and Performance		
13	The SPA and PS should review and implement the new Crime Scene Attendance policy to support a national approach with a focus on maintaining quality of service to the public and assuring operational competence of officers undertaking scene examination	**06/11/2017**

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14	PS should work with the SPA to develop a national approach to productions management, storage and transportation of items seized for forensic examination.	**23/9/2021**
15	The SPA and PS should implement the recommendations of the previous PS led Lean Six Sigma review	**24/11/2021**
16	PS and the SPA should introduce processes to dynamically monitor and report on the caseload including backlogs within FS at both a national and local level.	**21/12/2021**
17	The SPA and PS should implement an improvement planning process aligned within its strategic planning cycle and develop capability and capacity in applying the best practice tools and techniques for continuous improvement	**06/07/2018**
People		
19	The SPA should develop an enhanced staff and Union engagement approach within FS which includes the introduction of PDCs across all FS staff groups with immediate effect	**06/07/2018**
Resources		
20	The SPA should develop a forensic services costing model with appropriate support and expertise to support demand management and future income generation	**06/07/2018**
21	The SPA should commission a review of EMS functionality and investment profile against business requirements and link process efficiency work into future EMS development and refinement	**04/02/2020**
22	PS should further consider the impact of i6 cancellation on FS and ensure that interfaces and provision of other business support systems are included in the development of their future ICT investment plans.	**06/07/2018**
23	PS should develop formal SLA for the delivery of corporate support services to FS, reflecting agreed service levels, performance measures, regular monitoring and Customer Relationship arrangements	**04/02/2020**

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Appendix B – Recommendations in Progress

HMICS No	Recommendation	Timescales for Delivery	RAG	Update since last report	Within Control of Forensic Services	Out with control of Forensic Services
Leadership and Governance						
4	The SPA should review its partnership governance structures for FS and undertake a fundamental review of the MoU ensuring the process is thereafter undertaken on a regular basis with appropriate consultation with PS, COPFS and PIRC	April 2022	→	This work is now incorporated into the **FS 2026 Change Programme.** It is anticipated that the MoU should be in place by April 2022, following further engagement with partners. Update provided to HMICS December 2021.		√ [Agreement by COPFS, PS and FS required]
Management of Demand						
12	The SPA should work with PS and COPFS to develop capability and capacity within FS to systematically address failure demand	Q4 2021/22	→	**Evidence submitted to HMICS – October 2020, June 2021 and January 2022.** Agreement with HMCIS on what additional information required (December 2021) and update paper provided for review January 2022. Implementation of Operating Model will fully address this recommendation.	N/A	N/A
Planning and Process						
18	The SPA should develop a transparent workforce and demand planning model for Forensic Services.	Q4 2021/22	→	This work is now incorporated into the **FS 2026 Change Programme.** Further information provided to HMICS January 2022 on job modelling.	√	

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HMICS recommendations now aligned to FS 2026 Change Programme
Business as Usual Activity

Complete
On Target and Under Management Control
At Risk or Late – But under management control
At Risk or Late – Not under management Control

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