



Meeting	Authority Meeting
Date	25 May 2023
Location	Crowne Plaza Hotel, Glasgow
Title of Paper	SPA Chief Executive's Report
Presented By	Lynn Brown, SPA Chief Executive
Recommendation to Members	For Discussion
Appendix Attached	

PURPOSE

To update Authority Members on activities carried out by the Chief Executive since the last Authority Meeting.

Members are recommended to consider this report and to raise any matters for clarification or further detail with the Deputy Chief Executive.

1. Background

- 1.1. This report provides Members with an update on key Authority business not already covered elsewhere on the agenda.

2. Member Recruitment

- 2.1 As set out in [Schedule 1 of the Police and Fire Reform \(Scotland\) Act 2012](#), the Board of the Scottish Police Authority consists of up to 15 members (including a Chair) appointed by Scottish Ministers through a public appointments process. Currently, the Board consists of 12 members, including the Chair and meets the Scottish Government's 50/50 gender commitment with 7 female members.
- 2.2 The Authority has been in touch with the Scottish Government regarding a recruitment round for members later this year and in preparation for some appointment terms coming to an end in 2025. Both the Authority and the Scottish Government are committed to enhancing the diversity of the Board. We will actively promote and encourage applications for the Board from those with protected characteristics.

3. Mental Health and Trauma in Policing Event

- 3.1 On Friday 21 April 2023 the Authority and Police Scotland hosted a conference focused on the experience of trauma across our workforce. The event, attended by around 100 delegates, heard from academics and experts in trauma and from officers and staff across our workforce about their own lived experience. These insights, along with examples of practice from partner agencies such as Scottish Ambulance Service and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, inspired a rich and positive discussion about how we can learn and develop our approach within policing.
- 3.2 Authority Member Fiona McQueen chaired the event, and is leading on the next steps from the conference. I want to note formally our thanks to our staff associations and the trades unions for their involvement in the planning and delivery of such a successful event along with teams from the Authority, Forensic Services and Police Scotland. [The programme, presentations and a video from the event are available on the Authority's website now](#). An event summary and next steps document will be published in due course.

4. Mental Health Awareness Week

- 4.1 The Authority, along with Police Scotland and Forensic Services, marked Mental Health Awareness Week on 15 - 21 May 2023. The

impact of mental health on our workforce and the police response to calls for service where mental health and vulnerability is a factor remains a priority area of focus for the Authority. During awareness week we took the opportunity to share some of our recent work in this area, including outputs from our recent events focused on [mental health, vulnerability and demand](#), and [policing and trauma](#).

- 4.2 Over the last few years, the Authority and Police Scotland have published a series of [public briefings](#) on a range of key issues relevant to policing. These cover important issues such as public confidence and attitudes towards policing as well as the use of key technologies such as drones, tasers or body worn video.
- 4.3 The [latest public briefing](#), describes the challenges being faced by policing in responding to vulnerability and mental health demand in the community. This was published to coincide with mental health awareness week, and gives a wider context to our event focused summaries and next step documents.

5. Seldom Heard Communities Research

- 5.1 In 2021, along with Police Scotland and SIPR, the Authority funded five grants focused on supporting and informing policing engagement with seldom heard communities. On Wednesday 26 April 2023 Authority Member Tom Halpin and ACC Emma Bond supported the community impact event for this research, where the grant recipients presented their findings. We know that engagement with some groups within our communities can be limited or challenging, whether they are geographical communities or communities of interest. It is critical for delivery of policing in Scotland that we understand barriers to engagement and work to build relationships with those communities which could be considered 'seldom heard'.
- 5.2 This research will inform practice and processes going forward, focused on improving public trust and confidence in policing. The Authority's own independent public polling on confidence in policing tells us that older age groups display higher levels of confidence in policing than younger age groups. We also know that rural communities tend to have higher levels of confidence than urban areas, and that the most deprived communities, using the index of multiple deprivation, are less confident on every measure of confidence than those from the least deprived areas. Research such as this enhances and deepens our insights and will be invaluable to both the Authority and Police Scotland.

6. Community Confidence Project

- 6.1 Our community confidence research project is now in its third and final year of delivery, with community projects active in Perth & Kinross, North Ayrshire, Fife and Highland Council areas. Good progress is being made, with strong local engagement and relationship building in each of the four areas. Early insights are emerging from the work, which is overseen by the project steering group chaired by Authority Member Tom Halpin.

7. Gaelic Language Plan 2023-2028

- 7.1 The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on all public bodies to consider and contribute towards the objectives outlined in the National Gaelic Language Plan.
- 7.2 On 20 April 2023, the Authority published its second edition [Gaelic Language Plan covering the period 2023-2028](#). Gaelic is an important element of Scottish society and culture and the Authority is committed to supporting its promotion and recognition as part of our heritage and as a living language. The commitments set out in the plan describe how we will incorporate these responsibilities into our activities over the next 5-years.

8. Website Review

- 8.1 The Authority has been working to review and refresh our website with a view to improving the accessibility of the information we publish. Improvements have been informed by feedback provided by stakeholders and the public. We are now testing these improvements with stakeholders with a view to setting a launch date for the new site in the coming months.

9. Chief Constable Recruitment

- 9.1 The recruitment process to appoint a new Chief Constable is underway. A rigorous assessment process is taking place throughout May with final interviews scheduled for mid-June 2023. We expect to be in a position to recommend a preferred candidate to the Scottish Government shortly thereafter.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are invited to discuss the contents of this report.