

SPA Strategic Coordination Unit Terms of Reference

Introduction

This document outlines the terms of reference for the Strategic Coordination Unit (SCU) and should be read in conjunction with the following publically available documents;

1. [SPA Chair's Report, SPA Board Meeting 28 March 2019](#)
2. [SPA Chair's Report, SPA Board Meeting 22 May 2019](#)

The duties and deliverables for the SCU should also be considered alongside the wider plans for the development and design of the SPA as outlined in these reports.

Background

The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 put in place new arrangements for the delivery and oversight of policing in Scotland, notably the creation of the Police Service of Scotland (Police Scotland) and the Scottish Police Authority (SPA). It is the most significant public sector reform since the creation of the Scottish Parliament in 1999.

The ten year strategy 'Serving a Changing Scotland' was developed and agreed jointly by the SPA and Police Scotland in 2016. It sets out an ambitious programme of transformation and change within policing and is now at a key stage of implementation and delivery.

Policing in Scotland faces significant financial pressures – across revenue, capital and reform funding – and this creates a challenging environment in which prioritised investments and spending decisions are made against the need to ensure not only financial sustainability but also the need to keep people safe and to maintain public confidence and trust in policing.

The efficacy of the statutory governance arrangements for policing - in particular the ability to make informed, accountable and timely decisions on key strategic issues - is a key factor in determining the ability of Police Scotland to operate efficiently and effectively.

In the six years since the new statutory arrangements came into being, Scotland's post-police reform landscape has evolved and developed, and positive progress has taken place both in the delivery and governance of policing, however, many systems, practices and relationships have developed and

evolved in an ad hoc way and are in need of systematic review and improvement.

Role

The role of the SCU will be to support the development of a strategic 'whole system' approach and to provide effective co-ordination between the SPA and Police Scotland and, where necessary, the Scottish Government, to ensure that issues of key strategic import for the discharge of efficient and effective policing, or those issues which will/are likely to impact on public confidence in policing, are addressed transparently and expeditiously in accordance with the intent of the 2012 Act.

The SCU will provide professional police advice and support to the SPA in the design and development of systems, practices and processes to support the effective delivery and oversight of policing and will inform, and contribute to, a programme of organisational design and development of the SPA's structure, functions and practices by providing professional police advice and input.

Structure and Governance

The creation of the SCU is consistent with the provisions of the 2012 Act; both in terms of the requirement for the SPA and Police Scotland to work in cooperation and share resource¹ and also the Authority's power to appoint such individuals as are required to give effect to its statutory duties, including the temporary appointment of police officers².

The SCU will comprise an ACC and a Chief Superintendent whose work will be supported by appropriate staff, as agreed by the SPA Chair and Chief Constable, and will be subject to appropriate internal governance.

The SCU will operate for an initial period of 6 months, subject to review by the SPA Chair and Chief Constable at that time.

The ACC SCU will report directly to the SPA Chair for direction in support of this terms of reference, while maintaining a line management relationship through the DCC People and Professionalism.

Regular coordination meetings will be held between the SPA Chair and ACC SCU.

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2012/8/section/83/enacted>

² <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2012/8/schedule/1/enacted>

Duties and Deliverables

The role of the SCU as detailed above will be delivered through the following duties and work streams. This will be regularly reviewed and will be developed in agreement with the SPA Chair and Members

The SCU, as Police Advisors, will support both development and business as usual activities as required and particularly in relation to strategic planning.

In particular, the SCU will work in support of the Authority to address the following:-

1. **Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities** – provide professional policing advice which will support the development and articulation of a shared understanding of the respective roles and statutory responsibilities of the SPA, Police Scotland and Scottish Government, as a starting point for future work.
2. **Strategic Planning and Management of Change** - support the development of a strategic and well managed approach to forward planning (at least 1-2 years) across the SPA and Police Scotland to enable the delivery of key strategic priorities and the delivery of transformation and change within policing, underpinned by the necessary systems, practices, capacity and relationships to support effective governance, decision making and oversight of change and the delivery of policing.
3. **Business Co-ordination** - help ensure that effective, well designed and coordinated systems and practices, which are both rigorous and agile, are in place to ensure that governance and decision making arrangements between Police Scotland and the SPA effectively address both strategic themes/business as usual decisions and emerging risks/critical incidents, at all times working to ensure that public trust and confidence in policing is developed and maintained.
4. **System development** - provide professional policing advice and support to the development and redesign, and to the building of shared understanding and agreement, of respective roles and boundaries across the policing system and wider scrutiny landscape including the SPA, Police Scotland, HMICS, PIRC, Scottish Government and the Scottish Parliament.
5. **SPA design** – provide professional policing advice and support to inform the development and redesign of the SPA corporate support function so that it aligns to and supports the delivery of the SPA's key statutory responsibilities, in particular to provide effective governance and accountability arrangements for policing in Scotland while also being cognisant of, but not involved in, the SPA's wider responsibilities to deliver Forensic Services and the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme (ICVS), and the appointment of, and handling of complaints about, senior officers (ACC and above).