



Agenda Item 4.1

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>SPA Resources Committee</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>13 March 2024</b>
<b>Location</b>	<b>Video Conference</b>
<b>Title of Paper</b>	<b>Estates Transformation – Engagement Overview and Update</b>
<b>Presented By</b>	<b>Yvonne Johnston, Estates Transformation and Portfolio Lead and Davina Fereday, Research and Insight Manager</b>
<b>Recommendation to Members</b>	<b>For Discussion</b>
<b>Appendix Attached</b>	<b>Yes - Appendix A - Estates Transformation Engagement and Consultations Update</b>

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this paper is to outline activity undertaken to date to provide a co-ordinated and consistent approach to public, colleague and stakeholder engagement for the Estates Transformation Programme.

Members are invited to discuss the contents of the report and appendix.

## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The police estate is often linked to visibility and accessibility of the local policing service. Proposed changes need to be considered and managed sensitively to maintain public confidence. Statutory responsibilities in relation to public consultation and engagement must be followed, particularly where there will be a change or impact to local service provision.
- 1.2 The Police and Fire Reform Scotland Act (2012) emphasises collaborative working and engagement with communities in developing approach to future service delivery. Police Scotland's strategic outcome three and our public engagement and participation framework enables the service to keep the public, communities and partners engaged and involved, so they continue to have confidence and trust in the service.
- 1.3 Done well, engagement builds confidence and trust in policing, with police legitimacy linked to 'policing by consent' as central in a democratic society. Engagement must also be able to stand up to external scrutiny and can avoid the need for a judicial review in future which may be called to review any issues with the engagement process and subsequent decisions made by the service.
- 1.4 Engagement and participatory approaches enable understanding of public needs, expectations and factors that shape public trust and legitimacy. These approaches bring creative ideas for enhancing services in efficient and effective ways towards meeting genuine needs.
- 1.5 Similarly, the impact on our officers and staff must be recognised and trade unions, statutory staff associations, and impacted staff require to be fully consulted on the impact of any changes to their proposed working location.
- 1.6 Police Scotland has publicly acknowledged the plans to accelerate the disposal properties and this has been reported in the media and included in evidence submissions at the Scottish Parliament's Criminal Justice Committee, Scottish Police Authority board meetings, and in a partner letter.
- 1.7 Police Scotland's Research and Insight service, in collaboration with communications and estates colleagues, are taking consideration of the sensitivities internally and externally around each building. We must continue to be open and transparent in our approach -

communicating and engaging appropriately with purpose and continually, to manage expectations and respond to concerns which may arise because of this period of service change.

- 1.8 The service has been clear from the start on what we are proposing and why, engaging and involving those impacted, including communities and stakeholders, with the view of maintaining confidence in decision-making.

## **2. CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT APPROACH**

- 2.1 Our aim is to achieve a consistent and co-ordinated engagement plan that is appropriate and meaningful and accessible to the public, local communities and our stakeholders.
- 2.2 The approach is designed to do things with rather than to/for. Engagement is not always about asking what people want or think they need but working 'with' to understand needs and how these can best be met within our budgetary and resource capabilities. Feedback and solutions are led by needs and designing a service that meets these needs appropriate in every local area.
- 2.3 In the context of estates transformation, the engagement narrative has been framed on local policing delivery models towards meeting the needs and expectations of local areas. For example, adapting the local policing model for a modern accessible, visible, and engaging service; and all within and guided by the drivers of public confidence, predictors of trust, and determinants of satisfaction.
- 2.4 For a meaningful and constructive dialogue, the narrative has so far focused on outcomes and needs over buildings and efficiencies. While buildings help make savings, they do not equate to service delivery.
- 2.5 Communications and messaging has been focused on the budgetary challenges and has been clear on what our proposals are and that the service will be making decisions informed by feedback and consultation. We have made a commitment to keep communities and our stakeholders updated and informed as this engagement, and indeed with wider transformation programme, develops.
- 2.6 The Research and Insight service, in collaboration with colleagues from other corporate functions and with local policing divisions, have designed, managed and co-ordinated the quality control of activities, namely:

- 2.6.1 **A National Conversation about the future of our estate** – This has utilised our Engagement Hub platform to share and showcase information and invite everyone to take part in our conversation. This is focused on the Estate Strategy 2019, an opportunity to sense-check progress against the vision articulated by the strategy.
- 2.6.2 **Local community impact assessment** – The level and scope of engagement has been assessed based on a review of information available about how each building proposed for disposal is currently used by colleagues and the public; and the impact associated with any potential disposal. This assessment included a conversation with Divisional Commanders and teams around their own local knowledge and wider impacts or benefits in the local area.
- 2.6.3 **A consultation for each building** – Consultations (survey questions) include qualitative and quantitative questions to capture agreement with the proposals and people’s understanding, perceptions and use of their local police buildings. The information can then be used to inform local communications and engagement, address areas of concern and impacts for informing decision-making and local scrutiny.
- 2.6.4 **Weekly review and analysis of data** – A weekly review and overview report has been provided to teams and senior leaders within the service to provide robust oversight. This has enabled the service to monitor and respond to any important areas as required. This is fed into the governance structure surrounding estates transformation.
- 2.6.5 **Analysis, synthesis and reporting** – As each building’s consultation closes, we are taking a co-ordinated approach with estates colleagues about those buildings which decisions are required on first. For example, many consultations closed on 18 February, and by 19 February there was analysis of consultation findings reports available for four of these buildings to support proposals at Resources Committee on 13 March. In general terms, feedback and the reports for each building will be provided at least 2-3 weeks after each consultation closes. Reports will be available on [Police Scotland’s Engagement Hub](#), providing a ‘one stop shop’ for the public, communities and stakeholders to review the reporting of their feedback.

### 3. EMERGING FINDINGS

- 3.1 We have attached a report as Appendix A to this paper which outlines the emerging themes from our engagement at the current

time. This is a continually evolving picture and the team will continue to monitor responses as we progress; working with colleagues in Corporate Communications to ensure appropriate awareness in all areas.

- 3.2 At time of writing, there are 4 live consultations in the West, 2 in the East and none in the North regions. Eighteen consultations recently closed: 10 in the West, 1 in the East and 7 in the North. Further consultations are due to go live on the Engagement Hub over the coming weeks.
- 3.3 The following areas or themes have been identified through analysis of feedback from respondents. These remain consistent across all consulted sites. See Appendix A for more information.
  - 3.3.1 Lack of access – Perceptions of sites being closed, abandoned, and/or inaccessible to the public;
  - 3.3.2 Valuable if open – Perceptions that sites, subject to further investment, would have greater value to communities;
  - 3.3.3 Periods of disuse – Perceptions of sites with long-standing lack of public access shape the perceived lack of a local policing presence;
  - 3.3.4 Limited use of facilities – When sites are used, respondents relay seeing limited use, including the use of sites as touchdown points or for car parking;
  - 3.3.5 Not used as a safe space – Limited public access, compounded by longstanding lack of use, means respondents often see sites as not being used or required as a safe space; and
  - 3.3.6 Presence inspires feelings of safety – The physical presence of a policing site inspires feelings of greater safety and is perceived as a deterrent to crime.
- 3.4 Work will progress over the coming weeks to review, analyse and synthesise these consultations and to provide a consultation report for each building. This includes capturing feedback from stakeholders, such as local authorities and other services, which Divisional Commanders have been leading for their areas, with support to co-ordinate from our Strategic Stakeholder Engagement colleagues within Strategy, Insight and Engagement.

## 4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Our engagement activities are designed to be inclusive and accessible and aim to provide balanced information and answers to frequently asked questions for respondents to review before providing their responses. This has been achieved through careful design of each consultation, following best practice. We have taken a digital first approach, to maximise accessibility wherever possible – and making paper-based versions available upon request. This ensures that people’s individual needs are met, as our [Engagement Hub](#) is fully accessible with many assistive technologies to respond to user needs. In addition, we have provided British Sign Language and Easy Read versions.
- 4.2 We will continue to update members as this programme of engagement progresses over the coming weeks and months to ensure full awareness and oversight of activities underway; as well as what we are learning from public and stakeholder feedback through their involvement.

## 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 To date, there has been no financial implications as a result of running the consultation. The consultation is being undertaken in a cost-efficient way through using existing resource within Police Scotland – the engagement hub and professional research, engagement and insight personnel.

## 4. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 To date, the consultation has been achieved by existing in-house professional research, engagement and insight personnel. The continued success of the consultation and engagement programme is dependent on securing the existing resource within this area of business.

## 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 All consultations are subject to Scottish Government (Ministerial) mandated and/or judicial review. A risk assessment has been applied to determine the scale and scope of individual estate site consultations using local knowledge and professional expertise with our strategy, insight and engagement team; to maintain public confidence in policing.

## 6. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Done well, engagement builds confidence and trust in policing, with police legitimacy linked to 'policing by consent' as central in a democratic society. Engagement must be able to stand up to external scrutiny and can avoid the need for a judicial review.

## 7. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The public and stakeholder engagement and consultation is designed to elicit potential impacts of the estates proposals on local communities.

## 8. COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 8.1 The public and stakeholder engagement and consultation is designed to elicit potential impacts of the estates proposals on local communities.

## 9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The public and stakeholder engagement and consultation is designed within our equality, diversity and human rights framework and principles of practice so that anyone can participate.

## 10. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The consultation and engagement activities are designed with minimal impact through optimising the use of digital methods.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are invited to discuss the contents of the report and appendix.

# Estates Transformation Engagement and Consultations Update

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Research and Insight  
Reporting period up to: 23 Feb 2024

[InsightEngagement@scotland.police.uk](mailto:InsightEngagement@scotland.police.uk)



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# Consultation Insights Overview



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National Conversation Respondents



9

Open local Consultations



18

Local Consultations that have closed



1,009

Local Consultation Respondents

National Conversation



Local Consultations



Stakeholder Engagement



Since the 14th of December 2023, Police Scotland has provided the opportunity for the public, stakeholders, and communities the opportunity to provide their opinions and feedback on the overarching national Estate Strategy launched in 2019.

The National Conversation is an ongoing, national-level consultation being ran in tandem to the local consultation opportunities described below.

Since the 14th of December 2023, Police Scotland has provided the opportunity for the public, stakeholders, and communities the opportunity to provide their opinions and feedback on the proposed disposal of local sites. This delivery plan continues to be updated and implemented to adhere to the local context of each individual proposed site.

More information on the local consultations that are open and that have closed can be found on the [Engagement Hub](#).

The local consultations provided on the Engagement Hub have been co-designed with divisional colleagues to attend to the local context and nuance of each site proposed for disposal.

The Strategic Engagement team continue to liaise with divisions to ensure all Local Authorities are involved in our conversation.

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# National Conversation | Summary

Launched 14 December 2023

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National Conversation Respondents



31% (71) of respondents work for PSoS

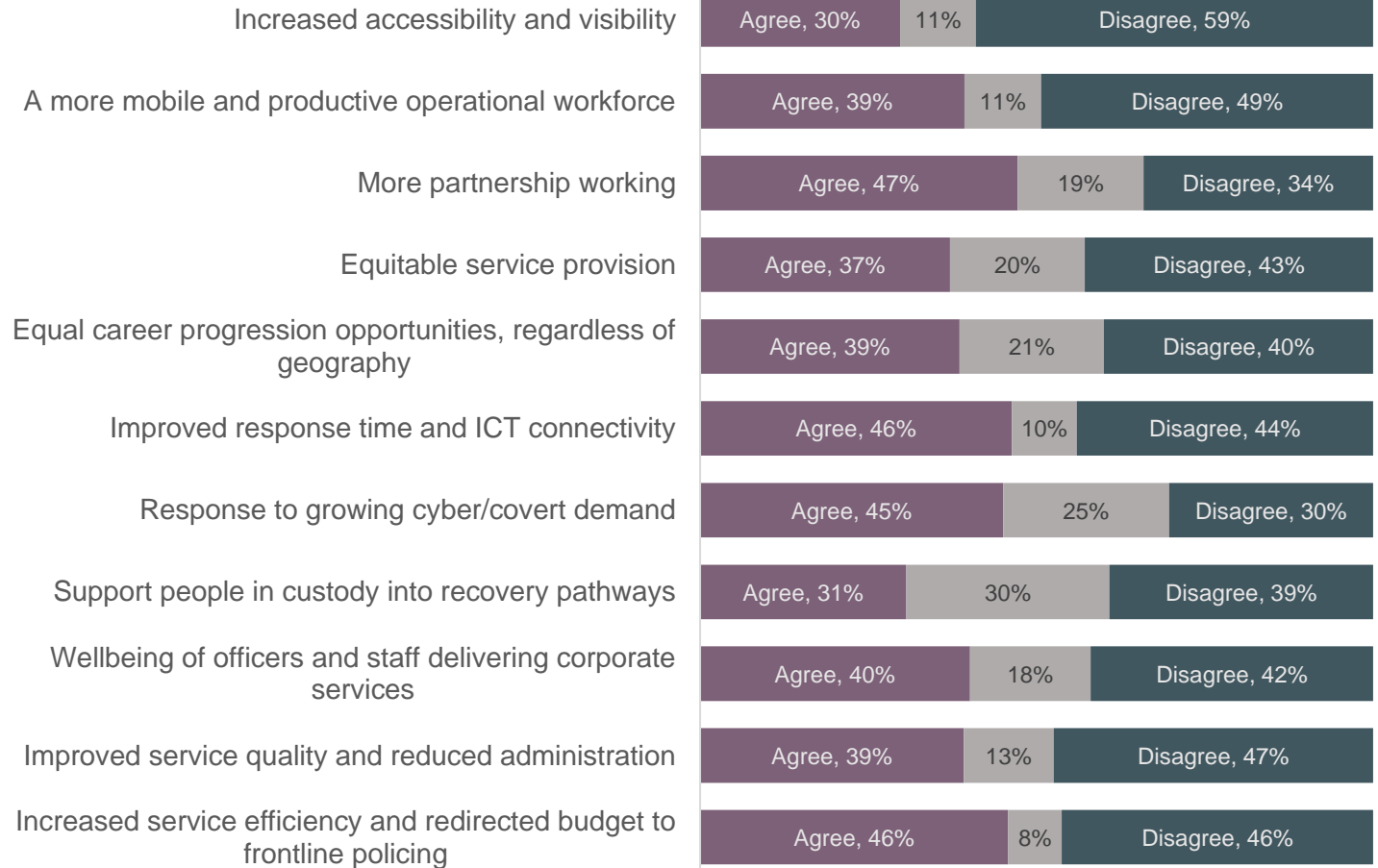


62% (141) public respondents

7% (16) chose not to disclose

1 Elected Official  
1 Local Authority rep

Understanding the level of agreement that our organisational objectives within the Estate Strategy meet expectations



■ Neither agree nor disagree

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# National Conversation | Summary

Launched 14 December 2023

This forms part of our wider engagement activity to listen to the feedback and views of everyone about our proposed estate changes and progress we have made so far towards our Estate Strategy, published in 2019.

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National Conversation Respondents



Understanding the level of agreement that our organisational objectives within the Estate Strategy meet expectations

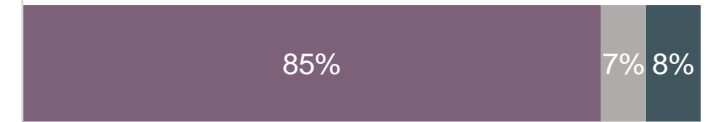
Working alongside other community-based services through co-location to improve experiences accessing services



Keeping the public, communities and partners engaged and informed using digital tools like our website



Enabling officers to be mobile within communities using digital devices to connect with policing systems



■ Important ■ Neither Important nor not important ■ Not important

## Qualitative drivers:

- Caution in over-reliance on the digital
- Worries regarding the digital divide
- Reinforcing community-based policing
- Concerns on increasing geographic spread of officers
- Queries regarding co-locating with partners
- The need to ensure safety of public using co-located buildings
- Informing public of next, co-locating, steps.

# Local Consultations | Summary



9

Open local Consultations



18

Local Consultations that have closed



1,009

Local Consultation Respondents



11% (99/895\*)  
of respondents  
work for PSoS

84% (754) were members of the public  
5% (42) chose not to disclose

WEST

Site	Respondents	Agreement with proposed disposal	Consultation status
Ayr	18	83%	CLOSED
Baillieston	30	17%	CLOSED
Bishopbriggs	15	20%	OPEN
Carluke	49	22%	CLOSED
Castlemilk	3	0%	CLOSED
Dalmally	12	18%	CLOSED
Ferguslie Park	6	50%	OPEN
Gorbals	0	--	OPEN
Greenock	263	47%	OPEN
Kilsyth	87	18%	CLOSED
Kilwinning	5	100%	CLOSED
Milngavie	149	14%	OPEN
Oban	70	67%	CLOSED
Paisley	48	50%	OPEN
Port Glasgow	6	50%	CLOSED
Saracen	8	38%	CLOSED
Stewart Street	36	25%	OPEN

EAST

Site	Respondents	Agreement with proposed disposal	Consultation status
Balerno	95	29%	CLOSED
Portobello	49	29%	OPEN
Coldstream	0	--	OPEN

NORTH

Site	Respondents	Agreement with proposed disposal	Consultation status
Dundee Annexe	20	75%	CLOSED
Mastrick	4	75%	CLOSED
Muir of Ord	4	25%	CLOSED
Rosemount	9	13%	CLOSED
Seaton	4	67%	CLOSED
Torry	14	29%	CLOSED
Whinhill	5	0%	CLOSED

# Local Consultations | Formative Qualitative Insights

Qualitative drivers related to perceptions and impacts of disposal of local sites



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Open local Consultations



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## LACK OF ACCESS

Many respondents, in response to the related local consultation, discussed a variety of sentiments related to the perceived closure, abandonment, and inaccessibility of some police stations to the public.

“Very accessible but part time and not always open”  
(Baillieston)

“Not used very well as always directed to Lanark” (Carluke)

“It’s been closed for years. Not required.” (Port Glasgow)

## VALUABLE IF OPEN

Looking at related sentiments to the public access of some sites, respondents proposed the belief that increasing investment of some police stations would provide greater value to communities.

“Good location for those wishing to attend (when it was open)”  
(Ayr King Street)

“In order to ensure local knowledge and build local relationships it is important that the police do not become remote from the communities they serve. Having a local base of operations is important.”  
(Carluke)

## PERIODS OF DISUSE

Of those who did have views on the long-standing lack of public access to some stations, some suggested this lack of access determined low perceptions of a local policing presence.

“Useless as not in use - a lot of antisocial behaviour in town not being addressed” (Kilsyth)

“I haven’t even been near it for years. I thought it was closed already” (Carluke)

# Local Consultations | Formative Qualitative Insights

Qualitative drivers related to perceptions and impacts of disposal of local sites



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## LIMITED USE OF FACILITIES

As mentioned earlier, many respondents emphasised the limited use of local police sites that were perceived to be closed to the public.

“I agree that the current building is probably no longer fit for purpose, but I hope that a new one will provide people with the same level of security.” (Oban)

“Does not bring any value. The building isn’t opened every day and when you go in you get told it’s not manned so phone 101. Not a police service total waste of money” (Baillieston)

## NOT USED AS A SAFE SPACE

Several respondents across local consultations highlighted the perceived limited use of local police stations as a safe space.

“Since the building is effectively not accessible by the public, it does not provide opportunity for public as a safe space” (Balerno)

“This could be a valuable refuge for those in need of a safe space if it was opened.” (Kilsyth)

“It used to be, but as it’s not staffed doesn’t not feel it anymore” (Carluke)

## PRESENCE INSPIRES FEELINGS OF SAFETY

One theme that emerged across open-ended qualitative responses was the sentiment that the local police sites themselves represent or manifest policing and infer feelings of safety within the community.

“The building brings value and reassurance of safety and police presence to the local community” (Balerno)

“Building gives older folk reassurance to shop but it’s never staffed.” (Kilsyth)

# Estates Transformation Engagement and Consultations Update

For further information or clarifications, please contact:

[InsightEngagement@scotland.police.uk](mailto:InsightEngagement@scotland.police.uk)

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