



SCOTTISH POLICE  
**AUTHORITY**  
ÙGH DARRAS POILIS NA H-ALBA

# Chief Executive

Policing in the Public Interest



**LHH**

Candidate Recruitment Pack, April 2025

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# Welcome from Fiona McQueen CBE, Chair of the Scottish Police Authority

Thank you for your interest in the position of Chief Executive  
for the Scottish Police Authority.

The Scottish Police Authority is one of Scotland's most important public bodies and I am delighted to have recently been appointed as its Chair, having served on the Board of this vibrant and vital organisation for the past four years. It is a great privilege to work with Board members, stakeholders and the leadership teams as we all strive to further enhance and support policing throughout Scotland.

I passionately believe in creating a fairer Scotland and in the positive contribution and influence that Scottish policing has on our society. The Authority plays a critical role in the policing system, working closely with Police Scotland and a range of key stakeholders including the Scottish Government, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland, the Police Investigations and Review Commissioner, COSLA and partners across the wider criminal justice system. The Authority's Chief Executive is one of the most high-profile and senior public leadership positions in Scotland, not least because this person is also the Accountable Officer for the £1.6 billion policing budget, answerable to the Scottish Parliament as well as the Board for its management.

This is a unique opportunity to play a fundamental role in supporting the Authority to oversee Police Scotland's efforts to create safer communities, reduce crime, support victims and build a thriving workforce.

With oversight of the second largest police service in the UK, the Authority has a key role to play in developing this vital public service to ensure that it is sustainable for the future and responsive to societal and community needs. Significant progress has been made since Police Scotland was established as a single national police service in 2013, but there is much more to do. It is imperative that we continue to develop effective governance and scrutiny of policing in Scotland and to build public confidence and trust. As Chief Executive the successful candidate will be instrumental in leading the Authority in this next phase of its development as it continues to set out strategy, scrutinise and report on performance, support continuous improvement activity, and listen to and take into account what people are saying about policing in Scotland.

For the right person, this role offers an excellent opportunity to shape and develop a major public body and to collaborate with a diverse range of people and organisations committed to an effective, responsive police service. This is a varied, challenging and enormously rewarding role and a fantastic opportunity to join the team and lead them through this next important phase of reform. If you have the skills, experience and commitment to lead the Authority and drive a culture of high performance and continuous improvement, we would welcome your application.

**Fiona McQueen CBE,**  
Chair



[Watch our Welcome Video](#)







# Advertisement

## Chief Executive

Salary – £151,816 (under review)

Location – Glasgow/Hybrid  
with regular travel throughout  
Scotland and across the UK.

The Scottish Police Authority is seeking an exceptional leader who can take the organisation through its next important chapter. As an experienced senior leader, you will play a key role in building capability and performance within one of Scotland's most important public bodies, overseeing the second largest police service in the UK, Police Scotland. The Authority has a key role to play in developing this vital public service to ensure that policing adapts to meet the needs of a changing Scotland.

As well as leading the Authority as a highly professional and outwardly engaging organisation, you will be the principal advisor to the Authority's Board, providing expert strategic advice and guidance. You will be the appointed Accountable Officer for an annual policing budget of £1.6 billion with a focus on securing best value for Scotland's communities. You will work closely with the Chief Constable, the Director of Forensic Services and the wider policing leadership team.

You will be an influential and collaborative leader and communicator, with a sharp intellect, financial acumen, political nous and strong strategic thinking and analytical abilities. You will have substantial transferable experience of working at a senior level in a complex, high-profile environment, and will be skilled in leading work to deliver strategic outcomes. Self-aware and alert to the wider social, economic and political context, you will be adept at building trusted relationships across organisational boundaries, with a focus on public assurance and continuous improvement. Your ability to foster and maintain strong working relationships with partners will be exemplary.

We are committed to developing a diverse and engaged workforce and to promoting an organisational culture where everyone is treated with dignity, fairness and respect. We particularly welcome applications from groups currently under-represented in Scotland's senior leadership roles.

Applications in the form of a tailored CV and a covering letter (no longer than two pages), highlighting your skills and experience pertinent to the requirements of the role, should arrive no later than **midnight Sunday 4 May 2025**.

For a confidential, informal discussion about the role, or to request a Candidate Information Pack, please contact LHH directly on **+44 (0)141 220 6460** or email [ScotlandExecutive@LHH.com](mailto:ScotlandExecutive@LHH.com)







# About the Scottish Police Authority

Thank you for your interest in the position of Chief Executive for the Scottish Police Authority.

The Scottish Police Authority was established under the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 which also sets out principles that underpin the policing of Scotland. These are:

- that the purpose of policing is to improve the safety and well-being of persons, localities and communities in Scotland; and
- that the Police Service, working in collaboration with others where appropriate, should seek to achieve that main purpose by policing in a way which

(i) is accessible to, and engaged with, local communities, and (ii) promotes measures to prevent crime, harm and disorder.

The Authority has a key role in the policing system, which also includes Police Scotland, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland and the Police Investigations and Review Commissioner. These bodies are part of the criminal justice system and wider public sector landscape. Local Authorities are empowered to specify measures to be included in Local Police Plans and approve a Local Police Plan for their area.

In terms of its governance role the Authority sets strategy, scrutinises and reports on performance, supports continuous improvement activity, and listens to and takes into account what people are saying about policing in Scotland. The Authority is also the legal employer of all staff and plays a key negotiating role in relation to police officer pay, regulations and pension matters.

The Authority's everyday work is focused on maintaining and improving policing in Scotland. We keep the state of policing under review, monitor performance, and seek assurances from the Chief Constable about how Scotland is being policed.

The Authority draws on a range of evidence and on independent, expert opinion from a number of bodies, including inspectorates, auditors and similar organisations.

The Scottish Police Authority consists of a Board of up to 15 non-executive public appointees, selected by Scottish Ministers with a range of professional backgrounds and experience. The Board is supported by an Executive team of circa 50 staff. The Authority's Chief Executive is the principal advisor to the Board and the Accountable Officer to the Scottish Parliament for the £1.6 billion police budget. As well as providing Forensic Services and administering the Independent Custody Visiting Scheme, the Authority's five main functions in relation to policing are:

**Promoting the Policing Principles:** The Authority keeps the policing principles at the forefront of its activities and decision-making, taking into account how they are applied in policing, including ensuring operational plans and strategies are consistent with them. In particular, this applies to co-produced Strategic and Annual Police Plans.

# About the Scottish Police Authority

**Maintaining the police service:** The Authority is funded directly by the Scottish Government through Grant in Aid and the Authority allocates funding to maintain the police service. From within the available budget allocation, we provide the Chief Constable with financial resources to ensure that an appropriately resourced workforce is in place to deliver policing services; and that buildings, vehicles and technology are maintained. The Authority also allocates funding for Forensic Services. We are responsible for scrutinising and approving major investment decisions, including proposals for transformational change, working with Police Scotland and the Forensic Service to establish short and long-term budget requirements and to make the case for funding.

**Promoting and supporting continuous improvement:** This is an important element of the Authority's role. We promote and support self-assessment activity and benchmarking to identify areas where policing could be improved. We ensure that improvement opportunities identified through audit and inspection activity are being taken forward, and are achieving the desired effect. The Authority also supports collaborative working, looking at how policing can work with other public services across the criminal justice sector and beyond. This recognises that a number of society's challenges are cross-cutting, and delivering good outcomes relies on a joined-up approach across services.

**Keeping policing under review:** The Authority regularly assesses policing performance and engages with the public and a wide range of stakeholders to understand their views and experiences of policing. We work in partnership with Police Scotland to prepare a strategic police plan based on evidence to improve policing now and in the future. The Authority also publishes an assessment of policing performance each year, which includes analysis and opinion from across the policing system, local authorities and other assurance bodies.

**Holding the Chief Constable to Account:** The Chief Constable is accountable to the Authority for the policing of Scotland. At public Board and Committee meetings we ask questions about how Scotland is being policed with reference to the Strategic Police Plan and other priorities. Alongside performance, we examine the community impact of policing, taking into account the differing nature of communities, whether geographic, social or virtual. We scrutinise and engage on proposed policy and operational changes, including implications relating to human rights, ethics, equality and diversity.

The Authority's own [Corporate Plan for 2023-2026](#) sets out the Authority's vision, values, strategic outcomes and activities. It aligns to the [Strategic Police Priorities](#) set by Scottish Ministers. Through the effective discharge of our functions, the Authority seeks to be an advocate for policing and supports continuous improvement, ensuring communities receive the best service possible.

Our governance and oversight of policing involves a series of checks and balances that ensure major decisions about the policing of Scotland are made transparently and appropriately. This helps to ensure that Scottish policing is based on public consent, commanding respect and building public trust and confidence.



# The Role

**The Chief Executive is a critical role within the Authority's senior leadership team. You will work closely with the Chair and Board members, leading the Senior Management Team consisting of two Deputy Chief Executives, the Head of Strategic Business Management and the Head of Legal, and you will also serve as the Accountable Officer in relation to the £1.6 billion annual policing budget.**

You will be the principal advisor to the Authority's Board and will work with members and the senior team to ensure the continuous improvement of the systems of assurance between Police Scotland and the Authority. You will lead in the development of strong relationships with a range of external stakeholders to continue to develop the reputation of the Authority as a credible, effective and trusted national public body which commands public confidence, and provides effective scrutiny and oversight of a continuing programme of transformation and change in Police Scotland.

Through effective, authoritative and knowledgeable engagement and dialogue, the Chief Executive will have an impact on and will influence national policy and public debate on matters affecting the development and operation of policing in Scotland. The Chief Executive will be an advocate of policing reform and will be able to articulate complex issues clearly and accessibly.

Key areas of responsibility will include:

## **Leadership and Governance**

- Providing strategic leadership of the Authority and supporting the Board to fulfil its functions as set out in the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012, ensuring the best available professional advice is provided to the Board and its Committees when making decisions.
- Supporting the Authority Chair in ensuring the maintenance and continuous improvement of Board effectiveness, upholding the highest standards of corporate governance.
- Leading and motivating the Authority's executive team to ensure that corporate objectives are delivered, driving a culture of high performance and continuous improvement that enables the Authority to perform in line with the strategic direction set by the Board.
- Communicating complex and sensitive issues clearly in public and at Board, Committee and Parliamentary meetings to support the purpose of the Authority.

## **Strategy and Delivery**

- Leading the implementation and continuous development of the Authority's Corporate Plan, ensuring delivery of the Annual Business Plan in line with the priorities of the Board.
- Working collaboratively with senior leaders across a multi-agency environment, including through the Scottish Government's Justice Board to ensure



the development of innovative approaches to policing which contribute to the National Outcomes for Scotland and deliver best value in the deployment of resources across the policing system.

- Leading with Police Scotland the review and renewal of the Strategic Police Plan, supporting the effective implementation in line with agreed timescales.
- ## **Relationships and Communications**
- Building trusted relationships at the most senior levels with key stakeholders including the Chief Constable and the senior executive team of Police Scotland, Scottish Government Ministers and officials, HMICS, PIRC, COSLA, Biometrics Commissioner, MSPs, Elected Members and officials, and a wide range of partner organisations across Scotland, the UK and internationally.
  - Communicating effectively and building shared understanding of strategic priorities for policing in Scotland.

## **Financial Accountability**

- Fulfilling the requirements of the role of Accountable Officer for £1.6 billion of policing expenditure in Scotland to ensure that the public funds for which you are responsible are properly managed and safeguarded.
- Ensuring the maintenance and continuous improvement of appropriate systems of assurance and financial control within policing which meet the requirements of the Scottish Public Finance Manual.
- Leading the financial governance of expenditure in the Authority itself, ensuring budgeting, financial control and financial management are carried out effectively.







# The Person: Specifications

## Essential

## Desirable

### Educational/Occupational

Educated to degree level with considerable practical leadership experience.

#### OR

Where no formal qualifications exist, extensive experience in a senior leadership position in complex organisations.

Membership of a relevant professional body.

Previous executive level experience in the Public Sector.

### Personal Qualities

Conveys a strategic, assertive and outcomes-based approach with the confidence to support, engage and challenge colleagues, Authority members, and internal and external stakeholders.

A resilient and self-aware leader who recognises their impact on others, and creates an environment which supports appropriate challenge, collaboration, diversity, equality, and well-being of self and others.

Demonstrates integrity, professional ethics and discretion when handling confidential and politically sensitive information, and situations.

A team player, and role model, who will be able to work collaboratively within the culture of the senior management team and create a supportive environment for the whole organisation to perform and be accountable.

Sharp intellect and strong strategic thinking and analytical abilities, combined with experience of leading delivery programmes to deliver strategic outcomes.

Be politically astute in approaching situations and communicating decisions.







# The Person: Specifications

## Essential

## Desirable

### Special Aptitudes

Extensive senior leadership experience within complex organisations, advising and influencing Senior Executives, Board Members or equivalent.

The ability to translate broad strategic ambitions into clear performance objectives which drive large scale improvement and operational effectiveness.

Experience of leading and motivating teams to achieve strategic outcomes and promoting successfully a culture of continuous improvement across the organisation.

Previous experience of managing systems of assurance which enable and support accountability for decisions and best value.

Successful organisational change leadership in a complex environment.

Extensive experience and an exceptional track record in acting as adviser to Senior Executives, Board Members or equivalent.

Expert understanding and extensive experience of delivering best value in the management of budgets and the use of financial and non-financial resources.

The ability to foster long term collaborative relationships, build trust, respect and confidence; and communicate clearly complex ideas to influence a wide range of stakeholders to improve outcomes.

Comprehensive strategic knowledge and experience of policing in Scotland.

Experience of working within a public assurance body.



# Competency and Values Framework

The successful candidate will be expected to demonstrate and evidence a high level of competence and effectiveness against the six competencies detailed within the Scottish Police Authority's Competency Values Framework:

- We are emotionally aware
- We take ownership
- We are collaborative
- We deliver, support and inspire
- We analyse critically
- We are innovative and open-minded

[Competency and Values Framework](#)  
[SPA Corporate Services.pdf](#)





## Benefits and Conditions of Appointment

**Salary:** £151,816 (under review)

The Scottish Police Authority offers a competitive benefits package that includes:

- A competitive salary and guaranteed allowances
- Annual salary increments within salary scale
- Local Government Pension Scheme
- 28 days' annual leave and 6 public holidays on appointment
- Wide range of family-friendly policies
- Modern, spacious working environments

- Employee Assistance Programme
- Access to a range of Diversity staff associations
- Scottish Police Recreation Association
- Scottish Police Credit Union
- Cycle 2 Work Scheme

**Duration of appointment:** This is a permanent, full-time appointment.

**Terms of appointment:** The successful candidate will be appointed on the Scottish Police Authority's terms and conditions of employment. Appointment will be subject to Security and Medical clearance in addition to appropriate reference checks.

**Working location:** The majority of work will be conducted from the Scottish Police Authority Headquarters, 2 French Street, Dalmarock, Glasgow with hybrid working available. However, the nature of the work will also require regular travel throughout Scotland and across the UK.

**Working hours:** Working hours will be 35 hours per week (Monday to Friday). Given the seniority of this role, some out-of-hours working is likely to be required. Flexible working arrangements will be considered in line with the current policy, as well as personal and organisational needs.

**Security clearance:** Appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of a vetting process (management level).

**Nationality:** Applicants must be a British citizen, a member of the EU or other states in the EEA, a Commonwealth citizen or a foreign national free of restrictions. You should also have been resident in the UK for a minimum of three years immediately prior to application.



# How to Apply



To apply for the post, please send a tailored CV and covering letter to [ScotlandExecutive@LHH.com](mailto:ScotlandExecutive@LHH.com)

Please note that the covering letter should be no more than two pages of A4 and should summarise your relevant skills and experience and motivations for applying for this role.

If you would like a confidential, informal discussion about the role then please contact LHH directly on **+44 (0)141 220 6460** or email the above address.

Should you require any modifications or wish to speak with a member of our team to discuss any particular circumstances, please email the above address.

**Equality and Diversity:** The Scottish Police Authority is committed to an appointment process which promotes, demonstrates and upholds equality of opportunity and treatment to all applicants. To assist us to monitor the effectiveness of our equality and diversity practices we would encourage you to complete a monitoring form. This form will be separated from your application prior to the selection process.

The deadline for receipt of completed applications is **midnight, Sunday 4 May 2025.**

## Selection Panel

The Selection Panel will be chaired by Fiona McQueen CBE, Chair, Scottish Police Authority and will include:

- A Board Member of the Scottish Police Authority
- Scottish Government representation
- An independent panel member

## Assessment and Interview

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to participate in an assessment event which will include a variety of assessments and tasks.

Final interviews will take place in Glasgow on **Wednesday 18 June 2025**

## Relocation

A relocation package may be available to the successful candidate should relocation be required because of this appointment.





# Links to Key Information

- [www.spa.police.uk](http://www.spa.police.uk)
- [Scottish Police Authority – Staff Survey Results 2024](#)
- [Strategic Police Priorities for Scotland](#)
- [Strategic Police Plan](#)
- [Forensic Services 2026 Strategy](#)
- [Scottish Police Authority Corporate Plan for 2023-2026](#)
- [Scottish Police Authority 2025/2026 Budget](#)
- [Scottish Police Authority Annual Report and Accounts 2023/2024](#)
- [Police and Fire Reform \(Scotland\) Act 2012](#)



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We count innovators, creatives and leaders among the professionals we work with, and our clients and candidates span a diverse range of sectors and functions. From procurement and supply chain, medical, engineering, project management, accountancy, legal, transport and business transformation, to banking, the arts, government, technology, marketing and communications, not-for-profit and HR, our expertise is wide-reaching and our reach unparalleled.

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