



Policing Performance Committee

19 March 2025

Minutes of the Policing Performance Committee held on 19 March 2025 via Webex.

Board Members present:	Alasdair Hay - Chair Katharina Kasper Mary Pitcaithly Chris Creegan
Board Member apologies:	Tom Halpin
In attendance:	<p><u>Scottish Police Authority (SPA)</u> Barry Sillers, Deputy Chief Executive (Strategy & Performance) Amanda Coulthard, Head of Strategy & Performance Scott Ross, Head of Change & Operational Scrutiny Vanessa Ewing-Blair, Head of Strategic Business Management Martin Smith, Strategy & Research Lead Catherine Reid, Governance Support Officer</p> <p><u>Police Scotland (PS)</u> DCC Jane Connors, Operational Policing ACC Steve Johnson, Major Crime, Public Protection and Local Crime ACC Emma Bond, Local Policing North & C3 ACC Catriona Paton, Policing Together Patrick Brown, Acting Director of Strategy & Analysis Tina MacLucas, Principal Analyst Nicola Crawford, Senior Planning Performance Officer</p>

	<p>Angela Wood, Head of Policy, Audit, Risk & Assurance Chief Superintendent Conrad Trickett, Policing in a Digital World Detective Chief Superintendent Dave Ferry, Specialist Crime Division</p> <p><u>COSLA</u> Lesley Weber, Policy Manager - Communities</p> <p><u>HMICS</u> Brian McInulty, Assistant Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland</p> <p><u>National Crime Agency</u> Gerry McLean, Regional Head of Investigations Scotland & Northern Ireland</p>
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1. WELCOME AND STANDING ITEMS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, which was held via Webex. The Chair advised that Tom Halpin has submitted apologies.

1.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND CONNECTIONS

Chris Creegan declared a connection to the Diffley Partnership, which is in relation to item 3.1 on the agenda. Chris Creegan is an occasional associate with the Diffley Partnership and confirmed he had no involvement with the work in relation to item 3.1.

1.3 MINUTE FROM MEETING OF POLICING PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE FOR 10 DECEMBER 2024 - FOR APPROVAL

Members approved the Minute of the Policing Performance Committee held on 10 December 2024 as an accurate record of the meeting.

1.4 ACTION LOG AND MATTERS ARISING

Members noted the updates provided and agreed with the proposed recommendations for closure. Members received an update in respect of the on-going wide-ranging review in relation to policy and practice to recording Sex and Gender within Police Scotland which confirmed the proactive approach being taken to external engagement.

2.1 QUARTERLY POLICING PERFORMANCE REPORT – Q3 2024/25 – PATRICK BROWN

Members considered the report which provided the Committee with an update in relation to Police Scotland's Performance at the end of Quarter 3 2024/25. During discussion and in addition to the written report, the following points were noted and discussed.

- Members considered a brief overview of the report which provided a deep dive performance focus on rape alongside a key insight on the increase in road fatalities. It was highlighted that the report is structured under Less Crime, Safer Communities, Supported Victims and Thriving Workforce, as per the Chief Constable's Vision 2030.
- The Committee focussed their oversight and scrutiny on the following areas: sexual crime, antisocial behaviour, public confidence, crime detection rates, retail crime, road fatalities, and stop and search.
- The Committee requested detail is provided regarding the upward trend in the use of Recorded Police Warnings in respect of antisocial behaviour and action PPC-20250319-001 was raised.
- Members highlighted the decrease of younger children being brought into custody and stated that the position of the Authority is that there should be alternatives to custody for children in all but the most serious of crimes. DCC Connors gave thanks to Members for recognising the progress made in this area.
- The Committee sought further detail around the sharp increase in rape crimes in J Division in May 2024 and the sustained increase across 2024/25 in G Division. ACC Johnson advised more victims are coming forward due to increased confidence in Police Scotland and they are being reached sooner in the journey. ACC Johnson advised he is confident that Officers are taking a victim centred approach. Members noted that the Deep Dive Analysis of Rape and Sexual Crime would be discussed at item 2.5.
- Members sought and received assurance that instances of Stop & Search continue to be intelligence based. DCC Connors further reassured that Stop & Search is used carefully.
- With regard to shoplifting, the Committee queried if Police Scotland's programme of work to address retail crime was having an impact. DCC Connors advised that the Retail Crime Taskforce was set up to address a rise in shoplifting and the Taskforce targets repeat offenders of retail crime by using analytical data and intelligence to carry out proactive enforcement activities in areas most heavily impacted.
- The Chair queried what learning has been taken from the recent pilot of increased use of roadside drug wipes in Shetland. DCC Connors offered to bring an evaluation of this work to a future Committee, this was welcomed by the Chair.
- Members noted the data within the report which shows a reduction in drug deaths, with 244 suspected drug deaths in Q3 of 2024-25 representing a 9% decrease from the previous year. The positive impact from the use of Naloxone was remarked upon. Carriage of Naloxone is mandatory for all officers up to and including the rank of Inspector. DCC Connors gave thanks to Officers that carry the

life-saving medication and advised that so far 360 lives have been saved due to Naloxone being administered.

- The Committee sought and received assurance that the increased threat from Nitazines entering the UK is a priority for the High Harm Drugs Intelligence team. DCC Connors offered further reassurance, noting that Nitazines have not been as prevalent in Scotland compared to other parts of the UK and analysts continue to monitor the situation closely.
- Members noted the decrease in public confidence and experience of policing articulated in the report and sought to understand the contributing factors to these decreases. ACC Paton advised that deep dive work is currently ongoing to understand levels of trust in black communities and with children & young people. ACC Paton gave assurance that Police Scotland are committed to being connected with communities.
- Members recognised the improvement in both 999 and 101 call answering times with a reduction seen in both.

Members noted the report and agreed the following action:

PPC-20250319-001 - Police Scotland to provide detail regarding the shift from fixed penalty notices to recorded police warnings.

2.2 PROPORTIONATE RESPONSE TO CRIME EVALUATION REPORT – ACC EMMA BOND

Members considered the report which provided an update on the national roll out of Proportionate Response to Crime. During discussion and in addition to the written report, the following points were noted and discussed.

- Members sought clarification around how the project team plan to measure business benefits in relation to officer time and capacity. ACC Bond advised that the time can be quantified however it is not straightforward to map specific benefits.
- The Committee requested a further report on this topic in 12 months' time which articulates the impacts on front line policing, service delivery and user satisfaction.

Members noted the report.

2.3 PREVENT ANNUAL REPORT – ACC CATRIONA PATON

Members considered the report which provided the Police Scotland Prevent Referral Data for the period 2023-2024, which was requested by the Scottish Police Authority at the 10 December 2024 Committee. During discussion and in addition to the written report, the following points were noted and discussed.

- Members sought and received assurance from Police Scotland that repeat PREVENT referrals are being reviewed. This was a recommendation as part of the PREVENT learning review in February 2025, which followed the Southport knife attacks on 29 July 2024.
- The Chair queried how Police Scotland manage their approach to repeat referrals over time and were advised that the Vulnerable Persons Database is utilised to provide a chronology for repeat referrals. ACC Paton provided reassurance that the information Police Scotland hold and the processes that relate to PREVENT and other safeguarding opportunities are intrinsically linked which gives Police Scotland the ability to recognise triggers and thresholds.
- Members sought to understand if Police Scotland were seeing an increasing threat through 'Incels' and toxic masculinity. ACC Paton advised that Police Scotland are seeing an increase and highlighted the work of the school-based officers and the Violence Reduction Unit in working with young people and Police Scotland's partnership working with the third sector to tackle these challenges. Members received further assurance that the Counter Terrorism Unit have always been attentive to these challenges as Police Scotland was the first Police force in the UK to report someone under terrorism legislation with an incel ideology.
- Police Scotland provided assurance that they are confident that they can influence and adhere to any changes from reviewing the approach to PREVENT.

Members noted the report.

2.4 POLICING IN A DIGITAL WORLD ANNUAL REPORT – CS CONRAD TRICKETT

Members considered the report which provided an update on the progress and direction of the Policing in a Digital World Programme (PDWP). During discussion and in addition to the written report, the following points were noted and discussed.

- With regard to the Digital Vans, Members sought assurance that the reduction of time where a device needs to be held to be checked is being quantified and can be evidenced as a benefit. CS Trickett advised that this benefit has been called out in the End Project Report, adding that the most pertinent benefit is to staff wellbeing as the Digital Vans allow for a mobile workspace instead of officers running device checks within properties associated with members of the public. In addition, devices can be triaged and efficiently identified as being not relevant to the enquiry and therefore can be left in the property rather than taken away for checks.

- The Committee were assured that the Sextortion Pilot held in East Ayrshire will be evaluated and considered for National Roll out.
- Members were advised that the partnership working in this space is UK wide and CS Trickett listed some key partners including the City of London Police and the National Crime Agency.
- Members were reassured to hear that the Cyber Training for front-line officers is in hand and an in-house training team was created to deliver this training. The decision to provide the training internally was made following the procurement process where it was identified that none of the providers were able to deliver what was required.
- The Chair gave thanks to CS Trickett for the report and advised that the assurances provided are helpful to the committee and the public.

Members noted the report.

2.5 DEEP DIVE ANALYSIS OF RAPE & SEXUAL CRIME – ACC STEVE JOHNSON

Members considered the report which detailed Police Scotland's strategies and collaborative initiatives pertinent to Rape and Sexual Crime, placing particular emphasis on statistical data and projects that adopt a victim-centred approach. During discussion and in addition to the written report, the following points were noted and discussed.

- Members queried how Police Scotland are working with COPFS to make improvements to ensure that the justice system response is focused on achieving positive outcomes for victims and their families. ACC Johnson advised that a whole systems approach is used to ensure victims are supported and learnings have been taken onboard from the victim's perspective such as avoiding the victim having to provide an account of the incident numerous times.
- Members sought and received assurance on issues recently reported in the media around women's feelings of safety and experience of antisocial behaviour particularly related to the nighttime economy.
- With regard to assaults in care setting such as hospitals, the engagement Police Scotland has with other NHS bodies was queried. Members were provided with assurance around the range and diversity of partners involved in Police Scotland's work around Violence Against Women and Girls. It was requested that the following action was raised to provide more detail:

PPC-20250319-002 - Police Scotland to check sexual crime data regarding abuse of power dynamics in hospital and care settings and share findings with PPC Members.

- Members highlighted the positive work underway to roll out the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 training. They sought and received assurance that this training will be provided to all officers

by the end of 2025. ACC Emma Bond provided further reassurance by advising all C3 staff and officers have received this training which is important as C3 is a first point of contact for victims.

- The Committee recognised the partnership working and the crucial role it plays in supporting victims. However, Members queried whether other sectors such as education are engaged, given the trends in sexual crimes against children outlined in the report. ACC Johnson advised through the Victim Task Force there is a good level of representation across partners. However, ACC Johnson advised this can always be improved and the following action was raised:

PPC-20250319-003 - Police Scotland to ascertain if there is representation from Education, NHS and Social Care on the Victim Task Force.

- ACC Johnson made reference to the Victim-Centred Approach to Justice in Scotland report and advised he would share this with PPC Members. The following action was raised:

PPC-20250319-004 - Victim Centred Approach to Justice Report to be shared with PPC Members.

- The Committee expressed that that the deep dive analysis model adds value and additional insights to the performance detail provided in the quarterly performance report.

Members noted the report.

3.1 PUBLIC POLLING INSIGHTS – MARTIN SMITH

Members considered the report which provided information relating to polling conducted in January 2025 and future plans relating to polling. During discussion and in addition to the written report the following points were noted and discussed.

- The Committee asked what more Police Scotland, local authorities and COSLA could do to raise awareness of the existence of local police plans and ways for the public to feed into the development of these. DCC Jane Connors advised she would be happy to work with the SPA regarding communicating Local Policing Plans with the public. The following action was raised:

PPC-20250319-005 - SPA Officials to link in with DCC Operational Policing regarding the communication of Local Policing Plans to the public.

Members noted the report.

3.2 COSLA UPDATE REPORT – LESLEY WEBER

Members noted the report. The following points were highlighted and discussed:

- Members noted the updates on events and the key areas of work undertaken by COSLA in relation to policing including; the mid-year Presidential catch up between the annual Police Scotland and SPA input into COSLA Leaders held on Thursday 23 January 2025, COSLA Budget & Manifesto, the Prisoner (Early Release) (Scotland) Act 2025 and Community Cohesion.
- The Committee expressed the importance of a whole system partnership approach during times of financial challenge and requested that local planning arrangements with partners are used to the full to ensure that there is a focus on reducing adverse unintended consequences from decisions taken to meet financial challenges. Lesley Weber highlighted the sharing of estates and assets as an example and advised that there is now a shared asset principles document.
- The Chair gave thanks to Lesley Weber for the update.

Members noted the report.

4.1 HMICS IMPROVEMENT PLANS – PROGRESS SUMMARY – ANGELA WOOD

Members considered the report which provided an update of recommendations from HMICS Inspections selected for review. During discussion and in addition to the written report, the following points were noted and discussed.

- The Chair sought and received assurance that Police Scotland ensure all the recommendations are appropriately captured and actioned within the Annual Police Plan, 3-year Business Plan and the 2030 vision. Angela Wood advised that all recommendations are managed in the 4action system and they are aligned accordingly. DCC Connors provided further reassurance regarding this and also stated that the work HMICS does is valuable to Police Scotland.
- The Committee asked for further information around the new approach taken in relation to the closure of R6. DCC Jane Connors advised that the new template will provide consistent standards and a tailored and professional level of care and support, based on individual needs at an early stage of engagement.
- The Committee recognised the positive steps taken to revise the format of this report in response to previous feedback. However, suggested that in future, revised target dates are provided.
- Members sought and received assurance around how Police Scotland select recommendations to report to PPC. Angela Wood advised that they aim to cover all HMICS publications over the 6-month reporting period.

Members noted the report.

4.2 NATIONAL CRIME AGENCY UPDATE REPORT – GERRY MCLEAN/ DCS DAVE FERRY

Members considered a verbal update from the National Crime Agency and Police Scotland on tackling serious and organised crime. During discussion and in addition to the verbal the following points were noted and discussed.

- The update gave assurance that the NCA and Police Scotland are working in partnership to tackle high harm crime and undertake major disruptions.
- The Committee heard that the two organisations, working in partnership, have undertaken a number of significant drug recoveries. Members were advised that the threat of synthetic opioids has intensified.
- ACC Steve Johnson advised that work is currently ongoing to articulate the impact the NCA is having at a local level.

Members noted the verbal update.

5.1 POLICING PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE EFFECTIVENESS – VANESSA EWING-BLAIR

Members considered the report which articulated the findings of a recent survey conducted with Board Members and stakeholders, seeking their feedback on the overall effectiveness of the committee. During discussion and in addition to the written report, the following points were noted and discussed.

- The survey findings and Stakeholder feedback were presented to the Committee.
- The report highlighted that Stakeholders felt that work needs to be done to ensure visibility and understanding of committee priorities and alignment to its workplan. In addition to this, 1 Stakeholder felt that more time is required in between receiving the papers and the meeting taking place.
- The Chair gave thanks to those that participated in the Survey and expressed the importance of this work to drive continuous improvement.

Members noted the report.

End.