



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

# SPA Corporate Strategy 2023-26



April 2023



OFFICIAL

# 1

# Introduction

## Introduction

This Corporate Strategy sets out the role and responsibilities of the Scottish Police Authority (the Authority), the five outcomes we seek to achieve and the high-level activities designed to achieve them. It aligns to the Scottish Government's [Strategic Police Priorities](#), and should be read alongside the [Strategic Police Plan](#) and the [Forensic Services Strategy](#), which relate to the delivery of the police and forensic services that the Authority is responsible for. This Corporate Strategy is underpinned by a more detailed Implementation Plan for the period.

## Background

The Authority plays a key role in the policing system, together with 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, for example each local authority is empowered to specify the measures and priorities to be included in local plans and to approve, and oversee delivery of, the Local Police Plan for their area.

The Authority sets out 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 Chief Constable of Police Scotland is accountable to the Authority. The Authority is the legal employer of all civilian staff, and also plays a key negotiating role in relation to police officer pay, regulations and pension matters.

The Authority draws on a range of evidence and on independent, expert opinion from a number of organisations to support its oversight of policing.

## The Authority's Purpose And Responsibilities

The Authority consists of a Board of up to 15 members, including a Chair, who are selected through an impartial public appointments process and appointed by Scottish Ministers. The Board is supported by a team of staff who provide advice and support.

The scale of the Authority's role is significant, including responsibility for securing best value in relation to its annual budget of over £1.2 billion. The Authority is responsible for the scrutiny of our national police service, delivered by Police Officers and staff. The Authority has a crucial role in enforcing and upholding fundamental human rights. The Authority also delivers forensic services to partners in the wider criminal justice system.

Through our Board and Committee meetings, a series of checks and balances is used to ensure that major decisions about the policing of Scotland are made transparently and appropriately, to help build and maintain public trust and confidence in policing.

Details of the Authority's Board and Committee Meetings can be found on the Authority's [website](#).

## Best Value

The Authority and the Chief Constable each have an overarching duty to achieve Best Value, which means securing continuous improvement in the performance of each organisation. Each organisation must make arrangements to secure continuous improvement whilst maintaining an appropriate balance between quality and cost. In making those arrangements and securing that balance each organisation should pay attention to economy, efficiency, effectiveness, equalities, , and the achievement of sustainable development.

# 3

## The Authority's main functions

### **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.

### **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. Additional money is available through a Reform fund allocated by the Scottish Government. From within our available budget allocation we must provide the Chief Constable with financial resources to ensure that an appropriately resourced workforce is in place and paid to deliver policing services. We must also ensure that buildings, vehicles and technology systems are maintained. We also allocate funding to Forensic Services and support the Authority's executive staff team and Board.

### **Promoting and supporting continuous improvement**

The Authority places a high level of importance on continuous improvement, promoting and supporting self-assessment activity and benchmarking against other organisations to identify areas where policing could be improved.

### **Keeping policing under review**

The Authority regularly assesses policing performance, listening to what the public and our partners are saying about policing, and works in partnership with Police Scotland to prepare a joint strategic police plan. The Authority also publishes an annual assessment of policing performance, 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. The Authority holds the Chief Constable to account and seeks assurance, through our Board and Committee meetings, on how Scotland is being policed in line with its strategic priorities and organisational values. We also scrutinise proposed policing policy changes from the perspective of best value, human rights, ethics, equality and diversity.

## Scottish Police Authority Corporate Strategy 2023-2026

Scottish Government Strategic Police Priorities: Crime and Security, Confidence, Partnerships, Sustainability, People, Evidence

**Our Vision:** Policing in the Public Interest

**Our Values:** Respect, Integrity, Public Service



### Strategic outcome 1

Communities are informed and confident that policing is accountable

#### We will do this by:

- Strengthening relationships with communities and actively seeking to engage the public and stakeholders in our work
- Communicating and engaging on the success of, and challenges faced by, policing in Scotland using an Outcomes based framework
- Ensuring openness and transparency in the work of the Authority and Police Scotland



### Strategic outcome 2

We have effective collaboration with partners

#### We will do this by:

- Promoting Scottish policing in the UK and beyond; proactively identifying and engaging with all stakeholders on issues of significant public interest
- Taking an active and strategic role in understanding and defining the police role in service delivery across the public sector
- Actively engaging with Police Scotland and Forensic Services to build strong partnerships across organisational boundaries



### Strategic outcome 3

Resourcing requirements are based on evidence, need and best value

#### We will do this by:

- Supporting and maintaining adaptable, effective, efficient and sustainable police and forensic services
- Ensuring service transformation is based on robust evidence that demonstrates best value
- Maintaining a focus on equality and human rights considerations across the Authority's work



### Strategic Outcome 4

Our workforce is valued, engaged and skilled

#### We will do this by:

- Seeking assurance that an appropriately resourced, diverse and sustainable workforce is in place, underpinned by a robust approach to employee engagement and wellbeing
- Ensuring that effective mechanisms are in place to engage with staff associations and trade unions as key organisational stakeholders
- Demonstrating responsible employment practice, with a focus on health, safety and welfare



### Strategic Outcome 5

We are a learning organisation, where decision making and scrutiny are evidence led

#### We will do this by:

- Seeking assurance that service delivery, resourcing and investment decisions across the policing system are based on robust evidence
- Analysing research and evidence sources to support horizon scanning, planning and policy development
- Developing the range of evidence used to inform the Authority's decision making, and communicate with the public and stakeholders on the future of policing

# 5

## The Authority's main functions

### The Board

Board members contribute a wealth of skills from both public and private sectors, knowledge, expertise, experience and perspectives.

They act in accordance, and comply with, recognised best practice set out in *On Board: A Guide for Members of Statutory Boards*. As Board members appointed through the public appointments process, members perform their role in accordance with *The Ethical Standards in Public Life etc. (Scotland) Act 2000*. This means that the Authority acts in a way that is accountable, proportionate and transparent, and which accords with the nine key principles underpinning public life in Scotland: Selflessness, Integrity, Accountability, Openness, Leadership, Objectivity, Honesty, Public Service, and Respect.

Details of the Authority's Board can be found on the Authority's [website](#).

### The Executive Team

The Board is supported to carry out its functions and responsibilities by a team of staff, who act in a range of capacities and support the delivery of the Authority's functions, responsibilities and duties as set out in this Corporate Strategy.

The Authority's staff team is led by a Chief Executive who is the principal advisor to the Board. As Accountable Officer the Chief Executive also has a personal accountability to Parliament for the way in which the Authority is being run, and how financial resources across the Authority and Police Scotland are being managed.

Details of the Authority's senior management team can be found on the Authority's [website](#).

## **Monitoring Progress**

Specific milestones and measures related to achieving this Strategy will be developed by the corporate team, underpinning the appended Implementation Plan. The Implementation Plan also references work underway within the Authority to take forward continuous improvement. The Authority will report publicly on progress in relation to delivery of this Corporate Strategy through a number of established mechanisms:

An annual assessment of the Authority's performance will be included in the Annual Report and Accounts.

The Chief Executive Officer will report to the Authority (the Board) on progress and achievement of the Corporate Strategy at regular public meetings of the Authority's Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee.

This Corporate Strategy will be reviewed after three years in accordance with the planning cycle, aligning with reviews of the Strategic Police Plan and the strategy for Forensic Services.

## **Additional Responsibilities**

The Authority has a number of specific responsibilities, linked to the five main functions, and fulfils several other significant duties:

- Providing Forensic Services
- Management of an Independent Custody Visiting Scheme
- Appointment of senior police officers and employer of all civilian staff
- Membership of the Police Negotiating Board
- Holding budgetary accountability and publishing an Annual Report and Accounts
- Preparation and review of strategic plans and reviewing policing performance
- Handling complaints against senior officers and the Authority
- Meeting statutory duties for public bodies

## Contact Us

The Scottish Police Authority welcomes comments, feedback and suggestions.

You can get in touch with us in the following ways:

**General Enquiries:** E-mail: [enquiries@spa.police.uk](mailto:enquiries@spa.police.uk) Tel: 01786 896630 or write: The SPA, 1 Pacific Quay, Glasgow G51 1DZ

**Complaints:** E-mail: [complaints@spa.police.uk](mailto:complaints@spa.police.uk) or Tel: 01786 896630

**Freedom of Information requests,** please E-mail: [foi@spa.police.uk](mailto:foi@spa.police.uk)

**Media enquiries,** please contact: E-mail: [media@spa.police.uk](mailto:media@spa.police.uk) or Tel: 01786 896871 / 01786 896882

**Out of hours:** 01786 896890

## Accessibility

This Corporate Plan can be made available in various alternative formats. Please contact us via [enquiries@spa.pnn.police.uk](mailto:enquiries@spa.pnn.police.uk) or 01786 896630