

SCOTTISH POLICE AUTHORITY BOARD OBJECTIVES 2023/24

Background

The Board of the Scottish Police Authority is a group of publicly appointed members with a collective responsibility as set out in the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 to deliver five core functions:

- to maintain the police service;
- to promote the policing principles set out in the 2012 Act;
- to promote and support continuous improvement in the policing of Scotland;
- to keep under review the policing of Scotland; and to hold the Chief Constable to account for the policing of Scotland

In addition, the Authority is responsible for the provision of Forensic Services to the criminal justice sector and an Independent Custody Visiting Service.

The strategic landscape

To support delivery against these responsibilities and to contribute to the delivery of the Scottish Government's Strategic Police Priorities, the Board has agreed the direction and priorities for policing in the following three strategic documents:

- [Joint Strategy for Policing 2023-26](#)
- [Forensic Services Strategy](#)
- [Authority's Corporate Strategy 2023-26](#)

The Board's approach

Provide strategic, effective non-executive leadership of policing.

Working with the Executive and leadership teams of policing to provide both support and challenge to ensure policing is effective, efficient and forward-looking. Promoting best practice, research and debate around the future of policing in Scotland and championing the growth of evidence and data.

Demonstrate and promote transparent governance and oversight of policing which is effective, proportionate, reflective of the public interest, consistent with the Authority's statutory duties and sufficiently adaptable to respond to changing circumstances.

Promote and communicate the Authority's role clearly and confidently, building relations with stakeholders and seeking input from relevant parties on the issues of public interest facing policing.

Our key areas of focus for 2023-24

Members identify areas of focus for the year ahead to guide and prioritise their support and scrutiny of policing. Board members remain concerned that the level of demand on the police and forensic service is not sustainable within the financial envelope available; we will seek greater evidence of fluctuations in demand across both. The Board will focus its efforts to:

- Maintain a balanced budget
- Support the development of a sustainable police and forensic service

To meet both objectives, the Board will concentrate its interest in 3 specific areas:

1. **CAPACITY** – for example;

- Address mental health and missing persons demand on response policing (to free police officers time to meet other demands)
- Invest in leadership and management training/support (to increase retention rates and job satisfaction)
- Invest in police and staff wellbeing and welfare support (to reduce sickness absence and ill-health retirement)
- Agree Strategic Workforce Plan, People Plan and monitor progress.

2. **CAPABILITY** – for example;

- Invest in technology to increase officer and staff efficiency
- Increase cross-sectoral partnership working to ensure Police Scotland makes best use of UK and wider police capability
- Focus on transformation/change programmes with emphasis on delivery of existing Police Scotland and Forensic Services strategies.

3. **CULTURE** – for example;

- Sustained oversight of Policing Together Programme of work to accelerate pace and measure progress to address cultural challenges
- Strengthen legal and administrative process and visibility of misconduct hearings and their outcomes and improve learning from them
- Transform system wide HR support within Police Scotland.

To meet these objectives, Board Members will adhere to the [SPA's Code of Conduct](#) and follow the principles laid out in the Scottish Government's "[On Board](#)" guidance, including upholding the principles set out in the Ethical Standards in Public Life etc. (Scotland) Act 2000.

Members will operate in a non-executive capacity, declaring all relevant interests and connections. Members will participate in a development programme designed to support them in achieving their corporate and individual objectives and support a culture of continuous improvement within the Authority.

These objectives and areas of focus will be reviewed annually, aligned to coincide with the conclusion of Member end of year reviews.