



Meeting	Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee
Date	6 February 2024
Location	By video-conference
Title of Paper	HMICS Inspection - SPA Validated Self-Assessment update
Presented By	Lynn Brown, Chief Executive
Recommendation to Members	For Information
Appendix Attached	No

PURPOSE

To provide the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee (ARAC) with an update on the SPA Validated Self-Assessment being conducted by HMICS.

The paper is presented in line with the corporate governance framework of the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) and Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee (ARAC) terms of reference and is submitted for consultation.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 HMICS has a statutory obligation to inquire into the state, efficiency and effectiveness of both the Police Service of Scotland (Police Scotland) and the Scottish Police Authority (SPA).
- 1.2 Whilst HMICS may consider the Authority during any review, the last specific review of the SPA was in 2019. In their [Scrutiny Plan 2022 – 2025](#), HMICS included a 'strategic review' of the SPA. An extract from the scrutiny plan is shown below.

Scottish Police Authority (SPA)

We last inspected the SPA in 2019, and since then there have been major changes including a new executive and staffing structure, a new Chair, a permanent Chief Executive and new board members appointed. Whilst a full, detailed inspection would not be proportionate at this time, it is important that we continue to apply regular focus to the SPA and the effectiveness of their new arrangements. This review will take the format of a validated self-evaluation, assessed against best value criteria. This approach will encourage reflection by the SPA and its continuous improvement, whilst ensuring an element of independent assurance on their core role and governance approach.

2. FURTHER DETAIL ON THE REPORT TOPIC

- 2.1 Authority staff and HMICS have been jointly planning for the inspection during late 2023.
- 2.2 On 5 December 2023, HMCIC provide a notification of inspection letter to the Chair of the Authority. This letter helpfully outlined aspects of the inspections including:
 - aims;
 - objectives and outcomes;
 - scope and exclusions;
 - methodology;
 - publication and reporting timescales.
- 2.3 The letter highlights that this is '*a strategic review, designed to be short, sharp and to minimise the impact on the area of inspection*'. It is a '*validated self-evaluation, assessed against best value criteria*'.

- 2.4 The Authority has undertaken a best value self-assessment over several years. The most recent self-assessment was reported to the November 2023 ARAC. The detailed findings from this work have been provided to HMICS as the basis of our self-assessment.
- 2.5 In addition to this work, the Authority has also provided HMICS with a narrative showing the continuous improvement journey of the Authority since the last inspection in 2019. This will highlight the various improvements delivered over the last five years.
- 2.6 Lastly, we have provided evidence showing our evaluation and development of the Authority's Committees and the Board.

Current progress

- 2.7 The Authority has provided HMICS with its best value self-assessment and a range of supporting material for the three strands; Best Value; Board and Members and the Improvement Journey. HMICS are currently reviewing this evidence.
- 2.8 The Authority has identified two key points of contact in the Executive Team to liaise with HMICS on this work. The HMICS team and the Authority's Executive support meet weekly to discuss progress and any matters arising.
- 2.9 HMICS are arranging interviews with a number of Members and senior executives, planned for completion by the end of February 2024. They will also be observing various Committee and Board meetings.
- 2.10 HMICS anticipate publishing a report in Spring 2024. We will provide this report formally to the Authority and invite HMICS to present their report.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no specific financial implications associated with this paper.

4 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific personnel implications associated with this paper.

5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no specific legal implications associated with this paper.

6 REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are reputational implications associated with this paper. The outcome of the HMICS inspection is likely to have a reputational impact on the Authority.

7 SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no specific social implications associated with this paper.

8 COMMUNITY IMPACT

8.1 There are no specific community impact implications associated with this paper.

9 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no specific equalities implications associated with this paper.

10 ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no specific environmental implications associated with this paper.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are requested to note the progress update.