

## **Scottish Police Authority**

### **Local Government Engagement Plan 2021-2023**

Improving the Scottish Police Authority's engagement with local government and local scrutiny conveners, is the Authority's most critical engagement priority in the year ahead.

This plan sets out how the Authority will engage with local government partners 2021-23. Local government is the only key sector for the Authority which has a dedicated and detailed engagement plan for the coming year.

### **Background**

The Authority and Police Scotland are jointly committed to engaging, listening, learning, and adapting, ensuring that citizens are able to influence decisions that affect them, and can trust the decisions taken about the future direction of policing. We have complementary but separate roles in engaging with stakeholders and citizens, built on shared values of integrity, honesty, respect, and the commitment to human rights.

The Authority's engagement will:

- Complement Police Scotland's;
- Be collaborative;
- Support the strategic direction for policing in Scotland, and the outcomes set out in our Corporate Plan;
- Reinforce the role, responsibilities and statutory duties of the Authority, and promote the policing principles;
- Promote and seek assurance on Police Scotland's responsiveness and accessibility to local communities and their needs;
- Seek independent assessment of views and attitudes to policing issues to ensure the public's voice is appropriately considered in decision-making.

This engagement plan is underpinned by a joint Memorandum of Understanding between the Authority and the Chief Constable, to ensure early dialogue on change in policing and matters of significant public interest.

### **How the Authority will engage**

1. The SPA Chair will attend and contribute to the COSLA Police Scrutiny Conveners' Forum, at the invitation of the Forum Chair.
2. The Authority will offer 3 virtual area based meetings each year subject to local demand – one for North; East and West respectively. These will involve the Authority Chair, with invitations to Local Scrutiny Conveners and the ACC for Local Policing in each area. The SPA and local authorities will jointly shape the agenda for these meetings.

3. Regular strategic discussions for the SPA Chair and Chief Executive with the COSLA Presidential Team and Community Well Being Spokesperson.
4. Regular meetings for the SPA Chair and Chief Executive, COSLA Chief Executive, and Chair of SOLACE to discuss the work programme and related issues.
5. The Authority will offer a network of SPA key officer contacts for local authorities, to build relationships, work collaboratively, and link directly with local scrutiny arrangements and local partnerships.
6. The Authority will consult annually with each local authority to inform its Annual Report.
7. If local authorities have significant issues which remain outstanding or unresolved, they can bring these to the attention of the Authority's Chief Executive, and if required to the SPA Chair.
8. The Authority will, jointly with the Chief Constable, offer an annual presentation to COSLA Leaders linked to the Annual Report on Policing.
9. The Authority, along with Police Scotland, will offer thematic meetings with local scrutiny conveners on policing issues of significant public interest.

### **Key areas of focus identified 2021-23**

- Localism
- Social Justice
- Emerging Technology
- The use of evidence in policing

### **Ongoing Review and Improvement**

This framework offers significantly more engagement between the SPA and local government, with a more structured approach, specific commitments, and the flexibility to respond to emerging issues or concerns.

Local government partners will be invited to offer feedback on how it is working in the first half of 2022, to identify any further improvements for 2022/23.