



Meeting	Authority Meeting
Date	26 June 2025
Location	COSLA, Edinburgh
Title of Paper	SPA Chief Executive's Report
Presented By	Lynn Brown, Chief Executive
Recommendation to Members	For Discussion
Appendix Attached	

PURPOSE

To update Members on activities carried out by the Authority's Chief Executive since the last Authority meeting held on 22 May 2025.

Members are recommended to consider this report and to raise any matters for clarification or further detail with the Chief Executive.

1. Background

- 1.1. This report provides Members with an update on key Authority business not already covered elsewhere on the agenda.

2. Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS)

- 2.1 The latest Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS), covering the period July 2023-July 2024, was published on 10 June 2025. This survey presents findings based on interviews with almost 5000 adults in Scotland. The SCJS tells us that around 20% of adults were a victim of at least one type of crime and that fraud and computer related crime made up 44% of all crimes in the year.
- 2.2 There were 231,000 violent crimes experienced in 2023-24, 73% higher than in 2021-22. This is an area of interest and scrutiny for our Policing Performance Committee. Repeat victimisation continues to be a challenge in Scotland, with 6% of adults having experienced 55% of all crimes reported through SCJS.
- 2.3 The SCJS reports that around 21% of all crimes, including fraud and computer misuse, were estimated to have been reported to the police. The Authority values the insights provided by the SCJS and will work with Police Scotland, through the Policing Performance Committee, to understand these insights alongside Police Scotland and the Authority's data.

3. 2024-25 Annual Report and Accounts

- 3.1 I am pleased to confirm that the Scottish Police Authority has submitted its accounts for 2024-25 to our Auditor. This has been submitted by the agreed deadline and marks an important milestone and aims to support laying the accounts in Parliament later in the year. I would like to thank the staff in SPA, Police Scotland and Forensic Services for their work in meeting this deadline.

4. Best Value Audit and Inspection

- 4.1 Audit Scotland and HMICS have commenced their audit and inspection field work. On 22 May 2025 the Chief Constable hosted an opening meeting and since then interviews have taken place with a wide range of officers, staff and Members across all areas of policing.

5. Scottish Railway Policing Committee

- 5.1 A meeting of the Scottish Railway Policing Committee took place on Wednesday 4 June 2025. Tom Halpin and Mary Pitcaithly were in attendance and represented the Authority at this committee.
- 5.2 A report summarising the key issues covered at this meeting is included at Appendix A. Further detail can be found on the [British Transport Police Authority website](#). The next meeting of the committee is scheduled for Friday 19 September 2025.

6. Board Members' Expenses Policy

- 6.1 A review was recently undertaken of the Authority's Board Members' Expenses Policy. The policy was last reviewed in 2021 to ensure it was consistent with the Scottish Government's [Public Sector Pay Policy Technical Guide](#); the Scottish Government's Travel Management policy on air and rail travel and HMRC Guidance.
- 6.2 To identify any best practice or inconsistencies, officials compared the policy against those publicly available for non-executive Board members on other public bodies. Findings suggest the Authority's policy is generally consistent with principles, content and rates for other non-executive members. However, a number of updates have been made to the policy, including:
- The inclusion of key principles to introduce the policy
 - Requirement to consider best value
 - A change to the maximum expense rates relevant to meals and accommodation and a requirement that claims require receipts
 - Current practice, whereby Members do not claim for alcohol, has been made explicit in the policy
 - Updating the office address to 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, Glasgow, G40 4EH.
- 6.3 The updated policy has been [published on the Authority's website](#) for transparency. The policy can also be viewed alongside the quarterly publications of Board Member remuneration and expenses claims.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are invited to discuss the contents of this report.

Summary report from the Scottish Railway Policing Committee

Wednesday 4 June 2025

SPA Members – Tom Halpin and Mary Pitcaithly

1. Operational Update

The committee welcomed ACC Ian Drummond-Smith to his first meeting, following the retirement of DCC Alistair Sutherland. ACC Drummond-Smith provided an operational update for D Division (Scotland), noting that this is the best performing division in British Transport Police (BTP) in terms of both crime volume and detection rates, and commending the achievements of the team. This included an update on BTP's use of drones. It was confirmed BTP will be able to implement visual line of sight use of drones in Scotland in line with the Police Scotland approach. Members noted that beyond visual line of sight was now being piloted in Leeds, with there having previously been an indication that this would take place in Scotland. Members expressed their support for pursuing the possibility of an additional pilot in Scotland, noting that this would require engagement with Police Scotland, a further public consultation and would be dependent on capital funding.

2. Policing Plan Performance Q4 / Year End 2024-25

It was highlighted that while there has been an increase in recorded crimes of 3.4% (73 crimes) in 2024-25 there has also been a 3.4% increase in the solved rate. The solve rate for robberies was 91%, an increase of 14% on the previous year. There had also been a 9% reduction in recorded incidents of disruption and a 15% reduction in total minutes lost.

Violence against women and girls increased by 19% (38 crimes) in 2024-25. It was noted that while increased confidence in reporting, including amongst witnesses and staff, was partly the reason for the increase, it was not entirely due to this and that this was a trend evident across the UK. The D Division solve rate for the year was 63%, which is higher than in other divisions. Members commended the positive work of the team and performance results.

3. British Transport Police and Police Scotland Joint Working

Members heard some positive examples of joint working including the Suicide Prevention Strategic Group in Police Scotland's K Division (Renfrewshire and Inverclyde), the Safer Shores operation in Ayrshire, and public order operations around football fixtures in Glasgow.

It was also noted that preparation for the upcoming Commonwealth Games has commenced, with BTP and Police Scotland working together to plan for this event.

4. Thematic: Retail Crime

A presentation was provided on the Retail Crime Taskforce put in place to tackle shoplifting, where crime volumes have increased significantly and over an extended period. The Taskforce brings together a range of partners including Police Scotland, BTP and retailers, and is currently funded by the Scottish Government for one year. Members noted that this particularly affects BTP in relation to shoplifting from shops within stations, however the tackling of retail crime also impacts on public and passenger confidence.

5. Audit and Inspections Update

It was highlighted that D Division continues to show positive results, with all Production Stores in Scotland achieving 100% in audits carried out during 2024-25 and D Division often being highlighted as best practice at force meetings. A summary of D Division audit performance from quarter 4 crime and incident audits showed that 95% of the crimes disclosed were recorded in line with the crime recording standard, 92% were recorded within 72 hours, and 96% were correctly classified. This compares favourably to England and Wales, where 84% were correctly classified. Members commended the teams involved.

6. Annual Review of the Workplan and Terms of Reference

Members reviewed and confirmed they were content with the Committee terms of reference. A new style of workplan was also approved, which has been expanded and is now better aligned to Best Value themes.

7. Optimised Policing Model in Scotland

A verbal update was provided on the BTP Optimised Policing Model which seeks to ensure BTP officers are in the right place at the right time with the right skills to meet rising demand. Members agreed that it would be important for the SRPC to provide scrutiny of the Model once it was reported formally to committee, to ensure there is equity across the UK and that the rationale for any changes in Scotland is fully understood.

8. Sex and Gender

Members received a brief update on work following the Supreme Court's judgement in relation to sex and gender and how this relates to areas of policing such as stop and search. BTP confirmed that in D Division they work to the Scottish Code of Practice for stop and search and will follow any additional rules introduced in relation to this. It was noted that work is underway in Police Scotland to respond to the judgement and that this will be shared with BTP.