

SCOTTISH POLICE AUTHORITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2021-2023

This Strategy sets out the purpose and principles which will form the basis of Authority's approach to public and stakeholder engagement.

1. Introduction

The Scottish Police Authority's (SPA) vision for 'policing in the public interest' is set out in the SPA's [Corporate Plan for 2020-23](#). The views and voices of key stakeholders and the public will bring that vision to life, informing and influencing the Authority's support, oversight and review of policing in Scotland.

Police Scotland has the **principal** responsibility for public engagement and communication on policing in Scotland. This engagement involves open communication and dialogue with a view to building and maintaining relationships. It also involves seeking support for and commitment to improvement and transformation in policing. Understanding the views and interests of a wide range of stakeholders will support understanding and awareness of policing issues and ensure the service understands issues at an early juncture.

The Authority's approach to engagement will be complementary to Police Scotland's. It will be targeted where it can best add value, and where additional evidence, insight, assurance or reassurance may be required. The Authority's Engagement Strategy aligns with the approach and priorities set out in [Police Scotland's Public Contact and Engagement Strategy](#).

2. Why the Authority will engage

The Authority and Police Scotland are jointly committed to a police service which recognises and responds appropriately to the needs of individuals and communities. We are also 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. Both the Authority and Police Scotland place the public interest at the heart of what we do and actively champion a whole system approach to addressing challenges and issues.

With this in mind, the Authority's approach to engagement will be proportionate, add value and actively avoid duplication. The Authority's engagement will seek to:

- Be complementary to Police Scotland's core responsibilities in communicating, engaging and building relationships;
- Understand views and experiences of policing in Scotland - seeking evidence of attitudes to policing issues to ensure the public's voice is appropriately considered in decision-making;
- Build trust and confidence in policing;
- Identify key issues or concerns affecting stakeholders, citizens, and diverse communities, regarding policing;
- Promote and seek evidence on Police Scotland's responsiveness and accessibility to local communities of place and interest and their needs;
- Strengthen existing relationships and establish and develop collaborative opportunities and partnerships; and

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- Promote the role, responsibilities and statutory duties of the Authority and progress the outcomes outlined in our Corporate Plan.

3. Our engagement priorities - 2021 - 2023

The Authority has identified three key priorities for its engagement activity over the next 24-months.

Year One 2021/22

- Improving engagement with local government, with detailed actions and commitments set out in a dedicated local government engagement plan.
- Implementing an improved digital framework for the Authority, as a key enabler for accessible promotion and support for policing issues and effective public engagement and discourse.

Year Two 2022/23

- Improving engagement with third sector partners and more widely across civic Scotland, including those who represent diverse groups related to protected characteristics. This will particularly focus on groups working to address poverty and disadvantage, in communities where people are more likely to be the victims of crime and have lower levels of confidence in policing.

4. Our key stakeholders

The Authority has identified a number of key stakeholders we will engage with over the next two years. This includes, but it not limited to:

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| • Staff associations and trades unions | • Community and voluntary organisations |
| • Scottish Government | • Third Sector organisations |
| • Scottish Parliament | • Audit Scotland |
| • Local Authorities | • Academia and the wider research community |
| • COSLA | • Other police governance organisations |
| • SOLACE | |
| • HMICS | |
| • PIRC | |
| • Citizens | |

5. Review

This Engagement Strategy will be reviewed in 2023, alongside the development of the Authority's revised Corporate Plan.

6. Useful Links

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| • Strategic Police Priorities for Scotland | • Police Scotland Public Contact and Engagement Strategy |
| • Joint Strategic Police Plan | • Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 |
| • Forensics 2026 Strategy | |
| • SPA Corporate Plan 2020-23 | |
| • Police Scotland SPA Joint Equality Outcomes | |

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Delivery Plan 2021/22 – Key commitments include

1.	<p>SPA Local Authority Engagement Plan 2021-22</p> <p>Meetings for the Chair / CEO with COSLA and SOLACE now established on a regular basis. The Chair will attend COSLA Leaders' meeting later this year with the Chief Constable and regional meetings will take place between the Authority, Police Scotland and local Scrutiny Conveners on local policing issues.</p> <p>The Authority hosted with Police Scotland an online engagement event for local scrutiny conveners on Body Worn Video and RPAS (drones) – the first of a programme of such online engagement meetings.</p>
2.	<p>Parliamentary Engagement</p> <p>The Authority will pro-actively engage with parliament, offering regular updates on policing and the Authority's activity.</p>
3.	<p>A 2021/22 programme of webinars for public and partners on -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joint SPA/Police Scotland COP 26 Roundtable event, September 2021• Public support on the use of technology in policing;• Policing's Covid-19 response.
4.	<p>The work of the Joint Evidence and Research Round Table for SPA, Police Scotland, academic and public partners will continue to develop. A Draft Joint Approach for the Authority and Police Scotland to identify research priorities was agreed January 2021.</p>
5.	<p>A review of local police plans will be undertaken jointly with Police Scotland and COSLA.</p>
6.	<p>An improved digital framework for the Authority will be delivered in 2021/22 as a key enabler for transforming the Authority's ability to support ongoing and accessible public engagement and discourse.</p>
7.	<p>A series of joint policing policy topical fact sheets on key issues for public and partners, will be prepared in partnership with Police Scotland, and made available online over the course of the year.</p>
8.	<p>Approaches to staff association and trades union engagement will be enhanced through -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance at and contributions to the People Committee• Improved articulation of areas of agreement and disagreement as part of Committee/Board Papers• The creation of an SPA/SCPOSA forum to recognise the specific 'employer' role of SPA with regards to Chief Officers

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9.	Citizen and stakeholder engagement will support delivery of the range of the Authority's public body duties; for example, the second iteration of the Authority's Gaelic Language Plan and a Corporate Parenting Plan.
10.	The Authority will work with Police Scotland and SIPR, offering grant funding for research, administered by SIPR, which can support Police Scotland's contact and engagement with all elements of our communities in Scotland, but particularly those groups which are seldom heard.

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