



2026

SERVING A CHANGING SCOTLAND



OUR 10 YEAR STRATEGY FOR POLICING IN SCOTLAND

FOR CONSULTATION

Policing 2026: Our 10 year strategy for policing in Scotland



Policing principles

- the main purpose of policing is to improve the safety and well-being of persons, localities and communities in Scotland
- the Police Service, working in collaboration with others where appropriate, should seek to achieve that main purpose by policing in a way which—
 - (i) is accessible to, and engaged with, local communities, and
 - (ii) promotes measures to prevent crime, harm and disorder.



2026

SERVING A CHANGING SCOTLAND

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Policing in Scotland has a long and successful record of adapting to the changing demands and needs of the people and communities it serves. We are now setting out our proposed 10 year strategy for consultation. It has been developed jointly and collaboratively by the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) and Police Scotland and seeks to ensure that Scottish policing remains fit for the future.

While policing’s organisational structures have undergone huge change over recent years, the need for our service to adapt and transform has become more immediate as the pace of change across wider society accelerates. We are setting a long term strategic direction that ensures continued service improvement, relevance, maintained public consent, enhanced legitimacy and financial sustainability.

The overall sustainability of policing in Scotland relies on a positive organisational culture that values and recognises our people and their contributions. In developing this strategy we have engaged our people – their input and wellbeing are critical to our continued success. We have also addressed the need to operate within our available funding. This strategy will empower our people to work with others, innovate and solve problems, and continue to protect the public from harm.

The demands and needs of Scottish society have changed and will continue to evolve in the future. We must build a policing service that meets the ambition of police reform, improving safety and wellbeing across the communities of Scotland. We must configure our people and services to address emerging demands, threats and risks in an increasingly global and virtual world.

The next decade of the reform journey will see us address the changing and ongoing demands on policing and the impact on our capabilities and shape. We will deliver a service with the necessary skills to address the growing and different demands of 21st century Scotland. This means developing a diverse workforce with the right balance of experience, skills, professionalism and capabilities.

By putting the needs of our citizens at the heart of shaping our services and through working collaboratively, we will improve outcomes for people, communities and places, playing our part in the wider process of public sector reform which began for policing nearly four years ago.

This strategy will be implemented through an organisation wide transformation portfolio that will deliver significant change and improvement over the coming years. We will become an evermore effective and sustainable organisation.

We want to engage and listen to views on our strategy as part of an ongoing conversation between policing, its workforce, its partners and the public. Our aim in setting a clear and long term strategic direction is to strengthen our operational and financial sustainability as well as increasing our relevance and legitimacy. Through this we will achieve our vision of sustained excellence in service and protection as we work, every day, to serve a changing Scotland.

Two handwritten signatures. The first signature is 'Phil Gormley' and the second is 'Andrew Flanagan'.

PHIL GORMLEY QPM, CHIEF CONSTABLE ANDREW FLANAGAN, SPA CHAIR

1

Executive Summary

1.1

Our Journey so Far

Policing in Scotland was formally established more than 200 years ago and is therefore one of the oldest public services in the world.

Over the last decade society has changed and so has policing. While policing's focus for many years was keeping people safe in the public space, the last decade saw significant reductions in predominantly public space recorded crime, particularly violent crime and crimes associated with antisocial behaviour. Although violence on the streets was reducing, levels of reporting of incidents within homes and private domains rose.

The way people were living their lives changed further over the last ten years, with a rise in the use of the Internet and more widespread use of technology leading to new ways of offending with more online crime. Policing has had to adapt to this ever changing landscape and operate effectively in both the public and private space with an increased focus most recently on safety online.

Scottish policing began a significant phase of change as the public sector faced significant budget pressures early in this decade alongside demands for greater effectiveness, adaptability and innovation. When the Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services published its findings in 2011 (The Christie Commission) it concluded that public services needed to work closely with individuals and communities to understand their needs, maximise talents and resources, support self-reliance and build resilience. It also placed a premium on prioritising preventative measures to reduce demand and reduce inequalities.

In 2011, it was determined that the best way to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of Scottish policing, in the context of reducing budgets and changing threats, was to move towards a single service model. The aims of this reform were influenced by the Commission's findings with the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 providing that:

The main purpose of policing is to improve the safety and well-being of persons, localities and communities in Scotland. The Police Service should work in collaboration with others where appropriate and should seek to achieve that main purpose by policing in a way which is accessible to, and engaged with, local communities; and, promotes measures to prevent crime, harm and disorder.

2013 saw the creation of the single service with the introduction of Police Scotland. This has been described by Audit Scotland as one of the largest and most complex reforms of the Scottish Public Sector since devolution, and the most significant change in policing since 1967.

The early successes of Police Scotland have seen the breaking down of historic boundaries that existed between legacy forces and the delivery of equal access to specialist policing services across the country.

However, the journey to date has not been straightforward and Police Scotland has not always met everyone's expectations. There are areas where improvement is undoubtedly required and the benefits envisaged through reform are yet to be fully realised.

IN EARLY 2016, Police Scotland committed to strategically focus across four key pillars of activity which reaffirmed the commitment to protecting the public, recognising the needs of diverse communities, achieving the right organisational culture and delivering a sustainable operating model.



The Strategic Police Priorities

In October 2016 the Scottish Government published the priorities for Scottish policing. These represent Scotland's high level ambitions for what it expects its police service to be. They are a central part of the policing mission.

The Priorities have set out the ambition of a service which carries the shared values of all of the public sector; a service which works at an international level to combat the threats and risks of modern times; brings national consistency, coordination and specialist resource; and most importantly, a service that holds local policing at its heart.

The achievement of these priorities rests with the SPA and Police Scotland working together to ensure the optimum use of resources to deliver excellent and continuously improving policing in line with these strategic aims. The current priorities are focused on seven themes: **localism, inclusion, prevention, response, collaborative working, accountability and adaptability.**

The priorities and our response to them can be found on page 57 of this document.

This ten year strategy is the foundation of our approach to fulfilling the Strategic Priorities in line with our statutory mission.

1.2

Our Approach

This strategy will clearly set out why we need to change, what we are trying to achieve and how we will do it.



In developing this strategy, we have considered the following:

- **Our purpose**, to improve the safety and wellbeing of people, places and communities in Scotland and **our vision**, which is sustained excellence in service and protection.
- **The current demands** on policing in terms of crimes, incidents and internal demand created as a result of our processes and structures.
- **How Scotland will continue to evolve to 2026** and what the implications are for policing. The key conclusion is that demand for our services will grow and we will need to be more agile and flexible to respond to threat, risk and harm in public, private and virtual spaces.
- **Our commitment to maintaining legitimacy and remaining relevant to changing needs.** We endeavour to meet communities' needs and expectations. This is a key focus moving forward and we understand that these can only be met by effective integration into community and partner networks.
- **Our whole workforce.** We are a people driven organisation, and have taken into account our workforce's views and futures through clear communication, engagement and workforce surveys. Our personnel are motivated by a strong desire to serve their communities and as an organisation we need to make sure that we look afresh at how we can motivate, enable, develop, empower and reward our people.

1.3

Why Change?

Policing in Scotland is complex. Its purpose is not limited to responding to crimes. It is also about working with people and communities to prevent crime, reduce harm and improve safety and wellbeing.

To do this effectively, we must understand and respond to the accelerating pace of change in society. As Scotland changes, in order to remain relevant, legitimate and effective, policing must do the same.

KEY POINTS

- The journey of police reform has started; much has been achieved but much still needs to be done to achieve long-term sustainability and our vision of **"sustained excellence in service and protection"**.
- Scotland's communities are growing and continuing to diversify. Policing must adapt to remain **relevant and legitimate**.
- The **needs** of people in society are changing. The scale and shape of **demand** is changing. Demands on policing are growing and increasingly focused towards addressing vulnerability and the consequences of inequalities.
- In order to meet the evolving needs of all of Scotland's communities we must create the capacity to focus on prevention and prioritise protection based on threat, risk and harm in the **public, private and virtual space**.
- We need to focus on ensuring that we have the skills, tools and capacity to address future needs rather than focusing on the size or structure of our organisation.
- Failure to invest in our people and infrastructure will **compromise our ability to deliver** the policing service that Scotland needs.

1.4

What will Change?

Policing is a vital public service which plays a critical role in building the resilience and wellbeing of our communities. The public expect the police to keep them safe and often turn to the service in times of crisis and need. Our objective therefore is to deliver a universal, accessible and evidence-based service enabling us to make key decisions to ensure that we focus our efforts on where the need is greatest.

This next phase of reform will require innovation at all levels throughout the service and a commitment to deliver service transformation over the coming decade. A long-term strategic approach will ensure that Scottish policing is sustainable and fit for the future, whilst playing its part in building a safer and stronger Scotland.

Our strategy is based on five key areas of focus: **Protection, Prevention, Communities, Knowledge and Innovation**. We will shape our services around the needs of the citizen.

KEY POINTS

- Our focus will be on **improving the impact** of our policing services by working more effectively with partners and the public to deliver **better outcomes for individuals and communities**.
- We will continue to drive improvements around protection based on a clear assessment of **threat, risk and harm**.
- We will make productive use of all resources to create capacity to focus on **prevention**, addressing **enduring problems facing communities**.
- We will demonstrate **leadership** in public service improvement and innovation by using the **knowledge and insight** our people have gained to influence and inform. We will work collectively and in collaboration with partner organisations and communities to **improve and develop new services**.
- We will constantly examine our performance and **innovate** to remain sustainable and effective.
- Despite a changing world, our values of **fairness, integrity and respect** will remain constant, as will our commitment to a **rights based approach** to policing, which will be based on maintaining public consent.

Throughout this change our values will remain constant.

We will continue to deliver policing based on **fairness, integrity and respect**, enshrining these values in our decision making and behaviours.

Alongside these values, we recognise the police service is unique in the public service landscape, having coercive powers and the ability to remove peoples liberty. Our direction will emphasise our commitment to rights-based approaches, anchoring our duties in the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012. This strategy is based on our core commitment to maintaining public trust and consent - this is key to our continued effectiveness, relevance and legitimacy.

We will develop our approaches in the following areas:

1

Protection

Based on threat, risk and harm

We will continue to drive improvement across our approaches to detecting crime, protecting vulnerable people, responding to incidents, maintaining order and ensuring national security.

A central part of the role of the police is to investigate crime, and report to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS). Policing operates as part of the wider public sector and as part of the Scottish justice system, working with partners such as COPFS to keep Scotland safe from crime and provide victims and witnesses with the support and service they deserve.

Our strategy will ensure that we continue to deliver these services effectively and efficiently while adapting to meet new threats and demands.

2

Prevention

Tackling crime, inequality and enduring problems facing communities

We will further develop prevention driven approaches with our partners to address enduring problems facing communities. We will maintain a key role in supporting vulnerable individuals and communities. Working with partners, we will intervene with them at an early stage to address high impact issues such as domestic abuse, substance misuse, sexual offending and mental health.

3

Communities

Focus on localism, diversity and the virtual world

We will support an increasingly diverse set of communities, whether defined by place, identity or virtual connection, to increase their resilience. Our society will be stronger through a collective responsibility for safety, security and wellbeing. Our commitment to communities will also include listening more and responding to their diverse needs as well as working positively with other services to support communities. We will continue to strengthen our approaches to community engagement and participation, ensuring that local services are effectively planned in partnership with communities.

4

Knowledge

Informing the development of better services

We believe we have a duty to share knowledge. We will build on our frontline experience and use our information and insight to influence, inform and work with partners, government and the public to collectively develop and improve the services to meet public needs more effectively and efficiently.

5

Innovation

Dynamic, adaptable and sustainable

We will constantly examine the nature and effectiveness of our services. We will establish an innovation capability to learn from best practice and design new services in partnership whilst constantly preparing for emerging issues in the future.

1.5

How will We Achieve this?

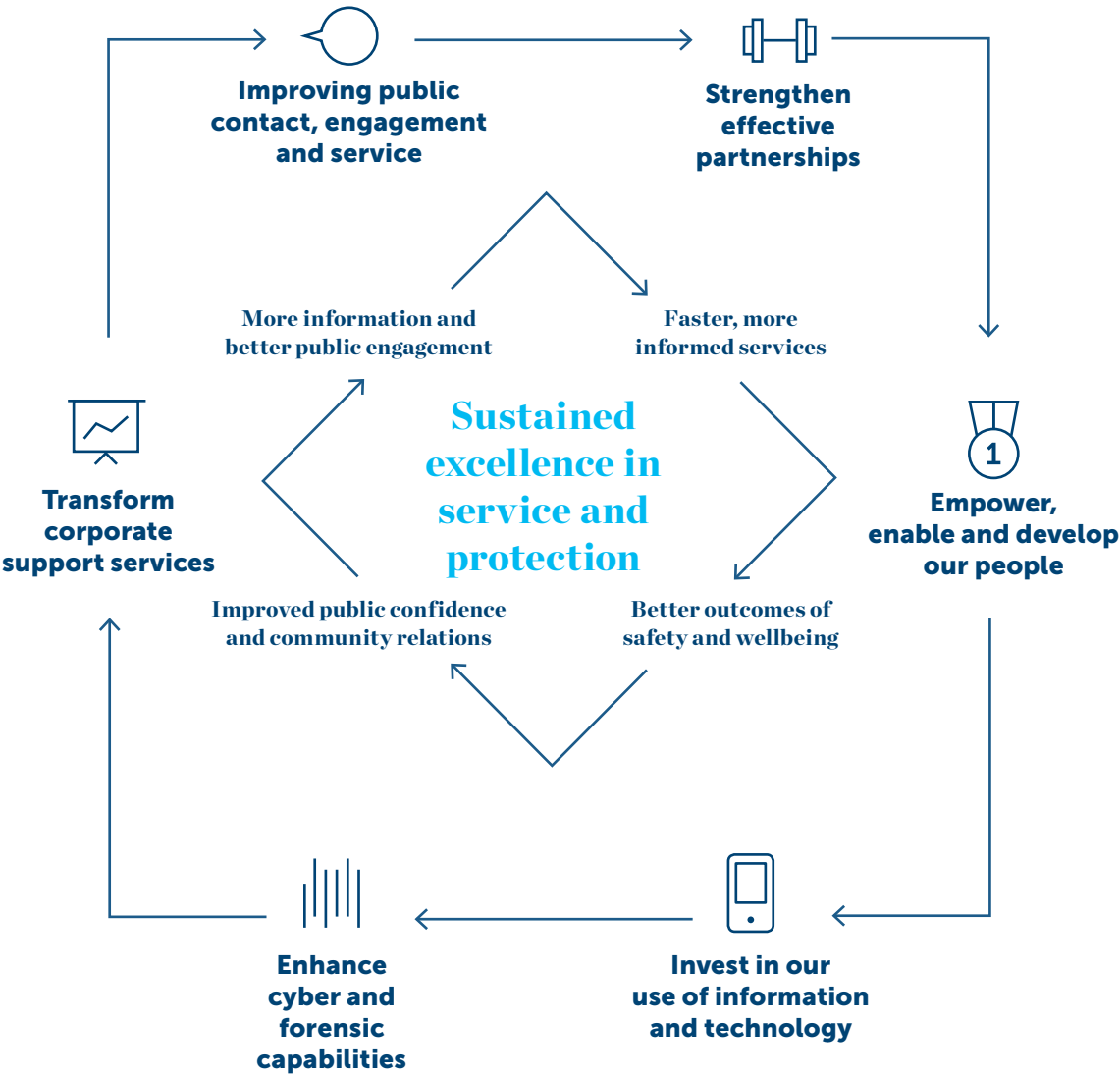
This ten year strategy sets out the Strategic Objectives we will focus on to deliver service improvement, continued relevance to communities and individuals, maintained public consent, enhanced legitimacy and financial sustainability. We believe that by focussing action across six Strategic Objectives, we can best fulfil the Strategic Police Priorities and successfully transform Scottish policing services for the better. We will base our approach to assessing performance and managing risk around the strategy on the achievement of these Strategic Objectives.

KEY POINTS

- We will **transform the way that people can contact us and how we resolve** their enquiries. This contact and resolution model will enable us to recognise and respond appropriately to the needs of individuals and communities, with a continued commitment to localism.
- We will **modernise our operating model** to ensure we achieve maximum impact with our available resources. We will enhance our culture to empower and support effective decision making at a local and national level.
- We will **strengthen partnership working**, identifying areas of shared improvement and opportunities to provide value for money services.
- We will continue to recognise and invest in the **development and wellbeing of our workforce**.
- We will strengthen the **diversity** of our whole workforce and **change the mix** of skills and experience to address evolving needs.
- We will introduce **technology to enable workforce efficiency** and operational effectiveness, using analytics, better quality data and wider sources to improve decision making.
- We will scale and change our **cyber capability** to respond to emerging cyber related crimes and we will continue to invest in Scotland’s forensic science capabilities.
- We will **transform our corporate services**, improving processes and systems to support and enable a modern national service.

Our responsibilities for policing in Scotland will not change, but the way in which we provide policing services will.

OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



Our Strategy on a Page

WE WILL FOCUS ON

1

Protection

Based on threat, risk and harm

2

Prevention

Tackling crime, inequality and enduring problems facing communities

3

Communities

Focus on localism, diversity and the virtual world

4

Knowledge

Informing the development of better services

5

Innovation

Dynamic, adaptable and sustainable

OUR PURPOSE

To improve the safety and wellbeing of people, places and communities in Scotland.

OUR VISION

Sustained
excellence in
service and
protection

OUR VALUES

Fairness
Integrity
Respect

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS: OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



2

Our Long Term Strategy



2.1

Why Must We Continue to Change?

To make informed decisions about the future of policing, we need to understand how Scotland will have evolved by 2026.

Although we cannot predict the next ten years with certainty, there are elements that are more likely to happen than others.

No matter what changes lie ahead, the public will always expect us to protect them from harm, and our services must be adaptable to society's complex and diverse needs.



Scottish policing has undergone major change. Despite the challenges, our communities have seen consistent and excellent local operational and specialist policing. While we have been changing as an organisation, so too has society around us. These factors require us to adjust the way policing operates and how we prioritise our resources over the next ten years towards 2026.

CHIEF CONSTABLE PHIL GORMLEY QPM.

We want people, communities and our workforce to have their voices heard in shaping policing over the coming decade and we will engage and listen as this strategy develops over the years ahead.

Communities should influence decisions that affect them and they need to trust the decisions that will be taken about the future direction of policing. We are committed to engaging, listening, learning and adapting. As a responsive national service locally delivered, we will ensure that our resources and efforts are focussed on the needs and aspirations of people and places and the improvement of their safety and wellbeing. We also want to empower our workforce to take the right action when they need to – we are committed to building a culture of effective decision making at the level closest to those affected, trusting and supporting our people to do the right thing.

We are entering the next phase of reform. As the pace and complexity of change continues to increase around us, our focus must now be on working with others, including communities themselves, to improve outcomes for people.

We need to organise policing services around the changing needs of the citizen and emerging areas of threat, harm and risk, while fulfilling the full purpose and vocation of policing over the long term.

New threats and demands mean that we must create a more diverse, multi-skilled and experienced workforce that can operate effectively across the public, private and virtual space.

Our focus for the future will be to ensure that we deploy this different mix of people and capabilities dynamically and flexibly. We must be judged by what we do to improve outcomes and the impact we have, not the size or structure of our organisation.

The Demands We Face Every Day

Understanding Policing Demand

In developing our strategy we have looked at the current demand for policing these demands can be described as:

Reactive Demand; responding to 101 and 999 calls, dealing with crime, supporting people at times of crisis and vulnerability.

Proactive and Preventative Demand; patrolling communities, managing offenders, policing events and festivals and working with communities, schools and other organisations to increase safety and improve wellbeing.

Internal Demand; the type of demands that exist within our organisation, processes, protocols, administrative tasks and bureaucracy.

Our demand analysis has identified key findings and areas of demand, these include:

- **Crime figures are not an accurate measure of demand** only 1 in 5 incidents attended by police result in a crime being recorded. Many of the most time consuming incidents relate to concerns for persons, missing/ absconded persons and dealing with sudden deaths. Considering recorded crime in isolation is therefore not an accurate measure of demand on policing services.
- **Vulnerability and people in crisis:** 1 in 4 people suffer from a mental health issue in any given year. As a result a proportion of these people come to the attention of the Police for various reasons. The most common marker on the police vulnerable persons database is mental health. As a result of attending various types of incidents last year officers recorded around 57,000 mental health entries on the database. Police Scotland investigates in excess of 30,000 missing persons every year.
- **Domestic incidents:** These are the most resource intensive type of incident attended by local policing officers. Domestic crimes account for 26% of all violent crime in Scotland.
- **The reporting of sexual crime is increasing:** Recorded crime statistics suggest that sexual offending continues to be a growing problem across Scotland with year on year increases since 2010/11. Media focus on sexual offending and increased confidence in reporting may account

for the increase in reported crimes, which includes historic reporting.

- **Cyber Crime:** These crimes are a growing enabler to offending across Scotland. The majority of cyber crimes reported related to sending messages that were grossly offensive or of indecent, obscene or menacing character via text message or on a social media platform. The Home Office Review of Cyber Crime (2013) stated that ‘under-reporting of both cyber dependent and cyber enabled crimes is an issue amongst the general public and businesses’, meaning that Police Scotland is unable to quantify the true scale of this issue.
- **Complex investigations:** The service faces significant demand in respect of investigations into serious crimes such as murder, non-recent abuse and Serious and Organised Crime. Our analysis has highlighted that quantifying some of this demand is difficult, however its impact cannot be underestimated.
- **Major events:** As Scotland’s international profile as a world class location for major events grows, demand on the police service will also grow. The current scale of our commitment both to planning for these events and policing them effectively is significant.
- **Counter terrorism:** The national threat level from terrorism remains at SEVERE. This critical area of focus is a growing area of demand for policing. The Contest Strategy aims to reduce the risk of a terrorist threat through the 4Ps – Protect, Prepare, Pursue and Prevent.
- **Internal demand:** Opportunities exist to reduce levels of internal demand. A primary enabler of this will be through the implementation of national ICT systems and processes, reducing duplication of effort and releasing additional capacity.

CALLS TO THE POLICE

7063 calls

On average are received every day. 1,159 of these are emergency 999 calls.*

This leads to

4430 incidents

being recorded*

Many of the most time consuming relate to concerns for persons, missing persons and dealing with sudden deaths.

84 people

Are reported missing every day.

CRIME AND VULNERABILITY

1 in 4 people

Suffer from a mental health issue every year.

157 Incidents are created every day on the vulnerable persons database relating to mental health.

1,138 crimes

are recorded every day*

158 domestic incidents

Are recorded every day and take up the most time per incident in local policing. *

* Data recorded as per 2015/16 Management Information Reports

TRENDS

Recording of domestic crimes has increased to 26% of all violent crime in Scotland.

Recorded sexual crime is increasing and has been since 2010.

Cyber crime is growing and changing. This includes sexual crime, fraud and extortion.

Alcohol is a prevalent factor in many crimes.



The Demands We May Face in the Future

Society is Changing

We understand that the demand on policing is changing, but also that society is changing. Scotland’s population is growing in size and is getting older¹.

It is expected to grow to 5.5 million over the next decade with the bulk of population growth from international migration. Communities will be far more diverse, changing in their make-up, language and cultural norms.

Neighbourhood and virtual communities will continue to change and evolve with people more globally connected than ever before. We will be increasingly active in virtual communities, developing more relationships of interest online.

In some communities, social and economic changes will lead to social isolation, which may lead to people becoming less visible to the police, more isolated, more difficult to engage with and less capable of dealing with problems as a community.

IMPACT ON POLICING

As our communities become more diverse, our people will require the skills and training to recognise and respond to cultural and language requirements. Listening and working with communities and partners will be key to understanding and responding to needs. We will also have to adapt to more virtual living and find new ways to engage with people.

¹ *Projected population of Scotland - National Records of Scotland (2015).*

² *Social and welfare statistics – Scottish Government (2016).*

³ *Alzheimer’s Society data.*

⁴ *McAra, L and McVie, S (2015) The Reproduction of Poverty, Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2014) Housing and Low Income in Scotland, Action for Children (2010), neglecting the issue: impact, causes and responses to child neglect in the UK.*

Inequality and Health

Income inequality may continue to increase, with some predictions suggesting the top 10% earning population will earn more than the bottom 40% combined². Inequality will continue to be linked to poorer outcomes for those in the most deprived areas.

People will live longer and the average age of the population will rise. More people will suffer from dementia, with the Alzheimer’s Society predicting a rise to over one million by 2025 across the UK.³ Mental health issues will be more common, as will isolation through living alone particularly for elderly women and young men.

The demand from missing and vulnerable people will rise from already significant levels. This demand often comes at a time when resources are under pressure and other service providers are unavailable.

Alcohol consumption will continue to be prevalent, especially in the home, with more alcohol bought in shops and online.

Drug usage will also continue to be a persistent and complex issue and people are likely to experiment with more and new psychoactive substances. Drug and alcohol abuse is likely to remain substantial for around 2% of the population (aged 15 to 64), with a prevalence of problematic drug use in areas of high deprivation. Crime and inequality will continue to be linked, with more crime and victimisation occurring within deprived areas.

IMPACT ON POLICING

The influence of alcohol and drug misuse will continue to influence crime and society. Continued inequality will place a high demand on policing and other public services, along with demand associated with mental health and vulnerability. Deprived areas will continue to remain disproportionately affected by crime.⁴

More preventative approaches will be required to intervene at an early stage to reduce the potential for harm and manage demand on services. This is not unique to policing and directly links to the wider needs of public service reform.

Changing Nature of Crime and Incidents

Crime types will remain similar, but will happen in new ways and through different channels. Cyber enabled and cyber dependent crime is anticipated to grow in scope, frequency, and impact, surpassing all other crime types.

The use of the internet by people of all ages within Scotland’s communities and businesses is already a way of life. The change in our lifestyles provides criminals with a means to commit crime anywhere in the world, including the sexual exploitation of children, widespread economic crime, cyber-attacks on businesses and the radicalisation of individuals by terrorist organisations.

In effect, this means that criminals anywhere in the world can target a victim in Scotland and similarly criminals in Scotland can target victims across the world

The use of smartphones, cloud computing and other technologies will have created a worldwide virtual community where criminals can operate with no regard for international boundaries or legislation. The Internet also affords criminals a level of anonymity that has not been possible in years gone by.

Cyber enabled, sexually motivated crime will have increased, particularly in relation to adolescent females and children. This has led and will continue to lead to increased ability for cyber sexual grooming, proliferation of indecent images of children and transnational child sexual abuse.

Serious and organised crime groups will have transformed. They will have moved away from traditional methods to running their activities online. Almost all of their communications will be secure through encryption and they will be able to make use of technology such as 3D printing to produce materials used for criminal intent.

The terrorism threat level is consistently ‘severe’, meaning attacks are highly likely. This is likely to continue.

IMPACT ON POLICING

The future workforce must scale and develop their capabilities to meet both the new and traditional crime demands, in order to protect people and communities. As the nature of criminality changes, this will impact on the relevance of some types of forensic science. These changes will also challenge us all to get the best from science and technology in order to support the effectiveness of policing and the delivery of justice in Scotland.



A Changing Workforce

The working age population will have increased by over 100,000 and it is likely that people will be working later in life due to increased life expectancy and the removal of the default retirement age. Inequality in the workplace will have reduced, and women will have continued to make improvements in their social and economic positions, largely due to better access to childcare provision, education and employment.

Millennials (or Generation Y) will have become the largest group within the workforce and will have different priorities⁵. Few will plan to stay in one career for life, so employers will have to change how they attract and retain talent. Employees who enter, exit and then re-enter a single employer will be commonplace by 2026.

IMPACT ON POLICING

Individuals will desire a more flexible working environment, which supports multiple routes into the service and often shorter term and more varied careers’ secondments to increase experience, and options to re-enter with additional skills and experience.

The changing profile and expectations of the working age population presents both challenges and opportunities for policing. With the potential for four generations within our workforce over the coming decade, we need to draw on the experience and talent of our people while making the right decisions about the roles most suited to the workforce at different ages. We will address these issues in the development of our workforce plan.

The Environment is Changing

Climate change will continue at pace. Summer months are likely to be hotter and dryer, on average 1°C warmer, while winters are likely to be wetter and on average 0.5°C warmer. Heavy rainfall, storms and floods have increased in Scotland, and sea levels are rising – increasing risk and disruption across society⁶.

IMPACT ON POLICING

Environmental changes will place greater demand on services. In 2015, Storm Frank resulted in over 740 calls to the police alone. This requires coordinated responses and resilient communities to respond and recover from such events.

⁵ Deloitte HR Trends 2016.

⁶ ‘Climate Change Risk Assessment’, ‘Key Issues for Scotland Environment’ - Scottish Government (2012/2010).

Changing Technology

Individuals and communities across Scotland will become increasingly networked. Over 90% of the population will own a smart device.

People will have the capabilities to be online 24/7, creating virtual communities, with less face-to-face social interaction. Social media will be ingrained in daily lives. Evidence or data will exist in huge quantities, and will be readily available.

People will expect and demand ‘anytime anywhere’ access to information. Virtual personal assistants and smart advisors will support everyday life choices. 100% of Scotland’s data is likely to be stored digitally and in ‘the cloud’. Data sensors will be built into everyday devices, both collecting and exchanging data without human input.

It is likely that wearable technology will be commonplace. Personal analytics will help people achieve objectives in areas like personal healthcare (tracking fitness), safety (alertness and focus), and financial management.

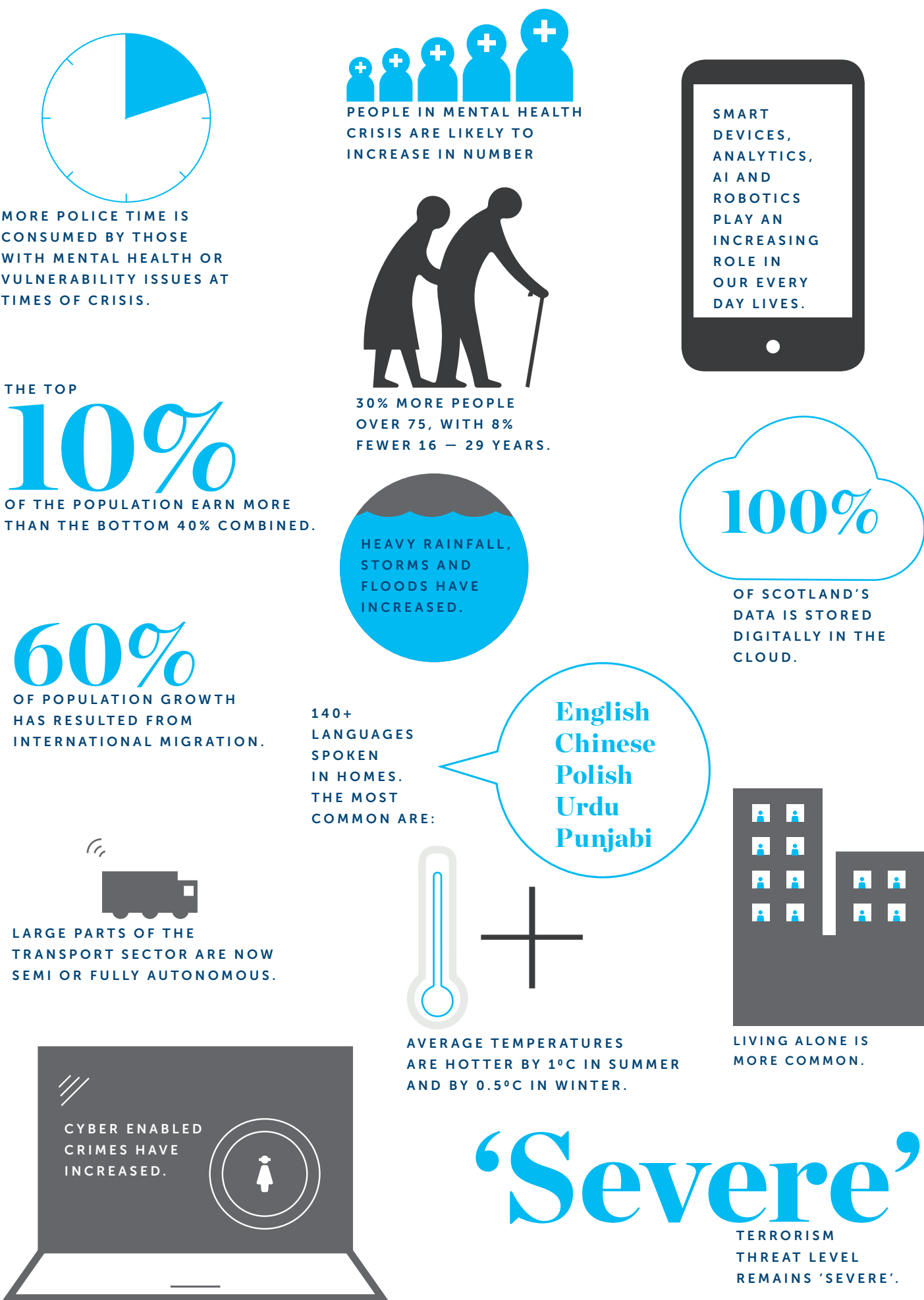
Artificially intelligent agents are likely to play a trusted role in our lives. Advanced chat-bots are likely to provide an alternative to human-to-human interaction, and process automation is likely to have standardised and automated manual processes.

Virtual reality will enable complex simulations in medicine, training, entertainment, product marketing, virtual shopping, and travel experiences. We will be able to talk and interact with anybody, anywhere, as if they are in the same room, with augmented/mixed reality now being heavily used.

IMPACT ON POLICING

Technology will change the way we live our lives and the way crimes are committed and as a Service we must respond. Advances in technology and data also provide opportunities for preventing crime and improving operational effectiveness. Technology will also introduce opportunities to introduce technology and improved data to the workplace to enable a more efficient and effective workforce.

WHAT MIGHT SCOTLAND LOOK LIKE IN 2026?



2.2

What will Change?

As Scotland continues to change, we must keep pace. Our focus will be on improving the effect of our policing services and working more intelligently with partners and the public to deliver improved outcomes for individuals and communities.

Whilst our approaches will mature and develop, our values of fairness, integrity and respect and commitment to a rights based approach to policing will remain constant and be the basis on which we deliver these services.



We will focus on five areas:

1

Protection

Based on threat, risk and harm

We will continue to drive improvement across our approaches to detecting crime, protecting vulnerable people, responding to incidents, maintaining order and ensuring national security.

A central part of the role of the police is to investigate crime and report to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS). Policing operates as part of the wider public sector and as part of the Scottish justice system, working with partners such as COPFS to keep Scotland safe from crime, disorder and danger.

Our strategy will ensure that we continue to deliver these services effectively and efficiently while adapting to meet new threats and demands.

2

Prevention

Tackling crime, inequality and enduring problems facing communities

We will further develop prevention driven approaches to address enduring problems facing communities. We will focus on prevention, early intervention, early resolution and diversion to reduce inequalities and improve life chances.

We will maintain a key role in supporting vulnerable individuals and communities in Scotland. We will work with others to improve health and wellbeing in justice settings, focusing on mental health and addictions. In doing so, we will embrace a decision making model based on threat, harm and risk that will ensure our activities are prioritised and carry the maximum effect both at an individual and community level.

We will do this by making effective use of our own data and insight, integrating that of others' and by increased coordination with partner agencies in order to

intervene at an early stage. We need to be in a position where our resources can focus preventative support on high-impact issues like vulnerability and mental health, domestic abuse and drug/alcohol abuse.

3

Communities

Focus on localism, diversity and the virtual world

We will enable and encourage communities and individuals to build resilience, recognising that our society will be stronger through a collective responsibility for safety, security and wellbeing. We will support our communities to be safe, cohesive and sustainable places, where people respect and support each other. We will work with people to understand local needs, whether geographically, demographically, or virtually, to increase their individual and collective resilience.

This is not about stepping away from any responsibility to prevent crime or catch the perpetrators of crime. Instead, on top of our core services, we will provide services and information to allow individuals and communities to increase their resilience. We will get smarter about the way we work with and deliver services to communities, supporting them to reduce demand and enhance safety. We will listen more to communities, and respond to diverse needs. This will also support us to focus our expertise on the most serious issues.

Delivering all of the above will require us to embrace an operating and decision making model based on a clear assessment of threat, harm, risk and effect, with critical prioritisation and decision making being a key foundation of this strategy. We are also aware that decision making in a changing environment – particularly around the private and virtual domains – is likely to require access to new sources of insight and evidence.

We will continue to strengthen our approaches to community engagement and participation, ensuring that local services are effectively planned in partnership with communities.

4

Knowledge

Informing the development of better services

We believe we have a duty to share the knowledge that we gain. We will build on our frontline information to influence, inform and work with partners, government and the public to develop and improve the services required to meet public needs.

Our objective is to provide a transparent evidence base that will enable ourselves, government and partner agencies to collectively become more effective and efficient. We want to share the knowledge and insight we gain from our frontline experience to improve services and outcomes, and we want to learn from our partners as we work alongside them.

5

Innovation

Dynamic, adaptable and sustainable

We also believe that we have a duty to constantly examine the nature and effectiveness of the services we deliver, both on our own and in collaboration with others.

To that end, we will establish an innovation capability that will focus on the following:

- Using internal and external learning and success stories to continually improve our services.
- Collaborating with partners to design and test new services.
- Identifying opportunities to work with new partners or expand existing partner networks.
- Anticipating the key shifts in public behaviour that will impact enduring issues to ensure that collectively we are prepared to address them. Our front-line presence means that we are well placed to pick up and interpret any lead indicators.

2.3

How will We Achieve this?

Delivering these ambitions will require significant change in the way we configure our people and our services.

Our responsibilities for policing in Scotland will not change, but the way in which we provide policing services will be smarter.

We will need to create the environment, culture and capacity to deliver these sustained changes by working with our people and in partnership. Delivery of this strategy will provide enhanced capability and increased capacity which will allow for a more effective frontline and ability to focus on the right activities.



Scottish Crime Campus - Gartcosh

Our responsibilities for policing in Scotland will not change, but the way in which we provide policing services will.



2.3.1

Improving Public Contact, Engagement and Service

We will continue to develop ways to make it easier to contact us and provide the right response.

KEY POINTS

- We will recognise and respond to the individual needs of victims and the vulnerable. We will also respond to the diverse needs of individuals and communities.
- Key to this will be transforming the way we communicate with people through our contact and resolution model. By creating new ways of engagement, we will focus on improving trust and confidence and promoting community engagement and resilience.
- Our primary focus is on the needs of the public and effectively prioritising their needs in order to effectively deliver our services.
- Creating a dynamic deployment model that reflects demand and need will be critical, as will developing new approaches to threat, harm and risk.
- We will work on the principle that police officers will perform operational roles. We will ensure that this principle is applied across our police officer workforce, strengthening operational policing across Scotland.



Making it Easier for the Public to Contact Us and Delivering the Right Response

Effective processes will determine how we resolve, refer or respond to incidents in the first instance and will allow us to channel our resources where they are needed most.

We will prioritise the most vulnerable, and respond faster to the public, using technology where appropriate. This will allow our people to be better deployed to where they are most needed.

Modernising our Service Delivery and Operating Model

Our strategy and the associated investment programme will deliver greater operational capacity to deliver better service to the public. We will modernise our operating model to ensure that we achieve maximum impact with our enhanced capacity. Our current operational model is based largely around legacy locations, divisional administrative structures determined in 2012, legacy ICT, infrastructure and ways of working. Our focus for the future is to prioritise prevention, better matching resources to demand, threat, harm and risk. We will be able to deploy our workforce more flexibly due to enhanced mobility, better digital capability and partner engagement. We will enhance public accessibility through improved use of technology and our estate function.

To further enhance our capacity, we will work on the principle that police officers will perform operational roles. We will ensure that this principle is applied across our police officer workforce, strengthening operational policing across Scotland.



Promoting Community Engagement and Resilience

We will recognise that communities are no longer defined by geographical boundaries but are also virtual and demographic; they will be more diverse than ever before. We will work with communities and individuals to increase their resilience. We will provide insight, advice and guidance – and direct them towards tools e.g. social collaboration – that builds their resilience and reduces their vulnerability to crime. This directly builds on the intention of the Christie Commission to enable people and communities to achieve positive outcomes in their own lives.

Promoting resilience within communities will enable us to prioritise our response resource on high threat and risk incidents, strengthening our relationships with communities across Scotland.

Our communities should be able to influence decisions that affect them and they need to trust the decisions taken about the future direction of policing. We are committed to engaging, listening, learning and adapting.

Central to our approach to all aspects of policing and working with partners across diverse communities, is keeping children and young people safe. Engagement with children in their early years will influence their perspective on policing for the rest of their lives.

Driving Improvement in Our Performance

We will have a broader understanding of success, with public confidence as a key measure of our performance. We will focus our services on delivering public satisfaction at a local and national level and provide a more complete understanding of our impact. This will include our impact on communities and enduring issues. When assessing our performance, we will also maintain traditional measures of crime and police activity, so that we do not lose sight of our performance in delivering our core services. We will enable a cycle of continuous performance improvement, identifying the root causes of problems, implementing informed solutions, evaluating results and learning from best practice.

We will develop a performance framework that assesses progress towards the delivery of this strategy as well as our response to crime, harm and disorder.

2.3.2

Strengthening Effective Partnerships

KEY POINTS



- We will share data, resources training and ideas. We will adopt and promote best practice and develop new shared services, including use of estate.
- We will use the knowledge that we gain to influence, inform and work with partners in order to develop and improve the services required to meet public needs. We wish to build effective networks in order to improve outcomes and reduce cost.
- In recognition of the increased diversity in Scotland, we will look to build partnerships for specific communities at a national and local level.



We will work with partners across the Scottish public sector to ensure an effective emergency response to incidents and events is provided by the most appropriate organisation.

Enhance Partnership Working

The Christie Commission clearly outlined an objective of working effectively with other organisations to improve outcomes (e.g. social and economic wellbeing) for the people of Scotland. To do this we will continue to explore and enhance our partnership network, at a local, national and international level. We will support, coordinate and integrate activities across all our areas of activity.

We will work in partnership across the Scottish public sector to ensure effective emergency responses to incidents and events are provided by the most appropriate organisation. This provides the best opportunity to improve long-term outcomes for individuals and communities.

We will build on our collective experience and use our information and insight to influence, inform and work with partners, government and the public to develop and improve the services required to meet changing public needs. By drawing on partner knowledge and insight, frontline officers will better understand demand and hot spots. Using our network, we will promote the sharing of back-office functions to drive efficiencies. We will aim for the compatibility of systems, information and effective resource allocation through the pooling of assets and infrastructure.

A Learning Organisation

We will continually review and improve our services, using evidence from elsewhere, best practice from within, and investment in innovation.

We will continue to improve the way that we work and learn together. We will ensure our service delivery is on a par with high performing organisations within our policing and public sector network.

We will continually improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our services – enabling us to influence others as much as we learn from others, and be open to hearing and learning about mistakes, while encouraging corporate and individual transparency and accountability.

We will highlight and build on success stories from within our organisation – sharing local successes for the benefit of the whole organisation.

2.3.3

Empowering and Developing Our People and Culture

KEY POINTS



- Our people will drive the success of Scottish policing; we must recognise and value their development and wellbeing.
- We must strengthen the diversity of our whole workforce as well as change the workforce mix to address the evolving needs and complexities of our diverse communities.
- We will change our workforce size and composition to provide the right balance of resources and capacity across the organisation. To do so, we need to offer new flexible career paths and new contribution-based systems of recognition and reward.
- We will invest in the continuous development of our whole workforce and create new routes to enter, exit and re-enter.

WE WILL DEVELOP leadership at all levels. Effective leadership in policing is critical and enabling our people to use their discretion will support good frontline decision making.

To enable our workforce to achieve their full potential at all levels, we will work to maintain a culture that empowers and supports effective decision making and development.

We will ensure that we invest to enhance the capability of our senior officers and executives, embedding approaches, which value team working and effective problem solving, while building a leadership team that operates effectively across public, private and 3rd sector networks.

Our workforce plan

We will develop a workforce plan that clearly identifies what capabilities we require and how we will attract, retain, develop and realise these capabilities. We will support our people to deliver an effective service.

We will increase the flexibility of the terms and conditions for both existing members and new roles with the organisation.

New threats and demands mean that we must create a sustainable and more diverse, multi-skilled and experienced workforce that can operate effectively in the public, private and virtual space.

Our focus for the future will be to ensure that we deploy this different mix of people and capabilities dynamically and flexibly.

DAY IN THE LIFE

Hi! I'm PC Sophie Robertson...



2016

I've been a Constable with Police Scotland for 3 years now, however I first joined the police as a Special Constable while I was at college. I love how much my job allows me to interact with the public and knowing I am helping lots of people on a daily basis is extremely rewarding, no two days are ever the same!

I get frustrated at work by how difficult it is to access multiple computer systems, especially as we have to go back to the office to do it. I also feel that we just react to what has happened when we could be better at helping and protecting victims.

Our technology is slow and outdated and I use my own phone a lot as it gives me maps and access to social media.

2026

I've been a Constable with Police Scotland for 13 years now however I first joined the police as a Special Constable while I was at college.

While I was a Special Constable I learned about the police and gained in life experience. I also gained a recognised policing qualification. I feel I am valued at work and have access to technology and equipment that allows me to be efficient and work smartly.

I love how much my job allows me to interact with the public and knowing I am helping lots of people on a daily basis is extremely rewarding, no two days are ever the same!



2016

LOCATION

- Public Police Office, Scotland
- Foot patrol, office based for paperwork and systems updates.



OPERATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Limited

CYBER KNOWLEDGE

Low

CONFIDENCE WITH TECHNOLOGY

Medium

KEY TASKS

- Community engagement, e.g. attending community meetings;
- Carry out follow up enquiries on recent cases;
- Targeted patrols in high crime areas;
- Responding to and investigating emerging calls;
- Responding to questions from the public submitted by email and letter;
- Keeping order at public events;
- Managing enquiries for current investigations.

CHALLENGES

- Limited technology and duplication of input leads to large amounts of paperwork at the end of shifts.

PC Sophie Robertson

1345—1400: I arrive at the station, change into my uniform and collect my protective equipment.

1400—1415: I attend my team briefing delivered by my Sergeant. The Sergeant uses a PowerPoint presentation and printed notes from the previous shift. The information and intelligence provided is limited and some of it is out of date. The Sergeant tasks the team with actions, I have to attend a Community Council Meeting later in the day. The team informally discuss some of the problem areas and people of their respective beats.

1430—1530: My colleague and I need to find a computer that allows us access to police systems to collate the statistics for the Community Council Meeting later today. It is difficult to find one because early shift are finishing their paperwork.

1530—1830: My colleague and I leave the station on foot patrol and walk to the High Street to tackle a problem with speeding cars. We nearly get there when we are tasked by the Control Room to go to a call, as all our response colleagues are busy.

When we get there we see a man bleeding from his head, he says he has been assaulted by another man who he recognised from a local pub, but did not know his name. I give basic first aid and request an ambulance to ensure the man gets professional treatment. I think the man might be suffering from concussion because he appears confused. I write down the details of the incident in my notebook and the man is taken to hospital in the ambulance. I carry out some basic enquiries and try to find out what happened, no one wants to tell me so I start looking for CCTV.

1830—1845: I call the Local Council CCTV operator from my airwave terminal to check if they cover the place where the man was assaulted and they confirmed they do. CCTV need a form emailed over before they will provide me with a CCTV disc, which I will then need to travel across the city to collect. It will need to be done back at the office.

1845—1900: My neighbour and I walk to the Church hall for the Community Council Meeting buying a sandwich on the way knowing it is quick to eat, we definitely won't have a break now.

1900—2100: The meeting begins with me providing my crime statistics. I am asked questions regarding what the police are doing to tackle the local speeding issue, I say we were there earlier. Only a few people came to the meeting, the issues they raise are limited and not really representative of the whole community.

2100—0000: When I arrive at the station I update my Sergeant on the meeting and my incident. I wait 20 minutes to get on a computer to submit all of the, often duplicated, information for the assault. I try to call the hospital for a medical update on the complainer, but I am told to submit a paper form to reception during office hours. I try to contact the complainer to find out how he is, but the phone isn't answered.

The enquiry for the assault will continue for weeks as the processes are cumbersome, the victim cannot be contacted and the suspect is yet to be identified. I want to help people but feel frustrated.

2026

LOCATION

- Public Hub, Scotland
- Foot patrol, mobile based for paperwork and systems updates.



OPERATIONAL EXPERIENCE

High

CYBER KNOWLEDGE

Medium

CONFIDENCE WITH TECHNOLOGY

High

KEY TASKS

- Community engagement, e.g. visiting schools to discuss various issues;
- Prevention — Carrying out follow up enquiries on recent cases to prevent it happening again;
- Targeted patrols focussed on harm prevention;
- Responding to and investigating emerging calls;
- Responding to questions from the public as they come in on my police social media account; and
- Working in partnership with local services and criminal justice agencies.

CHALLENGES

- There has been lots of change over the last ten years. We have had to integrate with all our partners, which has been tough and keeping up with technological changes and upgrades can be confusing.

PC Sophie Robertson

1345—1400: I arrive at the local civic hub and change into my uniform, which includes my smart devices and embedded body-worn cameras. The system automatically registers me on duty.

1400—1415: I attend the briefing led by my Sergeant and Community Safety Team Leader which contains up to date information regarding current joint initiatives and accurate, actionable intelligence. I am shown a map of "hot spots" informed by accurate data collected by all partner areas and this is sent directly to each of the team's mobile devices.

1430—1440: I am patrolling with my regular colleague, a community warden with extensive local knowledge. We are attending a Community Council Meeting later, the warden lives in this area and knows many of the people attending. We plan on patrolling the hot spots shown on our device.

1440—1700: We leave the hub on foot patrol, we walk past the High Street, which used to have a speeding issue, until we worked with partners and collectively took a preventative approach to tackle the problem. Whilst on foot patrol we are the nearest unit to attend a call of a male with an injury to his head. He tells us he was assaulted by a man from a nearby pub.

I give first aid but ask for an ambulance as the bleeding does not stop and the man appears concussed. The paramedics attend and carry out a full street triage and treat the male on-board, stitching the wound.

The medical notes are sent by secure email direct by the ambulance to my device. We arrange for a member of the man's family to come and take him home, we record a video statement of him telling us what happened.

1700—1800: Whilst waiting for the family member, I create a report and automatically upload the injuries of the man from my body worn camera to the comprehensive crime reporting system which can be made available at any point for evidential purposes across Criminal Justice partners. I access the local Council CCTV app on my device and observe the assault has been captured. I download the footage I need. The suspect has been recognised by facial recognition software and I send out a live time briefing alert across the division, the Police National Computer system is updated automatically. The suspect is quickly arrested by another local team.

1800—1900: I am able to have some food and drink at a local café, talking with the customers inside.

1900-2100: The Community Council Meeting takes place at the Hub with people from all our partners present. The meeting is live streamed to improve accessibility and many attendees and watchers have questions, for which we are able to come up with creative joint solutions. Following the meeting a summary goes out to the community via social media.

2100-2130: I complete the abbreviated custody report for the arrested male, and link all the evidence which is available on the shared Criminal Justice computer system.

2130-0000: We go back out on foot patrol in the community, targeting our hot spots and priority high harm locations.

2.3.4

Investing in Our use of Information and Technology

KEY POINTS



- We will develop the national technology infrastructure and identify partnership opportunities for shared investment to improve services and enable our people to operate more effectively.
- We will introduce technology to enable workforce efficiency and use analytics, better data quality and wider sources to improve decision making, particularly on the front line.
- We will invest in connectivity and mobility for real time decisions and to enable this, we will shift the culture to create a technically enabled workforce.

Transforming the way in which we use, manage and source data both internally and externally will increase our ability to prevent crime and harm.

Using Technology

Becoming a digitally-enabled organisation will provide the public with a seamless, consistent first point of contact regardless of how they choose to engage with us.

We will provide an online community portal for a seamless two-way exchange of information between the police and communities, using the knowledge that we gain to provide live alerts and creating community resilience through access to a range of self-help guidance and automated support, where appropriate.

We will produce a highly connected workforce with front-line officers that will be intelligently deployed to meet needs and better support people. The workforce will have instant access to the information they require, using leading smart devices for accurate real time data capture and display. By enabling and supporting our workforce with the right technology, we will reduce duplication and internal demand through advances such as body worn video. Such advances will rely on close liaison with other public sector and justice partners to ensure the maximum benefit from effectively joined up services.

Technology will be key to enabling the workforce, but will also be used to improve training through virtual and augmented technology, the workforce will be exposed to advanced situational simulations from any location.

Using Data to Inform Evidence Based Decision Making

We will become an organisation driven by effective and efficient use of data, in an ethical way, in order to maximise the effect of our services.

Data will guide everything we do. We will treat all data ethically, maintain reputational integrity, reduce data inaccuracies and ensure public and officer safety through accurate information management practices. Transforming the way in which we use, manage and source data both internally and externally will increase our ability to prevent crime and harm.

We will improve our data quality, and integrate it with data from partners and open sources. We will gather more information from the public, using mechanisms such as crowd sourcing to support complex investigations and missing person cases.

Evidence will be used to support our workforce in making better risk based decisions as they will be more informed about different threats and vulnerabilities. Effective use of data will improve planning, as budgeting, resourcing and corporate services will be better informed.

Castle Shopping Centre

This scenario shows how we might respond to a series of shoplifting offences. With easier crime reporting, better evidence gathering and efficient processes, officers have more time to deliver excellent services. The front-line is highly connected and informed. There is better information sharing with partners.



1. Series of thefts committed by multiple suspects

3rd of March 2026, a series of thefts were reported in stores in the Castle Shopping Centre, Glasgow. A number of suspects were believed to be involved. The Centre's own security team have been at the scene and have spoken with staff.



6. Integrated response

A number of agencies respond to the 'hot spot' alert including police and community safety services. CCTV picks up the suspect and his associate leaving the centre and a community policing team who were patrolling the 'hot spot' trace those responsible. The suspects are found in possession of stolen property.



7. Evidence reviewed, offender cautioned and charged

There is sufficient evidence to charge the suspect. Custody in this case is unnecessary and they start criminal justice procedures at the scene. Their mobile device is connected to the central case management system with all evidence captured to date already available to the criminal justice partners through shared computer systems. Officers charge both suspects using body worn video to capture the process.



2. Crime reported via online self-service portal

A security guard reviews the information gathered. He logs on to the police self-service portal on his smart device. He is able to quickly and easily report the thefts, without needing to call. The security guard adds detail on the location of the thefts, value of goods stolen and an eyewitness account. He securely uploads the evidence such as CCTV footage, editing the file online to focus on the crime's time frame.



8. Digital evidence and criminal justice samples taken at scene

After officers capture images of the stolen property on their mobile device both suspects are arrested. Officers capture digital fingerprints and obtain DNA at scene. This is efficient and instant, removing any need to return to the station.



3. First point of contact with Police Scotland

Police Scotland staff review and assess the report. The incident is graded according to the prevailing risk and focussed on reducing harm. A risk assessment for this incident identifies there is no immediate threat and an acknowledgment and reference number is sent to the reporter as it is a commercial victim.



4. Facial recognition identifies suspect

A crime and investigation log is automatically populated. Artificial intelligence (AI) scans the footage, identifying a main suspect via facial recognition however images of the accomplices are too blurry. An intelligence file is automatically populated with a suspect profile including associates attached to the log. The AI begins to build an evidence case.



5. Integrated offender and location management

Once the crime and investigation log is created real time information and intelligence is digitally circulated to community police officers and community support officers. The information report highlights Castle Shopping Centre as an emerging 'hot spot' and identifies the suspect. Through effective partnership working an alert is also sent to local businesses in the shopping centre and surrounding area.



9. Reducing harm

A full needs assessment is carried out to identify any specific language, communication or health needs that may require to be met. The potential cause of offending is established indicating both offenders have housing and addiction needs. Measures are taken to prevent re-offending through information sharing with partner agencies.



10. Business and community resilience

As a 'hot spot' area the local 'prevention board', made up of local partners including businesses and community representatives develop a prevention plan. The plan focusses on collectively addressing drug misuse in the area and increasing prevention. Businesses are provided with prevention advice and encouraged to report minor anti-social behaviour to the community safety partners.



11. Delivering benefits

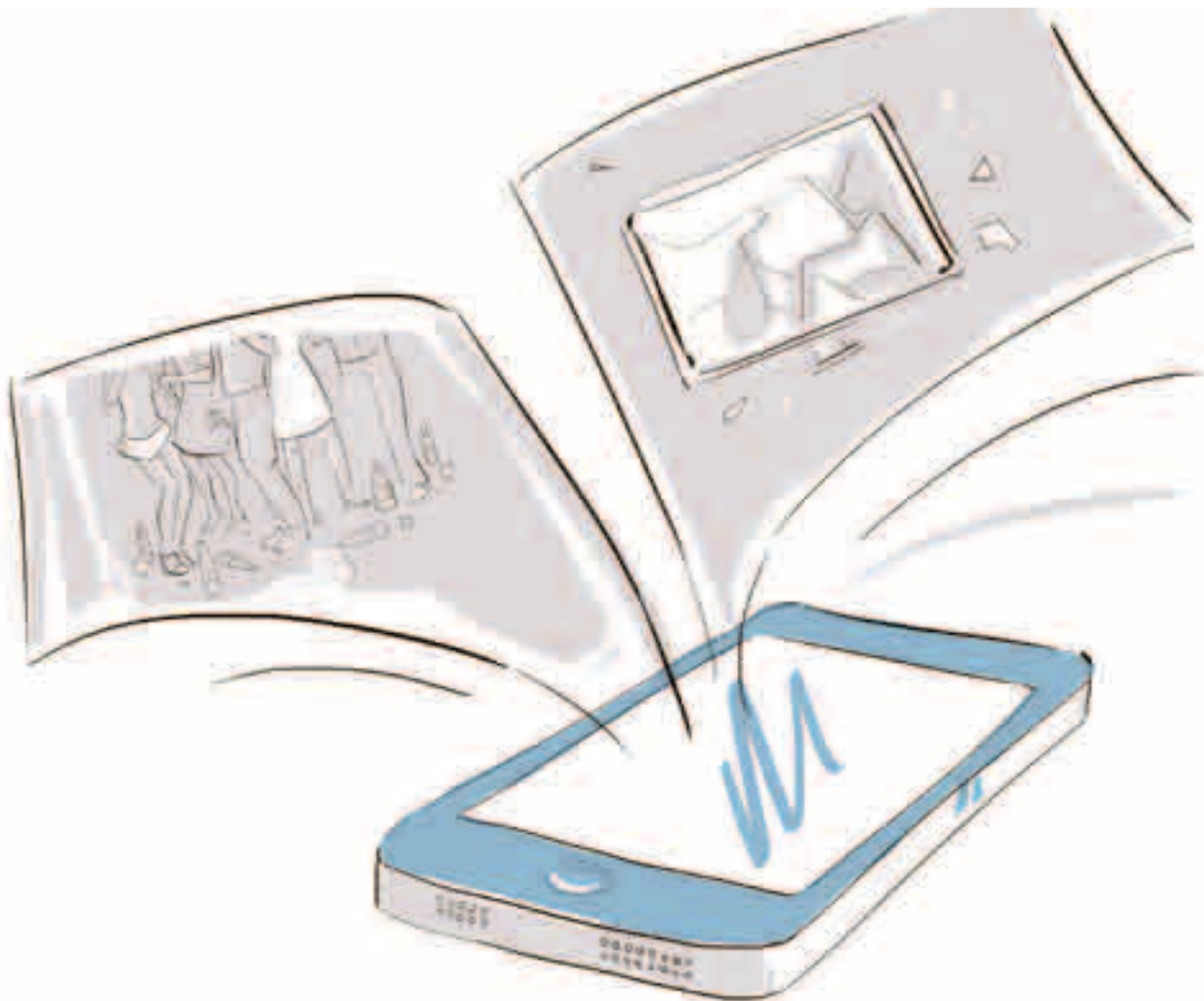
Over the coming months only one of the two offenders has re-offended and this was a minor public order offence. Incidents of anti-social behaviour and theft in the centre and surrounding area decrease with the number of customers and revenue increasing. Demand has reduced on criminal justice partners supporting additional prevention activity and problem solving in the wider area.

BENEFITS

- Repeat offenders brought to justice faster
- Deep rooted issues in society identified and addressed
- Businesses more resilient and profitable
- Community wellbeing enhanced

2.3.5

Enhancing Cyber and Forensics Capabilities



More science will be delivered at the scene using handheld or mobile devices that are linked to intelligence databases.

KEY POINTS

- We will scale our cyber capability and, by doing so, we will train our workforce to respond to emerging cyber related crimes.
- We will identify opportunities to collaborate with UK and international cyber capabilities and we will continue to invest in Scotland's forensic science capabilities.



Scale Our Cyber Capabilities

Transforming our cyber capability will provide our workforce with the skills needed to deal with cyber dependent issues and crimes as well as traditional crimes that are committed online.

This will enhance our investigation of sophisticated cyber enabled crimes and cyber dependent crimes, originating from Scotland and abroad, including the distribution of indecent images of children.

We will Continue to Invest in Scotland's Forensic Science Capabilities

Advances in science and technology will revolutionise the forensic services that will support policing. We will provide support for Forensic Services to ensure that more science will be delivered at the scene using handheld or mobile devices that are linked to intelligence databases (such as the National Biometric Database).

This will allow real time intelligence to be provided to officers to inform the investigative strategy and to increase the chance of obtaining other evidence before it can be destroyed, taking offenders off the streets before further offences can be committed.

Sue's Story

This scenario shows how we would be able to better respond to a cyber crime, disrupting serious and organised crime. We will have advanced cyber capabilities, with a different workforce mix that includes more specialists. We will work more effectively with international partners.



1. Unauthorised payments occur

On the 25th October 2026, Sue, a 70 year-old widow notices a series of unauthorised payments. She reports the circumstances to her bank.



6. Centre of Excellence identify crime source

With support from the Cyber Centre, they identify the source. The team includes data scientists and network specialists. They link an IP address to a server in Bucharest, Romania.



7. Artificial intelligence used for pattern analysis

Artificial intelligence is used to conduct further pattern analysis based on the data gathered in this case and over fifty similar recent crimes in Scotland. Evidence is linked to a group called Trojan horse.



2. Bank reports crime online

The bank compensates Sue, and the bank reports the crime online through the dedicated Cyber Crime App. The details are directly uploaded to Police Scotland's incident and case reporting system.



8. Critical evidence through proactive cyber investigation

Combining partner databases and using advanced capabilities, Trojan horse is compromised. Their illicit gains are mapped across numerous bank accounts and Bitcoin wallets. An evidence base is built.



3. Victim contacted by police

Sue is video called by a Police Investigator, her video messenger informs the investigator that Sue is deaf, but can lip read and read subtitles. The investigator activates the subtitle function on the video messenger and Sue is able to see them and read a transcript of the conversation. The investigator asks a series of questions to aid initial investigations. The Police computer system identifies that Sue has been a previous victim of cyber crime and the investigator offers her a face-to-face visit, but she prefers online, with subtitles.



4. Victim updated and safeguarded

Sue subscribes to automatic case updates. She is also provided with preventative support, including a password manager, 2 factor authentication and anti-virus software. She is connected with a charity that works with Criminal Justice Partners to provide impartial internet safety support to victims.



5. Forensics identify a 'phishing' attack

The Cyber Investigator conducts digital forensic analysis of Sue's tablet device. They are able to ascertain that her personal details were intercepted through a 'phishing' attack via a fraudulent bank email.



9. International law enforcement disrupts criminals

Through a coordinated International Policing Agency with support from local law enforcement the online crime group is disrupted. There are eight arrests across three continents with £81m recovered.



10. Victim is updated

Sue is still taking appropriate steps to remain safe online and is delighted to learn of the operation's success. She feels that by reporting the incident she made a difference and has helped others. She provides positive feedback about the service provided and being able to track the case online.



11. Preventative education campaign

Using the positive news, police continue to run education campaigns, in partnership with banks and local government. It helps protect communities from similar crimes. All intelligence has now been shared with relevant local and international agencies to underpin prevention and future investigations.

BENEFITS

- Repeat offenders brought to justice faster
- Businesses more resilient and profitable
- Community wellbeing enhanced

2.3.6

Transforming Corporate Support Services

KEY POINTS

- We will standardise and improve processes and systems capable of supporting and enabling a national service.
- Through the creation of an efficient single shared service, we will free up resources to reinvest in required capabilities.
- We will invest in technology streamlining processes through greater self-service and automation. Developing an innovation capability and environment, we will enable the workforce to generate ideas and identify leading edge technologies.



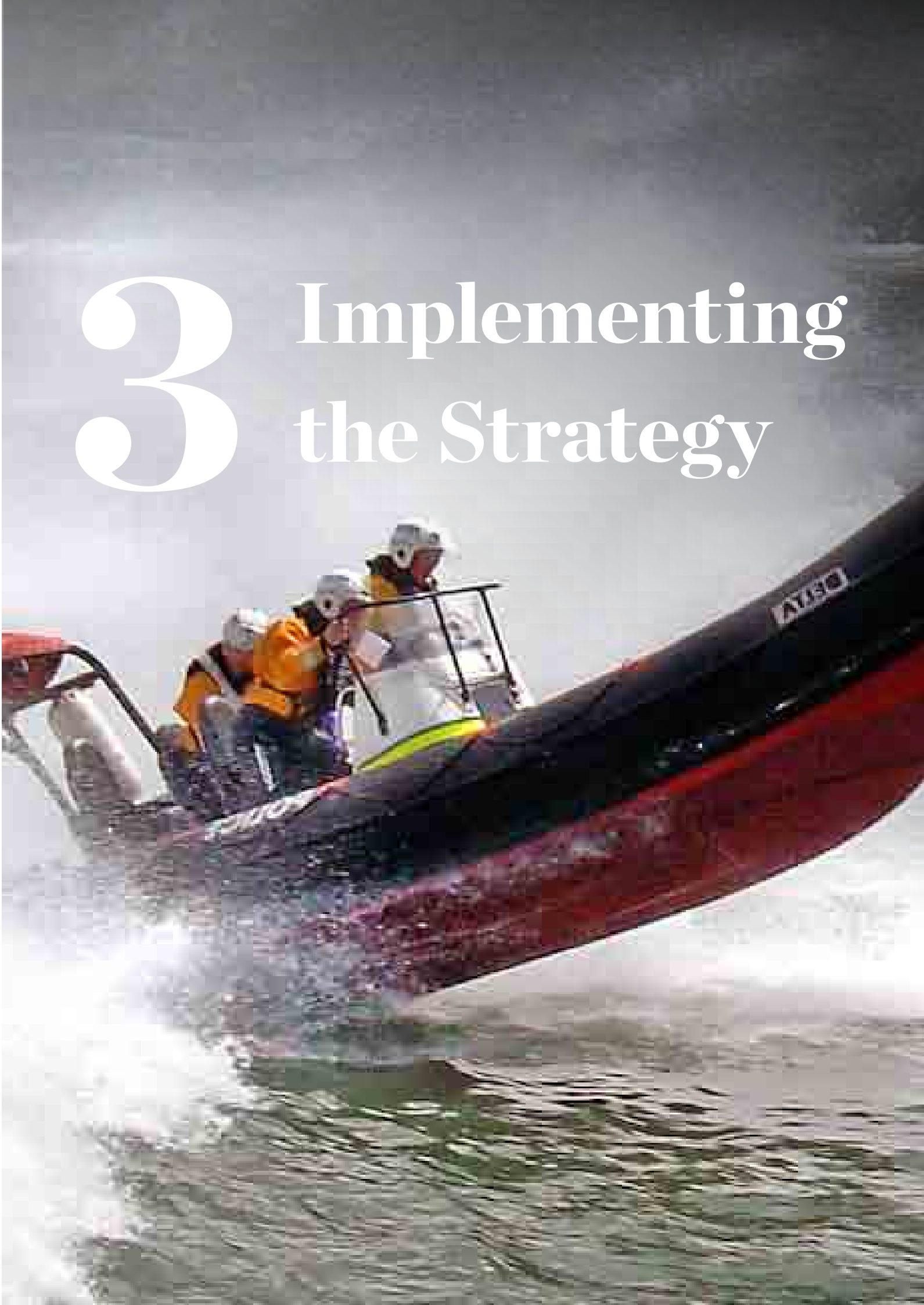
Stabilising and Improving Corporate Services, Creating an Efficient Shared Service and Developing an Innovation Capability

Transforming and reshaping our Corporate Support will prioritise our budget on frontline policing activities – our Corporate Support will be as efficient as possible.

To enhance delivery of policing services we will reduce and remove the frontline administrative burden associated with corporate processes and provide a standardised high quality service to our operational staff. Our workforce will receive the same consistency of support regardless of location. We will look to benefit from economies of scale by joining up services with other public sector agencies in order to pool capability and spending power.

We will manage change within our organisation, involving our people as our biggest asset and learning from what works in Scotland and elsewhere.

3 Implementing the Strategy



3.1

Long Term Financial Planning Approach

Financial Strategy Development

Alongside the development of the 2026 strategy, we have been developing a long term financial strategy which ensures that we can deliver the aims and objectives of the 2026 strategy while achieving financial sustainability. As consultation may impact our future costs, we will only finalise the draft 3 and 10 year financial plans after the conclusion of the consultation period.

Our current budget position

In common with all parts of the public sector, over recent years policing has faced budget constraints and rising demands for its services alongside calls for greater efficiency and the achievement of best value. We have seen cost pressures rising across policing and these have resulted in small revenue (operating cost) budget overruns. We have worked together to deliver savings which have largely met these pressures in previous years, but part of this has been through short term measures which are not sustainable in the longer term – for example by under spending the capital budget. We do not consider this to be a prudent or sustainable approach to managing our revenue budget shortfall in the future and we will therefore drive service wide transformation to bring our budget into balance in a sustainable way by the end of 2019/20.

Police Scotland’s revenue expenditure for 2016/17 is currently forecast as £1,074m and after offsets from other underspent budgets will result in a projected final outturn deficit of £17.5m*. In 2017/18 Police Scotland’s projected revenue expenditure will rise to £1,107m and would result in an operating deficit of £60m without the commencement of an effective transformation plan. The Scottish Government has yet to conduct a spending review beyond 17/18 but based on their indication that they would protect the police budget in real terms we believe that this level of deficit would be ongoing without fundamental change.

The Scottish Government has given a commitment to continued funding to support reform and change of £61 million in 2017-18 (split across Capital and Reform budgets). This will facilitate the commencement of the 2026 strategy and our transformation plan. This will reduce the projected deficit but will not eliminate it and a revenue budget deficit can be expected at the year end.

Our capital budget will allow us to begin to invest in increasing productivity and the reform budget will provide for a single Transformation Portfolio which will ensure high-level professional management of the change programme.

**As reported to SPA at its public board meeting in February 2017*

The 3 year horizon to 2020

Over the next three years we will begin to modernise the police workforce in a carefully managed way, ensuring that our operational and corporate productivity is improved and evolves to effectively meet the changing demands on policing. Our first priority will always be to continue to deliver a high-quality policing service to protect the public. Initially we will enhance our service by freeing up police resource from non- operational activity to increase productivity. Alongside this we will improve the effectiveness of our corporate services functions thereby reducing cost and we will seek to reduce non-pay costs significantly over the next three years. Further improvements in police productivity will free up resource over the next three years to deliver more operational policing and to invest in specialist resource such as cyber and vulnerability related demand.

Our changing workforce model to 2020

The most significant part of our cost base results from staff costs, both police officers and police staff. Our continuing priority will always be to maintain service levels and ensure operational policing is delivered to its usual high standards. We will ensure productivity gains are delivered and measured. We will invest in our infrastructure and adopt new approaches to deployment and call resolution to enhance officer productivity in communities, improving the impact and effectiveness of policing across Scotland. As we transform corporate services, we will free up more officers to deploy into operational policing roles. As the benefits of investment and transformation are delivered over the next three years, we can meet increasing operational demand by delivering an effective police service underpinned by efficiency, capacity creation and demand reduction. In 2017/18, we intend to maintain police officer numbers at their current levels. As productivity gains are delivered, we will seek to introduce new skills into the workforce to address the changing demands on the service. By the end of year three we will see a change in the overall balance and profile of the workforce.

Our clear view is that Police Scotland’s non operational corporate and business support functions have never been effectively re-structured and transformed to reflect the move to a single service. It will be important to bring these areas down to an appropriate size and to reduce process duplication and inefficiency. Over recent years, cost saving initiatives have often focussed in these areas - but without the necessary change or investment in systems and processes, this has increased pressure on staff and service delivery.

The initial focus following reform was to ensure the service to the public was maintained and the merger of the 10 legacy organisations into a single service successfully delivered this objective. Initial and significant budgetary savings from reduced duplication were achieved and through the move to a single service, policing in Scotland is undoubtedly better prepared than the legacy forces to meet the operational challenges ahead. However our considered view is that further efficiencies can be made in the systems and processes within non-operational and business support functions.

A major focus of the transformation portfolio will be to rapidly address these areas and do so in a carefully managed way to ensure we continue to support operational policing in meeting its demands. Overall, we expect this will result in a reduction of staff and officers engaged in corporate and business support roles. As we develop our planning for this transformation, we will fully engage with staff associations and trade unions on an ongoing basis to ensure we develop the best outcomes possible, within the financial constraints that we and the rest of the public sector are operating in.

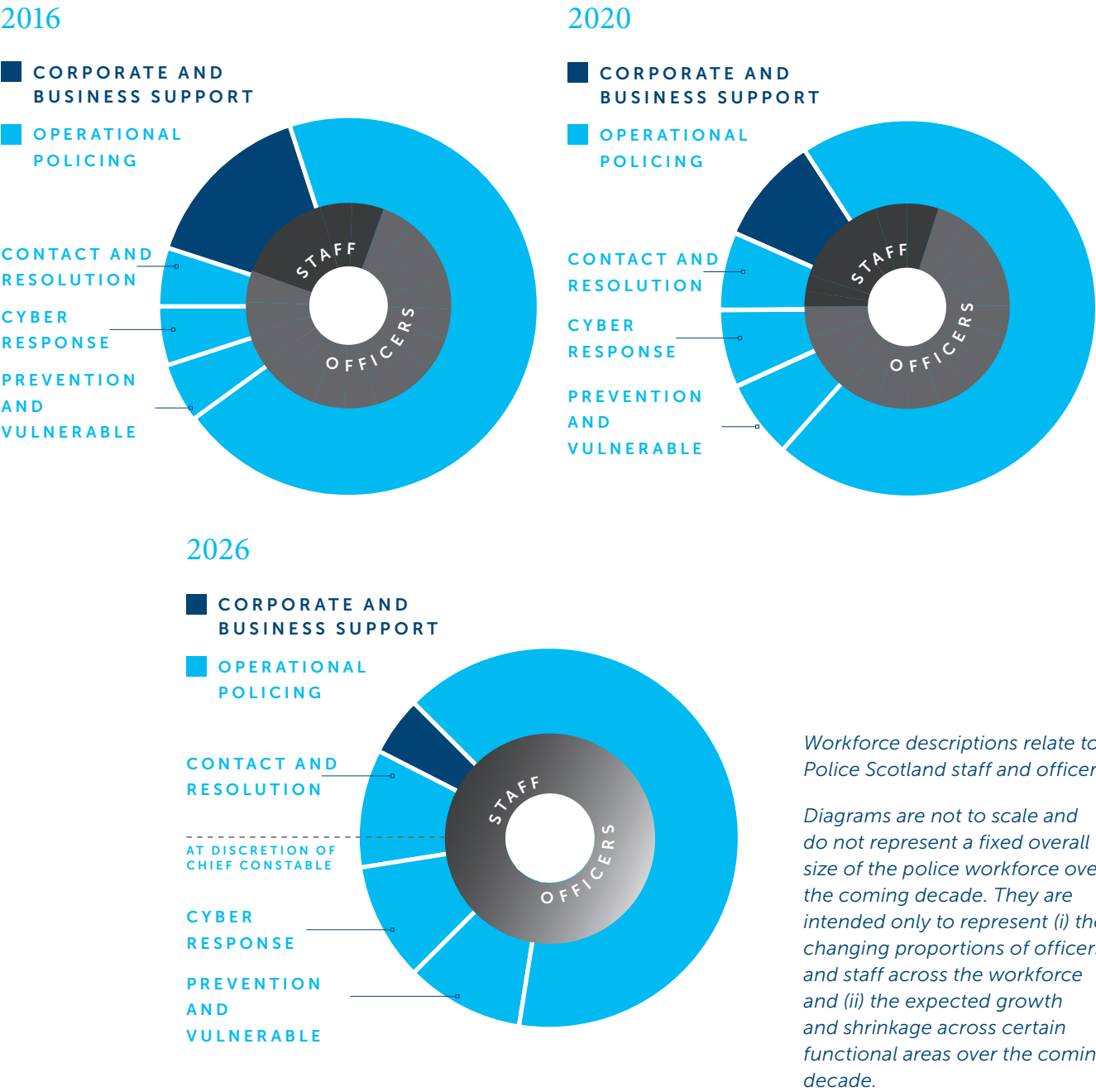
Our changing workforce model – the 10 year picture

Our transformational plan will create capacity to generate ‘policing hours’ that are more productive for police officers by reducing administration and freeing their time to focus on operational matters such as effective prevention and partnership working. The changing makeup of the police workforce is represented in the diagrams below. The first two are indicative and represent the planned changing position between 2017 and 2020. We believe it is not possible or advisable to predict the appropriate skill mix that

will be necessary beyond a three-year horizon. It will be a matter for the Chief Constable to determine the required proportions of staff and officers based on his or her operational assessment at that time of threat, risk and harm as well as available budget.

The final diagram is therefore illustrative to emphasise this flexibility and demonstrates that this will be assessed by the Chief Constable at the time when a more precise determination can be made.

OUR CHANGING WORKFORCE MIX: INDICATIVE AND ILLUSTRATIVE PROPORTIONS



The need for action

Without transformation and investment, it is projected that our revenue budget will face an operating deficit of £60m in 2017/18. Audit Scotland have confirmed this figure.

Therefore, we have developed an approach that enables Police Scotland to commence a portfolio of transformational change activity to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our corporate and business support and to start delivery of the key improvements in policing capability, capacity and efficiency while also achieving a financially sustainable position by the end of 2019/20.

We expect that the early benefits of our proposed investments in 2017/18 will result in a reduction of the projected outturn deficit and will demonstrate real progress towards arriving at a financially sustainable position.

Summary

Our first priority will always be to deliver a high-quality policing service to protect the public.

To enable us to do this and to continuously improve and develop the service we will free up police resource from non- operational activity to increase productivity and impact, utilise police staff in more operational roles and improve the effectiveness of our corporate services and business support functions. We will also bring in new skills to address the changing demands being placed on the service.

Additionally, by introducing efficiencies into the delivery of our corporate and business support and by significantly reducing our non-pay costs we will, over the next three years, aim to bring our budget into a sustainable position.

Undertaking transformation offers the opportunity not only to improve the service we provide to the public but to bring our budget into balance in a sustainable way over the next three years without significantly reducing our operational capability and capacity.



3.2

Implementation
Priorities

An Overview of the Six
Strategic Objectives and Key
Activities

We will establish a transformation portfolio and robust governance structure to oversee delivery of our change programmes. We will invest in specialist capabilities to support us through this period of significant change.

The first three years of this strategy will be focused on addressing current challenges and establishing the foundations required for more innovative and visible transformation. Successful implementation will require careful planning and monitoring.

Our transformation portfolio and implementation priorities will be set out in the 3 year plan that will follow the finalisation of this strategy.

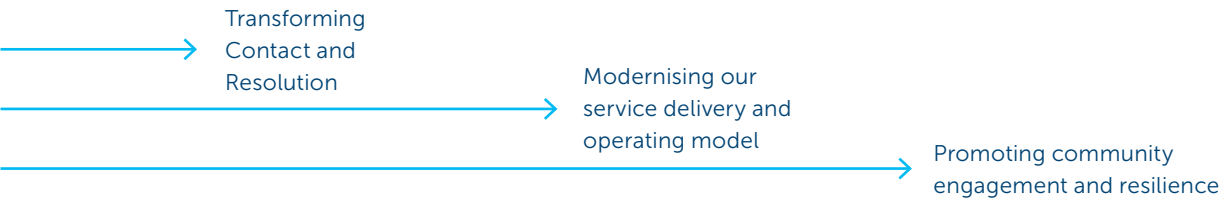
Sustained excellence
in service and protection

2026



Improving public contact, engagement
and service

We will transform our contact and resolution model, enabling us to recognise and respond appropriately to the needs of individuals and communities, with a continued commitment to localism. We will modernise our operating model to ensure we achieve maximum impact with our available resources.



Strengthen effective partnerships

We will strengthen partnership working identifying areas of shared improvement and opportunities to provide value for money services.



Empower and develop our people and culture

We will continue to recognise and invest in the development and wellbeing of our workforce. We must strengthen the diversity of our whole workforce and change the mix of skills and experience to address evolving needs.



Invest in our use of information and
technology

We will introduce technology to enable workforce efficiency and operational effectiveness, using analytics, better quality data and wider sources to improve decision making.



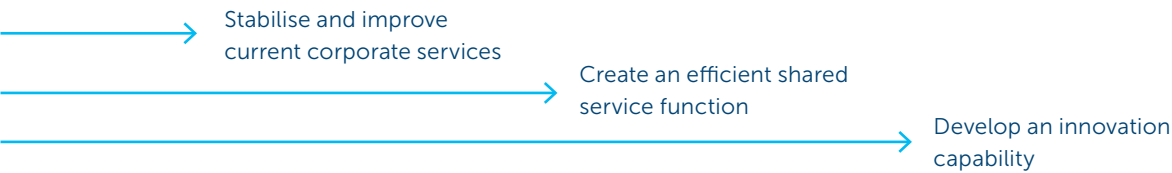
Enhance cyber and forensic capabilities

We will scale our cyber capability to respond to emerging cyber related crimes and we will continue to invest in Scotland's forensic science capabilities.



Transform corporate support services

We will transform our corporate services, improving processes and systems to support and enable a modern national service.



3.3

Our Collaborative Approach

Our 10 year Policing Strategy has been collaboratively developed by SPA and Police Scotland to align with the strategic planning framework described in the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (the Act).

This strategy fulfils the requirement set out in S.34 of the Act that a Strategic Police Plan is developed. This strategy will be jointly reviewed and refreshed by SPA and Police Scotland every 3 years.

Implementing and Governing

The following products will underpin the delivery of this 10 year Policing Strategy:

- a 3 year plan 2017 – 20
- Police Scotland’s Annual Police Plan 2017 – 18
- a 3 year Police Scotland performance framework 2017 – 20

The 3 year plan will set out how we will deliver this strategy across the service.

The Police Scotland Performance Framework will be based on the 3 year plan. SPA will hold Police Scotland to account for delivery against these strategic objectives using the agreed Performance Framework.

3 yearly planning will underpin the 10 year strategy, covering the periods:

- 2017 – 2020
- 2020 – 2023
- 2023 – 2026

Reviewing and Refreshing

Police Scotland and SPA will review and refresh this Strategy regularly in partnership (in line with statutory expectations set out in the Act).

- **Spring to Autumn 2019**
Joint review of 10 year Strategy to 2026
- **Winter 2019**
Public consultation on refreshed 10 year Strategy to 2029
- **Spring 2020**
Publication of Policing Strategy to 2029
- **Spring to Autumn 2022**
Joint review of 10 year Strategy to 2029
- **Winter 2022**
Public consultation on refreshed 10 year Strategy to 2032
- **Spring 2023**
Publication of 10 year Policing Strategy to 2032

How This Strategy will Fulfil the Strategic Police Priorities

PRIORITIES	ACTIVITIES – WHAT WE WILL DO
Localism Ensure that the needs of local communities are understood and reflected in the planning and delivery of policing at a local and national level.	We will work to empower and support an increasingly diverse set of communities, of place, identity or those in the virtual space to increase their resilience and safety. Our commitment will also include listening more and responding to their diverse needs.
Inclusion Ensure our police service is accessible and responsive to the needs of all people in Scotland.	<p>We will respond to the diverse needs of individuals and communities. Key to this will be transforming our contact and resolution models and the creation of new ways of engagement. We will focus on improving trust and confidence and promoting community resilience. Creating a dynamic deployment model that reflects demand and need will be key as will developing new approaches to threat, harm and risk.</p> <p>We recognise that valuing and promoting diversity in our own workforce improves confidence in diverse communities that we understand their needs.</p>
Prevention Ensure our police service works to protect people by preventing crime and reducing fear of crime through communication, education, innovation and partnership working.	We will further develop prevention driven approaches to address enduring issues facing communities. We will maintain a key role in supporting vulnerable individuals and communities. Working, planning and responding in an integrated way with partners, we will intervene with them at an early stage to address high impact issues such as domestic abuse, substance misuse and mental health.
Response Focus policing on improving the wellbeing of individuals and communities by tackling crime and responding to and investigating incidents effectively and efficiently.	We will continue to drive improvement across our approaches to responding to the needs of communities, detecting crime, protecting vulnerable people, maintaining order and ensuring national security.
Collaborative Working Ensure that our police service works productively with partners at local, national and international levels to deliver better outcomes for people in Scotland.	<p>We believe we have a duty to share the knowledge we gain. We will build on our experience and use our information and insight to influence, inform and work with partners, government and the public to develop and improve collectively the services required to meet changing public needs.</p> <p>We will share data, resources, training and ideas; we will adopt and promote best practice and we intend to build and integrate new shared services. We wish to build effective networks in order to improve outcomes and reduce cost. In recognition of the increased diversity in Scotland we will look to build partnerships for specific communities at a local and national level.</p>
Accountability Continuously improve public confidence in policing and inspire trust by being transparent, accountable and acting with integrity, fairness and respect.	<p>To maintain our legitimacy and relevance, as well as meeting our statutory obligations, we will continue to work positively with external scrutiny partners at local and national levels. Whilst our approaches will mature and develop, our values of fairness, integrity and respect will remain constant and be the basis on which we deliver services. We will have a broader understanding of success, with public confidence as our central measure. We will focus our services on delivering public satisfaction at a local and national level and provide a more complete understanding of our impact.</p> <p>This will include our impact on communities and enduring issues facing communities. We will maintain traditional measures of crime and police activity, so that we do not lose sight of our performance in delivering our core services. We will enable a cycle of continuous performance improvement, identifying the root causes of problems, implementing informed solutions, evaluating results and learning from best practice.</p>
Adaptability Ensure our police service takes advantage of new opportunities and meets emerging threats and challenges.	As a learning organisation, we will constantly examine and evaluate the nature and effectiveness of our services while developing opportunities for innovation to flourish at all levels. Through establishing an innovation capability we will encourage and learn from tests of change at local level while identifying best practice nationally and internationally to enable us to design new services and prepare for the future.

3.4

What will Success Mean for the Public and Our Workforce?

I know that the police are actively working with other services to make my community safer and prevent harm.

I think that policing in my community is stronger and more effective than ever.

I am confident that the police are ahead of criminals and new types of crime.

I am confident that the police know who is vulnerable in my area and are working with others to help them.

The diversity of my community is represented and understood by the police.

I welcome the fact that the police have all of the tools and knowledge they need to stay ahead of crime and keep my community safe and strong.

I know that if I'm a victim of crime, the police will help me in the most appropriate way and with the right people.

I can contact the police in a way and at a time that suits me and they will work to help me quickly and effectively.

I welcome that the police are using their knowledge and experience to inform anybody's decisions that will impact on safety in my community.

I trust the police and am confident that they will use information about me wisely.

I work in policing and I feel valued and trusted by the organisation - my wellbeing is taken seriously and I feel happy in my career.



Publication Information

This Strategy is a draft version. We are seeking your views and input to help us shape the final publication.

We want to meaningfully involve our communities, our staff and our stakeholders in the future delivery of policing services.

To take part in the consultation please visit:

<https://consult.scotland.police.uk/consultation/2026>

Or submit written responses to us at:

Policing 2026 Consultation

Clyde Gateway

2 French Street

Dalmarnock

Glasgow

G40 4EH

If you have any queries about the strategy or the consultation please contact us:

Email: PoliceScotland2026Consultation@scotland.pnn.police.uk

Minicom Service - for the deaf, deafened, hard of hearing or speech impaired callers who can call us on 1 800 1101

This document will also be available in Gaelic upon request:

Please email us at: PoliceScotland2026Consultation@scotland.pnn.police.uk

Other languages, braille, large print, sign-language, audio or CD

Please contact us if you would like to receive a copy of this document in any of the above formats.

Equality Impact Assessment – The final strategy will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) in compliance with the Scottish Public Sector Equality Duty. A summary of the EIA results will be published alongside the final strategy on the Police Scotland website.

Twitter: @policescotland

Facebook: www.facebook.com/policescotland