



Agenda Item 5

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| Meeting | Authority Meeting |
| Date | 28 November 2024 |
| Location | Merchants House, Glasgow |
| Title of Paper | Chief Constable's Report |
| Presented By | Jo Farrell Chief Constable |
| Recommendation to Members | For Noting |
| Appendix Attached | Appendix A – Chief Constable's Report November 2024 |

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide the Authority with information relating to the Police Service, policing and the state of crime.

This report is submitted as a Standing Agenda Item.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The attached Chief Constable's Report provides the Authority with information relating to the Police Service, policing and the state of crime.

2. FURTHER DETAIL ON THE REPORT TOPIC

2.1 There are no further details on this report.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no direct financial implications in this report. Any financial implications relating to subjects referenced are fully considered at the time.

4. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct personnel implications in this report. Any personnel implications relating to subjects referenced are fully considered at the time.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications in this report. Any legal implications relating to subjects referenced are fully considered at the time.

6. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Given the nature of the report there are reputational implications however all reputational implications relating to subjects referenced are fully considered at the time.

7. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no direct social implications in this report. Any social implications relating to subjects referenced are fully considered at the time.

8. COMMUNITY IMPACT

8.1 Given the nature of the report there is potential community impact implications however community impact relating to subjects referenced have been fully considered at the time.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no direct equalities implications in this report. Any equalities implications relating to subjects referenced are fully considered at the time.

10. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no direct environment implications in this report. Any environment Implications relating to subjects referenced are fully considered at the time.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are invited to note the information contained in this report.

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Keeping people safe

POILEAS ALBA

Chief Constable's Report November 2024

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Chief Constable's Report November 2024

Overview

I want to thank our communities, colleagues at the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, and other partners who worked with policing across months of planning and prevention and then during the intense period from the end of October into early November in response to the misuse of fireworks around Bonfire Night.

During our Operation Moonbeam period, I was able to meet with and thank officers, staff and partners for their contribution and I was hugely impressed by the collaborative approach taken to keep our communities, our partners and our own people safe.

Police officers and blue light colleagues demonstrated bravery and professionalism to respond to unacceptable behaviour and serious offending in parts of Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Although we did not experience the unprecedented violence, sustained disorder and large numbers of officers injured of 2023, communities and emergency service workers were still subjected to completely unacceptable conduct.

At the time of this report, we have made 43 arrests and investigations continue to identify those responsible for the disorder and violence.

We are also working with partners, including the Scottish Government, to determine what more can be done to prevent disorder, violence and misuse of fireworks around Bonfire Night and what further diversions can be implemented.

At this stage, I want to place on record my thanks to officers and staff and emergency service colleagues.

Earlier this month, Scotland welcomed law enforcement colleagues from around the world as INTERPOL hosted its 92nd General Assembly in Glasgow.

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This international event shone a global spotlight on policing in Scotland and I met with the Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer KC MP and the Home Secretary Yvette Cooper MP following the opening ceremony.

The event was an important opportunity to maintain and build upon the significant collaboration at international, national and regional levels between Police Scotland and agencies including INTERPOL, the National Crime Agency and others to make Scotland, and the world, a safer place and my report details court outcomes and operational action in respect of drug dealing and human trafficking which underline these principles.

My report also highlights significant criminal justice outcomes following investigations into murder, culpable homicide, and sexual offending, illustrating our commitment to securing justice for victims and their families.

Police Scotland is resolute in our determination to tackle violence against women and girls and our operational action and close engagement with partners and stakeholders, including survivors' groups, continues to be complemented by powerful prevention campaigns. The latest iteration of our That Guy campaign, which encourages men to reflect on their own and their friends' and relatives' behaviours to women. The campaign commenced at the end of October and has been shared widely.

In the coming weeks, we'll follow That Guy with support for 16 Days of Activism and our domestic abuse campaign.

As we enter the festive period, we will also focus on drink and drug driving as part of our year-round, partnership approach on road safety. Fatal and serious collisions have long lasting consequences for people who witness crashes and emergency responders first on the scene.

Road safety is a significant priority for Police Scotland and our officers are out every day educating road users and carrying out enforcement. I am also grateful to His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland for his work to highlight this crucial area of policing and we are working to meet the recommendations made.

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It was encouraging to see the importance of road safety partnerships, and our good work with partners, recognised in this report.

We have outlined that we will identify and implement a sustainable model for road policing. I have been clear policing must evolve to meet demand, with a focus on enabling frontline officers and staff to deliver for communities.

My report illustrates the intense and broad demand policing responds to, day in, day out, and our vision for policing and business plan sets out how we'll meet the challenges of today and those on the horizon.

An appropriately resourced, effective police service is essential to deliver safer communities, less crime, supported victims and a thriving workforce.

A key element of that resourcing relies on delivering a more effective and sustainable estate that enables modern policing, supports the health, safety and wellbeing of our people and the communities we serve and reduces long term operating costs.

Our business plan outlined that we'll develop a prioritised ten-year programme of building improvements, refurbishments and disposals and this month we're sharing more detail on our plan for estates.

Along with the Authority, I continue to ask the Scottish Government to support a second phase of police reform, and, at the end of October, we outlined our budget proposal for 2025-26 to the Criminal Justice Committee of the Scottish Parliament.

The budget proposal allows us to maintain a maximum of 16,600 police officers as part of a workforce of over 22,000 and budgets for a 2025-26 pay award in line with the Public Sector Pay Policy.

Pay is our most significant element of spend, accounting for around 87% of our revenue costs and pay inflation represents the largest proportion of revenue uplift.

My report outlines that headline 4.75% pay award offers have been made to officers and staff for the current year, 2024-25.

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Formal processes are now under way to seek to progress agreements with officers and staff and we remain committed to achieving a fair outcome.

I have consistently highlighted the skill, commitment, goodwill and professionalism, our officers, staff, and volunteers demonstrate as they deliver a challenging and essential public service for our communities. I would take this opportunity to publicly reiterate and record my thanks for all they do.

As well as appropriate resourcing, equipment, and fair pay, officers, staff, and volunteers, must know that they are valued, have a voice and that we will act on what they say to improve their experiences and better support them to deliver for communities.

That's why we opened a Service-wide survey over the summer, and we've had over 11,000 responses from Police Scotland, SPA Forensics and SPA Corporate, which is a really strong response.

We've now published national findings, with internal communication and engagement to share the results ongoing. In the coming weeks and months, we'll follow-up with our workforce at a national and local level to set out the action we'll take based on what they've told us. I have also committed to running a survey on an annual basis.

Key to driving better experiences for all communities within Police Scotland and across broader society is our Policing Together programme, led by Assistant Chief Constable Catriona Paton.

My report outlines the development of learning under the Policing Together banner, including face-to-face anti-racist sessions and an 'Act, Don't React' approach to interactions with colleagues and members of the public which can help to keep people safe and increase trust in policing.

At the same time, we continue to host, recognise and celebrate events and key dates through our Policing Together programme and I outline a number of important engagements since my report in September which can develop our understanding of, and links with, communities, including Black History Month, Disability History Month and a meeting of community and faith leaders in Glasgow.

I also outline our attendance and recognition of Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day.

Finally, I outline the latest intake of probationary constables who took their Oath of Office earlier this month, bringing our officer establishment to our budgeted maximum.

I'm grateful to our recruitment team for their significant efforts to bring us to this position and we continue to recruit officers to maintain that number as we experience natural attrition, for example through retirement.

Tackling threat, harm and risk

Significant court outcomes

Death of Cameron Rae - Perth

On Friday, 4 October, 20-year-old Caleb Ferguson was found guilty of the murder of 20-year-old Cameron Rae, following a trial at the High Court in Edinburgh. Mr Rae was found injured within a flat in Perth on Saturday, 8 April, 2023. He was pronounced dead a short time later. Cameron was a young man when his life was ended and this incident was felt by the whole community in Perth. Our thoughts remain with Cameron's family and all those who knew him.

Death of Keith Rollinson - Elgin

A 16-year-old male pleaded guilty to culpable homicide at the High Court in Edinburgh on Friday, 18 October following the death of Keith Rollinson in Elgin in February. The incident happened at the town's bus station on St Giles Road around 10.40pm on Friday, 2 February, 2024. Mr Rollinson's death was a tragedy which affected a number of people across Elgin and the wider Moray area. The thoughts of

the entire policing team remain with his family, friends and colleagues who have suffered a devastating loss.

Violence against women

At the High Court in Paisley on Wednesday, 9 October, Callum Monson, 28, was sentenced to seven years in prison and three years under supervision having been found guilty of the crimes against six women between 2019 and 2023.

Operation Pepperoni

In October six members of a serious organised crime group were jailed for almost 50 years after being convicted of conspiring to import £100 million of cocaine to Scotland from Ecuador in a consignment of bananas and manufacture millions of Etizolam tablets.

James Stevenson, 59, was sentenced to 20 years in prison. His accomplices, David Bilsland, 68, Paul Bowes, 53, and Lloyd Cross, 32, were each sent to prison for six years. Gerard Carbin, 45, was sentenced to seven years and Ryan McPhee, 34, to four years.

The multi-agency operation, Pepperoni, which spanned several countries, prevented a huge haul of illegal drugs reaching our communities and will have undoubtedly saved lives. This important outcome underlines Police Scotland's commit to ensuring Scotland remains a hostile environment for organised criminals as part of the Serious Organised Crime Taskforce.

Organised crime

On Thursday, 24 October, at the High Court in Livingston Christopher Smith, 34, was sentenced to seven years and five months in prison for organised crime offences whilst in prison, having been convicted of organising the supply of controlled drugs. Smith's offences occurred at HMP Edinburgh and at addresses across Edinburgh, Inverness and Nairn between March 2018 and November 2019. He was also issued

with a Serious Crime Prevention Order, which will last for three years, to help prevent him returning to crime when he is released from jail.

At the High Court in Glasgow, on Tuesday, 29 October, John Bonner, 38, Christopher Laycock, 52, and David Kelly, 42, were jailed for a total of 18 years and five months for their involvement in serious organised crime offences including importing and supplying controlled drugs, possessing firearms and money laundering. The men were arrested as part of Operation Buggy, an investigation into drug trafficking into Scotland from Spain between March 2020 and January 2022, and Operation Escalade, a high-profile investigation into one of the country's top-tier and most prolific serious organised crime groups.

Cannabis cultivation

On Tuesday, 1 October, at Dundee Sheriff Court Indrit Saraci, 27, was sentenced to three years and nine months and Adiol Hila, 37, was jailed for three years and four months after pleading guilty to drugs offences following the discovery of a cannabis cultivation worth an estimated £1.7 million in Dundee.

Drug Recoveries

On Friday, 4 October, officers from the Organised Crime and Counter Terrorism Unit West recovered drugs in Glasgow worth an estimated street value of around £5.5 million. This included more than 90kgs of cocaine, 23kgs of heroin, 19kgs of MDMA and around 5,800 diazepam and ecstasy tablets. A quantity of cash and ammunition were also recovered. A search of a vehicle was also carried out with approximately 20kg of cocaine being found. Two men, aged 30 and 45, and a woman, aged 31, were arrested and charged in connection with the seizure and appeared at Glasgow Sheriff Court on Monday, 7 October.

Five men were arrested and charged following the discovery of a cannabis cultivation in West Calder estimated to be worth £1.2 million in September. The men,

aged 20, 22, 26, 29 and 36, appeared at Livingston Sheriff Court on Thursday, 26 September, in connection with drugs offences.

Human trafficking

Officers carried out an operation with colleagues from the Home Office Immigration Enforcement team at three addresses in Paisley on Thursday, 26 September. Two women, aged 38 and 44, were arrested and charged in connection the offences. On Monday, 30 September, a 37-year-old woman was arrested and charged in connection with brothel keeping, human trafficking and serious and organised crime offences at Abercorn Street, Paisley. The arrest follows an extensive enquiry into brothel keeping, human trafficking and serious and organised crime offences at premises across the town.

Two men were arrested and charged in relation to human trafficking offences in Mallaig and Tarbert on Tuesday, 5 November. A 50-year-old man was arrested from a fishing boat off the coast of Mallaig, and a 38-year-old man was arrested from a fishing boat off the coast of Tarbert during the pre-planned operation.

Operation Moonbeam

During the operation, over 500 specialist resources supported local policing teams across Scotland in responding to fireworks offences. This included Public Order Officers, Evidence Gathering Teams and the Police Scotland Air Support Unit.

Additional policing powers under the Fireworks and Pyrotechnic Articles Act (2022) were utilised to keep communities safe and in Edinburgh, a number of Fireworks Control Zones and Dispersal Zones in place. Officers deployed within the Capital had the ability to take appropriate enforcement action against anyone committing a breach of the legislation within these areas.

Bonfire Night 2024 saw a fall in the number of incidents of serious disorder arising and a significant fall in the number of officers injured. No officers deployed during

Bonfire Night itself reported any injuries, however one officer was hurt during Halloween when a brick was thrown through the window of her vehicle in Edinburgh.

The criminal investigative strategy following Bonfire Night continues and so far 43 arrests have been made.

Those involved in the planning, co-ordination and delivery of Operation Moonbeam, and divisional Bonfire Night responses, played a vital role in ensuring communities and emergency service workers were not subjected to the same ordeals that arose in 2023. Areas that had previously required a significant level of policing resource to address fireworks-related crime, such as the Kirkton area of Dundee and the north west of Edinburgh, saw a sizeable reduction in calls.

While Operation Moonbeam 2024 has concluded, a review and planning for next year will begin shortly so we can continue to address fireworks offences and make communities safer during Bonfire Night.

Prevention, problem solving and proactivity

INTERPOL General Assembly

At the start of November, Glasgow hosted the four-day long 92nd INTERPOL General Assembly on behalf of the UK Government and the Home Office.

The conference brought together around a thousand senior figures, including 65 heads of police, ministers and senior leaders. This included His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, the Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, and the Home Secretary Yvette Cooper, who I also welcomed on a visit to the Scottish Crime Campus at Gartcosh where we met with on-site partners to discuss our collaborative work.

The conference had a significant focus on the global efforts taking place to make communities and countries as safe as possible, including addressing the harms caused by the international drugs trade, the misery caused by people trafficking, and the ongoing threats and dangers of cyber-enabled crime.

The event also offered the opportunity for Police Scotland to further strengthen our links with major collaborative partners, including the National Crime Agency across all levels of our operational activity.

In addition, the International Development and Innovation Unit took part in the INTERPOL exhibition at the Scottish Event Campus during the General Assembly. We have a strong international reputation for our delivery of innovative training to overseas police services, both through undertaking in-country deployments and hosting delegations at our Tulliallan headquarters and beyond.

The exhibition offered an excellent opportunity to showcase our expertise and forge extended bonds with law enforcement agencies who may wish to work with us, as well as our involvement in the renowned Global Policing Exchange programme.

That Guy Campaign

Police Scotland's new THAT GUY sexual crime prevention campaign, a key deliverable of our Violence Against Women and Girls strategy, launched on Monday, 28 October.

The campaign continues the theme of supporting men to reflect on their own, their friends and relatives, behaviour towards women.

The campaign has already received significant coverage over broadcast, digital, radio and print media. In just over two weeks the campaign advert has over one million views.

16 Days

Police Scotland will be supporting 16 Days of Activism, an international campaign that encourages action and awareness of all forms of violence against women and girls. The campaign will run from 25 November - 10 December and is a key

deliverable under both Police Scotland's Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy and the work of the Sex Equality and Tackling Misogyny Delivery Group.

Throughout the 16 days we will highlight the prevention work we are doing as part of gender-based violence focussing on a range of topics including domestic abuse, stalking, sextortion and the domestic abuse disclosure scheme.

Content will feature on our social channels alongside a number of events taking place across the country.

Forth Valley domestic abuse week of action

A week of action to trace and arrest named domestic abuse suspects in Forth Valley in September and October resulted in 15 arrests for a range of offences including rape, sexual assault and Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act charges.

Officers from the divisional public protection unit worked with colleagues in CID, response policing and the domestic abuse violence reduction unit to carry out this focused week of action.

Victims were kept updated and referrals made to local support services.

This focused action brings together skills and experience from across the division. It encourages our teams to work cohesively, share knowledge and skillset while putting focus on our highest risk offenders who are outstanding.

This intensification allows us to focus our investigative capacity, to tackle potential backlogs and reduce workloads which also contributes to officer wellbeing and effective service delivery.

Policing Together and working with communities

I remain committed to building an anti-racist, anti-discriminatory, Service which better reflects and represents all our communities.

Earlier this year, I appointed ACC Catriona Paton to lead an enhanced Policing Together Division which combined the internally focused activities of the original strategy with more external service delivery, as we continue to drive action for meaningful change.

I am grateful for the work done to refresh our approach, to better understand the progress made under the Policing Together programme and to maintain and develop effective work in this vital area.

Act Don't React

Act Don't React is a training programme which puts academic research from behavioural science into practice. It enables officers to understand human behaviour, what drives and triggers it, and how they can use the training to positively influence other people's behaviour, as well as their own.

The training is designed to help officers learn how best to engage, communicate and positively influence colleagues and members of the public, so that all our interactions can reach their best outcome to keep everyone safe and increase trust in policing.

Piloted in J Division, the programme was delivered to probationers over a two-year period and extensive evaluation revealed that there was a significant reduction in use of force, injuries and complaints against Act Don't React trained officers.

A train the trainer model will enable the programme to be delivered to officers across the organisation and a number of probationers in Ayrshire division have been receiving the training during November.

Anti-racist learning

We are testing a programme of face-to-face anti-racist learning ahead of plans to deliver it to 1,000 officers and staff in the coming months.

Unity Through Learning is an in-person one-day session by specialist diversity training team, Mission Diverse, and a train the trainer model will be used to embed the learning across Police Scotland.

Black History Month

Throughout October we teamed up with SEMPER Scotland to celebrate Black History Month to recognise the enormous contribution Black and Minority Ethnic citizens bring to communities across Scotland.

We benefited from contributions from our colleagues with a series of events highlighting their achievements, pride in their culture and what the month means to them.

I addressed an event hosted at our headquarters to mark the end of Black History Month, where we heard from a variety of speakers who provided valuable insight into some of the challenges and further work required to drive an anti-racist, anti-discriminatory agenda.

I also shared some of the tangible action and progress we have been making, providing that assurance that we are absolutely committed to building a better and more inclusive organisation.

Community and faith leaders engagement event

As part of our continued efforts to build and maintain relationships with all our diverse communities, along with other officers and staff, I met key individuals from religious and minority ethnicity communities at Dalmarnock police office, Glasgow, on Wednesday, 13 November.

This important session was an opportunity to discuss recent policing developments as well as gaining a better understanding of the issues which impact them most. ACC Paton also provided an update on the work our Policing Together programme is doing to build an effective and inclusive service.

Disability History Month

We are supporting Disability History Month between 14 November and 20 December. Police Scotland's officers and staff are drawn from our communities and we greatly value our colleagues who are neurodiverse, have disabilities and caring responsibilities – a significant proportion and an important part of our Service. As an organisation, we work to create a supportive and inclusive environment where everyone can thrive.

Throughout Disability History Month, and as part of the Policing Together Inclusion calendar, Police Scotland; The Scottish Police Authority and the Scottish Police Disability and Carers Association will be supporting UK Disability History Month by raising awareness of the guidance and support available to staff and officers.

In addition, we are sharing the lived experiences of our colleagues with disabilities, and information on how officers and staff can get involved in Disability History Month.

We are encouraging our staff to take time to drop in and support their colleagues as they talk about their lived experiences; the difficulties they have faced; some of the potential solutions in addition to sign posting and the provision of wider peer support.

Mental Health Taskforce

As previously reported, Deputy Chief Constable Alan Speirs is leading Police Scotland's work to ensure members of the public who are in mental health crisis get the care and support they need and deserve from the agency best able to provide it while allowing officers to respond to core police work.

We continue to work closely with partners including the Authority, health colleagues, and the Scottish Government and we've established a mental health taskforce to drive work in this priority area at pace.

Mental Health Pathway - Care for Mental Health Award

The Mental Health Pathway provides people experiencing mental health crisis or distress with earlier access to the right care, while also reducing emergency service deployments and officer time spent at hospitals.

It enables staff within our Contact, Command and Control (C3) Division to identify callers who would benefit from early intervention from mental health practitioners, rather than attendance by the police, and refer them to the Mental Health Hub at NHS 24.

To date, 96% of C3 personnel (1550 individuals) have been trained on the referral process and 99% of staff confirmed they felt confident making referrals following their training. Since its introduction in August 2020, the Mental Health Pathway has resulted in 10,611 referrals to NHS 24 via C3. This has allowed 54,328 officer hours to be redirected to other duties.

The Mental Health Pathway was announced as the winner of the Care for Mental Health Award at the Scottish Health Awards 2024, which took place in Edinburgh on Thursday, 7 November.

Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day

On Sunday, 10 November, I represented Police Scotland at a National Remembrance Service on Sunday at St Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh, in recognition of those who served in the armed forces and died during conflict.

Officers, staff and volunteers, including the Police Scotland Youth Volunteers joined our communities across the country on Remembrance Sunday. On Armistice Day, officers and staff observed a two-minute silence at 11am, where duty allowed.

Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day is an important period of reflection and recognition of the contribution that veterans, serving members of the armed forces and those who lost their life in combat have made.

It is right that the Police Scotland family joins together to pay our respects and give thanks to those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

Change to prioritise frontline policing

Criminal Justice Committee pre-budget evidence session

Along with Deputy Chief Constable Jane Connors and Chief Financial Officer James Gray, I provided evidence about our budget proposal for next year during an evidence session at the Scottish Parliament's Criminal Justice Committee on Wednesday, 30 October.

Key points of the submission on our budget requirement for 2025-26 include:

- £59.1 million of additional core revenue funding to fund public sector pay assumptions, specific inflationary pressures and the impact of new legislation, primarily the Domestic Abuse (Protection) (Scotland) Act 2021 and the Police (Ethics, Conduct and Scrutiny) (Scotland) Bill.
- Reform funding to be maintained at ~£25 million to support change and transformation.
- An increased capital allocation of £83 million to deliver our basic rolling replacement programme including the replacement of fleet, systems and policing equipment; to support delivery of the estates masterplan to maintain and upgrade properties; investment in Change and Transformation, including technology, data, process automation, supporting AI and innovation, and spend to save initiatives.
- A move towards more appropriate future funding arrangements such as securing multi-year funding commitments from Scottish Government, the exercise of statutory borrowing powers and the establishment of a facility to enable the carry forward of financial reserves.

Since the evidence session and following the UK Autumn budget, we have built in a further £25.3 million ask to fund additional National Insurance costs.

Discussions with Scottish Government are ongoing across all of these areas and I look forward to the outcome of Scottish Government funding considerations in the coming weeks.

Force Mobilisation Model

I have been clear about the need to prioritise frontline services and a model to deliver enhanced resourcing, particularly around events, is being developed at pace.

The Force Mobilisation Model applies to officers who work Monday to Friday and will combine a seven-day shift pattern with a demand-led operational deployment mechanism, which would include officers working 10 operational frontline deployments a year. These deployments will include two to three predetermined high demand days, for example Hogmanay and Bonfire Night, in order to spread the burden of policing events.

The mobilisation model will improve officer wellbeing through reducing cancelled rest days for frontline officers and improve service to communities by minimising officer absences.

An informal survey on a preferred shift pattern has recently concluded and we are now beginning the formal consultation process with officers. Future work in this space will review other non-seven day working business areas.

Supporting officers and staff

Pay Award

We remain committed to achieving a fair outcome for officers and staff following the 4.75% pay award offers. Our colleagues work tirelessly every day to keep people safe across the country and it is right that their public service is recognised and rewarded.

I have been clear on my commitment to agree a fair offer for our colleagues. I respect the challenge from the staff associations which act on their behalf and hope for an effective resolution very soon.

In the meantime, I am confident our officers and staff will continue to demonstrate the highest levels of commitment to communities across Scotland.

Long Service and Good Conduct Awards

On Thursday, 10 October, I was grateful for the opportunity to personally thank and congratulate colleagues for the significant contribution they continue to make to public service.

Almost 800 years of collective policing experience was recognised during a Long Service and Good Conduct Awards ceremony for 39 officers, staff and special constables in Aberdeen last month. The ceremony was also grateful for the interest and support of Lord Provost Councillor David Cameron, a former Special Constable.

I greatly welcome such opportunities to meet with our people and continue to be hugely impressed by the passion and commitment they demonstrate.

Oath of Office

On 7 November we welcomed 253 probationers to the policing family as they took their oath of office at ceremonies across our estate. They will be ready to deploy in March next year and I thank every one of them for stepping forward to help safeguard Scotland's communities.

This latest intake brings our officer establishment to 16,603 and adds to the strong pipeline of candidates we already have from our live recruitment campaign which has so far resulted in more than 850 applications being submitted.

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The campaign tells the stories of real officers, how they have been able to apply their life skills and experience to the role of a police officer and why policing is a job like no other.

It launched in September and will run until the end of March next year.