

Meeting	Authority Meeting
Date	22 January 2021
Location	Video Conference
Title of Paper	Chief Constable's Report
Presented By	Chief Constable Iain Livingstone QPM
Recommendation to Members	For Discussion
Appendix Attached:	No

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

The purpose of Police Scotland is 'to improve the safety and wellbeing of people, places and communities in Scotland' and our focus is Keeping People Safe. This paper is intended to provide Members with an update on key activity and events.

2. TACKLING THREAT AND RISK

SERIOUS VIOLENCE INCLUDING HOMICIDE

Armed Robberies - Greater Glasgow Division

Between Friday 6 and Saturday 28 November 2020, a series of robberies took place at commercial locations in Glasgow, including an armed robbery at bank premises in Kilmarnock Road. Although no injuries were sustained, these incidents were particularly distressing for the members of staff affected, and caused concern in the wider communities across Glasgow.

A rigorous investigation was carried out by officers from Greater Glasgow Division's Community Investigation Unit, including the forensic examination of CCTV footage. This led to the arrest of a 42 year old male on Tuesday 15 December, who was charged in respect of a number of robbery offences. He subsequently appeared at Glasgow Sheriff Court where he was remanded in custody.

SERIOUS ORGANISED CRIME

Operation VENETIC – Further Enforcement Activity

As previously reported, Operation VENETIC is one of the most significant operations targeting serious and organised crime in the United Kingdom, and involves Police Scotland, the National Crime Agency (NCA), Border Force and other police forces from across the UK. The operation has previously led to numerous arrests in Scotland, the seizure of controlled drugs, firearms, ammunition and explosives, and also resulted in the takedown of 'Encrochat', an encrypted global communication service used by criminals.

Evidence obtained during Operation VENETIC led to a further investigation by the Organised Crime Partnership in conjunction with Forensic Services. The Organised Crime Partnership is a multi-agency partnership involving officers from Police Scotland and the NCA. As a result of this further investigation, on Wednesday 9 December, two males were arrested and charged in respect of serious fire-raising which

had occurred in Lanarkshire and Forth Valley Divisions in May.

Organised Crime Partnership Operations

On Monday 14 December, having been convicted of drug supply and serious organised crime offences at the High Court in Edinburgh, a male from Liverpool was imprisoned for 45 months. This was the second male to receive a significant custodial sentence following an intelligence led operation by the Organised Crime Partnership. The enforcement action which culminated in the significant sentences took place in a car park in East Kilbride in November 2019, when the males were arrested and cocaine with an estimated street value of £600,000 seized.

On Friday 8 January 2021, two males were convicted of firearms and drug offences at the High Court in Glasgow, which again followed investigation by officers from the Organised Crime Partnership. During that investigation, a package containing a firearm was intercepted on its way to Scotland in December 2019. A police operation was carried out at a property in Inverkip where one of the males was arrested for firearms offences. The second male was arrested in respect of drugs offences following search at a separate property.

These operations demonstrate the continued benefit of Police Scotland working with colleagues from other law enforcement agencies, to target those involved in serious and organised crime, focusing on disruption and intervention activity to protect communities from those who cause significant harm.

COUNTER TERRORISM

Significant Conviction – Terrorism

On Tuesday 12 January 2021, a 22 year old male was sentenced to ten years imprisonment at the High Court in Edinburgh, following his earlier conviction under the Terrorism Act 2000. The male had been arrested in August 2019 by Police Scotland officers and charged in respect of possession of a crossbow, crossbow bolts, a tactical vest and machete. The arrest, conviction and sentence followed a complex and challenging investigation after concerns had been raised by health and social care professionals.

Police Scotland is committed and focused on protecting our fellow citizens, and continues to work with partners to prevent acts of terrorism. We appeal to members of the public to report any concerns about friends or family members being radicalised, engaging with extremist content online, or becoming involved in terrorist activity.

DRUGS SUPPLY AND HARM**Drug Enforcement Activity – Edinburgh and Forth Valley Divisions**

Between Tuesday 17 November and Wednesday 16 December 2020, an intelligence led operation conducted by officers from Edinburgh Division, supported by neighbouring Local Policing Divisions and Specialist Crime Division, resulted in nine cannabis cultivations being recovered from private rented properties in Edinburgh and Falkirk, with an estimated street value in excess of £1 million.

During the enforcement activity, eight males and one female, aged between 17 and 39, were arrested and charged with drug related offences. All subsequently appeared at court, with eight of the accused being remanded in custody.

Drugs Supply Convictions

On Tuesday 5 January 2021, two males aged 56 and 39 were convicted of drugs supply offences at the High Court in Glasgow and remanded in custody pending sentence. The convictions followed their arrests on the A74 in May 2020, after Police Scotland officers stopped their vehicles and recovered cocaine with an estimated street value in excess of £5 million.

ROAD SAFETY AND ROAD CRIME

Police Scotland continues to prioritise visibility on the road network to positively influence driver behaviour and enhance road safety throughout Scotland. In conjunction with partner agencies, national road safety and enforcement campaigns continue, prioritising areas of particular risk and concern. Additional high visibility patrols have been carried out on the arterial road network in response to the COVID-19 travel restrictions.

The annual Festive Drink and Drug Drive Campaign took place from Saturday 1 December 2020 until Sunday 3 January 2021. The campaign was intelligence led, with targeted deployment of resources in areas of particular concern to address the risks associated with drink and drug driving. During the campaign, officers carried out over 4,000 roadside tests, including 437 drug screening tests, leading to the detection of 508 drink or drug driving offences. A number of drink or drug drivers were reported to Police Scotland by members of the public. Proactive public support for the campaign assisted officers and enabled them to take action against those who selfishly put themselves and others at risk by driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

3. DELIVERING ON OUR PRIORITIES

PROTECTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE

16 Days of Activism Campaign

16 Days of Activism is an annual international campaign against Gender-Based Violence, which this year took place between Wednesday 25 November (Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women) and Thursday 10 December 2020 (Human Rights Day). Police Scotland supported the campaign, each day focusing on different aspects directly relating to our commitment to the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls, including rape and other sexual offences, human trafficking and domestic abuse.

During the campaign, Police Scotland highlighted the marked increase during lockdown of applications to the Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse in Scotland, which seeks to prevent abuse and share information with those at risk, as well as the activities of the taskforce to tackle Online Child Sexual Abuse. In addition, an animated video intended for foreign nationals was launched. The video aims to improve Police Scotland's early engagement and first contact with people at risk of being or becoming victims of Honour Based Abuse, Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation and Human Trafficking.

Victims and those at risk were encouraged to continue to engage with Police Scotland, and information from key partners and stakeholders including Rape Crisis, Scottish Women's Aid, HeForShe and SafeLives was shared and endorsed.

TACKLING CRIME IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Fraud Campaign

In recent years, there has been an increase in cases of criminals exploiting unsuspecting people, persuading them to part with personal information and defrauding them of money. Fraudulent activity has become more sophisticated, often taking advantage of online technology to target individuals and business. The Police Scotland Cyber Strategy, published in September, set out a clear direction for how we will tackle the threat, risk and harm from digitally-enabled crimes including fraud.

The Police Scotland fraud campaign, based on national guidance and advice, took place between December 2020 and January 2021. The preventative campaign, which was designed to raise awareness by providing information on common fraud types, and offering advice on how

to avoid becoming a victim, was publicised across a number of physical and digital outlets.

WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES

Wildlife Crime Campaign

Phase Two of Operation Wingspan, the year-long Police Scotland campaign to tackle wildlife crime, will conclude at the end of January. This latest phase, which tackles badger persecution, includes work with the charity Scottish Badgers who are supporting officer training and the identification and protection of vulnerable sites.

The campaign commenced in October 2020, and across seven phases, will focus on the national wildlife crime priorities through a mixture of operational policing activity, internal training, effective partnership working and action to raise public awareness.

SUPPORT FOR OPERATIONAL POLICING

Mobile Working – Academic Evaluation

The Mobile Working Project enabled the roll out of around 11,000 mobile devices to operational police officers and Forensics Services staff, offering direct remote access to a variety of policing applications. Feedback from officers and staff using the devices has been extremely positive.

To offer additional internal and external assurance, an independent evaluation of the project was conducted by academics from Robert Gordon and Abertay Universities. The final evaluation report confirmed that the implementation of mobile working technology has enabled significant and sustained qualitative benefits including increased visibility, instant access to information, and enhancement to proactive policing, as well as having a positive impact on morale and wellbeing.

Contact Assessment Model (CAM)

CAM provides callers to Police Scotland with an improved assessment of threat, harm, risk, investigation and engagement (THRIVE), enabling us to deliver the most appropriate and proportionate outcome for every caller. The model has been successfully embedded throughout Police Scotland and has been a crucial enabler in our ability to respond to the coronavirus pandemic.

On Wednesday 16 December 2020, the CAM Project received the Campbell Christie Public Service Reform Award at the Scottish Public

Service Awards. This award is granted to the team that best embodies the spirit of public service reform, improving the delivery of their service and showcasing the exceptional public sector of the future.

4. STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT

PUBLIC INQUIRY - DEATH OF SHEKU BAYOH

On Monday 30 November, the Public Inquiry into the death of Sheku Bayoh commenced. Police Scotland will participate fully in the Public Inquiry in an open and transparent manner. It is vital that the role and independence of the Public Inquiry is respected to ensure society sees the application of the rule of law, due process, and justice being served.

The death of Sheku Bayoh was, and remains, a terrible tragedy. It has had a traumatic impact on his family and friends, as well as affecting many people within policing, and the wider community of Kirkcaldy and Scotland. As Chief Constable, I am committed to supporting all those who have been affected by Sheku Bayoh's death throughout this time.

TRANSATLANTIC WEBINAR – GLOBAL POLICING CHALLENGES

On Wednesday 9 December, Police Scotland facilitated a transatlantic webinar involving senior police officers from Scotland, England, Northern Ireland and the United States of America. This provided a unique opportunity to discuss and share experiences on some of the major issues facing police services around the world. I co-hosted the event, along with Mr. Chuck Wexler, Executive Director of the Police Executive Research Forum. Discussion focused on key global challenges including the response to COVID-19, public protest during the pandemic, the policing of major events, and environmentalism. There was a panel discussion on public trust and confidence in policing, and recognition of the principle of policing by consent, through which policing draws its legitimacy.

The webinar was the first in a series of online learning events to be facilitated by Police Scotland's International Development and Innovation Unit, which will build on existing partnerships and develop new relationships, to enable shared learning through a collaborative approach.

LOCKERBIE BOMBING

The bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie in December 1988 resulted in the terrible loss of 270 lives. On the 32nd anniversary of the tragedy, the United States Department of Justice announced terror related charges against a Libyan suspect in respect of the bombing. On

Friday 15 January 2021, the Court of Criminal Appeal in Scotland refused an appeal against the conviction of Abdelbaset Ali Mohmed Al-Megrahi. These were significant developments for the families of the victims who have demonstrated dignity and courage for over 30 years, and my thoughts and the thoughts of Police Scotland officers and staff remain with them.

Since 1988, policing in Scotland has been committed to carrying out the largest terrorist and murder investigation ever undertaken in this country. Police Scotland will continue to work closely on this investigation with the Crown Office, our American law enforcement colleagues and other international partners.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT – CORONAVIRUS

Police Scotland recognises that restrictions designed to tackle the national health emergency continue to have a major impact on how we live our lives. As coronavirus restrictions have changed, we have continued to provide local and national updates in a number of ways, including direct contacts, and through traditional media, internet and social media outlets. As part of that wider public engagement, since the last Scottish Police Authority Board meeting, I participated in a number of the First Minister’s Daily Briefings. During these sessions, I was able to communicate directly with the citizens of Scotland, offering assurance that the policing style and tone in respect of the restrictions will remain clear and consistent, engaging with people in our communities and adopting a common sense approach, while acting decisively against those who wilfully breach coronavirus regulations.

PARLIAMENTARY ENGAGEMENT

On Tuesday 22 December 2020, as part of a panel of witnesses, Detective Chief Superintendent Samantha McCluskey provided evidence to the Justice Committee, who were considering the provisions of the Domestic Abuse (Protection) (Scotland) Bill.

On Monday 18 January 2021, Assistant Chief Constable Mark Williams and Chief Superintendent Matt Richards provided evidence to the Justice Sub Committee on Policing in respect of Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems and Body Worn Video.

LOCAL AUTHORITY ENGAGEMENT

On Tuesday 12 January, Deputy Chief Constable Will Kerr and I, together with senior colleagues, participated in the latest virtual engagement session with senior representatives from the Convention of Scottish Local

Authorities (COSLA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE). These sessions build on the strong relationships which exist between Police Scotland and Local Authorities, and included discussion on community safety, serious and organised crime, mental health demand, public confidence, and the forthcoming 2021 parliamentary elections.

CHIEF CONSTABLES' COUNCIL

On Wednesday 20 and Thursday 21 January, along with other members of the senior leadership team, I will attend a virtual meeting of the Chief Constables' Council. This meeting will provide the opportunity for Chief Constables and senior policing colleagues from across the UK, to discuss matters of strategic importance which are likely to arise in the year ahead.

5. SIGNIFICANT OPERATIONAL EVENTS

POLICING RESPONSE TO COVID-19 – OPERATION TALLA

Police Scotland continues to deliver a proportionate and common sense policing response to the evolving circumstances associated with the COVID-19 public health pandemic. This response continued throughout the challenging festive period, when all areas of mainland Scotland moved into Level 4. During this period, police officers worked in communities across Scotland, where the vast majority of people continued to exercise their civic responsibility by following the regulations and guidance. However, officers continued to respond to breaches of the legislation, including illegal house gatherings and contraventions of travel regulations. On Tuesday 5 January 2021, restrictions in Scotland were further strengthened, and visible patrols will be maintained to support efforts to tackle the national health emergency.

Throughout the coronavirus crisis, Police Scotland's approach has been predicated on the 4Es principle – engage, explain, encourage, and enforce. This consistency of approach remains, however, where officers encounter the minority of people who deliberately and wilfully break the law, they will act decisively to enforce the legislation.

FESTIVE PERIOD DEMANDS

In conjunction with the unique and concurrent challenges associated with the coronavirus pandemic, EU Exit and preparation for the COP26 Conference, Police Scotland continued to experience a high level of demand throughout the festive period. Demands related to serious criminality, road fatalities, protest activity and other significant incidents,

across the length and breadth of the country, all of which required an effective policing response to support local communities.

Officers and staff responded with professionalism, discretion and common sense, and the continuing demand over the festive period underlines the relentless and challenging nature of policing. I reiterate and formally record my thanks to officers and staff for their personal and professional commitment to public service, and acknowledge the support they receive from families and friends.

POLICING RESPONSE TO EU EXIT

As previously reported, Police Scotland was involved in extensive contingency planning and preparations in advance of the UK's withdrawal from the European Union on Thursday 31 December 2020. In response to risks presented by concurrent threat and risk, the National 'All-Risks' Co-ordination Centre (NCC) was established to manage the response to EU-Exit, COVID-19 and any other civil emergency that may occur. The NCC became fully operational on Monday 28 December.

Police Scotland retained the capability of the Flexible Response Unit to provide a nationally deployable asset, capable of responding to challenges at short notice. In addition, officers have worked with Home Office, UK Law Enforcement and other partners to identify and develop a range of contingency options that will replace the EU Justice and Home Affairs measures to which access has been lost.

The policing response to EU Exit will be discussed as a substantive agenda item during the Board meeting.

CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES (COP26)

Planning and preparation for the COP26 Conference in Glasgow later this year continues. In December 2020, representatives from Police Scotland attended a UK Government led two day workshop in London, which considered strategic planning assumptions, and made progress on matters relating to the safety and security of the conference venue and other COP26 related sites.

Other developments include the establishment of the Police Scotland COP26 Wellbeing Governance Group, and commencement of the Peer Review being undertaken by the Metropolitan Police Service, which is being led by Deputy Assistant Commissioner Lucy D'Orsi.

6. OUR PEOPLE

MENTAL WELLBEING PROGRAMME

As previously reported, in July 2020, I announced six personal commitments to officers and staff for 2020/21. To support my commitment to implement new initiatives to support wellbeing and our understanding of mental health issues, a Mental Wellbeing Programme commenced on Tuesday 1 December. The pilot programme is taking place across four areas, with courses scheduled until the end of March 2021. The interactive course modules are being delivered virtually for small groups, with officers and staff of all ranks and grades involved.

To accompany the Mental Wellbeing Programme modules, Police Scotland has introduced the 87% App, a digital wellbeing and mobile fitness platform for officers and staff. The interactive app contains a mental health self-check-up tool and offers a Police Scotland specific platform for wellbeing materials and support. Over 2,000 users have registered an account, and its use will continue to be encouraged and promoted.

POLICE OFFICER RECRUITMENT

On Thursday 17 December at Police Scotland Headquarters, Tulliallan, I conducted a physically distanced Oath of Office for 125 new recruits, who have commenced their career with Police Scotland. This latest cohort consisted of 42% female officers, and 12% from minority ethnic backgrounds, which demonstrates positive progress in our continued efforts towards a workforce that reflects the demographics of Scotland. As a result of focussed recruitment, 22 of the officers will be deployed in historically hard to fill areas, including remote and rural locations.

Police Scotland's positive action recruitment activity continues, and an online LGBTI recruitment event took place on Thursday 3 December, attracting 45 attendees, with 11 already having applied to Police Scotland. In addition, two online events to encourage the recruitment of women in policing took place in December, attracting 311 participants.

Greater Glasgow Division has been chosen to lead the Retain Sub Group of the 'Raise the Ceiling' Project being driven by the Scottish Trade Union Conference - Black Workers Conference. The purpose of the group is to increase the recruitment, retention and promotion of police officers and staff from minority ethnic backgrounds into Police Scotland. It will look to identify and remove systemic barriers through a localised approach, with national and external support and guidance.

EQUALITY OUTCOMES 2021-2025

In terms of the Equality Act 2010, Police Scotland will refresh its Equality Outcomes for the next four years, to ensure we deliver the best possible service for our staff, as well as the diverse communities we serve. In January, to help shape the 2021-2025 Equality Outcomes, we launched an online engagement survey, open to police officers and staff, members of the public and partner organisations, seeking feedback to ensure that the refreshed outcomes have a positive impact in the areas that need them most.

POLICE OFFICER PROMOTION

As previously reported, in the last year, Police Scotland introduced a new national promotion process for each rank from Sergeant to Superintendent. The process is designed to test operational knowledge and competence, and recognise day to day performance. Following conclusion of recent processes, 131 and 51 candidates have been added to the promotion pool for Inspector and Chief Inspector ranks respectively.

Following selection process, on Monday 7 December 2020, Temporary Assistant Chief Constable Pat Campbell was appointed to the Police Scotland Senior Leadership Team, with portfolio responsibility for Organised Crime, Counter Terrorism and Intelligence.

POLICE SCOTLAND OFFICERS HONOURED

Two Police Scotland officers were recognised in Her Majesty's New Year Honours. Detective Chief Superintendent Sam McCluskey, Head of Public Protection and Chief Inspector Lindsay Tulloch, Area Commander for Shetland were awarded the prestigious Queen's Police Medal for services to policing.

The awards recognise the dedicated public service each recipient has given to communities across Scotland, a level of dedication that is reinforced by officers and staff throughout Police Scotland on a daily basis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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