



Agenda Item 5

Meeting	Authority Meeting
Date	27 June 2024
Location	COSLA, Edinburgh
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 June 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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Chief Constable's Report

June 2024

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Chief Constable's Report June 2024

Overview

This week Police Scotland is recognising and celebrating the vital role and contribution of response policing as part of the National Police Chiefs' Council Response Policing Week of Action.

Response officers work around the clock to serve the public with bravery, compassion and resilience across countless scenarios - no two shifts are the same. Response officers are often the first contact the public has with their police service, and often in moments of crisis and criticality.

I've been clear that it is my duty to support frontline policing and my aim is to bring the frontline to its strongest possible position. I want to record my deep gratitude for our response officers and I know senior officers right across the country are taking time to recognise and thank their teams.

My report outlines how officers and staff are delivering for the public every day - investigating crime; securing court outcomes; and seizing illegal drugs.

This summer, policing is also supporting major events, including hugely popular music concerts, sporting events, festivals and a general election. I want to thank the officers and staff who plan and support our proportionate and appropriate policing response to ensure communities can enjoy events safely and participate in the democratic process.

Since appointment, I've underlined that as policing tackles threat, harm and risk, we must also focus on prevention and problem solving to get on top of demand.

This month, we're campaigning to reduce road casualties with a focus on wearing seatbelts and we've shared powerful testimony from people affected by road traffic collisions. I thank those who bravely shared their experiences in an effort to prevent further harm.

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Introducing change that achieves efficiencies and benefits is absolutely critical to provide effective service.

This month, we outlined a national contract to implement body worn video for over 10,000 frontline officers and staff across Scotland, over the next three years.

Motorola Solutions was awarded the contract on the basis of quality and value for money and a range of technical requirements. The new system is anticipated to work smoothly in areas with lower quality network connections, including rural locations, and we are also investing in our network capability to support this.

Body worn video can help to de-escalate incidents, improve public trust in policing and reduce complaints, support officer and staff safety, and bring wider benefits to the criminal justice system and I have been clear a national roll-out is a priority for me.

We know there is strong public and partner support for body worn video in Scotland and we will continue to explain policing's use of this important technology, including assurance around data privacy and human rights considerations.

The national roll-out of body worn video is a complex programme of work. Appointing a supplier is an important step and we are working at pace with Motorola Solutions to ensure that body worn video is embedded effectively for frontline officers and staff as soon as possible and we'll continue to share details as progress is made.

I have highlighted that innovation and improvement must be prioritised and accelerated across the criminal justice system and, as we roll-out body worn video, we're working with Motorola Solutions and partners to maximise its benefits to improve efficiencies and experiences for victims.

My report details other work with the Scottish Government, the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service and the Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service to support better and quicker court outcomes for victims and to provide efficiency and value for the public and I am grateful for their engagement and commitment to those shared goals.

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Along with accelerating broader change across the criminal justice system, I want key partners, including the third sector, to help us find a balance around the care, support and monitoring of people suffering with poor mental health that officers are too often picking up.

I've directed Deputy Chief Constable Alan Speirs to lead Police Scotland's work with partners including the Authority and the Scottish Government and we've established a mental health taskforce to drive work in this priority area at pace.

The taskforce will develop and embed referral pathways such as the NHS Mental Health Pathway and Distress Brief Intervention, as well as operational guidance on how to access community triage, so the public get the right response from those best able to give people the help they need and deserve.

The taskforce will also build on training to give our people the knowledge, skills and confidence to support that balance around the care, support and monitoring in our day to day policing.

I want to briefly highlight three events which are further detailed in my report.

I was grateful for the leadership, contribution and support of the Scottish Police Authority and its Chair Martyn Evans for the first Scottish Biometrics Conference which the Authority and Police Scotland jointly hosted with the Biometrics Commissioner Dr Brian Plastow in Edinburgh last week. The event was an important opportunity to continue the necessary public conversation about policing's ethical use of biometrics data and new technology where it can help us discharge our positive duty to keep people safe.

I want to thank everyone who contributed to and attended our recruitment open day hosted at our Recruitment and Training Centre at Jackton, in South Lanarkshire. We are recruiting police officers and the showcase was well attended and gave members of the public an insight into our varied, rewarding and demanding vocation.

We welcomed around 50 law enforcement colleagues, mostly from the United States as the Federal Bureau of Investigations hosted a cycle of their National Executive Institute programme for senior officers at Police Scotland Headquarters. Along with

other Police Scotland Chief Officers, I addressed the delegates during this important example of our commitment to sharing learning on an international scale.

Lastly, my report details changes to leadership responsibilities within the Force Executive following the appointments of Stuart Houston, Catriona Paton and Mark Sutherland as Assistant Chief Constables.

Our refreshed Force Executive has a shared focus to evolve our service so policing can live within our means and to support you, our fantastic officers and staff, to deliver for our communities.

Tackling threat, harm and risk

Death of Brian Low – Aberfeldy

On Thursday, 23 May, a man was arrested in connection with the death of 65-year-old Brian Low. The man, aged 75, subsequently appeared in private at Perth Sheriff Court charged with murder and attempting to defeat the ends of justice.

Mr Low's body was discovered in the Pitllie area on the outskirts of Aberfeldy, Perthshire, around 8.30am on Saturday, 17 February, 2024. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

Our officers have been working tirelessly in what has been a protracted investigation examining 2400 hours of CCTV and visiting almost 500 properties in the area.

Death of Kory McCrimmon

A 13-year-old boy has been arrested and charged in connection with the death of 16-year-old Kory McCrimmon following a disturbance at Greenfield Park in the Cranhill area of Glasgow around 8.15pm on Friday, 31 May, 2024.

Kory McCrimmon was seriously injured and taken by ambulance to the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital where he died on the afternoon of Sunday, 2 June, 2024.

Our enquiries are ongoing to establish the full circumstances and our thoughts very much remain with the family of Kory at this unimaginable time.

Significant court outcomes for sexual crimes

A 61-year-old man pled guilty to the serious sexual assault of a child and possession of indecent images of children. The man, who lives in Thailand but is originally from Dunfermline, pled guilty at the High Court in Glasgow on Tuesday, 11 June.

Specialist officers from the National Child Abuse Investigations Unit carried out this enquiry which also established the man had also sexually assaulted a young girl in Thailand.

Officers were able to pursue him under legislation which protects children anywhere in the world from sexual abuse by British nationals. This outcome underlines our commitment to protecting children by relentlessly pursuing individuals who carry out these heinous crimes.

Steven McMath, aged 24, was sentenced to five years imprisonment on Thursday, 23 May for sexual offences against two women in the Dumfries area. He was previously found guilty of rape and sexual assault charges following a trial at the High Court in Glasgow in April this year.

On Tuesday, 28 May, Clifford Hodgkins, 42, was jailed for 12 years for serious sexual offences in Perthshire between September 2020 and January 2022.

Lewis Forbes, 34, was jailed at the beginning of June for sexual and violent offences, including rape and assault to injury in the Inverness and Ross-Shire areas. He was given ten years imprisonment for his offences which took place between 2020 and 2022.

A 38-year-old man, Leslie Jackson, also appeared at the High Court in June and was sentenced to eight years in jail in connection with abduction and causing severe life threatening injuries to a woman in Aberdeen. The incident happened on 30 July, 2022, in the Kittybrewster area of Aberdeen. He forced his way into a property, seriously assaulted a woman and held her for 18 hours before she was able to escape.

Police Scotland thoroughly investigates all reports of sexual crimes and, with the support of our partners, will support those who come forward throughout the process.

Drugs recoveries

On Thursday, 23 May, three men were arrested and charged after drugs with a street value of around £1.35million were recovered at a property in the Tresta Road area of Glasgow. A significant quantity of cocaine as well as other drug related equipment was discovered.

On the same day officers searched a property under warrant on Wood Crescent, Motherwell, as part of a separate investigation. Heroin with an estimated street value of £20,000 was seized from within. Two men, aged 18 and 49, and a 42-year-old woman were arrested and charged in connection with drugs offences.

A further seizure took place on Thursday, 23 May, when acting on intelligence, officers executed a warrant at an industrial unit near Cumnock and recovered a drugs cultivation. Over 1,300 cannabis plants with an estimated street value of between £265,000 and £796,000 were seized at the unit in Lugar.

On Thursday, 30 May, 2024 officers searched two addresses in Comely Bank, Hamilton and recovered a quantity of cannabis with an estimated street value of £245,000.

On Thursday, 6 June, officers executed a warrant at a property in Wallacewell Road, Robroyston, and recovered 22.8 kilograms of cocaine, with an estimated street value

of £1.8 million. A 38-year-old man has been arrested and charged in connection and was due to appear before Glasgow Sheriff Court on Monday, 10 June, 2024.

Conviction for embezzlement

Michael Paterson, 59, was convicted of embezzling funds of more than one million pounds in Aberdeen. He pled guilty at the High Court in Edinburgh on Friday, 7 June of embezzling more than £1m from Aberdeen City Council between 2006 and 2023.

Paterson portrayed himself as an honest and professional individual and instead used his position to obtain a significant amount of money. This complex and protracted investigation was carried out by local CID officers and highlights our commitment to fully investigate all reports of financial crime. He will be sentenced at a later date.

Prevention, problem solving and proactivity

Online Child Sexual Abuse prevention campaign

Our new campaign tackling online child sexual abuse and exploitation campaign commences next month.

As with previous campaigns our focus is on prevention, targeting perpetrators and signposting them to support to prevent offending.

We have again partnered with the Lucy Faithfull Foundation, in recognition of the vital work they do to divert potential offenders, and to support Police Scotland in our commitment to protect children and keep our communities safe.

Seatbelt campaign

Road safety remains a priority and Police Scotland is part of a crucial partnership approach.

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The evidence is clear that seatbelts save lives and we supported a national seatbelt campaign from 3 - 16 June.

It was a coordinated approach with police forces across the UK as part of our work to support a national road safety campaign calendar. Figures show that on average, 13 per cent of people who died on Scotland's roads were not wearing a seatbelt.

As part of our campaign, we heard powerful testimony from Laura Torrance and David Galloway who suffered serious spinal injuries after they were thrown from cars that crashed. Their stories were made available on our national social media channels to highlight the serious, life-changing injuries that can happen if you don't wear a seatbelt.

I am grateful to both Laura and David for sharing their experiences in a bid to prevent others from experiencing traumatic incidents as a result of not wearing a seatbelt.

Officers are out every day educating road users and carrying out enforcement.

Policing Together and working with communities

General Election

The UK General Election will take place on Thursday, 4 July, 2024. Detailed planning is ongoing and officers in local communities are working alongside national teams and partners to ensure public safety and security to facilitate a peaceful, democratic process.

As with any election, Police Scotland, in connection with forces throughout the UK, provides safety and security advice to parties and candidates. We also liaise closely with local authority returning officers across Scotland regarding security at polling places.

Biometrics Conference

Last week, Police Scotland, along with the SPA and the Scottish Biometrics Commissioner, hosted the first Scottish Biometrics Conference. This brought together experts to discuss how new, and future, technologies can support effective policing. It is our positive duty to explore and exploit new technologies but to do so with a strong ethical basis governed by our Rights Based Pathway, through consultation and engagement, and underpinned by our commitment to uphold people's human rights.

Our capture, retention and use of biometric data must be lawful, effective, proportionate and ethical in a policing context. The conference was a significant step, the start of that discussion and exploration, and it will continue in this and other forums.

Care Experienced Young Person event

On Friday, 24 May, officers and staff met with care experienced young people at an event organised by Who Cares? Scotland, and hosted by Scottish Fire and Rescue, to talk with them about career opportunities within Police Scotland.

The session was an example of our commitment to being a Corporate Parent, to reducing stigma and engaging with young people from this valued community who have so much to offer. Further events are planned and we look forward to being involved.

FBI National Executive Institute

Police Scotland has a longstanding collaborative relationship with the Federal Bureau of Investigations, which was strengthened in the aftermath of the Lockerbie Disaster in 1989.

In 2021, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the FBI to further this mutually beneficial partnership, committing to fostering efficient and effective

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responses to threats through the identification and sharing of best practices to the leadership and management of police services and law enforcement agencies.

Earlier this month, Police Scotland hosted the FBI's National Executive Institute with 45 senior police leaders from the US, along with seven international colleagues, including one from Police Scotland. Along with other members of the Force Executive and external speakers, I addressed delegates across themes including policing by consent; policing the digital world; public health approaches to policing; recruitment and retention; leadership styles and policing under fiscal pressure.

Practical demonstrations were also delivered at Jackton on de-escalation tactics and the facilitation of peaceful protests, with a particular focus on how Police Scotland achieves this when the overwhelming majority of our officers do not carry firearms.

This is the third time in consecutive years the FBI has brought the NEI to Scotland, facilitated by our International Development and Innovation Unit. We have very much welcomed the opportunity to exercise our professional curiosity to learn from our guests, to share our experiences, to forge new professional bonds, and to underline our position as a centre of international excellence in policing education.

Pride Month

This month we are recognising PRIDE with a programme as part of this, I publicly apologised to the LGBTQI+ community which was published on 29 May. We are also flying of the Intersex-Inclusive Progress Pride Flag at Scottish Police Headquarters, Tulliallan for the first time and a range of events have been developed by our LGBTQI+ Community and their allies.

Change to prioritise frontline policing

Criminal Justice Reform

I have been clear that innovation and improvement must be prioritised and accelerated to support better and quicker court outcomes for victims and to provide efficiency and value for the public.

The overtime cost of officers being cited for court – with very few of them being called to give evidence – is £3.4m and £2.1m of that is for citations of officers while on annual leave. This not a sustainable position financially, or operationally. We must reduce cancelled rest days and leave and increase the time officers can spend in communities.

The time it takes for victims to get justice in this system is far too long. Victims and witnesses, including police witnesses, are repeatedly cited to court when they are not giving evidence.

A national roll-out of body worn video is evidence of policing's commitment to lead and support the transformation that can reduce these inefficiencies.

There are a number of work streams we are also supporting including:

- A new summary case management process that aims to improve court efficiency and outcomes for victims through early disclosure of evidence.
- A court scheduling app to reduce the demand on officers by taking account of shift patterns and rest days for officers when organising court business.
- The further roll-out of Digital Evidence Sharing Capability which revolutionises the way the criminal justice system processes evidence such as CCTV footage.

Fundamental system wide reform is required have been meeting with key partners and I believe there is a shared recognition of the challenges and desire to drive meaningful improvement.

Retail crime reporting pilot - Fife

We have made our first arrest following a process we are piloting in Fife which enables retailers to share evidence, such as witness statements and CCTV, with police through a platform used by Retailers Against Crime.

A male shoplifter at a sports shop in Dunfermline was identified from the information and CCTV footage submitted via this reporting approach. The pilot commenced in April and will run for approximately six months to evaluate its effectiveness.

Supporting officers and staff

NPCC Response Policing Week of Action

The contribution response officers make to policing in Scotland is crucial. They are on shift 24/7, 365 days a year, ready to respond when the public need us and often putting themselves in harm's way to keep other people safe.

Deputy Chief Constable Jane Connors met with response teams across the country to discuss the amazing work they do on a daily basis, and to hear first-hand about their vital contribution to policing.

Throughout the week of action, which takes place between 24 and 30 June, a series of free web sessions are being held and we will be promoting these internally. Our officers will be provided with a range of opportunities to enhance professional development, network with colleagues, share good practice and gain understanding on how to maintain their own physical and mental wellbeing.

I would like to thank all of our response officers for their continued professionalism, bravery and dedication to their duties.

Leadership and responsibilities

Following the appointments of Stuart Houston, Catriona Paton and Mark Sutherland as Assistant Chief Constables, I have confirmed changes to leadership responsibilities within the Force Executive.

Deputy Chief Constable (Designate) Jane Connors continues to lead Local Policing as well as leading on change. Mark Sutherland took up post as ACC West on 10 June. Operational Support is now part of the DCC Local Policing portfolio.

Criminal Justice reports into DCC Bex Smith as part of the Crime portfolio. ACC Steve Johnson now leads Major Crime, Public Protection and Local Crime within the DCC Crime portfolio.

Stuart Houston remains as ACC Professionalism and Assurance and Catriona Paton has joined DCC Alan Speirs's Professionalism, Strategy and Engagement portfolio as ACC for Policing Together.

Passing out parade

On Friday, 14 June, more than 190 officers celebrated their passing out parade with family and loved ones at Police Scotland Headquarters, Tulliallan, having completed their initial training.

The officers have now deployed to serve communities across Scotland and continue their probationary periods.

I am grateful to every one of our new officers for stepping forward to join the policing family in providing an excellent service to the public.

Police Officer Attraction

On Saturday, 1 June, we held our recruitment showcase event which was the first time Police Scotland has welcomed members of the public into our Recruitment and Training Centre at Jackton, in South Lanarkshire. The event enabled over 2,500

members of the public to gain access to the people and departments who support the recruitment journey and meet the real people behind the uniforms.

Our theme, “Are you looking for a job like no other?” was supported with insight and lived experiences from many of our specialist teams on how they support and help protect our police officers to keep the people and communities of Scotland safe from harm.

The event supports our ongoing efforts to attract candidates for the roles of police officer and Special Constable.

King's Birthday Honours

I want to record my thanks to officers and staff, including a member of our brilliant Special Constabulary, who were recognised in His Majesty's Birthday Honours earlier this month.

Assistant Chief Constable Catriona Paton and Special Constable Alistair Cameron were awarded the King's Police Medal (KPM). Head of Fleet Tony Chalk and retired Special Constable Iain Sutherland received an MBE.

I offer my warmest congratulations to Catriona, Alistair, Tony and Iain for this deserved recognition of their significant contribution to policing and their communities.

Workforce survey

We have partnered with Progressive Partnership Ltd to deliver a workforce survey which will open on 1 July.

The wellbeing and support of our colleagues is at the heart of our decision making and the survey will give them further opportunity to tell us if the support we are providing is tailored to their needs.

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Colleague feedback will help us build an understanding of how connected they feel to the organisation and how confident they are that they can be themselves at work.

We are communicating with colleagues to encourage participation and we will share the results with officers and staff, the Authority and publicly later this year.