



Meeting	Authority Meeting
Date	27 June 2024
Location	COSLA, Edinburgh
Title of Paper	Police Officer Recruitment and Initial Training
Presented By	Deputy Chief Constable Alan Speirs
Recommendation to Members	For Discussion
Appendix Attached	No

PURPOSE

This purpose of this paper is to provide the SPA Board with an overview of the future plans for police officer recruitment and current developments in the initial training for new police officers.

Members are invited to discuss the contents of this paper.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 2024 marks 70 years in Police Officer training at the Scottish Police College and coincidentally 24/25 will also mark the largest number of new recruits joining Police Scotland since its inception.

Careful consideration is given to the number and frequency of officers leaving Police Scotland. Early projection for those leaving in 24/25 was estimated at 63 per month. This has risen to an estimated average projection of around 80 officers leaving per month. The vast majority of those officers are retiring from police service. The increased retirements are largely as a direct consequence of the McCloud Remedy introduced in 2022 providing officers with an option to retire at the age of 50 years with 25 years police service.

The strategic recruitment and training pause in December 2023 was entirely predicated on a lack of available revenue funding and whilst it has allowed for the exploration of a revised recruitment model, developed and agreed, it has had a detrimental impact on both officer recruitment and training.

The revised model for recruitment of police officers has provided the ability to increase numbers and do so in a flexible way that is demand led. This model moves away from the traditional quarterly intakes of approximately 200 recruits to a more frequent model, introduced in March 2024 and will accommodate ten intakes of officers per year.

Organisation learning has been gleaned from a number of sources including Operation Tarn, Human Rights Baseline review, HMICS Review of Culture, Manchester Arena Inquiry, HMICS Crime Audit, HMICS Review of the Contact Assessment Model (CAM). Violence Against Women and Girls and equality, diversity and inclusion training, and trauma informed and wellbeing training.

As such a thematic review of all training delivered by LTD is underway, with Initial Probationer Training identified as a priority.

2. Police Officer Attrition and Recruitment

2.1 Scheduled Inductions for FY 2024/2025:

Date	Intake
25/03/2024	193 (SPC) – Completed 14/06/24
13/05/2024	119 (SPC)
15/07/2024	207 (SPC)
15/07/2024	55 (Non residential)
02/09/2024	125 (SPC)
04/11/2024	207 (SPC)
04/11/2024	55 (non residential)
13/01/2025	125 (SPC)
10/03/2025	207 (SPC)
10/03/2025	55 (non residential)
	Total 1348 officers

Recruitment continues to look at attraction methods and the launch of a new campaign in September 2024 is expected to increase the officer pipeline. A recent Force wide event hosted at our Jackton training facility saw over 2000 potential new applicants attending. This event showcased all aspects of Police Scotland resulting in a positive surge in applications received. The number of applications received by Police Scotland continues to be extremely positive and reflective of the communities we serve across Scotland. The Recruitment team continue to travel to our remote and rural areas of Scotland to assess candidates to ensure there are no barriers in recruiting for all geographical locations. Our Positive Action Team continue to work diligently in engaging with our hard-to-reach communities across Scotland.

Recognising the barriers to a residential training programme at the Scottish Police College and caring demands which may be placed upon potential recruits, July 2024 will see the introduction of a non-residential training course operating from our Jackton facility.

On the 15 July 2024 the new intake will be trained concurrently in two locations for the first time in the history of Scottish policing:

- 207 officers at the Scottish Police College
- 55 officers at the Jackton Training Centre, East Kilbride

The non-residential programme will be delivered by highly experienced staff to the required standard. A full evaluation process will be put in place and should the pilot be successful, it is proposed that such an approach could be delivered in any suitable location across Scotland.

Both courses will culminate in a pass out parade at the Scottish Police College on the conclusion of their initial training programme.

2.2 Today (14 June 2024), we have **16,267.3 FTE** officers. The graph below shows attrition since January this year. This peaks in April, which may be attributed to the end of the financial year in March. It should also be noted that the current July and August figures will be subject to change in the coming months.



The predictions in the table below are based on leavers patterns demonstrated this year.

Officers continue to leave at an average of 80 per month and are recruited at an average of 370 per quarter which is the current training capacity of the organisation. In order to bring the force back to around 16500 to 16600.

As outlined Police Scotland is maximising recruitment opportunities throughout 2024/25, with estimates provided below:

Month	FTE
May-24	16277
Aug-24	16290-16320
Nov-24	16425-16450
Mar-25	16475-16500

3 Revised Approach to Initial Training

- 3.1 A revised training model has been launched where officers begin and complete their initial probationer training locally. Benefiting from staying at home, having the support and familiarity of family/friends, familiarising themselves with the local Policing Areas and building relationships with local officers. Our flexible delivery model will see residential courses running concurrently with non-residential courses.

Probationer training has been refreshed and modernised to ensure it equips our newest recruits for the complex role they will face in local policing environments. Updated and new content on the initial training course includes history and ethics of Policing, Policing Diverse Communities, additional support where English is not a first language, communication skills and recognising how attitudes, behaviours and emotions influence interactions with themselves, the public and colleagues.

This history of policing includes the Peel Principles and legitimacy, and the evolution of policing. Sir Geoff Palmer contributed a recorded interview which will be incorporated, educating officers on race, colonisation and Scotland's role in slavery. Cases of historic importance are discussed, including Stephen Lawrence which opens discussions on institutional discrimination/racism. It also explores the definition of institutional discrimination/ institutional racism as well as the murder of Sarah Everard, which leads into a focus on ethics. Custom and practice are introduced and the need to challenge stressed.

Policing Together provide an input to probationers with up-to-date information on the demographics of Scotland, and specifically in terms of the communities we serve, broken down by geography and policing division. Community tensions and cultural sensitivities are discussed, and good practice is shared.

The Probationer Governance Unit was established in October 2023 to provide any additional support required in the transition from the training to operational environment.

A full training needs analysis (TNA) of the probationer training programme will explore the effectiveness of the changes, additional content and enhancements implemented and any further changes that are required.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications in this report.

5. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no personnel implications in this report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no legal implications in this report.

7. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no reputational implications in this report.

8. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no social implications in this report.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

9.1 There are no community implications in this report.

10. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no equalities implications in this report.

11. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no environmental implications in this report.

