

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Policing Performance Committee</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>26 August 2020</b>
<b>Location</b>	<b>Video Conference</b>
<b>Title of Paper</b>	<b>Overview of Local Authority Scrutiny Arrangements for Policing</b>
<b>Presented By</b>	<b>Eleanor Gaw</b>
<b>Recommendation to Members</b>	<b>For Discussion</b>
<b>Appendix Attached</b>	<b>Yes</b>

**PURPOSE**

To provide members with an overview of current local authority scrutiny arrangements for policing.

## 1. BACKGROUND

### 1.1 Legislation

1.2 The policing principles, set out in the 2012 Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act, reset the main purpose of policing from the previous legislative articulation, agreed in 1967, to “guard, patrol, and watch”. The new policing principles set in 2012 are:

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

1.3 The 2012 Act also requires Police Scotland to:

- involve the local authority in the setting of priorities and objectives for the policing of its area, and take into account any feedback received;
- consult each local authority in the setting of priorities and objectives for the policing of its area;
- submit a local policing plan which sets out the main priorities and objectives for the area to the local authority for approval, and as soon as is reasonably practicable after the strategic police plan is approved;
- provide reports to the local authority as it requires on the carrying out of police functions in the area;
- consult each local authority prior to the designation of a local commander.

1.4 Under the Act, the SPA:

- must promote the policing principles;
- may specify the format for publication of local police plans; and
- must hold the Chief Constable to account for the policing of Scotland.

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- 1.5 A local authority:
- may monitor and provide feedback on the policing of its area, and make recommendations for improvement; and
  - may specify measures it wishes the local commander to include in the local police plan.
- 1.6 Police Scotland and local authorities are also statutory participants in community planning. They must work together with community planning partners and consult with local communities, to identify priority local outcomes. These are set out in a local outcomes improvement plan (LOIP) for each local authority area, specifying the improvements sought and timeframe for delivery. The community planning partnership monitors and reports on progress on delivery of these outcomes.
- 1.7 Each community planning partnership must also prepare locality plans, to support improvement for particular areas which experience significantly poorer outcomes. These can often be areas of multiple deprivation, with higher than usual levels of crime, victims and vulnerable people.
- 1.8 Local and national policing priorities are reflected in the local plan for each local authority area, prepared by the Divisional Commander in consultation with the local authority, and submitted to the local authority for approval.

## **2. Overview of Local Scrutiny Arrangements for Policing**

- 2.1 Each local authority has chosen and established individual scrutiny arrangements to align with their own local requirements, and governance and accountability structures. An outline of current local arrangements in place is attached at Appendix A.
- 2.2 These arrangements could be broadly categorised as follows –
- Dedicated police and fire oversight committees - 10 local authorities
  - Local police scrutiny streamed principally through local community planning arrangements – 3 local authorities
  - Scrutiny of policing takes place in a committee with wider responsibilities across community services, or community safety and public protection – 14 local authorities

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- Scrutiny of policing takes place in a committee with a wider scrutiny role – 2 local authorities
- High level local scrutiny of policing performance takes place at full council or committee, with more detailed scrutiny at local community planning level – 3 local authorities

The frequency of scrutiny of policing at local level varies considerably and is frequently reviewed. The majority of arrangements offer dedicated consideration of policing at local authority level between 2 – 5 times a year, supplemented by reporting and engagement at local community planning level.

### 2.3 Supporting local police plans

Local police plans largely run on a three year cycle, and underpin performance reporting at local authority level. Local scrutiny processes review local performance against priorities set out in local police plans, and reporting is supplemented by briefings on national issues or strategic policing matters with local implications.

Significant work has taken place in Police Scotland to support the renewal of local police plans this year. Local plans in all divisions have been reviewed and refreshed, to ensure alignment with strategic priorities set out in the Joint Strategy for Policing, and to reflect any changing local priorities, including those reflected in local community planning arrangements.

Most refreshed local police plans run from 2020-2023, with a small number of exceptions where there has been a local decision to align the local police plan with local community planning timelines.

The local authority approval process for local police plans has been impacted by COVID-19 response, due to related disruption to local committee meeting calendars.

Revised local police plans have been submitted to the local scrutiny arrangements for sign off, with more than half approved at local authority level as of 19 August 2020.

All police divisions yet to achieve full sign off have confirmed that they are working to a known timetable to complete the process, and that this work is in hand.

### 3. COSLA Police Scrutiny Conveners' Forum

COSLA Police Scrutiny Conveners' Forum was established by COSLA in 2016. It was set up to enhance the ability of elected members to have a meaningful role in the governance and scrutiny of policing in Scotland, and provide a mechanism for elected members to provide input into national policy issues and broader policing matters that have an impact on local communities.

The Forum comprises all local authority scrutiny conveners or the equivalent political lead for police scrutiny at local authority level, supported by relevant senior officials, with additional participation from Police Scotland senior officers, the Scottish Police Authority Board and Executive Team, and Scottish Government officials.

The purpose of the Forum is to

- Gather the collective views of member councils on national policy issues relating to policing
- Enable Local Scrutiny Conveners for Policing to influence and scrutinise national policy decisions which have an impact at local level
- Contribute to a formalised relationship between Local Scrutiny Committees and with the Scottish Police Authority
- Act as a conduit for the dissemination of any relevant information from COSLA, the SPA or Police Scotland
- Encourage the sharing of good practice in scrutiny at local level, with the support of the Improvement Service.

The Forum meets twice yearly, reporting to the COSLA Community Well Being Board, and is chaired by COSLA Community Well Being Spokesperson Councillor Kelly Parry.

The SPA Chair and members, and SPA Senior Executive Team, together with Police Scotland senior leaders and representatives, remain regular participants and contributors to the Forum. The Forum has consistently offered a valuable additional access point at national level for local authority consultation and engagement on developing strategy, emerging developments and challenges, work programmes, and partnership opportunities.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are requested to note the report.

**Appendix A - Local Authority Scrutiny Arrangements for policing**

19 August 2020	Local Authority	Scrutiny Arrangements	Type of committee
North East	Aberdeen City	Public Protection Committee	Committee with a broader remit on public protection
	Aberdeenshire	Communities Committee	Committee with broader remit focused on communities
	Moray	Police and Fire and Rescue Services Committee	Police and Fire Committee
Highlands and Islands	Highland Council	Communities and Place Committee	Committee for high level scrutiny, approves the local plans for Police and Fire Services and provides annual strategic scrutiny and engagement on these plans; regular scrutiny and engagement on local delivery takes place at local area committees.
	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	Communities and Housing Committee	Committee with a broader community service and community safety remit
	Orkney Islands Council	Police and Fire Committee	Police and Fire Committee
	Shetland Islands Council	Community Safety and Resilience Board	Committee with a broader community safety focus
Tayside	Dundee City	Community Safety and Public Protection Committee	Committee with a broader community safety and public protection remit
	Angus	Scrutiny and Audit	Committee with a broader remit, focused on audit and scrutiny

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19 August 2020	Local Authority	Scrutiny Arrangements	Type of committee
	Perth and Kinross	Housing and Communities Committee	Committee with a broader community services, and community safety remit
Greater Glasgow	Glasgow City	Safe Glasgow Group	Local community planning committee
	East Renfrewshire	Cabinet (Police & Fire)	Police and Fire
	East Dunbartonshire	East Dunbartonshire Council	Full Council
Ayrshire	East Ayrshire	Police and Fire and Rescue Committee	Police and Fire Committee
	North Ayrshire	Police and Fire Scrutiny Committee	Police and Fire Committee
	South Ayrshire	Partnerships Panel	Committee with a broader remit
Dumfries and Galloway	Dumfries and Galloway	Police, Fire and Rescue Sub Committee	Police and Fire Committee
Lanarkshire	North Lanarkshire	Community Safety Partnership Forum	Police and Fire Committee
	South Lanarkshire	Safer South Lanarkshire Board	Local community planning board
Argyll and West Dunbartonshire	Argyll and Bute	Community Services Committee	Committee with a broader remit
	West Dunbartonshire	West Dunbartonshire Community Planning Management Board	Local community planning board



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19 August 2020	Local Authority	Scrutiny Arrangements	Type of committee
Renfrewshire and Inverclyde	Inverclyde	Local Police and Fire Scrutiny	Police and Fire Committee
	Renfrewshire	Police and Fire & Rescue Scrutiny Sub Committee	Police and Fire Committee
Edinburgh	Edinburgh City	Culture and Communities Committee; supplemented by scrutiny at local community planning level	Committee with broader remit / focus on cultural and community services
Lothian and Scottish Borders	Scottish Borders Council	Police, Fire and Rescue and Safer Communities Board	Police and Fire Committee
	East Lothian	East Lothian Police, Fire and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee	Police and Fire Committee
	Midlothian	Midlothian Safer Communities and Reducing Reoffending Board	Committee with a broader remit focusing on community safety and public protection
	West Lothian	Services for the Community, Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (PDSP)	Committee with a broader communities focus and scrutiny

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19 August 2020	Local Authority	Scrutiny Arrangements	Type of committee
Fife	Fife Council	Environment, Protective Services & Community Safety Committee	Committee with a broader remit, focusing on community safety, environmental impact and public protection
Forth Valley	Clackmannanshire	Partnership & Performance Committee	Committee with a broader remit, focused on partnerships and performance
	Falkirk	Scrutiny – External	Committee with a broader remit, focused on scrutiny of externally provided services
	Stirling	Public Safety Sub-Committee	Committee with a broader remit, focusing on public safety