



Scottish Police Federation

5 Woodside Place Glasgow G3 7QF

JCC Circular 43 of 2016

Ref: CS/LS

8 August 2016

Attachments: SPF Response to Strategic Police Priorities

Dear Colleague

Scottish Government Strategic Police Priorities - Information

I attach for your information a copy of the SPF response to the Scottish Government consultation on the Strategic Police Priorities.

The original consultation can be found at https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/police-division/strategic-police-priorities/supporting_documents/00503438.pdf

Yours sincerely

Calum Steele
General Secretary



SCOTTISH POLICE FEDERATION

Established by Act of Parliament

Strategic Police Priorities Review
Police Division
Scottish Government 1WR
St Andrews House
Regent Road Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

By email to: ScotPolicePriorities@gov.scot

Ref: CS/LS

8 August 2016

Dear Sir / Madam

Strategic Police Priorities

I refer to the above consultation and thank you for inviting the Scottish Police Federation (SPF) to respond.

The SPF has no specific comment on the generalities of the first four priorities laid out in the consultation. We are however concerned at the wording;

Ensure the police service works to prevent crime and reduce fear of crime through partnership, communication, education, and innovation, **placing particular focus on the need to address inequalities within and between communities** {emphasis added}

Whilst the consultation document explains inequalities as relating to the experiences of communities in their dealings with the police, the SPF is concerned that once published, the accompanying narrative will be lost. This risks creating a perception the police provide the recognised minority and protected groups with a lesser service and this would be highly regrettable.

Turning now to the last two priorities. The SPF believes that the police, like all public services, should act with fairness, integrity and respect. We also believe transparency and accountability are key pillars of legitimacy and acceptability. That being said the SPF believes utilising these five elements as the basis upon which confidence is inferred is inherently dangerous and effectively directs that confidence is derived from a narrow spectrum.

We consider that public confidence in policing is about more than the manner in which the police service operates. Specifically confidence is delivered by having an effective police service. Effectiveness is primarily a product of capability and capacity and at this time the effectiveness of the police service is being significantly undermined by a lack

of funding. We consider that if the strategic priority is to truly set the standard for public confidence, the issues of capability and capacity must be included.

This is also relevant for the not unreasonable expectation for the police service to respond to emerging threats and challenges. That being said, no matter what way the Government chooses to dress it up, the dire capital funding settlement for the police service means that the service struggles to deal with existing threats and challenges, let alone be in a position to adequately respond to new ones.

The background to this priority states "... we expect our police service to be resilient, flexible, responsive and efficient." The SPF considers these priorities to be laudable. However we consider that laudable priorities will only ever be that, unless there is a commitment to actually making them happen. Simply creating a priority without delivering the means to implement is an abrogation of responsibility.

It is important to note that the police service requires to continually adapt and innovate in order to attempt to keep up with the online criminals who are often streets ahead with their technology and security measures.

At this time, the Police Service of Scotland (PSoS) is fighting 21st century crime with technology developed in the 1990's. The capital settlement is simply woefully inadequate to allow the police to innovate to enable the PSoS to 'be resilient, flexible, responsive and efficient.' The trickle of money for IT makes it inevitable the service will only be able to afford to invest in yesterday's technology for delivery tomorrow.

There is an inherent risk in assuming on-line capabilities primarily relate to serious and organised crime. Whilst it is undoubtedly true these types of crime are increasingly moving into the on-line arena, more day to day criminal investigation and general police work is dependent on modern and efficient IT. Whether searching for missing people, searching for stolen property or simply tracking offenders amongst a myriad of other things, the PSoS IT is going backwards whilst the rest of the world races ahead. Simply setting a laudable priority without the capital means to match will not address this chasm in capability.

Additionally the PSoS is operating in a crumbling estate that needs millions of pounds of investment to simply get it into a safe condition (including compliance with asbestos regulations). We have maintenance expectations that simply cannot be met and as a consequence parts of essential estate (including police cells) are rendered unusable.

Yours sincerely



CALUM STEELE
General Secretary