



2026

SERVING A CHANGING SCOTLAND



SCOTTISH POLICE
AUTHORITY

Presented by Superintendent Gavin Phillip



‘Policing 2026’ is a collaborative and strategic programme, led jointly by the Scottish Police Authority and Police Scotland, to transform policing in Scotland over the next 10 years.

- A clear direction will provide the foundation for long term operational and financial sustainability, towards achieving our vision of *“sustained excellence in service and protection”*.
- The strategy will clearly set out why we need to change, what we are trying to achieve and how we will do it.
- **‘Policing 2026’** will ensure Police Scotland will be flexible in responding to new and changing demands over the course of the next ten years.
- By putting the needs of citizens at the heart of shaping our services we will improve outcomes for people, communities and places.
- It will empower our people to develop partnerships with others, innovate and solve problems.
- By managing demands more effectively we will create the capacity needed to focus on prevention.
- By prioritising against threats and risks we will continue to protect the public from harm.



- Policing in Scotland is complex. In over 200 years an evolving mission has developed from preventing and detecting crimes, towards reducing harm and improving safety and wellbeing.
- More recently the decision to create a national service has seen the successful transition of eight legacy forces into a single service.
- Early successes focused on operational capability, with the delivery of equal access to specialist policing services across the country, and progress with national partnership working, for instance through the Crime Campus at Gartcosh.
- Inherited underinvestment in infrastructure and technology has constrained the opportunities to effect transformation in the early years, to fully realise the envisioned benefits of national police service.
- In the short-term, capital and reform funds have been used to supplement revenue funding that is insufficient for the scale of the organisation. Without change, future years could see a significant recurring budget deficit alongside a degrading service to the communities of Scotland.
- Regardless of strategic direction and future finance available, transformation is now urgently required. To deliver the level of service required, address emerging organisational risks and enable us to operate within budget in the future, we must change.



CALLS TO THE POLICE

7,063 calls

ON AVERAGE ARE RECEIVED EVERYDAY, OF WHICH

1,159 are emergency 999 calls.

THIS LEADS TO

4,430 incidents being recorded.

MANY OF THE MOST TIME CONSUMING RELATE TO CONCERNS FOR PERSONS, MISSING PERSONS AND DEALING WITH SUDDEN DEATHS.

84 PEOPLE ARE REPORTED MISSING EVERYDAY.

CRIME AND VULNERABILITY

1 in 4 people

SUFFER FROM A MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE EVERY YEAR.

157 incidents

ARE CREATED ON THE VULNERABLE PERSONS DATABASE EVERYDAY RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH.

1,138 crimes

ARE RECORDED EVERY DAY.

158 domestic incidents

ARE REPORTED EVERYDAY AND TAKE UP THE MOST TIME PER INCIDENT IN LOCAL POLICING.

TRENDS

Recording of domestic crimes has increased to 26% of all violent crime in Scotland.

Recorded Sexual crime is increasing and has been since 2010.

Cyber crime is growing and changing.

THIS INCLUDES SEXUAL CRIME, FRAUD AND EXTORTION.

Alcohol is a prevalent factor in many crimes.



WHAT MIGHT SCOTLAND LOOK LIKE IN 2026?



2026



30% MORE PEOPLE OVER 75, WITH 8% FEWER 16 – 29 YEARS.

'Severe'

TERRORISM THREAT LEVEL REMAINS 'SEVERE'.



LARGE PARTS OF THE TRANSPORT SECTOR ARE NOW SEMI OR FULLY AUTONOMOUS.

60%

OF POPULATION GROWTH HAS RESULTED FROM INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION.



THE TOP

10%

OF THE POPULATION EARN MORE THAN THE BOTTOM 40% COMBINED.

MORE POLICE TIME IS CONSUMED BY THOSE WITH MENTAL HEALTH OR VULNERABILITY ISSUES AT TIMES OF CRISIS.

140+ LANGUAGES SPOKEN IN HOMES. THE MOST COMMON ARE:

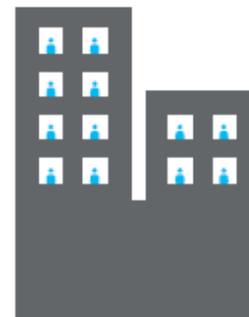
English
Chinese
Polish
Urdu
Punjabi

100%

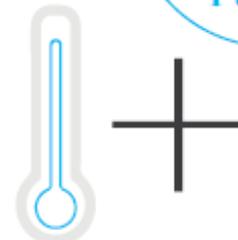
OF SCOTLAND'S DATA IS STORED DIGITALLY IN CLOUD.



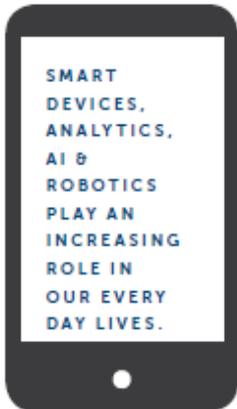
PEOPLE IN MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS ARE LIKELY TO INCREASE IN NUMBER



LIVING ALONE IS MORE COMMON.



AVERAGE TEMPERATURES ARE HOTTER BY 1°C IN SUMMER AND BY 0.5°C IN WINTER.



SMART DEVICES, ANALYTICS, AI & ROBOTICS PLAY AN INCREASING ROLE IN OUR EVERY DAY LIVES.



SCOTTISH POLICE AUTHORITY

WE WILL FOCUS ON FIVE AREAS



2026

1.

Protection

Based on threat, risk and harm.

We will continue to drive improvements across our approaches to detecting crime, protecting vulnerable people, responding to incidents, maintaining order and ensuring national security.

Our strategy will ensure that we continue to deliver these services effectively and efficiently while adapting to meet new threats and demands.

2.

Prevention

Tackling crime, inequality and enduring problems facing communities.

We will further develop prevention driven approaches with our partners to address enduring problems facing communities.

We will maintain a key role in supporting vulnerable individuals and communities.

3.

Communities

Focus on localism, diversity and the virtual world.

We will support an increasingly diverse set of communities, whether defined by place, identity or virtual connection, to increase their resilience. Our society will be stronger through a collective responsibility for safety, security and wellbeing. Our commitment to communities will also include listening more and responding to their diverse needs.

4.

Knowledge

Informing the development of better services.

We believe we have a duty to share knowledge.

We will build on our frontline experience and use information to influence, inform and work with partners, government and the public to collectively develop and improve the services to meet public needs more effectively and efficiently.

5.

Innovation

Dynamic, adaptable and sustainable.

We will constantly examine the nature and effectiveness of our services.

We will establish an innovation capability to learn from best practice, design new services in partnership whilst constantly preparing for emerging issues and the future.



What will change?

- Despite a changing world, our values of **fairness, integrity and respect** will remain constant. Our commitment to a **rights based approach** to policing will be based on maintaining **public consent**.
- We will make more productive use of limited resources to create capacity focused on **prevention**.
- We will continue to drive improvements around **protection**, based on a clear assessment of **threat, risk and harm**.
- Our focus will be on **improving the impact** of our policing services by working more effectively with partners and the public to deliver **better outcomes for people and communities**.
- We will demonstrate **leadership** in public service improvement and innovation by using the **knowledge and insight** our people have gained to influence and inform. We will work collectively and in collaboration with partner organisations and communities to **improve and develop** new services.
- We will constantly examine our performance, and **innovate** to remain sustainable and effective.

OUR STRATEGY ON A PAGE



2026

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WE WILL FOCUS ON

1. Protection

Based on threat, risk and harm.

2. Prevention

Tackling crime, inequality and enduring problems facing communities.

3. Communities

Focus on localism, diversity and the virtual world.

4. Knowledge

Informing the development of better services.

5. Innovation

Dynamic, adaptable and sustainable.

OUR PURPOSE

To **improve the safety and wellbeing** of people, places and communities in Scotland.

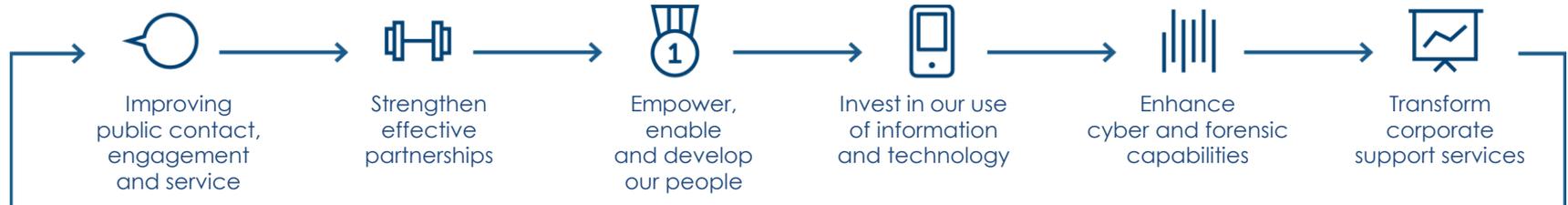
OUR VISION

Sustained excellence in service and protection

OUR VALUES

**Fairness
Integrity
Respect**

HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS: OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



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- 21385 recorded visits to consultation webpage
- 1715 completed responses
- 2450 formal engagement activities
- 55 staff engagement activities

The breakdown of those completing the consultation are as follows:

- Public/ Organisations 1234 (72%)
- Police officers: 384 (22%)
- Police staff: 97 (6%)

Overview of responses to questions posed:

- 59% agree that the strategy identifies the main risks, challenges and opportunities (23% believe the contrary)
- 77% agree with the main areas of focus within the strategy
- 73% agree with the methods proposed to deliver the strategy
- 79% agree that public confidence should be a key measure of success and the effectiveness of police performance
- 82% agree that we should reshape our organisation with a workforce focused on having the rights skills and capacity to meet future challenges



Following detailed analysis of the consultation results and engagement feedback the following themes were amended within the finalised strategy:

- To acknowledge in more detail the budget constraints on the Police and other Public Bodies now and in the future, and to provide more detail on the financial planning arrangements to deliver the strategy.
- To make more explicit reference to the value of Third Sector Partners.
- The need for the roles and responsibilities of all partners to be clearer.
- Further detail provided around measurement of public confidence.
- Acknowledgement in stronger terms of the contribution of and continued commitment to the Community Planning Framework.
- More explicit about understanding and responding to the needs of rural and remote communities.
- More emphasis on staff wellbeing, training and development.



We consider that the benefits to Scotland's people and communities from implementing the strategy are:

- The introduction of better ways for the public to contact the police and get the response that they need and expect – when they need it.
- A stronger policing effect to serve community needs.
- More effective partnership working at local and national level to enhance the service we offer to the public and prevent crime and harm.
- Greater accountability and improved public confidence.
- The capacity and capability to get ahead of the cyber threat.
- The delivery of better service – responsive, fit for the future, innovative and sustainable.



To commence delivery of this Strategy in the next financial year we propose to:

- Invest in new ways of public contact, resolution and demand management based on threat, risk and harm.
- Modernise our approach to traditional policing methods by investing in enabling technology.
- Invest in cyber capability for enhanced prevention and protection.
- Return officers to operational policing from corporate support roles.
- Develop new partnerships for both service improvements and value for money efficiency gains.
- The delivery of better service – responsive, fit for the future, innovative and sustainable.

This is a long-term strategy, but by starting now, the people of Scotland, our partners and our workforce will see visible and sustainable changes in the way we work, leading to better outcomes of safety and wellbeing.