

[DOCUMENT WILL BE FULLY DESIGNED BEFORE PUBLICATION]

Tri-partite Review of the Development of Local Police Plans

Final report

January 2022

DRAFT



**SCOTTISH POLICE
AUTHORITY**



[INSIDE PAGE]

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Introduction

[To be agreed and finalised with sponsors prior to publication]

Policing in Scotland is built upon a strong foundation of local, community and partner relationships. Its legitimacy is fostered through the principle of policing by consent. The role of local policing in forming and maintaining these partnerships is crucial and is reflected in its prioritisation of addressing the needs of local communities through effective service delivery, and of ensuring that partners are engaged, involved and have confidence in policing. The Chief Constable has responsibility for the policing across the country.

Local Police Plans' content are determined by local Area and Divisional Commanders in discussion with local authorities. Plans reference outcomes, objectives, policing priorities and performance measures distinct to the local area to which they refer, and where possible, are linked to Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs). Local authorities are responsible for approving the plan that covers their local authority area, demonstrating a transparent and democratic approach to local policing.

A shifting demographic, legislative and cultural outlook in Scotland means that there is value considering how the development of Local Police Plans and how they contribute to a safer country ahead of the next iteration of plans.

This tri-partite review is indicative of the approach that Police Scotland, the Scottish Police Authority and COSLA wishes to take towards service provision – it should be open, accountable, and responsive to local concerns. We thank all participants for their input and candour.

[Signatures to be added for publication]



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Background to the review

Police Scotland, the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) and COSLA agreed to collaborate on a review of the development of the latest Local Police Plans to identify areas of development and best practice which will then inform future local planning processes.

This review recognises the fundamental role of locally elected representatives in scrutiny of the local police planning process, and as such has sought the views of local authority elected members and officials involved in the last planning cycle and leading on scrutiny of local policing, as well as Police Scotland's divisional and local commanders.

An overview of the provisions in the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 and some information on the process to develop the current LPPs is provided below.

Statutory context

Under the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 ("the Act"), local policing commanders prepare a Local Policing Plan (LPP) for each of Scotland's 32 local authorities. The LPP sets out the approach to policing in the area and is shared with the appropriate local authority for the area.

The Act requires LPPs to be reviewed at least every three years or whenever a new Strategic Police Plan (SPP) is agreed. The latest SPP, known as the Joint Strategy for Policing – Policing for a Safe, Protected and Resilient Scotland ('the Strategy') was approved in 2020.

The Act sets out the following areas for inclusion in the LPP:

- the priorities, objectives and arrangements for policing in the local area;
- an overview of how these were determined;
- the contribution of policing to local and community planning; and
- information on performance monitoring.

Local policing structure

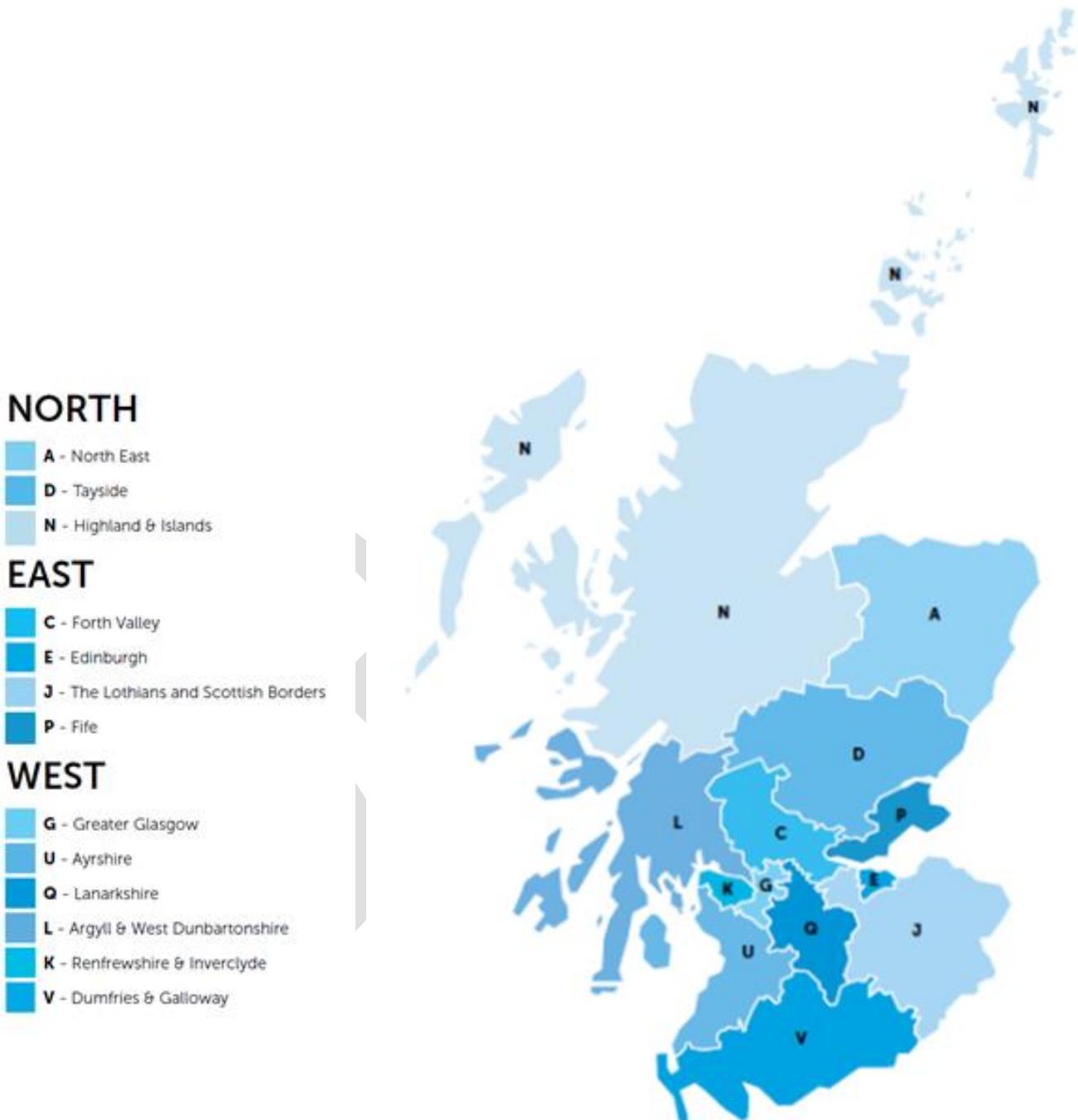
Police Scotland has 13 local policing divisions. Each is headed by a Chief Superintendent known as a Divisional Commander, supported by Superintendents with responsibilities across operations, specialist operations, support, service delivery, partnerships and crime.



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Also within these divisions, Chief Inspectors are assigned to local areas and are known as Local Area Commanders. Both Divisional and Local Area Commanders work closely with local authorities and other key partners.

As a national service, Commanders can call upon additional operational support and specialist services to assist with incidents and investigations, large planned and unplanned events, and other situations where these resources are needed.



Our approach

In June 2021 the terms of reference and key questions for the review were agreed. These key questions were as follows:

- How effectively does Police Scotland engage at local level in the development of LPPs?
- How effectively does Police Scotland demonstrate the benefit of access to national assets to local communities?
- How effectively does Police Scotland engage with you on changing local priorities?
- How effective do you consider current scrutiny of LPP delivery of LPP delivery at local level to be?
- Could the process to develop the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) in your area be enhanced to more effectively embed the role of policing?
- What measures could be used to strengthen the local relevance of local police plans?

Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority subsequently wrote to Scotland's thirty-two local authorities, explaining the review and inviting participation through an initial online survey. Twenty-five responses were received in total – fourteen from local authorities, and eleven from representatives of wider groups such as Community Planning and Community safety Partnerships. At the same time, interviews were undertaken with nineteen senior officers, including Divisional Commanders from every territorial policing division in Police Scotland, using the same question set contextualised for policing participants.

Data and responses from the survey and semi-structured interviews with Divisional Commanders were analysed and six key themes identified. These were:

- Engagement on the development of current Local Police Plans for 2020-23
- Potential approaches to future engagement
- Local Policing Plan content
- Alignment with other local plans and strategies
- Data/information provision and accessibility
- National guidance/standards on scrutiny

Workshops were held with representatives from local authorities to explore these themes. These facilitated workshops took place on 7 and 19 October 2021 and included a broad range of representatives including Elected Members and officers, from a range of local authorities across Scotland.

Our findings

We have grouped our learning from the survey, interviews and workshops under the six broad themes identified above. Findings for each of these themes are detailed below.

Engagement on the development of Local Police Plans for 2020-23

To consider the most effective approaches to engagement for the next iteration of Local Police Plans, it was important to gauge how Local Authorities and Local Commanders felt about the level of this engagement over the last cycle.

Understanding how and to what extent police engaged with the local authorities, as required under the legislation, will help multiply and widen the pathways by which information informing LPPs reaches local policing divisions.

Feedback from local authority representatives indicated that these local authorities were active participants in the developments of LPPs, with a range of formal and informal mechanisms facilitating input into their formation. The majority of respondents felt that Police Scotland engaged very well with them on changing local priorities and there were many positive examples of engagement. Some respondents representing other groups expressed a desire for more engagement at both local and national level.

Attendees at workshops were positive about the content of LPPs for their areas. The challenge of developing plans that are reflective of both localism and of a national service was acknowledged, along with the difference between what individual local citizens may identify as key priorities (e.g. some things that are not policing responsibilities such as dog fouling) and what operational expertise, data and intelligence would identify as policing priorities. The lived experience of local people also provides valuable insight to public services. Attendees discussed the possibility of including discussion of issues of heightened public interest within the plans, such as environmental sustainability in policing. Increased accessibility to LPPs was also seen as important, with considerations such as 'easy read' versions of plans seen as making information easier to access.

Through interviews and surveys there was a recognition of the importance of policing experience and operational insight in the development of the plans; Emerging trends in potential areas of threat, risk and harm such as organised crime and counter-terrorism, were examples of issues which might be less visible to the public and may not therefore be highlighted through consultation, but nevertheless needed to be addressed in local planning. There was strong support across participants for a local approach to producing LPPs.

Potential approaches to future engagement

There was positive feedback on engagement with local authorities during the last LPP development cycle. The review also considered enhanced engagement that could be undertaken, in addition to the statutory requirements, and Your Police survey. Innovation proposals from Local Commanders and knowledge-sharing from partners in local authorities resulted in some suggestions for improving engagement on local priorities.

There was broad agreement across all stakeholders that accessibility and representation were key to achieve community engagement with policing plans. Although data from surveys, interviews and workshops suggested a high degree of satisfaction with current development mechanisms, there were several suggestions as to how engagement could be augmented for future development of LPPs. Some survey responses suggested the possibility of better capturing the views of specific groups such as black and minority ethnic communities and young people.

| Recommendations | |
|------------------------|---|
| 1 | Police Scotland and Local Authorities should jointly share good practice, and consider new methods to improve engagement from less-engaged groups. |
| 2 | Police Scotland should consider expanding the ways by which the public can contribute to informing the content of Local Police Plans. |

Local Police Plan content

The content of Local Policing Plans has to inform a wide audience about policing priorities and local initiatives. It is important to strike a balance between the document being detailed enough to allow scrutiny boards and other stakeholders to hold commanders to account, and accessible enough to inform and engage local residents with little prior involvement with policing. The plans also need to communicate LPPs' place within wider organisational planning, whilst retaining the localism that makes these documents relevant to residents.

Survey respondents suggested ways in which LPP content could be enhanced for local use and scrutiny, such as more detailed performance indicators. It was also suggested that the developments of new LPPs could be enhanced by a specific review of delivery of the previous plan, in addition to existing reporting mechanisms.

Attendees at workshops were positive about the content of LPPs for their areas. The challenge of developing plans that are reflective of both localism and of a national service was acknowledged, along with the difference between what individual local citizens may identify as key priorities (e.g. some things that are not policing priorities

such as dog fouling) and what operational expertise, data and intelligence would identify as policing priorities. The lived experience of local people also provides valuable insight to public services. Attendees discussed the possibility of including discussion of issues of heightened public interest within the plans, such as environmental sustainability in policing. Increased accessibility to LPPs was also seen as important, with considerations such as ‘easy read’ versions of plans seen as making information easier to access.

Through interviews and surveys there was a recognition of the importance of policing experience and operational insight in the development of the plans. Emerging trends in potential areas of threat, risk and harm such as organised crime and counter-terrorism, were examples of issues which might be less visible to the public and may not therefore be highlighted through consultation, but nevertheless needed to be addressed in local planning. There was strong support across participants for a local approach to producing LPPs.

| Recommendations | |
|------------------------|---|
| 3 | Police Scotland should consider expanding the range of accessible versions of published plans |
| 4 | Police Scotland should reflect good practice and potential improvements in the approach to developing the content for the next iteration of local police plans, including any additional areas of interest |

Alignment with other local plans and strategies

A key issue for this review was how and to what extent LPPs interacted with Local Outcome Improvement Plans. It also sought to establish whether there was an appetite for greater alignment and to what extent this would contribute to furthering the strategic priorities of Police Scotland.

The majority of survey respondents stated that the LOIP could be improved to more effectively embed the role of policing within the plan, with a clear appetite for the LPP to have greater relevance to the LOIP and for LOIPs and other plans to more effectively embed the role and contribution of local policing. Plan alignment was subject to local arrangement; in some cases the LPP was comprehensively embedded within the LOIP, whilst in others the documents remained separate albeit linked.

This variation of approach was also reflected in Commander interviews; in some places LPPs were already embedded, whilst in other divisions there was a wish for policing to contribute to the LOIP, either embedded within the main plan or as an annex. It was noted that embedding LPPs within the LOIP may be challenging

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however Divisional Commanders were supportive of greater connectivity whilst recognising that that a police plan will still be required to reflect police-specific activities and responsibilities. This aspiration for greater connectivity between LPPs and LOIPS was also expressed during workshops, again recognising that differing planning cycles and legislative emphasis poses challenges.

| Recommendations | |
|-----------------|---|
| 5 | Police Scotland, Local Authorities and local partners to encourage greater and more meaningful synergy between LPPs and LOIPS where possible |

Data/information provision and accessibility

Diversification of data on which LPPs are developed was a theme discussed at length during the workshops and several Commanders wanted to engage more widely in the process for LPP priority setting. Data from both Commander interviews and workshops emphasised the importance of informal interactions with members of the public in the LPP development process; these interactions were seen as important in capturing the opinions of people not engaged in more formal mechanisms.

The review recognised that there were opportunities to capture further data which could inform prioritisation, such as utilising local authorities' surveys and research studies. Those that are long-running provide opportunity for comparison. Contributors felt that there were opportunities for broader societal data (e.g. employment, health and wellbeing etc.) to inform plan prioritisation and reporting. Challenges around establishing Information Sharing Protocols were discussed, although it was noted that in some cases the pandemic had accelerated solutions.

Both workshop attendees and Commanders recognised that the most recent performance data collected must be subject to validation and cleansing and therefore, depending on schedules, may not be immediately available.

| Recommendations | |
|-----------------|---|
| 6 | Police Scotland should explore the utilisation of local authority, other partners' and societal data to inform priority setting and subsequent reporting on priorities, where appropriate |
| 7 | Police Scotland should explore the potential for enhanced timescales around data cleaning for scrutiny boards, so that Commanders are speaking to statistics that are as current as possible |

National guidance/standards on scrutiny

A key benefit of Local Policing Plans is that scrutiny boards can hold Commanders accountable for the progress they have made towards stated priorities. With elections forthcoming, it is important for the SPA and COSLA to understand what assistance could be given to members in order for them to more effectively scrutinise policing.

A majority of survey respondents stated that the introduction of national guidance/standards on local scrutiny would be helpful, however there was a clear caveat that reports should be tailored to allow local scrutiny and reflect local circumstances and contexts.

While the importance of scrutiny was emphasised it was agreed that there was no appetite for a prescriptive approach to scrutiny, with approaches, frequency and arrangements for scrutiny varying across the country. This variance is influenced by the nature of boards, with some favouring performance-oriented reporting whilst others worked within a partnership framework.

Survey respondents and Divisional Commanders also referenced the importance of a legacy infrastructure to support newly elected members to carry out effective scrutiny, particularly as we look ahead to the upcoming election. The scrutiny board mechanism was not always seen as effective; perhaps as a result of the varied approaches and lack of clear national guidance around scrutiny.

Divisional Commanders felt that thematic reporting was seen as a responsive and valuable tool for engaging with partners on specific issues. In one case these were so popular that they were calendared a year in advance, indicating a structured and demand-led approach to thematic reporting. This thematic reporting was instigated by the police and was seen as good practice, with neighbouring local authorities requesting similar reporting upon learning of its existence.

Both survey participants and workshop attendees discussed the possibility of more active contribution from national bodies such as COSLA and SPA in scrutiny arrangements.

| Recommendations | |
|------------------------|---|
| 8 | SPA and COSLA should assist in updating existing scrutiny guidance for new locally elected members for Spring 2022 |
| 9 | Police Scotland and Local Authorities should share good practice around thematic reporting where this is deemed appropriate in scrutiny forums |

Conclusion, recommendations and next steps

The tri-partite nature of this review has resulted in an open and comprehensive analysis of the Local Police Plan process. LPPs are an important part of the local policing function and should be reflective of local priorities. An extended data collection period for the review has ensured that anyone who wanted to contribute to the research has had the opportunity to do so. Strong engagement throughout this review has shown that there is an appetite for engagement on Local Police Plan functionality; the conclusions and recommendations drawn from this engagement have hopefully been reflective of this enthusiasm.

Overall, this review reflects a planning approach which is well-embedded and which allows local policing to be held accountable for priorities and performance. There was consensus that local authorities are active contributors to plans with strong local engagement evident. The review of LPPs has suggested potential opportunities for improved practice, particularly in the involvement of groups not currently set out in the statute, such as seldom heard groups and in the provision of better guidance and support to those carrying out scrutiny to enhance the approach.

Recommendations

| | |
|----------|---|
| 1 | Police Scotland and Local Authorities should jointly share good practice, and consider new methods to improve engagement from less-engaged groups |
| 2 | Police Scotland should consider expanding the ways by which the public can contribute to informing the content of Local Police Plans |
| 3 | Police Scotland should expand consider expanding the range of accessible versions of published plans |
| 4 | Police Scotland should reflect good practice and potential improvements in the approach to developing the content for the next iteration of local police plans, including any additional areas of interest |
| 5 | Police Scotland, Local Authorities and local partners to encourage greater and more meaningful synergy between LPPs and LOIPS where possible |
| 6 | Police Scotland should explore the utilisation of local authority, other partners' and societal data to inform priority setting and subsequent reporting on priorities, where appropriate |
| 7 | Police Scotland should explore the potential for enhanced timescales around data cleaning for scrutiny boards, so that Commanders are speaking to statistics that are as current as possible |
| 8 | SPA and COSLA should assist in updating existing scrutiny guidance for new locally elected members for Spring 2022. |

| | |
|---|---|
| 9 | Police Scotland and Local Authorities should share good practice around thematic reporting where this is deemed appropriate in scrutiny forums |
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Next steps

Recommendations for Police Scotland from the review will be incorporated into the Local Police Planning approach from early 2022.

The SPA and COSLA will work together to update existing guidance regarding local policing scrutiny in time for the arrival of new locally elected members in the spring of 2022.

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Appendix 1: Overview of responses from local authorities and divisional commanders

| Region | Division | No. of LPPs | Local Authority survey | | Divisional Commander interviews | | Represented at workshops |
|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|-----------|--|---|--------------------------|
| | | | Authority | Responded | Complete | Representatives | |
| East | Fife | 1 | Fife | -* | ✓ | CS Derek McEwan | ✓ |
| | Forth Valley | 3 | Clackmannanshire | -* | ✓ | CS Alan Gibson | - |
| | | | Falkirk | - | | | - |
| | | | Stirling | - | | | - |
| | Lothians and Scottish Borders | 1 (joint) | Borders | - | ✓ | CS John MacKenzie Supt Debra Forrester | - |
| | | | Midlothian | - | | | - |
| | | | West Lothian | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| | | | East Lothian | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Edinburgh City | 1 | Edinburgh | -* | ✓ | CS Sean Scott Supt Samantha Ainslie | - | |
| North | Highlands and Islands | 4 | Highland | - | ✓ | CS Conrad Trickett | ✓ |
| | | | Orkney | - | | | ✓ |
| | | | Shetland | ✓ | | | - |
| | | | Comhairle nan Eilean Siar | - | | | ✓ |
| | North East | 3 | Aberdeen City | -* | ✓ | CS George MacDonald | - |
| | | | Aberdeenshire | ✓* | | | ✓ |

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| | | | | | | | |
|------|-----------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|----|---|--|---|
| | | | Moray | - | | | - |
| | Tayside | 3 | Perth & Kinross | - | ✓ | CS Phil Davidson | ✓ |
| | | | Dundee City | ✓ | | | - |
| | | | Angus | ✓ | | | - |
| | | | | | | | |
| West | Argyll and West Dunbartonshire | 2 | Argyll & Bute | ✓ | ✓ | CS John Patterson Supt Douglas Wilson Supt Claire Dobson | ✓ |
| | | | West Dunbartonshire | ✓ | | | - |
| | Ayrshire | 3 | East Ayrshire | ✓ | ✓ | CS Faroque Hussain Supt Derek Frew | ✓ |
| | | | North Ayrshire | ✓* | | | ✓ |
| | | | South Ayrshire | -* | | | - |
| | Greater Glasgow | 3 | Glasgow | -* | ✓ | CS Mark Sutherland | ✓ |
| | | | East Dunbartonshire | - | | | - |
| | | | East Renfrewshire | - | | | - |
| | Lanarkshire | 1 (joint) | North Lanarkshire | - | ✓ | CS Alan Waddell | - |
| | | | South Lanarkshire | ✓* | | | ✓ |
| | Renfrewshire and Inverclyde | 2 | Renfrewshire | ✓ | ✓ | CS Davie Duncan | ✓ |
| | | | Inverclyde | ✓ | | | - |
| | Dumfries and Galloway | 1 | Dumfries and Galloway | - | ✓ | CS Carol Maguire CI Stuart Donaldson | - |

Note: Local Authorities were invited to take part in the survey, however a small number of responses from other groups or individuals were also received (e.g. Community Planning Partnerships, community councillors or similar). These are denoted in the table using *.

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Appendix 2: Question set for respondents (Local Authorities and Divisional Commanders)

| Theme | Question | Answer format |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| Setting local priorities, objectives and agreeing the Plan | Does Police Scotland share the findings and information used to determine local priorities and objectives for policing with you / your Local Authority | Yes / No / not sure |
| | How effectively do Police Scotland engage with you on changing local priorities? | Scale 1-5 (not at all to very) |
| | Are there any further comments you would like to make on setting local priorities? | Open text |
| | Please provide detail of any additional activities you feel Police Scotland could take to enhance how Local Authorities are engaged and involved in the priority setting process, and in the development of the overall LPP content? | Open text |
| | What would be most supportive in enabling Local Authorities to give their feedback and input in to the priority setting process? | Open text |
| | How can Local Authorities support Police Scotland with this e.g. dedicated planning and community engagement officers to help gather and coordinate feedback? | Open text |
| | How does the local authority / CPP provide evidence to Police Scotland to inform the development of LPPs? | Open text |
| | In what ways can this be enhanced going forward? For example, in providing feedback to Police Scotland, adjusting timescales for reviewing and developing Plans, providing intelligence and evidence obtained by the Local Authority or Community Planning Partnership? | Open text |
| Wider integration of | In your view, could the process to develop the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) in | Yes / No / not sure |

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| Theme | Question | Answer format |
|--|---|---|
| the LPP and performance measurement | your area be enhanced to more effectively embed the role of policing? | 'if yes, how?' |
| | In your view, could the process to develop key local strategies and plans (such as the community safety strategy) in your area be enhanced to more effectively embed the role of policing? | Yes/No / not sure 'if yes, how?' |
| | How effectively do Police Scotland demonstrate the benefit of access to national services to local communities? | Scale 1-5 (not at all to very) |
| | How effectively do Police Scotland engage at local level in the review of LPPs | Scale 1-5 (not at all to very) |
| | In what ways could the reviewing of a Local Policing Plan (prior to committing to refresh/replace) be enhanced going forward? | Open text |
| | To what extent does Police Scotland measure progress against delivering the objectives set out in Local Police Plans? | Scale 1-5 (not at all to very) |
| | How well do performance measures used help to assess whether implementation of the Local Police Plan is making a positive difference locally, and making a contribution to delivery of the LOIP? | Open text |
| | In your view, does the current performance reporting provided by Police Scotland enable your role to undertake effective scrutiny and promote accountability? | Yes / No / not sure If no, what would enable this? |
| | Would the development and introduction of national practical guidance / standards on local scrutiny be helpful, with the guidance/standards aligned to the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 and the Community Empowerment Act (2015)? | Yes / No / not sure Would your local authority like to be involved in development? |

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