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**DRAFT STRATEGIC POLICE PRIORITIES FOR SCOTLAND - CONSULTATION**

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**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Scottish Government has issued a consultation document outlining draft Strategic Police Priorities for Scotland and is seeking views from stakeholders, including councils. The general consultation closes on 16 August 2016 however a few days extension has been agreed to enable this matter to be considered by a strategic Council Committee.

In September 2015, the Scottish Government set out its intention to work with members of the public, communities and elected representatives to review national priorities for policing. These national priorities are set under the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012<sup>1</sup> (the Act) and provide the top level framework for what is expected of the police service. The current priorities were set in 2013 in the context of the creation of a new national police force and police authority.

The Council has previously considered this issue at its meeting in January 2016 in relation to the initial Scottish Government discussion paper on the review of Scottish Strategic Police Priorities. The initial discussion phase has informed the content of the paper that is now out for formal consultation.

It is recommended that Council agree the draft response as set out in this paper and submits it to the Scottish Government as close to the deadline as possible.

The draft response recognises the positive ongoing working relationship between the Council and the police both locally and strategically and largely welcomes the revised priorities however it is proposed that these may benefit by strengthening the reference to tackling terrorism and hate crime as key public concerns.

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**2.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 The Scottish Government has issued a consultation document outlining draft Strategic Police Priorities for Scotland and is seeking views from stakeholders, including councils. The general consultation closes on 16 August 2016 however a few days extension has been agreed to enable this matter to be considered by a strategic Council Committee. The Scottish Government has issued a discussion paper on the review of Scottish Strategic Police Priorities and is seeking views from stakeholders, including councils. The closing date for submission of views on these priorities is 12 February 2016.
- 2.2 The Council has previously considered this issue at its meeting in January 2016 in relation to the initial Scottish Government discussion paper on the review of Scottish Strategic Police Priorities. The initial discussion phase has informed the content of the paper that is now out for formal consultation.
- 2.3 This paper sets out a draft response for Council to consider in response to the Scottish Government paper.

**3.RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Council is invited to
- a) consider the consultation document outlining draft Strategic Police Priorities for Scotland; and
  - b) to approve the draft response to the consultation for submission to the Scottish Government as close to the deadline as possible.

**4.DETAIL**

- 4.1 A new approach to policing was implemented in 2013 through the implementation of the Police and Fire (Reform) Act 2012, which created a single police force for Scotland – Police Scotland. The current priorities were set in 2013 in this context and the draft revised priorities have been informed by experience to date and through feedback gained through the initial process of consultation.

4.2 The revised draft priorities are focused on six themes:

- Localism  
Ensure that the needs of communities are understood and reflected in the planning and delivery of policing.
- Prevention  
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.
- Response  
Focus policing on keeping people safe by tackling crime and responding to and investigating incidents effectively and efficiently.
- Collaborative working  
Ensure that the police service works collaboratively with partners at both a local and national level to deliver better outcomes for people in Scotland.
- Accountability  
Maintain public confidence in policing and inspire trust by being transparent, accountable and acting with integrity, fairness and respect.
- Adaptability  
Ensure the police service is able to take advantage of new opportunities and meet emerging threats and challenges.

4.3 The detail of each of these themed priorities is set out in that consultation document at Appendix 1 and it should also be noted that whilst it is for Scottish Ministers to set the Strategic Police Priorities, the delivery and achievement of those Priorities is a matter for the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) and Police Scotland. Section 2 of the Consultation documents sets out the wider planning structure for policing including the Strategic Police Plan which is prepared by the SPA, the Annual Police Plan, developed by Police Scotland and linked to this the Local Police Plans which set out local policing priorities for each of Scotland's 32 local authority areas.

The associated Equality Impact Assessment and Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment and Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment can be accessed at the following link:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Justice/policies/police-fire-rescue/police-scotland/StrategicPolicePriorities/PartialImpactAssessments>

4.4 The Council considered its response to the initial discussion document at its meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> January and the response submitted on behalf of Argyll and

Bute Council is attached at Appendix 2. This initial response provides the basis for the proposed response to the consultation question as follows:

**1. Do the revised Strategic Police Priorities sum up your ambitions for your police service?**

**No**

**Comments**

Argyll & Bute Council welcomes the revised priorities and in particular the inclusion of localism and collaborative working as key strategic priorities which should allow for particular local circumstances to be addressed through Local Policing Plans. We have previously highlighted that would wish to see the Scottish Government ensure that prioritisation of objectives, resources allocation and operational discretion is devolved to divisional commander level to meet local circumstances. We would also reiterate that the current local and community based resources are particularly important in Argyll and Bute, therefore the Council would wish to see a focus on increasing community based resources that strengthen local partnership working and community cohesion. Partnership working is essential and must be at the core of the strategic policing objectives.

We would however like to see a stronger and clearer emphasis on the commitment to tackling terrorism and hate crime contained within these priorities as key public concerns. In our initial response we had indicated “we would like to see the police in future enhance and develop specialist response mechanisms to tackle terrorism and serious and organised crime. As a national and international issue, this is an area that the Council would wish to see Police Scotland appropriately resourced to prioritise”. This element of the national priorities should be strengthened.

**2. Do the revised Strategic Police Priorities reflect the needs of your local community or the communities you serve?**

**No**

**Comments**

At a high level the priorities are largely reflective of local concerns with the exception highlighted above. We note that there is the facility for further and more specific detail to be incorporated into the Annual Police Plan, developed by Police Scotland and linked to this the Local Police Plans which set out local policing priorities. The ongoing working relationship between the Council and the police both locally and strategically is very good and operating well within the context of the current strategic policing priorities and we would seek to continue to build on this with regard to the revised priorities..

**3. Do you have anything to add to our impact assessments?**

No

**Comments**

Nothing further to add.

**5.0 CONCLUSION**

5.1 As advised in the report to Council in January the ongoing working relationship between the Council and the police both locally and strategically is very good and operating well within the context of the current strategic policing priorities. Continuation on a strategy which enables a locally based approach to continue is a high priority for Argyll and Bute Council, as it underpins partnership working, enables effective scrutiny and supports elected member engagement with the Police Service across a challenging, remote, rural and island area. The draft police priorities do address these issues at a high level however it is considered that these may benefit from a stronger and clearer emphasis on the commitment to tackling terrorism and hate crime as key public concerns.

5.2 Council is invited to consider the consultation document outlining draft Strategic Police Priorities for Scotland and to approve the draft response to the consultation.

**6.0 IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Policy None
- 6.2 Financial None
- 6.3 Legal None
- 6.4 HR None
- 6.5 Equalities None
- 6.6 Risk None
- 6.7 Customer Service None

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