

Policing 2026: Our 10 year strategy for policing in Scotland

Why Change?

KEY POINTS

- The journey of police reform has started; much has been achieved but much still needs to be done to achieve long-term sustainability and our vision of “sustained excellence in service and protection”.
- Scotland’s communities are growing and continuing to diversify. Policing must adapt to remain relevant and legitimate.
- The needs of people in society are changing. The scale and shape of demand is changing. Demands on policing are growing and increasingly focused towards addressing vulnerability and the consequences of inequalities.
- In order to meet the evolving needs of all of Scotland’s communities we must create the capacity to focus on prevention and prioritise protection based on threat, risk and harm in the public, private and virtual space.
- We need to focus on ensuring that we have the skills, tools and capacity to address future needs rather than focusing on the size or structure of our organisation.
- Failure to invest in our people and infrastructure will compromise our ability to deliver the policing service that Scotland needs.

What will Change?

Policing is a vital public service which plays a critical role in building the resilience and wellbeing of our communities. The public expect the police to keep them safe and often turn to the service in times of crisis and need. Our objective therefore is to deliver a universal, accessible and evidence-based service enabling us to make key decisions to ensure that we focus our efforts on where the need is greatest.

This next phase of reform will require innovation at all levels throughout the service and a commitment to deliver service transformation over the coming decade. A long-term strategic

approach will ensure that Scottish policing is sustainable and fit for the future, whilst playing its part in building a safer and stronger Scotland.

Our strategy is based on five key areas of focus: Protection, Prevention, Communities, Knowledge and Innovation. We will shape our services around the needs of the citizen.

Throughout this change our values will remain constant.

Key Points:

- 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 individuals and communities.
- We will continue to drive improvements around protection based on a clear assessment of threat, risk and harm.
- We will make productive use of all resources to create capacity to focus on prevention, addressing enduring problems facing 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 Knowledge sustainable and effective.
- Despite a changing world, our values of fairness, integrity and respect will remain constant, as will our commitment to a rights based approach to policing, which will be based on maintaining public consent.

We will continue to deliver policing based on fairness, integrity and respect, enshrining these values in our decision making and behaviors.

Alongside these values, we recognise the police service is unique in the public service landscape, having coercive powers and the ability to remove people's liberty. Our direction will emphasise our commitment to rights-based approaches, anchoring our duties in the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012. This strategy is based on our core commitment to maintaining public trust and consent - this is key to our continued effectiveness, relevance and legitimacy.

We will develop our approaches in the following areas:

1. Protection - Based on threat, risk and harm

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

A central part of the role of the police is to investigate crime, and report to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS). Policing operates as part of the wider public sector and as part of the Scottish justice system, working with partners such as COPFS to keep Scotland safe from crime and provide victims and witnesses with the support and service they deserve.

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, in equality 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. Working with partners, we will intervene with them at an early stage to address high impact issues such as domestic abuse, substance misuse, sexual offending and mental health.

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 as well as working positively with other services to support communities. We will continue to strengthen our approaches to community engagement and participation, ensuring that local services are effectively planned in partnership with communities.

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 our information and insight 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 and design new services in partnership whilst constantly preparing for emerging issues in the future.

How will We Achieve this?

This ten year strategy sets out the Strategic Objectives we will focus on to deliver service improvement, continued relevance to communities and individuals, maintained public consent, enhanced legitimacy and financial sustainability. We believe that by focusing action across six Strategic Objectives, we can best fulfil the Strategic Police Priorities and successfully transform Scottish policing services for the better. We will base our approach to assessing performance and managing risk around the strategy on the achievement of these Strategic Objectives.

Key points:

- We will transform the way that people can contact us and how we resolve their enquiries. This contact and resolution model will enable us to recognise and respond appropriately to the needs of individuals and communities, with a continued commitment to localism.
- We will modernise our operating model to ensure we achieve maximum impact with our available resources. We will enhance our culture to empower and support effective decision making at a local and national level.
- We will strengthen partnership working, identifying areas of shared improvement and opportunities to provide value for money services.
- We will continue to recognise and invest in the development and wellbeing of our workforce.
- We will strengthen the diversity of our whole workforce and change the mix of skills and experience to address evolving needs.
- We will introduce technology to enable workforce efficiency and operational effectiveness, using analytics, better quality data and wider sources to improve decision making.

- We will scale and change our cyber capability to respond to emerging cyber related crimes and we will continue to invest in Scotland's forensic science capabilities.
- We will transform our corporate services, improving processes and systems.

Why Must We Continue to Change?

To make informed decisions about the future of policing, we need to understand how Scotland will have evolved by 2026.

Although we cannot predict the next ten years with certainty, there are elements that are more likely to happen than others.

No matter what changes lie ahead, the public will always expect us to protect them from harm, and our services must be adaptable to society's complex and diverse needs.

“Scottish policing has undergone major change. Despite the challenges, our communities have seen consistent and excellent local operational and specialist policing. While we have been changing as an organisation, so too has society around us. These factors require us to adjust the way policing operates and how we prioritise our resources over the next ten years towards 2026” CHIEF CONSTABLE PHIL GORMLEY QPM.

We want people, communities and our workforce to have their voices heard in shaping policing over the coming decade and we will engage and listen as this strategy develops over the years ahead.

Communities should influence decisions that affect them and they need to trust the decisions that will be taken about the future direction of policing.

We are committed to engaging, listening, learning and adapting. As a responsive national service locally delivered, we will ensure that our resources and efforts are focused on the needs and aspirations of people and places and the improvement of their safety and wellbeing. We also want to empower our workforce to take the right action when they need to – we are committed to building a culture of effective decision making at the level closest to those affected, trusting and supporting our people to do the right thing.

We are entering the next phase of reform. As the pace and complexity of change continues to increase around us, our focus must now be on working with others, including communities themselves, to improve outcomes for people.

We need to organise policing services around the changing needs of the citizen and emerging areas of threat, harm and risk, while fulfilling the full purpose and vocation of policing over the long term.

New threats and demands mean that we must create a more diverse, multi-skilled and experienced workforce that can operate effectively across the public, private and virtual space.

Our focus for the future will be to ensure that we deploy this different mix of people and capabilities dynamically and flexibly. We must be judged by what we do to improve outcomes and the impact we have, not the size or structure of our organisation.