



HM INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY IN SCOTLAND

Assurance Review of Police Scotland Strategic Workforce Planning: Terms of Reference

February 2022

HM Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland

HM Inspectorate for Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) is established under the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012¹ and has wide ranging powers to look into the 'state, effectiveness and efficiency' of both the Police Service of Scotland (Police Scotland) and the Scottish Police Authority (SPA).

We have a statutory duty to ensure that the Chief Constable and the SPA meet their obligations in terms of best value and continuous improvement. If necessary, we can be directed by Scottish Ministers to look into anything relating to the SPA or Police Scotland as they consider appropriate. We also have an established role in providing professional advice and guidance on policing in Scotland.

- Our powers allow us to do anything we consider necessary or expedient for the purposes of, or in connection with, the carrying out of our functions.
- The SPA and the Chief Constable must provide us with such assistance and co-operation as we may require to enable us to carry out our functions.
- When we publish a report, the SPA and the Chief Constable must also consider what we have found and take such measures, if any, as they think fit.
- Where our report identifies that the SPA or Police Scotland is not efficient or effective (or best value not secured), or will, unless remedial measures are taken, cease to be efficient or effective, Scottish Ministers may direct the SPA to take such measures as may be required. The SPA must comply with any direction given.
- Where we make recommendations, we will follow them up and report publicly on progress.
- We will identify good practice that can be applied across Scotland.
- We work with other inspectorates and agencies across the public sector and co-ordinate our activities to reduce the burden of inspection and avoid unnecessary duplication.
- We aim to add value and strengthen public confidence in Scottish policing and will do this through independent scrutiny and objective, evidence-led reporting about what we find.

Our approach is to support Police Scotland and the SPA to deliver services that are high quality, continually improving, effective and responsive to local needs.²

This review will be undertaken by HMICS under section 74(2)(a) of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 and will be laid before the Scottish Parliament under section 79(3) of the Act.

¹ Chapter 11, Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.

² HMICS, [Corporate Strategy 2017-20](#) (November 2017).

Our review

Introduction

1. HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) has committed to ongoing assurance activity monitoring Police Scotland's approach to demand and productivity, operational capacity and workforce planning. This assurance review of Police Scotland Strategic Workforce Planning is part of our Scrutiny Plan for 2021-22.³
2. HMICS wrote to the Chief Constable and Vice Chair of the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) in August 2020 to indicate that we would continue to monitor the force's approach to demand and productivity, operational capacity and workforce planning and carry out scrutiny activity in these areas. A series of assurance reviews was therefore planned with a view to supporting the realisation of a sustainable policing model.
3. This review will be the second of our planned assurance activities, with the first (Demand Analysis and Management) having been published in June 2021⁴ and the third (Performance Management and Outcomes) currently planned for early 2023. HMICS has been engaged with both Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) since 2017 in providing regular assurance briefings on the development of workforce planning and the generation of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) productivity benefits.

Aim

4. The aim of this review is to assess the state, efficiency and effectiveness of the strategic workforce planning process within Police Scotland.

Background

5. It is clear that today's environment of rapid change and uncertainty increases the pressure on Police Scotland to ensure it has the required people and skills to support changing business and operational priorities. Strategic workforce planning enables the organisation to identify roles and skills associated with its future demands and challenges and allows it to establish a strategy to ensure it has the right mix of skills, technologies and employment models to meet these demands and address the challenges of sustainable service delivery.
6. HMICS considers that workforce planning is the process that organisations use to make sure that they have the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time. This can be challenging; the size and structure of the workforce should be shaped by an organisation's current and future strategic objectives; the needs of its service users, and of potential users over the planning period; the amount and sources of funding available and the wider policy and legislative environment in which it operates.
7. Effective strategic workforce planning should allow Police Scotland: to deliver a policing service within an agreed budget; to prioritise resources to meet current and predicted service demand and expectations; and to be able to address a level of ad hoc pressure and demand without recourse to the need for additional resource.

³ HMICS, [Scrutiny plan 2021-22](#), 18 June 2021.

⁴ HMICS, [Assurance review of Police Scotland demand analysis and management](#), 29 June 2021.



8. HMICS acknowledges that workforce planning in itself is a dynamic and iterative process and constantly changes as the demands placed on policing and resultant strategies develop over time. However we also acknowledge that the Strategic Workforce Plan itself is fixed at a point in time. Whilst the plan should be regularly refreshed to coincide with the strategic planning cycle of the organisation, regular monitoring of its progress and the changing shape of the workforce is required to maintain a focus on its delivery. The information and processes employed by the organisation are just as important as the plan itself.
9. The Strategic Workforce Plan (SWP) for Police Scotland was presented to the Scottish Police Authority on 22 January 2021. The Authority accepted that the SWP would continue to be developed as an iterative process. Contained within the plan were eight areas which had been identified through the development of the plan as separate workstreams that required to be addressed within a three year period by the wider service. A number of short life working groups have been established to support these workstreams and progress is being reported quarterly to the SPA People Committee.
10. The latest formal update on progress was to the SPA People Committee on 30 November 2021.⁵ This report provided a bi-annual update on the key workstreams identified within the SWP. All are still a work in progress with a task force and short life working groups established for most. The verbal update provided indicated that a full review of the SWP was now underway, with a view to updating the plan by the end of 2022.

Financial position

11. At the point of consideration of the Strategic Workforce Plan by the SPA in January 2021, there was a recognised budget deficit of £44 million for 2020/21. The SWP however outlined an additional unfunded resource gap relating to national services of just over £20.56 million. A further £34.84 million of potential additional resources were identified within Local Policing, where it was suggested that capacity could be met from within the service. It was envisioned that the eight national workstreams would generate this additional capacity over the following three year period.
12. The SPA Board approved the revenue and capital budget for 2021/22 on 24 March 2021.⁶ The Scottish Government provided a £60m uplift in core revenue funding, as well as an additional £15m of 'one-off' funding to support the impact of COVID-19. When combined, the total funding allowed the SPA to set a balanced revenue budget with no operating deficit. However no additional funding was made available to address the anticipated growth in demand identified in the SWP. Instead there is a clear expectation that the SPA and Police Scotland will consider their joint strategy, priorities and allocation of resources to effectively balance demand and the services provided.
13. HMICS in its submission to the Criminal Justice Committee⁷ on Pre-Budget Scrutiny for 2022/23 stated that the main reason for the previous structural deficit in the revenue budget was the need to meet the predominant costs of the minimum prescribed number of police officers, which the Scottish Government had previously set at 17,234. The political commitment to maintaining an arbitrary number of police officers was amended in 2017, and was replaced by the proviso that Police Scotland would demonstrate its ability to deliver policing services in the most efficient and effective way in line with its Strategic Workforce Plan and demand for policing services. The strategic workforce planning process is a vital tool to inform decisions about the overall number of resources, the optimum balance of police officer and police staff posts, and the deployment of these to meet the needs of the public across Scotland and the capability or skills requirements in the future.

⁵ SPA People Committee, [Bi-annual Strategic Workforce Plan \(SWP\) Update](#) - Item 4.1, 30 November 2021.

⁶ SPA Board, [Draft Budget 2021/22](#) – Item 6, 24 March 2021,

⁷ The Scottish Parliament, [HMICS response \(69624981\) to Criminal Justice Committee Pre-Budget Scrutiny of the 2022/23 Budget](#), October 2021.



Review - Terms of reference - Scope

14. This review will be undertaken by HMICS in terms of the Section 74(2)(a) of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.
15. HMICS will make an assessment of the strategic workforce planning processes adopted by Police Scotland. The primary components of which will be included within the scope of our review:
 - The development of an organisation-wide workforce plan
 - The approach to managing workforce numbers, skills, and costs (including the use of information, governance and decision-making processes)
 - Planning and Implementing organisation and workforce change programmes
 - Scrutiny of workforce plans and workforce change programmes.

Exclusions from scope

16. A number of related areas impact directly on workforce planning which have been considered under varying existing assurance mechanisms and previous reports. HMICS may comment on these linkages and dependencies in our review but we will exclude specific examination of:
 - The benefits of individual programmes within the transformation portfolio which contribute to workforce changes
 - The development of strategy and programmes to address information management and data quality
 - ICT systems development and infrastructure
 - SPA (including Forensics) workforce planning.

Objectives and outcomes

17. The objectives for this assurance review are consistent with those deployed in our terms of reference for the Assurance Review of Demand Analysis and Management which was published in December 2020.⁸ Our review objectives are therefore to ascertain:
 - **Appropriateness** of the overall approach and methodology used in the development of the SWP (and supporting divisional and workstream plans) and the resulting quality of the plans
 - **Alignment** of the SWP within the overall strategic planning framework and governance: including with strategic plans, strategic assessment, demand analysis, transformation portfolio and Target Operating Model.
 - **Application** - Examine how the SWP (and supporting processes) are used to support strategic tasking and co-ordination, medium to longer term resource planning and operational change programme/projects to maintain the required level of operational policing capacity with the right skills mix to cope with demand on policing.
 - **Anticipation** - Consider how well the SWP reflects projections for demand on policing services in the future (and Target Operating Model) in terms of securing a sustainable policing model.

⁸ HMICS, [Assurance Review of Demand Analysis and Management - Terms of Reference](#), 18 December 2020.



18. HMICS will also incorporate the Audit Scotland publication 'Scotland's public sector workforce - Good practice guide'⁹ which provides a set of standard questions to support the scrutiny and challenge of workforce plans and workforce change programmes. These are organised around four key themes from the guidance:

- The development of an organisation-wide workforce plan
- The approach to managing workforce numbers, skills and costs (including the use of information, governance and decision-making processes)
- Planning and implementing organisation and workforce change programmes
- Scrutiny of workforce plans and workforce change programmes.

15. This guide will be incorporated into our bespoke inspection framework and key lines of enquiry.

Outputs

19. The key output from the review will be the final report. The intended outcomes from this review and its publication are to:

- Provide effective workforce planning benchmarking to support Police Scotland's continued development of the approach and assure that best practice is being adopted
- Provide assurance that workforce planning is integrated with other aspects of strategic planning, and being owned and used effectively at both strategic and operational level within Police Scotland to support policing delivery
- Provide assurance that the plan will deliver the required organisational structure, capacity and capability to meet the articulated future vision for the organisation with an appropriate evidence base
- Ensure that suitable capacity, capability and skills are in place to support a sustainable workforce planning function
- Equip the Scottish Police Authority to assert its scrutiny role and to ask the right questions of Police Scotland about workforce planning and how it uses an evidence base to inform choices about the shape and size of the organisation.

User Perspective

20. As set out in the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010, HMICS has a duty to demonstrate continuous improvement in user focus, i.e. involving users in the scrutiny process. In this review, we will use available information from and engage directly with Police Scotland officers, staff and their representative organisations as 'users' of the workforce planning process. HMICS will also engage directly with key governance groups and stakeholders including the SPA and the Scottish Government.

Methodology

21. We will use the HMICS Inspection Framework which is based on the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Excellence Model and Best Value Characteristics.

22. The Inspection Framework will provide a supporting structure to our review which will be risk based, proportionate and focused on improving the delivery of policing in Scotland. We will structure our review around our objectives and three themes:

- Outcomes
- Leadership and Vision
- Delivery

⁹ Audit Scotland, [Scotland's public sector workforce – Good Practice Guide](#), March 2014.



23. Between January 2022 and May 2022 we will:

- Identify a senior responsible officer and single point of contact for HMICS in Police Scotland to support the review process and to facilitate appropriate access to people and information
- Liaise regularly with Police Scotland and maintain ongoing engagement with other key stakeholders
- Issue a self-evaluation template (based on our objectives and key lines of enquiry) with guidance as early as possible
- Analyse the completed self-evaluation and evidence provided and consider relevant documentation in the public domain. Where possible we will minimise the amount of further documents requested but this will depend on the quality of evidence provided in the self-evaluation. Additional requests may emerge during the course of the review.
- Assess existing and ongoing research in the field of workforce planning, and benchmark models in UK policing and other public sector models.
- Engage directly with relevant officers and staff, conducting interviews and observations where appropriate.
- Review the detailed governance, analysis and source data which contribute to the workforce planning process, assessing gaps and plans for future development of the approach.
- Consider the sustainability and long term purpose of the workforce planning function, in terms of their capacity and capability, planning and prioritisation of their work and maintaining and developing the product set.

Publication and reporting timescales

24. We anticipate publishing a report of our findings in June 2022. Our report will be published in terms of Section 79 of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012. A copy of the report will also be provided to the Chief Constable, the Scottish Police Authority and the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans, and laid before the Scottish Parliament. A copy will also be made publicly available on the HMICS website.

25. For further information about the review, please contact Tina Yule, Lead Inspector (Christina.yule@gov.scot).

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HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland
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