



**HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland**  
Improving Policing across Scotland

**Wednesday, 2nd August, 2023**

**PRESS RELEASE**

## **HMICS Annual Report 2022-2023**

The significant contribution to policing in Scotland made by retiring Chief Constable, Sir Iain Livingstone during his lengthy career and in particular during the past six years has been recognised today.

HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary (HMCICS) said that Sir Iain's announcement in May that Police Scotland is institutionally discriminatory was seen as a bold and brave step which allows the incoming Chief Constable to continue the work in progress to address equality, discrimination and inclusion.

However, he urged Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority to do more to communicate the significant steps they have taken to address institutional discrimination, how they are learning from complaints and how they are committed to equality, diversity and respect.

In his annual report published today, (Wednesday, 2nd August) Mr Craig Naylor, HMCICS, stated the importance of effective communication for Police Scotland, both within and outwith the service.

He praised the work being undertaken by Police Scotland across many areas and believed it should be more proactive in detailing this, especially how it aimed to tackle violence against women and girls and discrimination within its own ranks and wider society.

HMICS supports policing in Scotland by providing independent scrutiny and challenge where necessary. In this report, Mr Naylor commented that Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority had worked hard to continue to serve communities during a difficult and challenging year.

He highlighted the challenges Police Scotland had faced in the past 12 months and reflected that many of the issues undermining policing in England and Wales had touched on Scotland.

“We are not insulated from events elsewhere and there have been continued challenges to the legitimacy of policing from many angles. In Scotland, there have been questions about budget, culture, staffing levels, public expectation and a noticeable rise in the impact of dealing with those experiencing poor mental health.

He added: “A series of negative reports and reviews across England and Wales, whose findings have not been replicated in Scotland, have the ability to impact on the trust and confidence in policing north of the border.”

As a result of these and some other issues, HMICS revisited its planned programme of work. Following feedback from stakeholders and an assessment of what partners in other jurisdictions had been inspecting and finding, HMICS publishes a revised scrutiny plan alongside this annual report.

Work was already underway to inspect organisational culture and vetting in Police Scotland with the intention of improving the culture and trust in the workforce – both for the communities it serves and for those who serve as officers and staff. The demand from policing mental health is also being looked at with support from an independent advisory group made up of service users, third sector and other partner agencies. This work will report in the autumn.

A continuing theme of inspections by HMICS had been the need for continuing and regular training. The scrutiny body believed this could, alongwith internal communication, benefit from being face-to-face and reduced reliance on online packages. Another strong theme is the importance of training reflecting the lived experience of people.

The current work plan of HMICS includes the inspections of organisational culture, vetting, demand on policing from mental health and missing people. Working alongside Healthcare Improvement Scotland and the Care Inspectorate, HMICS also inspects on children at risk of harm, adult support and protection and healthcare in custody.

Mr Naylor praised Police Scotland for its safe delivery of a number of key events in the past year, not least the passing of the Queen and the associated ceremonial proceedings.

The financial challenges allied to the need to change the operating model, Police Scotland's approach to best value and the demand on policing from mental health will be issues to be addressed by the incoming Chief Constable, Jo Farrell.

"We look forward to working her and wish Sir Iain a long, healthy and happy retirement. His six year tenure began at a time of turmoil and uncertainty and he leaves the service as one which is regarded as world leading in its ability to deal with everything from community issues, major and complex crimes, political challenges and major events."

## **Ends**

## **Notes**

HMICS is a member of the UK's National Preventive Mechanism (NPM), a group of organisations which independently monitor places of detention, including police custody, under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Our improved custody inspections along with Healthcare Improvement Scotland are designed to provide even greater understanding of custody, health care provided and opportunities to improve outcomes for those who have been arrested.

## **Ends notes**

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

The HMICS Annual Report will be available to download on the HMICS website [www.hmics.scot](http://www.hmics.scot) from 1100 on Wednesday, 2nd August, 2023.

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**Ends**