



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

**Tuesday, 11th June, 2024**

**STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:01, TUESDAY, 11 JUNE 2024**

**PRESS RELEASE**

## **Scottish Police Authority Praised for Progress**

Improved leadership and direction at the Scottish Police Authority has greatly enhanced the work of the police oversight body, states a report published today (11 June 2024).

A strategic review by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) has praised the progress made by the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) in providing oversight and scrutiny of policing in Scotland.

But more needs to be done to help Police Scotland develop a longer-term vision and sustainable model for policing.

HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland, Mr Craig Naylor, said: "To deliver the future ambitions for policing, the SPA needs to ensure there is a clearly defined operating model, a medium-term financial plan and an effective workforce plan in place, to support a financially sustainable and high-performing police service."

The SPA was set up in 2013 with aims that include promoting and supporting the continuous improvement of policing in Scotland, and holding the Chief Constable to account.

Since its inception, HMICS has conducted four inspections of the SPA. The most recent review had the specific objective of assessing the SPA's journey of improvement since the last HMICS inspection in 2019.

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It noted there had been major changes including a new executive and staffing structure, a new Chair, a permanent Chief Executive and new board members.

Mr Naylor said: “Our review work has clearly demonstrated a significant difference in the approach and effectiveness of the SPA as a corporate body since our 2019 inspection.

“There have been real improvements in leadership, governance and accountability - the core statutory role of the SPA.

“Planning, capacity and capability have all been improved. These improvements have also been acknowledged by external auditors.”

The new HMICS review praised the SPA for its good governance relating to a forecasted budget overspend by Police Scotland of £18.9 million that it announced for 2023-24.

However, inspectors expressed concern no effective plans were in place to secure financial sustainability where funding gaps are identified in the medium to longer term.

The HMICS report, A Strategic Review of the Scottish Police Authority, listed 17 areas for development for the SPA, including calling on it to improve its scrutiny in terms of any strategic risks encountered by Police Scotland.

It also said the SPA should prioritise its work for most impact.

Mr Naylor added: “It is paramount that the SPA is able to provide effective oversight and governance of the improvements needed across the whole policing system, including using its role to ensure best value and continuous improvement within Police Scotland.

“We are confident that – with the strong leadership now in place, and the support provided by the SPA’s corporate function and board members – the necessary longer-term vision and sustainable policing model can be achieved.”

**Ends**

## **Notes**

The aim of the HMICS strategic review was to assess the state, efficiency and effectiveness of the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) in fulfilling its core role and meeting its statutory obligations. It took the format of validating a self-evaluation conducted by the SPA, as well as analysis of other documentation, interviews and observations.

## **Ends notes**

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

The HMICS Strategic Review of the Scottish Police Authority will be available to download at the HMICS website [www.hmics.scot](http://www.hmics.scot) from 00.01hrs, Tuesday 11 June 2024.

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## **Ends**