

DEPUTY FIRST MINISTER AND CABINET SECRETARY FOR JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS MEETING WITH POLICE SCOTLAND AND THE SCOTTISH POLICE AUTHORITY

7 November 2023

Teams Meeting

Attendees:

Shona Robison MSP, Deputy First Minister
Angela Constance MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs
Jo Farrell, Chief Constable – Police Scotland
Jane Connors, Deputy Chief Constable – Police Scotland
James Gray, Chief Finance Officer – Police Scotland
Martyn Evans, Chair - Scottish Police Authority
Lynn Brown, Chief Executive - Scottish Police Authority
John Somers, Police Division Deputy Director - Scottish Government
[REDACTED UNDER SECTION 38(1)(B)]

Welcome and introduction

The Deputy First Minister (DFM) welcomed everyone to the meeting, acknowledging that it followed on from the Chief Constable's (CC) recent meeting with the First Minister, and provides an opportunity to discuss the 2024-25 policing budget requirements.

The DFM outlined the challenging fiscal position facing Scottish Government in relation to the development of the 2024-25 Scottish budget. She explained that to balance its budget the Scottish Government would have to take tough evidence-based decisions.

The Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs (CSJHA) recognised that Police Scotland (PS) is a vital public service, is an exemplar of public service reform, and is a key partner in the delivery of the Justice Vision. She recognised the challenges facing Police Scotland in relation to budget pressures, the size of the workforce and in determining the model of policing required into the future.

Police Scotland Budget Proposition

The CC outlined PS's proposal for further reform and transformation which would deliver service improvements **[REDACTED UNDER EXEMPTION SECTION 30(C)]**

The PS plans involve investing in technology, undertaking efficiency reviews and service delivery improvements, re-shaping the workforce to ensure it has the right skills and capabilities, and working with partners to maximise resources.

The CC noted that PS was created ten years and that it was now timely to review the organisation to ensure it is fit for the future. Reflecting on her previous experience the CC

stressed the importance of local policing and national capabilities to ensure police can be proactive not reactive and is well placed to provide the right response at the right time.

James Gray outlined the PS invest to save proposal which would allow it to take a more strategic approach during 2024-25, to plan for the delivery of efficiencies across the organisation, while at the same time delivering an increase in policing capabilities.

The PS invest to save proposal is constructed to allow PS the time in 2024-25 to undertake efficiency reviews across the organisation, to re-shape and re-size the police workforce, and to enhance capacity, all of which will deliver the Chief Constables priorities and strengthen the service in a sustainable way. The proposal requires investment in 2024 as follows:

- Core Revenue Funding – £74.5 million
- VR/VER and Capability Development Funding - £22.6 million
- Reform Funding - £5 million
- Capital Funding - £23.5 million (in addition to core capital budget of £50.1million)

The SPA Chair confirmed that this invest to save proposal was fully supported by the SPA. He also highlighted the significant work that has been done since police reform, delivering £200m pa in savings **[REDACTED UNDER EXEMPTION SECTION 30(C)]**

[REDACTED UNDER EXEMPTIONS SECTION 30(B)(i), 30(B)(ii) AND 30(C)]

Concluding Remarks

DFM thanked everyone for their contributions to the discussion, acknowledging that it had been helpful for her to hear directly about the police proposal. She reminded PS and the SPA of the financial challenges and the tough decisions that would have to be made.

The CC highlighted the need to be given time to reflect on and describe the new model for policing to ensure it is right for Scotland, and will deliver a sustainable future.

DFM encouraged PS and SPA to continue engaging with CSJHA on their proposal and plans.

DFM and CSJHA both acknowledged the current challenges facing policing, and thanked Police Scotland for their well-handled responses to recent events.

[REDACTED UNDER EXEMPTION SECTION 30(B)(i)]