



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

Thursday, December 13, 2018

**PRESS RELEASE**

## **HMICS publish thematic inspection of policing priorities**

A report published today (Thursday, December 13) will assist Police Scotland in identifying and agreeing its priorities and preparing its annual policing plans.

The findings of the inspection by HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland presents the service with an opportunity to establish a new national policing model which is flexible enough to meet varying local needs.

The aim of the inspection was to establish the effectiveness of the process of identifying and setting the policing priorities, how they inform the operational delivery of policing at national and local levels, their alignment to the strategic plan and how they contribute to the safety and well being of the Scottish population.

The HMICS Thematic Inspection of Police Scotland's Approach to the Development and Delivery of the Annual Police Plan 2018-19 details how intelligence gathering, analysis, planning and performance can all work effectively to develop and deliver a relevant policing plan.

The report highlights that to achieve this there is a need for an immediate review of the capacity and capability of analytical services and where they are deployed across Police Scotland.

HMICS recognises that the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) and Police Scotland have already accepted the need to further develop their strategic planning framework, analytical approach and performance management framework.

HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, Mrs Gillian Imery QPM, said: "We have found that the main elements of the strategic assessment, priority setting, planning and delivery are in place and deliver effective policing on a day to day basis.

"However there remains a lack of clarity and consistency of approach across the country. We make specific comment on the extent to which equity of access to specialist resources has been achieved.

"Inconsistent recording of specialist and national resource allocation and limited transparency or assurance around the impact or effectiveness of their deployment, means that Police Scotland is unable to fully demonstrate the value of the work being delivered to communities across the country."

The current annual policing plan is an improvement on previous ones however the inspection team found priorities have not been tailored to look at specific local areas of risk, many cannot be delivered in a year nor can their outcomes be clearly measured or identified. They also found that many within the organisation found the preparation of the plan to be onerous and of little relevance to them.

In addition, the move away from Police Scotland's early focus on performance to one of more local flexibility has led to many managers being unsure as to what is now expected of them in terms of strategic assessment, tasking and delivery and performance reporting.

Decreasing numbers of analysts has led to gaps in provision and inequitable distribution of experienced personnel across the country. HMICS supports the aim of Police Scotland to revise its approach to analytical support and gives guidance on the future model.

Mrs Imery added: "The provision of this vital area of expertise has become inconsistent and of variable quality, there having been under investment in both its capability and capacity. The previous emphasis and continued reliance on performance information has de-skilled the intelligence analyst function and alignment to the specialist crime division is essential to address this in the future."

HMICS believes that the move to a three year planning cycle, with a concise version of the annual plan, will address many of the issues it has identified with planning and performance frameworks. However it does point out that previous lack of progress on performance management is a major leadership and governance shortcoming for both the Scottish Police Authority and Police Scotland.

The report makes 12 recommendations for Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority relating to the strategic assessment, the role of intelligence and the use of analysts in setting priorities, strategic overviews of tasking, co-ordinating and delivery, transparent and consistent use of specialist crime and operational resources Scotland-wide, empowerment of local commanders and the move to a three year planning cycle. HMICS will monitor progress of these recommendations.

**Ends**

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

The HMICS Thematic Review of Police Scotland's approach to the development and operational delivery of the Annual Police Plan (2018-19) is available to download at the HMICS website [www.hmics.scot](http://www.hmics.scot) from 1500hrs, Thursday 13 December, 2018.

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**Ends**