



HM INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY IN SCOTLAND

Thematic Inspection of Organisational Culture in Police Scotland: Terms of Reference

January 2023

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.

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



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 Inspection 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.

² HMICS, [Corporate Plan 2021-24](#) (February 2022).

Our inspection

Introduction

1. HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) has committed to a statutory thematic Inspection of Organisational Culture in Police Scotland as part of its [HMICS Scrutiny Plan 2022-25](#) in year one of the scrutiny timetable.

Aim

2. The aim of this thematic inspection will be to make an assessment as to whether Police Scotland has a healthy organisational culture and ethical framework and whether the appropriate values and behaviours are consistently lived across the organisation.

Background

3. The creation of Police Scotland in April 2013 was described at the time as the most fundamental change to policing in 40 years and the biggest public service reform in Scotland since devolution. As it approaches its ten-year anniversary HMICS considers this a timely juncture to ascertain how it reflects the proud history and values of the forces and organisations it replaced.
4. Recent incidents and media reporting in Scotland and elsewhere in the UK have made this an area of significant public interest, with concerns expressed about issues such as misconduct, abuse of power, misogynistic behaviour and attitudes towards equality and diversity. Although these cases have mostly been related to English forces, the recent [Rhona Malone case](#) demonstrates that we cannot assume these issues are not relevant to Scotland. HMICS does however acknowledge the different context in which policing has developed in Scotland. Our work over the last ten years has demonstrated many positive aspects of policing culture in Scotland.



5. Our inspection will therefore take account of work undertaken by the force and consider our previous findings and recommendations. In particular issues identified in our Training and Development [Phase 1](#) and [Phase 2](#) inspections, the joint work with [HMICFRS](#) on Leadership ([Leading Lights](#)) and the recent HMICFRS publication [An inspection of vetting, misconduct, and misogyny in the police service](#) (November 2022) will be considered as well as our future planned HMICS scrutiny activity in the related areas of wellbeing, mental health, training and development, conduct, HR processes and governance.
6. We also recognise that Dame Elish Angiolini's [Independent Review of Complaints Handling, Investigations and Misconduct Issues within Policing: Final Report](#) (published 11 November 2020) noted some concerning behaviours relating to policing culture suggesting that in responding to her report Police Scotland should consider that: *"This is a good opportunity to reflect on the culture of the new service, address any long standing issues and consider how everyone in the organisation can help to change that culture for the better."*
7. HMICS acknowledges that an Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Human Rights [Independent Review Group](#) (IRG) was established in 2021³ to address recommendation 18 in Dame Elish Angiolini's report to commission a broader, fundamental review of equality matters by an independent organisation taking into account our [HMICS Thematic Inspection of Police Scotland Training and Development – Phase 2](#) (October 2021). In that inspection a number of respondents referenced the culture within Police Scotland as something that needed to improve especially in regards to behaviours and attitudes towards diversity.

³ [SPA Board 21 September 2021 Item 11](#) – Police Scotland Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Human Rights Independent Review Group set out original terms of reference and membership agreed in July 2021.



8. Three workstreams have been established for the IRG: culture, strategic direction and training and development. Consideration of culture will feature across all three workstreams due to its cross-cutting nature. The IRG aims to ensure that the workstreams will conclude their work by Autumn 2023 with a view to the group delivering its final report by the end of 2023. The IRG and HMICS are committed to ensuring that our respective programmes of work complement each other and avoid unnecessary duplication.

9. Organisational culture can be defined in a number of ways and there are many academic and management models which can be applied. However, the background to this inspection and the rationale for its selection have some common features:
 - Public confidence – ensuring that cultural dimensions do not have an overly negative impact and that the public (and key stakeholders) maintain confidence that the force is being led and run well at every level
 - Outcomes – ensuring that organisational culture is not adversely impacting on service delivery, the performance of the force and how it treats victims, witnesses and others who officers and staff come into contact with
 - Wellbeing – ensuring that aspects of organisational culture do not adversely impact on officer and staff wellbeing or their ability to do their jobs efficiently and that they work in an environment where they feel safe and valued.



Terms of reference

Scope, objectives and outcomes

10. This inspection will be undertaken by HMICS in terms of the Section 74(2)(a) of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.

11. This inspection will make an assessment as to whether Police Scotland has a healthy organisational culture and ethical framework and whether the appropriate values and behaviours are consistently lived across the organisation. The primary components of which will be included within the scope of our review:

Leadership and Vision

- Leadership behaviours, attitudes and values will be considered at all levels and whether the workforce is motivated and committed.
- This will also include a focus on any gaps in understanding/perception of key cultural issues between senior, divisional and frontline/middle management (Chief Inspector, Inspector and Sergeant).
- We will assess whether leaders act as role models and seek assurance that 'frontline' supervision is perpetuating the right culture and behaviours.
- We will assess progress and impact of leadership development on behaviours and values.
- We will assess how promotion processes (and the supporting Competencies and Values Framework) are driven by and impact on behaviours and values.
- We will assess if culture aligns to and supports delivery of strategy, including whether the commitments made in the [Joint Strategy](#) (Strategic Police Plan) are supported by actions and are being delivered effectively.



Delivery

- We will assess how the service perpetuates its values and code of ethics and how effectively this impacts on behaviours at all levels/ranks within the organisation.
- Whether the policing style and tone adopted are effectively supported by culture
- We will assess whether any aspects of culture may perpetuate misconduct
- We will assure the quality of vetting and renewals and whether these effectively identify potential misconduct
- We will assess how the organisation understands its culture and how well staff and officers feel they are listened to
- We will assess how the impact of change is managed and communicated and how the force is actively managing culture change.

Outcomes

- We will assess what aspects of culture impact on performance and identify if officers and staff feel that culture impacts on their wellbeing
- We will consider how cultures (and sub-cultures) impact on collaborative delivery of services.

Exclusions from scope

12. HMICS will ensure that any issues impacting on culture within the organisation are captured and reflected in our report. However, a number of related areas are to be considered in future inspections and it is proposed we will not review these specifically within the scope of this inspection.

- Wellbeing – we will conduct a short Frontline Focus review of Wellbeing simultaneously with this thematic inspection. Both pieces of work will complement the other and fieldwork will be shared to ensure all issues are captured.
- Facilities and equipment - we will be conducting a Frontline Focus review on 'Tools of the Trade' in year three of our current scrutiny programme.
- Conduct – we will undertake a specific assurance review on Conduct in year two of our programme.

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- HR policies, procedures and governance – we will undertake a specific thematic inspection in year three of our current scrutiny programme.
 - Strategy and Performance we will undertake a specific assurance review in year two of our current scrutiny programme.
 - Training and development – we will undertake a specific thematic inspection of probationer training in year three of our current scrutiny programme.

Objectives and outcomes

13. The objectives of this inspection are as follows:

- Identify how culture has been established, influenced and understood in Police Scotland (*identifying the predominant and competing culture/sub-cultures in Police Scotland by considering leadership, values and behaviours as well as standards of professional behaviour*)
- Assess how culture(s) impact on the efficient and effective service delivery of policing (*considering performance, morale, abstraction/productivity*)
- Consider what is being done to address any issues (*considering plans and actions to address cultural change and comparing to theory and practice using benchmarking and case studies*).

14. The key output from the inspection will be the final report and our findings from our assurance of vetting procedures. The intended outcomes from this inspection and its publication are to:

- Provide assurance that the right leadership, people, policies and procedures are in place to drive the development of policing culture
- Provide assurance that the wider issues which have received media attention are being appropriately addressed by Police Scotland
- Provide assurance that cultural development is integrated with other aspects of strategic planning, and being owned and implemented at both strategic and operational level within Police Scotland to support policing delivery
- Assess whether suitable capacity, capability and skills are in place to support cultural development
- Support the Scottish Police Authority to further assert its scrutiny role and to ask the right questions of Police Scotland about cultural development.



User Perspective

15. 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 inspection we will use available information from and engage directly with Police Scotland officers, staff and their representative organisations. HMICS will also engage directly with key stakeholders including the SPA and Scottish Government.

Methodology

16. HMICS provides assurance that the footprint of this inspection will be carefully managed and will make use of existing evidence as much as possible, without duplicating work already undertaken or planned. As such HMICS commits to not undertaking any specific survey work, but to access and use existing data sources from both Police Scotland and other partners/stakeholders.
17. HMICS will carefully manage the scope and footprint of what could be a wide-ranging inspection to focus on a number of key areas. We acknowledge that Police Scotland has a number of workstreams already underway to address a number of cultural issues. We do not expect that this work will have yet had an impact and will therefore only assess if the plans will effectively address any related issues raised.
18. We will use the HMICS Inspection Framework which is based on the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) [Excellence Model](#) and [Best Value](#) characteristics. The Inspection Framework will provide a structure to our inspection which will be risk-based, proportionate and focused on improving the delivery of policing in Scotland. We will structure our inspection around three themes:
 - Outcomes
 - Leadership and Governance
 - Delivery.



19. EFQM has a particular focus on organisational culture. It defines organisational culture as *‘the specific collection of values and norms shared by people and groups within an organisation that influence, over time, the way they behave with each other and with key stakeholders outside the organisation’*. The framework, which we reflect in our own approach to inspection, includes key elements of:
- Steering the organisation’s culture and nurturing values
 - Creating the conditions for realising change
 - Enabling creativity and innovation
 - Uniting behind and engaging in purpose, vision and strategy.
20. HMICS does not propose to conduct a full independent cultural audit as part of this inspection. However, our inspection methodology will be underpinned by the Johnson and Scholes Cultural Web model.⁴
21. Between November 2022 and April 2023 we will:
- Identify a 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 a set of 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 inspection.
 - Assess existing and ongoing research on organisational culture and benchmark approaches to policing culture in other forces and other public sector bodies.

⁴ Originally set out in 1988, the Cultural Web model is referred to as the organisation’s cultural paradigm, reflecting what people within the organisation perceive as being normal. There are six interrelated elements which describe and influence culture that make up this paradigm.

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- Engage directly with relevant officers and staff, conducting interviews, focus groups and observations where appropriate.
 - Engage with the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Human Rights Independent Review Group on a regular basis to avoid unnecessary duplication of fieldwork.
 - Review the detailed analysis and source data which provide cultural indicators, assessing gaps and plans for future development of culture.
 - Consider the sustainability and long-term purpose of functions which directly contribute to the development of culture, in terms of their capacity and capability, planning and prioritisation of their work and maintaining and developing the policing culture.

Publication and reporting timescales

22. We will publish a report of our thematic findings in July 2023. The 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 laid before the Scottish Parliament. A copy will also be made publicly available on the HMICS website.
23. For further information about the Inspection, please contact Tina Yule, Lead Inspector (christina.yule@hmic.gov.scot).

Craig Naylor

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