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HM INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY IN SCOTLAND

# Frontline Focus - Wellbeing

## - Terms of Reference

March 2023

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Improving Policing Across Scotland

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# HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland

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HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) is established under the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012<sup>1</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup>

**This assurance review 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.**

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<sup>2</sup> HMICS, [Corporate Strategy 2021-24](#).

# Our review

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## Introduction

1. HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) has committed to conduct a number of short, focused reviews throughout the period of the HMICS Scrutiny Plan 2022-25.<sup>3</sup>
2. This is in response to consultation and engagement with key stakeholders and partners where a significant number of comments were received about the challenges facing frontline officers and staff, relating to access to training, working environments, impact of work on staff and officer wellbeing and increasing public health demands.
3. HMICS have not previously undertaken specific frontline focus reviews. It is intended that these reviews will be strategic in nature, as opposed to a deep dive. The published report will include an easily consumable product, bulletin like in nature, summarising findings and highlighting good practice and areas for development.
4. Wellbeing has been selected as the first topic for Frontline Focus

## Aim

5. The aim of this review is to engage directly with frontline officers and staff in order to identify the issues they consider support or impact on their wellbeing and to assess the work undertaken by Police Scotland to improve wellbeing, under the Positive Environment strand of the People Strategy.

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<sup>3</sup> HMICS, [Scrutiny Plan 2022-25](#).



## Background

6. Wellbeing encompasses a number of factors and is understood to be defined as how people feel and function on a number of levels, incorporating physical, psychological, social and financial health.
7. Research highlights that culture within policing inhibits disclosure and discussion around officers' mental health and wellbeing and this can affect the uptake of wellbeing campaigns and activity, and their ability to have a lasting impact (Phythian et al, 2019). With so many reactive wellbeing interventions being implemented across policing in the UK, it is imperative that progress and efficacy is routinely evaluated and adjustments made where necessary (Phythian et al, 2022).
8. In 2020 Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority published their Joint Strategy for Policing "Policing for a safe, protected and resilient Scotland." Outcome 4 of the Strategy relates specifically to wellbeing:  
  
Our people are supported through a positive working environment enabling them to serve the public.
9. The strategy goes on to state that *Officer and staff safety and wellbeing are at the heart of Police Scotland's commitments* and that *We will prioritise wellbeing and keep our people safe, well equipped and protected.*
10. A three year implementation plan was to be developed to achieve the outcomes set out in the Strategic Plan. In order to measure progress and assess performance of delivering the outcomes the Strategic Plan stated that Police Scotland would provide quarterly performance reports to enable review and oversight by the Scottish Police Authority.
11. The Police Scotland People Strategy 2018-2021 outlined three strategic priorities: Inspiring Leadership, Positive Environment and Organizational Health. Wellbeing is a key theme throughout the strategy, with a particular focus on wellbeing in the Positive Environment strand.



12. **To create a positive and healthy working environment, we will invest in and have a strong focus on the wellbeing and development of our people. We will support our people to deliver an effective service through a culture of empowerment and opportunity.**
13. Police Scotland do not have a current People Strategy in place. In a report to SPA in May 2021 it was stated that the new strategy was in development, and would be available in the forthcoming months.
14. The 'Your Wellbeing Matters' campaign to deliver the Positive Environment strand was launched in September 2017 to support the four areas of wellbeing. Work has been undertaken to promote the internal and partner services which are available to support officers and staff in all of these aspects of their health and wellbeing. The strategic aim of the 'Your Wellbeing Matters' programme, is to promote and embed an inclusive approach to Wellbeing within Police Scotland and the SPA, taking proactive measures and promoting good practice to ensure that officers and staff feel informed, valued and supported.
15. Your Safety Matters encompasses work in relation to violence and abuse directed towards police officers and staff in the discharge of their duties. The Chief Constable made a pledge in 2020 which outlined his response to violence and abuse, ensuring that the workforce would be equipped and trained to carry out their duties, would be supported following instances of violence, and that the impact of violence on the workforce would be recognised. This was supported by Lord Advocate and Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS). This has expanded to include a National Assault Pledge, working with national partners to share best practice and engage in preventative work, and the development of Victim Impact Statements for officers to provide to COPFS in legal proceedings.
16. For the year [2021/2022 Police Scotland reported](#) that Police Officer workdays lost (WDL\*), (excluding COVID), have increased 29.8% in the last year from 138,609 during 2020/21 to 179,865 during 2021/22. In the same period Police Staff WDL (excluding COVID) increased 25.5% from 64,124 during 2020/21 to 80,470 during 2021/22. The highest category of illness for both officers and staff was Psychological Disorders.



## Review - Terms of Reference - Scope and Objectives

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

The objectives of this review are as follows:

- Engage with frontline officers and staff to assess their awareness of Police Scotland's approach to wellbeing, associated activities and the effectiveness of this approach.
- Identify the factors which officers and staff consider support or impact their wellbeing.
- Highlight any identified good practice and initiatives.
- Assess the approach taken by Police Scotland comparable to recognised professional guidance and approaches elsewhere.

## Exclusions from scope

18. The term 'frontline' can mean many things to many different people, for the purpose of this review we will use the definition contained within the HMIC Formal Document ([justiceinspectorates.gov.uk](http://justiceinspectorates.gov.uk)) report on frontline and police visibility -

'The police frontline comprises those who are in everyday contact with the public and who directly intervene to keep people safe and enforce the law'.

This will naturally exclude certain roles and police functions but care will be taken to ensure that a broad representation of frontline roles are considered within the scope of the review.

The nature of this inspection is intended to be a short, focused review which will be guided by responses received from frontline officers and staff, and this may lead to more directed scrutiny activity in the future.

A number of related areas are to be considered in future frontline focus reviews, namely, Tools of the Trade, Access to training and Role of the frontline officer. As such we will not review these specifically within the scope of this inspection.



Given the simultaneous, cross cutting Inspection activity relating to Mental Health and Organisational Culture and we will not focus on these aspects of wellbeing but will share findings where relevant.

## **Outcomes/Output**

19. The intended outcomes from the review are to:

- Provide assurance that the approach taken by Police Scotland in relation to wellbeing is recognised by officers and staff.
- Provide assurance that the approach taken by Police Scotland is being delivered to frontline officers and staff.
- Provide an assessment of Police Scotland's understanding of the factors which relate to workforce wellbeing.
- Provide an assessment of the approach taken by Police Scotland.

The key output from the review will be the final report. Given the strategic nature of this review and the intended audience being frontline officers and staff, a newsletter style document is proposed, containing observations and sound bites from the engagement work, along with recommendations.

## **User Perspective**

20. 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. We will endeavour to obtain the perspective of key stakeholder groups through consultation. HMICS will engage directly with Police Scotland officers and staff as users of wellbeing services and the Scottish Police Authority.

## **Methodology**

21. We will use the latest 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 review which will be risk based, proportionate and focused on improving the delivery of policing in Scotland. We will structure our review around our objectives and three themes:

- Outcomes
- Leadership and Vision
- Delivery



Between February and June 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
- Document request and review
- Engage directly and virtually via a questionnaire with relevant officers and staff, across A, C, L, C3 and CJS Divisions, conducting interviews, focus groups and observations where appropriate.

### **Publication and reporting timescales**

22. We anticipate publishing a report of our findings in June 2023. Our 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. With the frontline being the intended recipients, the final report will be summarised into an easily consumable bulletin, with links to the full document set to make this report accessible.
24. For further information about the frontline focus review on Wellbeing please contact Lead Inspectors Jill Harper ([Jill.Harper@hmic.gov.scot](mailto:Jill.Harper@hmic.gov.scot)) and Maggie Pettigrew ([Maggie.Pettigrew@hmic.gov.scot](mailto:Maggie.Pettigrew@hmic.gov.scot))

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