

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT - RESULTS

Title of Policy	STRATEGIC POLICE PRIORITIES FOR SCOTLAND
Summary of aims and desired outcomes of Policy	To set revised Strategic Police Priorities which are provided for through section 33 of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012.
Directorate: Division: team	Safer Communities Directorate: Police Division: Police Strategy Unit

Executive summary

The public sector equality duty requires the Scottish Government to assess the impact of applying a proposed new or revised policy or practice. It is a legislative requirement. Equality legislation covers the characteristics of: age, disability, gender reassignment, gender including pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, and sexual orientation.

An equality impact assessment (EQIA) aims to consider how a policy (a policy can cover: activities, functions, strategies, programmes, and services or processes) may impact, either positively or negatively, on different sectors of the population in different ways. This EQIA has been undertaken to consider the impacts on equality of the revised Strategic Police Priorities (SPPs).

Policing is relevant to everyone in Scotland but is particularly relevant for the most vulnerable people in our society. In drafting revised SPPs we have considered issues affecting all of the above mentioned equality groups, reflecting our expectation that policing should have a positive impact on each and every individual and community across Scotland.

Background

The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (the Act) allows Scottish Ministers to set SPPs which relate to the policing of Scotland and the SPA's statutory functions. They provide an outline of what is expected of our police service and make a link between the National Outcomes and our approach to policing.

Scottish Ministers must consult with the SPA, the Chief Constable, representatives from local authorities and anyone else they consider relevant before setting new SPPs. Scottish Ministers must have regard to the policing principles, set out under section 32 of the Act, when setting new SPPs and a copy must be laid before the Scottish Parliament.

The original SPPs were set in 2013 in the context of police reform and the creation of a single police force, Police Scotland, and single police authority, the Scottish Police Authority (SPA).

In September 2015, the Scottish Government set out its intention to strengthen the community focus of policing by working with members of the public, communities and elected representatives to review the SPPs.

The revised SPPs have been developed following an initial phase of engagement which ran from December 2015 to April 2016 and a formal consultation which ran from 22 June to 16 August 2016. Both exercises sought views and information from members of the public, communities, Local Police Scrutiny Committees and other stakeholders.

Moving forward, the revised Priorities will provide a clear mandate for the Scottish Police Authority and Police Scotland. They will set out our shared aspirations and expectations for policing in Scotland and will be used by Scottish Ministers, the Scottish Parliament, the SPA and Local Scrutiny Committees to guide our approach to policing in the years to come.

The Scope of the EQIA

The initial phase of engagement to inform the revised SPPs was launched on 7th December 2015, supported by a discussion paper which centred on the question ‘What are your priorities for your police service?’. The document was published on the Scottish Government website and sent to a variety of stakeholders including Local Authority Police Scrutiny Committees, all MSPs, senior police officers, SPA Board members and staff, and various other stakeholders including a range of third sector organisations (including those representing specific equality groups).

The first stage of engagement was intended to prompt a general discussion about the aspects of policing which are most important to people and organisations from across Scotland. The covering letter had two ‘asks’, firstly that people consider what is important to them about policing, and secondly that they promote the discussion as widely as possible in their own areas.

As part of this initial round of engagement, Scottish Government officials attended a number of Local Authority Police Scrutiny Committee meetings and community planning events. A workshop with YoungScot’s Police Scotland Youth Advisory Panel also took place. A total of 68 responses were received and 18 ideas were posted on the Scottish Government’s online policy ideas platform.

In addition to work specifically focused on the SPPs, the Scottish Government has been conducting a discussion around how we can become a Fairer Scotland by 2030. That discussion was launched in June 2015 and since then over 7,000 people have taken part in Fairer Scotland public events as well as locally organised sessions, with many more taking part online. Policing was raised in a number of the Fairer Scotland discussions and views captured have been used to augment those collected as part of our initial engagement on the Strategic Police Priorities.

Following on from this initial stage of engagement we carried out a formal consultation on a revised set of six Priorities focussed around the following themes:

- Localism
- Prevention
- Response
- Collaborative working
- Accountability
- Adaptability

The formal consultation paper was accompanied by a partial EQIA/Childrens Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) and the consultation paper specifically asked for views on that assessment. The formal consultation, which ran from 22 June to 16 August 2016, provided an opportunity for further engagement with Local Authority Police Scrutiny Committees, senior police officers, SPA Board members and staff, and various other stakeholders including a range of third sector organisations (including those representing specific equality groups). There were 110 responses to the formal consultation, offering a range of views and further evidence. Information and feedback was also gathered from further meetings, including a workshop attended by organisations representing childrens interests and two roundtables attended by people representing ethnic minorities (one of which was attended by the Cabinet Secretary for Justice).

The responses highlighted additional research and data which was considered alongside already known information and used to shape both our equality impact assessment and the SPPs themselves. Those information sources include:

- Scottish Crime and Justice Survey 2014/15,
- Scottish Household Survey (2014),
- EQIA for the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012,

- Race Equality Framework for Scotland 2016-2030,
- Equality and Human Rights Commission, 'Hidden in Plain Sight' (2011),
- SPA, 'Mainstreaming Equality Outcomes - Update Report' (April 2015),
- Scottish Transgender Alliance, 'Transgender Experiences in Scotland – Report Summary' (2008),
- Scottish Government, 'Religiously Aggravated Offending in Scotland 2012/13'
- Various Police Scotland Record Crime Statistics,
- Scottish Government, 'Equally Safe: Scotland's Strategy for eliminating violence against women and girls'.

The main equality issues that emerged from consultation responses and our related discussions with stakeholders focussed on:

- challenges around inclusion/equality and the important role of the police in promoting community cohesion.
- scope for the impact assessments linked to the revised SPPs to be enhanced with consideration of further issues relating to particular equality groups.
- the structure of the impact assessments. Whilst some consultation respondents felt that the partial joint EQIA/CRWIA offered a good assessment of cross cutting issues, others felt that this approach diluted the focus of the respective assessments.
- the need for the EQIA to consider intersectional identities.
- the need for the SPPs to refer to specific types of crime or related issues that affect each of particular equality groups.

Key Findings

Although our considerations in relation to the SPPs and their impact on equality issues and childrens rights/wellbeing have been taken forward as part of a single process, we have chosen to report our findings and response on these matters separately, aiding clarity and reflecting views expressed during consultation.

Very broadly, we know from both the quantitative and qualitative evidence gathered in carrying out the EQIA that people with different equality characteristics have different experiences of policing and crime and can also have different needs and expectations. It is important that our police service takes account of this and adapts accordingly, working constructively with individuals and communities across Scotland. The SPPs have been strengthened to reflect this point.

Following our initial phase of engagement we set out draft SPPs and sought views as part of a formal consultation. These included a Priority around localism:

“Localism – Ensure that the needs of communities are understood and reflected in the planning and delivery of policing”

In the background we set out that this Priority should extend not only to geographic communities but also to communities of interest, and that police services need to be responsive to the needs of all individuals and communities across Scotland. This was intended to reflect views we heard during our initial phase of engagement and to capture our expectation that policing should be as inclusive as possible.

More generally, the SPPs which were issued for consultation were intended to be inclusive and supportive of equality issues, with the priorities focusing on "Localism", "Collaborative Working", "Prevention" and "Response" being particularly relevant.

We agree with the feedback offered through the consultation which highlighted the importance of inclusion/equality and recognised the important role of the police in promoting community cohesion. We have sought to reflect this through an additional Priority:

“Inclusion – Ensure our police service is accessible and responsive to the needs of all people in Scotland.”

This Priority is intended to work in conjunction with the other SPPs and has clear links to them. It has been pitched at a strategic level and so does not refer specifically to any particular equality characteristic or community or the types of crime or issues that affect them. Instead, it is intended to broadly encapsulate the Scottish Government’s commitment to ensuring that nobody is stigmatised or denied opportunities simply because of where they live, their race or ethnicity, their disability, their gender or sexual orientation, their age or religion.

Recommendations and Conclusion

We have used views expressed in relation to the needs or expectations of people from equality groups, alongside other views, research and experience to shape our thinking on the revised SPPs.

As a result, we believe the SPPs now fully recognise the importance of inclusion and make clear that, in improving the safety and wellbeing of people and communities across Scotland, police services must be accessible to and engaged with people covering the range of protected characteristics. Priorities focussing on "Inclusion", "Localism", "Response", "Collaborative Working" and "Accountability" are particularly relevant in this context.

The SPA and Police Scotland have a statutory duty to ensure that the SPPs are reflected in the Strategic Police Plan and Annual Police Plan. These plans are used to set out more specific objectives (in the case of the Strategic Police Plan) and operational priorities (in the case of the Annual Police Plan) for the policing of Scotland. As such, the implementation and

delivery of the Strategic Police Priorities rests mainly with those bodies. We expect that further impact assessment will be carried out by Police Scotland and the SPA to support the development of these plans. We will share information gathered through this review to inform those processes.