

Scotland's single police force to be split into 14 local units

Posted by ErnHW Ltd - 24 Nov 2012 13:55

Courtesy Scotsman

By TOM PETERKIN

SCOTLAND'S single police force is to be split into 14 divisions, in an attempt to crack down on local crime such as vandalism, antisocial behaviour and drink-and drug-related offences.

Each division will be headed by a chief superintendent, known as a local policing commander, who will have responsibility for delivering a service that will be developed in conjunction with members of the public.

The new divisional command structure, covering the whole country, will replace the current system, under which eight chief constables are in charge of eight regional forces.

Details of the new structure follow concerns that a single force would concentrate too much on policing the cities and Central Belt at the expense of rural areas and low-level crime, which causes misery in many communities.

Between them, the 14 divisions will cover all 32 Scottish local authority areas. When broken down further, it is hoped local people will be able to influence policing plans created to suit each of the 353 multi-member wards into which Scottish local government is divided.

Each division will be given flexibility in how it achieves this. Some may choose to build on existing models, such as the Police and Communities Together (Pact) system devised by Central Scotland Police.

Pact aims to give people the chance to discuss policing priorities with local officers at community council meetings or area surgeries. The public are then updated with progress and results.

Local authorities may also choose to set up panels that include councillors and representatives from communities.

The plans were set out by the chief constable of the new single force, Stephen House, in a meeting in Edinburgh yesterday with chief executives of local authorities.

Mr House said: "Local policing drives what we as police officers do and is at the very heart of delivering a responsive, demand-led service that truly reflects the needs of the local communities.

"Reform allows us an opportunity to provide a consistency of approach to policing across the whole country.

"Keeping people safe is our priority and, with crime at a 37-year low, I want officers to be visible, accessible and working closely with those they serve to help build public confidence."

He added: "We operate differently across our communities to reflect local needs. Policing needs are different in Maryhill and Mull. Policing in Perth is not the same as in Peterhead. By setting out our clear intentions at a local level, we can be held accountable for our results, for what we deliver."

The initiative was welcomed by politicians.

South Scotland Labour MSP Graeme Pearson, a former head of the Scottish Drug Enforcement Agency, said: "The big fear is that all resources are diverted to the big cities and local policing becomes denuded and local low-level crime is ignored in favour of a national agenda. So I think this is a good idea, which we have been pushing for right from the start. We want to see local groups have some power and influence."

Last week, Mr Pearson expressed fears that the operational independence of the new force was being undermined by the Scottish Police Authority (SPA), the body set up to scrutinise it. The former police officer was concerned that the SPA would have control over finance and staffing.

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Re: Scotland's single police force to be split into 14 local units

Posted by Gordon McCaskill - 25 Nov 2012 10:41

Before I comment on this I'll wait to see how it works in practise.

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Scotland's new deputy chief constables unveiled

Posted by ErnHW Ltd - 26 Nov 2012 17:29

Courtesy Scotsman

By GARETH ROSE

SCOTLAND'S four new deputy chief constables have been unveiled - Neil Richardson, of Strathclyde, Iain Livingstone and Steve Allen, of Lothian and Borders, and Rose Fitzpatrick, most recently of the Metropolitan Police.

- Four new deputies will earn £169,000 a year and will report to Steve House, Scotland's first ever chief constable
- Ms Fitzpatrick will head up territorial policing, whilst Mr Allen will take responsibility for Commonwealth Games and other major events
- Mr Richardson will be designated deputy to Mr House whilst Mr Livingstone will take control of crime and operational support

The quartet will report to Steve House who had already been named as Scotland's first ever chief constable.

No senior officers have yet been appointed from outside the two largest forces - Lothian and Borders, and Strathclyde - and there is a strong Metropolitan Police influence, with Mr House, Mr Allen and Ms Fitzpatrick all having worked in the London force.

The four officers were appointed by the Scottish Police Authority and will earn £169,600 a year.

Mr Richardson will be the designated deputy to Mr House, as well as the reform lead, Ms Fitzpatrick will head up territorial policing, Mr Livingstone will be in charge of crime and operational support, while Mr Allen will take responsibility for the Commonwealth Games and other major events.

“The appointment of four deputy chief constables today is another major milestone in the journey towards the development of the single police service for Scotland and I look forward to working with them,” Mr House said.

“These officers will be responsible for leading policing and delivering for the public across all communities, ensuring the public are protected from harm and that Police Scotland keeps people safe.”

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