

OUTLINE FOR JUSTICE MINISTER'S SPEECH
29 JANUARY 2007
RELAUNCH OF ACPOS PEOPLE STRATEGY

Introduction

Today is an important milestone in the development of the Scottish Police Service's key asset – its people. And the challenge to us all is to ensure that the decisions we make today will ensure we create a workforce fit for the second decade of the 21st century.

And it is a big challenge, but if anyone can deliver, you can.

Police reform

You would not expect me to speak without making some reference to the record resources invested in the policing since 2003, now over £1.1 billion a year, as well as to the record number of police officers and police support staff - 16,260 and 7,300 respectively, at the last count.

But money and numbers are only part of the story. We have already embarked on an ambitious programme of police reform. The new Scottish Police Services Authority and the Independent Police Complaints Commissioner for Scotland from will be up and running in April. Improvements are being made in reporting of performance. And very importantly, these reforms are being made in the wider context of the most radical modernisation programme the criminal justice system has seen in a generation.

Reform of the workforce has been a crucial element in wider programme of police reform in Scotland. The policing family has changed considerably over the past 4 years, in line with the principles of flexibility and diversity that remain at the heart of the People Strategy:

- We have greatly increased the use of Special Constables, providing an invaluable service to our communities and additional front line resources.
- We have introduced Community wardens, operating in all local authority areas, tackling issues such as vandalism and graffiti and providing an important additional resource along with visibility and reassurance.
- We have taken forward the civilianisation of posts to release officers for front-line services.

- We have seen innovations in how people are used. The Reliance Contract has freed over 200 officers for frontline duties. Forces are innovating with more flexible working structures, such as the Tayside lead constable project, developing and rewarding people's skills where they are needed most.

People strategy

So we have achieved a great deal. But of course there is still much more to do. And tomorrow's environment will be even more challenging than today's

The labour market is shrinking, the workforce pattern is changing and individuals have different career expectations. The workforce of the future will be more diverse than ever before, attracting people from different backgrounds. Age profiles, experience and skills will not be the same as in the past. People no longer arrive in a career with the expectation being there for life.

And the financial climate will be more stringent. The period of record growth in resources will not continue indefinitely, everyone needs to be prepared for this. If we are to continue to meet the ever growing expectations of Scotland's people, there will be a premium on efficiency, effectiveness and flexibility in how we attract, retain and develop our workforce.

So delivering on the vision set out in the people strategy will be crucial to stay ahead of the game, ensuring that our workforce remains fit for purpose, and continuing the tradition of excellence of which the Scottish police service can be so proud.

SCDS and Diploma

I am particularly pleased that today sees the launch of two key elements in the professionalisation of career development in the police service.

The Senior Careers Development Service (SCDS) will offer a structured continuing professional development to our senior officers. It will enable them to hone their skills, and enable the service to prepare the new generation of chief officers. This is a significant investment in the future leaders of the police service.

And in launching the SCDS with all the opportunities that it will bring, I am also pleased that ACPOS Council has agreed that the Strategic Command Course will be a mandatory qualification for future Chief Officer appointments from January 2008. This decision has been some time in the making, and it now sends a clear and unequivocal message about our commitment to continue to professionalise the workforce at every level. This qualification will ensure that the best of the Scottish police can compete on a level playing field for posts not only across Scotland but across the whole of the UK. It is a significant and welcome step in the development of our workforce and in ensuring that we have the highest calibre of candidates for what are very challenging and demanding roles.

Equally significant is the launch of the Police Diploma in Leadership and Management. A professional qualification accredited by Scottish Qualification Authority, this will provide consistent standards and access to the best training opportunities for all who aspire to move through the ranks.

Conclusion

These are significant achievements, long in preparation. No doubt there have been blood, sweat and tears along the way. I would like to express my thanks to the team who have worked so hard to get us to this point today.

I would like to pay particular tribute to Andrew Cameron. He has brought vision, and leadership and commitment to this project. He has not shied from tough and sometimes controversial decisions, and can be genuinely proud of what has been achieved. Working in partnership is never without its challenges, but Andrew has been totally committed in his approach to

partnership working with the Executive at every stage of the process.

People are our greatest asset, and today's relaunch of the ACPOS People Strategy, together with the new Diploma and the SCDS, will help ensure that we are all ready to move forward and create the world class police service of the future that Scotland deserves.

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