



## NEWS RELEASE

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### Scotland's Chief Police Officers launch a new strategic vision for celebrating and valuing difference

A challenging new strategy, which puts equality and diversity at the heart of daily policing in Scotland, was unveiled today by Scotland's Chief Police Officers at the Scottish Police College.

The strategy builds on the success of the previous plan and aims to meet the challenges of policing in an ever-changing environment, whilst encouraging and adopting a variety of ideas and approaches.

The strategy describes a programme of activity and an approach to policing with four key commitments:

**Service:** We will ensure that our service, and the policies and procedures that underpin it, are fair, ethical, promote equality and diversity and are responsive to individuals.

**Engagement:** We will involve, consult and engage with our communities, staff and partners in order to ensure that we continue to improve the way we work.

**People:** We will recruit, develop and maintain a skilled workforce that reflects and understands the diverse communities of Scotland, respects personal dignity, difference and individuality and actively promotes Equality and Diversity.

**Hate Crime:** We will robustly tackle harassment, intimidation and abuse suffered due to prejudice against any individual or social group.

"Equality and Diversity have nothing to do with what some still regard as political correctness", said Chair of the ACPOS Equality and Diversity Business Area, Northern Constabulary Chief Constable Ian Latimer. "On the contrary, promoting equality and recognising diversity, is fundamental to the success of policing. Understanding, promoting and respecting equality and diversity are key components in creating greater and sustained public confidence and trust in policing, as both a service provider and employer."

Mr Latimer went on to say: "The Police cannot work in isolation. Reducing crime and building safe and confident communities requires the assistance, trust and co-operation of everyone.

"The strategy, however, is just the beginning - to make real achievements, we need commitment throughout our Forces to deliver the changes in the coming years. Taking this forward will enable individuals and communities to be safer and stronger with reduced risk of

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victimisation. It will also help to continue to build a fair and accessible police service, which has a richness of diversity and is trained and empowered to support equality and diversity.”

Ros Micklem, The National Director for Scotland, European Human Rights Commission, welcomed the new strategy. She said:

“The EHRC warmly welcomes the publication of the ACPOS Equality & Diversity Strategy 2009 – 2011 which reconfirms the commitment of ACPOS to equality and diversity in a modern police service.

The Police service in Scotland has made significant progress on equal opportunities since the publication of the MacPherson report into the murder of Steven Lawrence 10 years ago. However, there is still much to do – taking employment as one example, less than a quarter of all officers are women and only 1 in 100 are from ethnic minority communities. Both groups are seriously underrepresented at senior levels. Whilst the roots of these problems are historical, it is only through the continued effort and focus that this updated strategy gives can significant progress be made”.

The Cabinet Minister for Justice, Kenny MacAskill endorsed the strategy. He said:

"The Scottish Government is committed to working towards a fairer society through a sustainable and inclusive Scotland in which everyone can participate.

In Scotland, we have always policed by consent, and as we meet the challenges of the modern world, it is vital that we take all possible steps to ensure that policing continues to receive the confidence and support of the diverse public it serves.

I am therefore delighted to offer my personal support and that of the Scottish Government to the ACPOS Equality & Diversity Strategy which I am confident provides clear direction to the delivery of effective and appropriate policing services to the people of Scotland and links well with Governments aim of mainstreaming equality across all sectors."

End.

For further information please contact ACPOS Communications on 0141 435 1240 or 07771 842881

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