

# New bill to modernise law relating to domestic abuse



Proposals for a new Bill to modernise the law to address the complexities of cases involving domestic abuse was welcomed by Police Scotland today.

Plans for an Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm Bill were set out in Scottish Government's Programme for Government published today (Tues 1 Sept) which will provide additional powers to ensure effective action can be taken against those who commit domestic abuse, harassment and sexual offences.

Chief Constable Sir Stephen House said: "Tackling domestic abuse and sexual violence and ending the inconsistency in support provided for victims has been a priority for Police Scotland and this proposal sends a clear message to offenders that these abusive and highly damaging behaviours will be tackled.

"Creating a specific offence that will deal with those who commit psychological abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour will ensure greater protection for some of the most vulnerable in our communities and that families and children get the right support and protection.

"The behaviours in domestic abuse cases are complex and challenging. Any legislation must be explicit in how it will ensure offenders are successfully brought to justice. Police Scotland will work closely with Government, the Crown Office and Procurators Fiscal Service and partners to ensure that the legislation serves its purpose in securing the protection victims deserve."

Deputy Chief Constable Rose Fitzpatrick, Local Policing, also

welcomed the proposals for enhanced local scrutiny arrangements.

“Reform of policing in Scotland has delivered early benefits in ending inconsistency of approach and improving access locally to specialist support and this provides a strong foundation on which to build.

“Policing has always faced challenges and will continue to do so. We will work closely with the Scottish Police Authority, local authorities and our partners to ensure that we continue to provide the best service we can for communities. We welcome the proposals for enhanced local scrutiny arrangements and look forward to participating in the local scrutiny summit later this month.”