

# Police launch four-year commitment to keep young Scots safe



Five new priorities which will define the policing approach to keeping Scotland's one million young people and children safe have been announced.

Police Scotland has unveiled a four-year commitment called ["Our Approach"](#) which will put the safety of young Scots at the heart of the service.

Working with a wide range of partners, Police Scotland's priorities for children and young people are:

- Safety and Protection
- Engagement
- Prevention
- Victims and Witnesses
- Offending

Our Approach has been created with the assistance of young people who are members of the Police Scotland Youth Advisory Panel, which is supported by Young Scot.

Chief Constable Phil Gormley said, "These priorities are more than just fine words; they link to direct action which will shape the work we do with children and young people over the coming years. Identifying these priorities allows us to make clear commitments to the way we support and protect them.

"I recognise the need to set out our commitment to the children and young people of Scotland and the people who care for them. The key principles of integrity, fairness and respect are never more important than when we are engaging

with children in their early years, as this will influence their perspective on policing for the rest of their lives.

“It’s vital we listen; it’s vital we engage; and it’s vital we provide information about the police service for children and young people that will help them make informed choices. This can help them avoid risks ranging from substance abuse to threats emerging from the online world and other harmful behaviours.

“We are ready to start delivering on the commitments we are setting out today which will help improve life chances and positive outcomes for all children and young people.”

The priorities were launched at the Police Scotland College, Tulliallan, where the Chief Constable was joined by the Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs Annabelle Ewing and Louise Macdonald, the Chief Executive of YoungScot.

Members of the Youth Advisory Panel were recognised for their efforts since 2014 in helping shape the new approach to children and young people. Representatives of the award-winning Police Scotland Youth Volunteers from Dunfermline were also commended for their involvement in the flagship citizenship programme for young people.

CEO of Young Scot, Louise Macdonald, said, “The Young Scot Police Scotland Youth Advisory Panel has been instrumental in creating Police Scotland’s new approach to working with young people. Their contribution demonstrates the power of working alongside young people to improve public services.

“Both the Young Scot Police Scotland Youth Advisory Panel members and the Police Scotland Youth Volunteers have done phenomenal work within their own communities. They more than deserve all the recognition they have received today and I’d like to congratulate each and every one of them.”

Tam Baillie, Children and Young People’s Commissioner, said,

“I am delighted to welcome ‘Children and Young People 2016/20 – Our Approach’. It is an approach grounded in children’s rights, and one which clearly reflects the significant input of children and young people.

“The Police Scotland Youth Advisory Panel should be congratulated on what has clearly been a very successful piece of work. The new approach sends a positive message to both Police Scotland staff and children and young people themselves about the way in which they can hope to work together over the next four years.”

Annabelle Ewing, Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs, said, “The Scottish Government welcomes this new approach to working with children and young people which, crucially, has been developed in collaboration with young people themselves.

“The safety and wellbeing of our children should always be our first priority, therefore I’m pleased to see Police Scotland taking forward a clear way ahead over the next four years.”

Our Approach is aimed at children, young people, parents, carers, professionals and volunteers. It outlines the specific things Police Scotland will do to meet its commitment to the five priorities.