

Chief Constable's pledge to improve safety of officers

Chief Constable Iain Livingstone QPM has outlined his commitment to reduce the impact of violence and improve the safety of officers and staff in a new pledge announced today.

The Chief has made it clear that violence against officers and staff is utterly unacceptable and should never be seen as simply part of the job. He has promised to provide appropriate support to colleagues where it does occur.

Lord Advocate James Wolffe QC and Cabinet Secretary for Justice Humza Yousaf have both backed the pledge, which also calls on wider society and the public to support policing.



Chief Constable Livingstone said: "As has been evident in recent weeks and months, at times of crisis, chaos and criticality, policing in Scotland brings order, discipline and compassion.

"It is, then, disgraceful and deplorable when officers and staff are subjected to violence during the course of their duties.

"I have enormous concern about assaults and attacks on police officers and staff, which are disgracefully on the increase. I utterly reject any suggestion or view that they come with the job.

"This pledge outlines my commitment to reducing the impact violence has on our officers and staff and to introducing

measures to improve their safety.

“I am clear that it is the strong bond of trust and confidence forged between policing and our fellow citizens from which we obtain our authority. Your police service will always value that relationship.

“I’m grateful for the overwhelming support for policing from members of the public in recent weeks and months and I request that the same support and co-operation continues as we work together to build and maintain our collective safety and security.”

The Lord Advocate has made clear that offending against police officers will be prosecuted rigorously. Lord Advocate James Wolffe QC said: “Assaults on police officers and staff are reprehensible and Scotland’s prosecution service will take action to protect their safety.

“COPFS works closely with Police Scotland to ensure the effective investigation and prosecution of crime, properly addressing any criminal behaviour that threatens public safety and the safety of police officers.”

Justice Secretary Humza Yousaf said: “I fully support the Chief Constable’s pledge and I am deeply concerned to hear that reports of violence on officers and staff are on the increase.

“It is simply not acceptable that they should be attacked or abused while going about their daily duty. The men and women of Police Scotland are the frontline in protecting communities and keeping Scotland safe.

“They are the very people who run to help others when it can be dangerous and often witness distressing scenes.

“No-one should face abuse or violence while at work and the courts have extensive powers to deal robustly with those who

carry out such appalling behaviour on our officers and staff.”

The pledge and guidance were developed by members of the Your Safety Matters group, the membership of which includes staff associations, unions and experts from across Police Scotland.

Deputy Chief Constable Fiona Taylor, who chairs the Your Safety Matters group, said: “The trend of increasing reports of assaults on officers and staff over a number of years is a matter of significant concern. It causes physical and psychological harm to dedicated public servants and also costs the public purse through days lost to ill-health or personal injury claims.

We will continue to work closely with the Scottish Police Federation, staff unions, and our partners to support our people as they, in turn, support their fellow citizens.”