

Police Scotland to ban officers from having beards

According to the BBC, Police Scotland will order all frontline officers to shave off beards by the end of May.

The reason given is to ensure that officers and civilian staff can wear FFP3 masks which is the preferred option used by Police Scotland when officers respond to fires, chemical incidents or road traffic collisions. These masks fit better and provide better protection if the wearer is clean shaven.

Assistant Chief Constable Speirs of Police Scotland said:

Assistant Chief Constable Alan Speirs said: “The safety of our officers and staff is a priority and the policy around the use of respiratory equipment is being implemented to protect those on the frontline.

“Significant learning from the covid pandemic identified that the FFP3 mask – which is face-fitted and requires users to be clean shaven – offers the most appropriate and effective respiratory protection to officers and staff.

“While the risk from coronavirus has lowered, wider risks remain to those attending calls, such as fires, road accidents and chemical incidents which require PPE to be worn.

“The Respiratory Protective Equipment policy mandates that, where it can be reasonably foreseen that an officer or member of staff will use an FFP3 mask in the course of their duties, they should be clean-shaven.

“The exception to this policy covers officers and staff who cannot shave for religious, cultural, disability or medical reasons. In these circumstances, Police Scotland is seeking to introduce an alternative type of respiratory protection.

“We understand the frustrations among those affected on the frontline, but the use of RPE is absolutely necessary to protect officers and staff from serious health risks.

“We are listening to a wide range of views on this matter and will undertake full consultation with all relevant staff associations ahead of implementation.

“A full human rights impact assessment is also being carried out as part of this process.”

Four officers are said to be taking legal action against the order.

The Scottish Police Federation (SPF) have said they are “inundated” with complaints from officers about the policy.

SPF say that such a policy about Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE) should only be used as a last resort. They are supporting “several members” who are lodging complaints through employment tribunals and are seeking legal opinion about “health and safety, discrimination and human rights”.



Police Scotland are to ban the wearing of beards by frontline officers.

PHOTO Alan Simpson Photography