

Chief Constable praises “good sense of our communities” during periods of violence and disorder

Scotland’s Chief Constable Jo Farrell praised the good sense of our communities during periods of violence and disorder in other parts of the United Kingdom.

He comments were made during a public update at the Scottish Police Authority Board today Thursday, 22 August.

The Chief also thanked officers and staff who contributed to Police Scotland’s response throughout the period, including officers who deployed following a mutual aid request from the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

She said: “I want to thank our communities for their support and good sense during a challenging time which has seen appalling violence and disorder in parts of the United Kingdom.

“Our thoughts are with the individuals and communities who have been affected in recent weeks and with our brave colleagues from across UK policing who have put themselves in harm’s way to protect the public.

“We continue to be closely in touch with other police services and have provided mutual aid support, a valuable principle in

UK policing which is balanced against the needs of policing in Scotland.

“On Monday of this week, I thanked officers who deployed to support colleagues after we responded to a mutual aid request from the Police Service of Northern Ireland and initial feedback around arrangements and their welfare was very positive.

“I want to thank all officers and staff who contributed to our response.

“During the period, I met with the First Minister John Swinney MSP, the Cabinet Secretary for Justice Angela Constance MSP, Community Safety Minister Siobhian Brown MSP and Secretary of State for Scotland Ian Murray MP to brief them on our response.

“As Chief Constable, my priority continues to be the safety and security of the people of Scotland, including our officers and staff.

“Policing in Scotland has strong relationships with the public and we deeply value our role in contributing to the important social cohesion which has been evident here.

“I encourage everyone to be responsible in their use of social media – please do not share speculation or inaccurate information. Think twice about what you read, share and believe from online sources.

“During this time, we increased our patrols and engaged directly with communities to offer reassurance and support.

“As part of this, I was pleased to meet with community groups, including the Scottish Refugee Council, Interfaith Scotland, and various ethnic and faith groups and individuals in Glasgow so I was able to listen to their perspectives first hand.

“We are closely monitoring the situation to ensure any

potential for violence or disorder in Scotland is identified quickly and responded to immediately.

“Our role is to ensure public safety while balancing the rights of protesters who wish to peacefully demonstrate.

“And we have sent a clear and consistent message that any violence and disorder that is not legitimate protest will be dealt with swiftly and robustly.

“The policing demand associated with the violence and disorder comes during a busy summer of events including festivals, sporting events, music concerts and a general election.

“I am grateful to the many officers and staff who have been involved in planning or providing the support required to allow our communities to go about their business and leisure or exercise their democratic and human rights.

“An effective, appropriately resourced, police service able to support law and order is therefore a pre-requisite for the social cohesion and economic development necessary for Scotland to thrive and flourish.”