| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 23-0705  Responded to: 1st May 2023 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

**In a BBC News article published on 8 February 2023**, [**https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-64513654?**](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.bbc.co.uk%2Fnews%2Fuk-scotland-64513654%3Fat_medium%3DRSS%26at_campaign%3DKARANGA&data=05%7C01%7Cfoi%40scotland.police.uk%7Cc6218d0c4e49412a1b5308db219dcdf2%7C6795c5d3c94b497a865c4c343e4cf141%7C0%7C0%7C638140733983535337%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=9zkCCD57Mt0hqVG7mYwmQr2PgwlwJM%2FZHW4JMY377sQ%3D&reserved=0)**, DCC Fiona Taylor is quoted as saying "… we conducted an internal survey to listen to colleagues' experiences of sexism and misogyny as we build a service where everyone knows they are valued and welcome.”**

**Please provide the results, and/or data and insights and any summaries or headlines from this survey.**

Police Scotland is taking a number of steps to enhance our understanding of the impact of sexism and misogyny on our people.

In late 2021, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion & Human Rights Strategic Oversight Board (now known as the Policing Together Strategic Oversight Board) supported the establishment of a Sex Equality and Tackling Misogyny Working Group. Led by Deputy Chief Constable Malcolm Graham, the working group is taking an evidence-led approach to tackling sexism and misogyny. The working group includes statutory and diversity staff association representatives as well as senior leaders from across the service.

This work forms part of our Policing Together initiative to drive improvements in policing and in Scotland, ensuring that we reflect, represent and serve all our communities. Police Scotland has also welcomed the opportunity to discuss this work with the Policing Together Independent Review Group for scrutiny and advice.

Colleagues were invited to share their experience of sexism and misogyny at work through an anonymous online survey and submit suggestions on how to create a more welcoming and inclusive working environment.

The survey was made available to all colleagues to learn more about their experiences. It ran from 16 August to 11 October 2022 and participants provided with assurances about the secure storage of their data and guidance about access to support functions and information sources.

In addition, an online ideas platform enabled colleagues to share reflections and suggestions for what could be done to tackle sexism and misogyny.

Interviews and engagement sessions with colleagues also helped to build a better picture of the nature of challenging experiences and how those in a position to make a difference responded.​

More than 500 people responded to the survey or shared ideas for change, with 150 opting to be involved in further focus groups and/or interviews.

This engagement is a strong, positive starting point in what will be an ongoing dialogue as we all work together to achieve long overdue and long term cultural change.

It also reflects that around half of the people who responded agreed the organisation was tackling the issue.

Below is a summary of issues that officers and staff raised:

* Sexism and misogyny impacts colleagues in all areas of Police Scotland.
* Officers and staff highlighted examples of inappropriate behaviour, language, discrimination and unfair treatment, where colleagues have felt unsupported and unable to raise issues.
* Female colleagues have shared experiences of sexual misconduct spanning over a number of years and of not having the confidence to report incidents.
* Genuine concerns and clear instances of discrimination have on occasion been ignored or dismissed as 'banter' with those speaking out wrongfully being accused of not being able to take a joke.
* Female colleagues have told of being treated differently to male counterparts and their knowledge and experience being discounted.
* Male colleagues highlighted that they recognised inappropriate behaviour but don't always feel empowered to call it out, especially when it comes from senior officers.
* Male colleagues have expressed how senior female management and officers have exhibited inappropriate behaviour towards them but felt it went unchecked because they were female.
* Leaders, supervisors and senior managers have a key role to play in supporting colleagues and challenging sexist and misogynistic behaviours.
* When it comes to recruitment, those with unacceptable attitudes towards women need to be rooted out from the start.
* Better mechanisms and safe spaces for reporting discrimination and sexist behaviour can empower people to report without fear of detriment or victimisation.

Of those who responded to the survey:

* 71% were officers.
* Two-thirds were women.
* Most who offered ideas or opinions had more than 15 years' service.
* 81% agree it is an issue.
* 86% of women had either been subjected to and/or witnessed sexism and misogyny.
* More than 40% of men have witnessed sexism and misogyny.
* Around 50% agree the organisation is tackling it.

The survey and ideas platform were the first step in developing an action plan to tackle sexism and misogyny and will help to provide a benchmark to measure progress.

This engagement with officers and staff is just one part of an ongoing programme to improve equality, diversity and inclusion in the service and to better represent communities across Scotland.

Understanding the impact of sexism and misogyny from those with lived experience is crucial in order to develop and implement strategic plans that support colleagues and encourage a positive working environment.

The Sex Equality and Tackling Misogyny Oversight Board will continue to meet regularly to agree plans and oversee progress and a Delivery Group, chaired by ACC Emma Bond, will drive forward a range of key change activities that respond to insights.

Change activities will include empowering leaders across the service to embed good practice, ensuring reports are dealt with promptly and in a supportive manner, and the capturing of data and feedback to improve outcomes and to communicate progress to officers and staff.

Although there is clearly lots to be done, colleagues also fed back that this work is a positive step and the organisation is learning from past mistakes and putting effort into change, which helps to improve colleague confidence in the organisation.

In September 2022 Police Scotland published our Policing Together Strategy which sets out our commitment to being an anti-discrimination service. More details can be found here: [New Policing Together strategy to drive equality and inclusion - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/what-s-happening/news/2022/september/new-policing-together-strategy-to-drive-equality-and-inclusion/)

In March 2023 our Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy was approved at the [Scottish Police Authority board meeting](https://www.spa.police.uk/meetings/authority-meetings/23-march-2023/).

Our VAWG strategy recognised that as an organisation we are not immune from the sexism and misogyny that is at the root of this violence. Our strategy recognises the work that needs to be done internally, which includes a zero-tolerance approach to sexism and misogyny.

We will use every tool at our disposal to ensure that the wrong individuals are prevented from joining the police and, where appropriate, removed from the organisation.

More information can be found here [Violence against Women and Girls Strategy](https://www.scotland.police.uk/what-s-happening/news/2023/march/violence-against-women-and-girls-strategy/).

If you require any further assistance please contact us quoting the reference above.

You can request a review of this response within the next 40 working days by [email](mailto:foi@scotland.police.uk) or by letter (Information Management - FOI, Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH). Requests must include the reason for your dissatisfaction.

If you remain dissatisfied following our review response, you can appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC) within 6 months - [online](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal), by [email](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info) or by letter (OSIC, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, KY16 9DS).

Following an OSIC appeal, you can appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

This response will be added to our [Disclosure Log](http://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log) in seven days' time.

Every effort has been taken to ensure our response is as accessible as possible. If you require this response to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know.

Add in section on exemption for raw data S36 and S38 FOI.