



SCOTTISH POLICE
AUTHORITY
ÙGH DARRAS POILIS NA H-ALBA

2 Clyde Gateway
French Street
Glasgow
G40 4EH
SPAChairOffice@spa.police.uk

LETTER SENT BY E-MAIL ONLY

Councillor Susan Aikten
Leader of the Council
Glasgow City Council

susan.aitken@glasgow.gov.uk

21 October 2025

CO-086-2025

Dear Councillor Aikten

LIVE FACIAL RECOGNITION TECHNOLOGY (LFR)

Thank you for your correspondence of 9 October 2025 setting out Glasgow City Council's position on the use of live facial recognition technology by Police Scotland.

As referenced in the motion debated by council on 26 June 2025, the use of live facial recognition (LFR) technology by Police Scotland was the subject of a National Conversation earlier this year. The National Conversation invited the views and perspectives of the public, stakeholders and campaign groups. Focus groups were also held across the country and a national event brought key perspectives together to discuss the feedback.

The National Conversation was not a formal consultation on the use of LFR technology by Police Scotland. It sought to gather a range of views to inform Police Scotland's next steps should it choose to develop a proposal to establish a LFR capability in the future. The Authority fully supports this approach to early engagement, which is a key element of and consistent with the [Joint Memorandum of Understanding \(MoU\)](#) agreed between the Authority and Police Scotland. A joint objective of the MoU is better informed decision making, through wide and transparent public discussion and engagement at the earliest opportunity. This approach enhances decision making by enabling the widest civic awareness, understanding of the issue, and providing assurance that relevant partners and stakeholders have had an opportunity to consider and contribute to it.

Item 6(c)

30th October 2025

OFFICIAL

To support the principles of the MoU, Police Scotland follows a rights-based pathway to support the implementation of any new technology in policing. This pathway was recommended by the [Independent Advisory Group on Emerging Technologies in Policing](#) in 2023. It focuses on maintaining public trust through the lens of ethical considerations and public engagement.

The Chief Constable has been clear in reporting to the Authority that there are several steps to be followed prior to a decision on the use of LFR by Police Scotland being taken. These steps include:

- further stakeholder engagement and public consultation
- detailed and transparent consideration of the legal, privacy, human rights, equalities and ethical implications of using this technology
- the development of a business case outlining clear timelines, costs and benefits, and
- ensuring any relevant policy and operating procedures in place.

We agree that it is the role of the Authority to work with Police Scotland to ensure that any use of technology is lawful, fit for purpose and non-discriminatory and that robust guidance and oversight arrangements underpin its use. These essential and necessary steps outlined above seek to ensure any future use of LFR technology by Police Scotland is governed in a robust, proportionate and accountable way.

We also recognise that partners have a key role to play to inform this oversight. I therefore welcome the Council's commitment to continue to work with Police Scotland and the Authority through the SAFE Glasgow Partnership to monitor any future consideration of facial recognition technology.

Finally, the Authority shares Glasgow City Council's commitment to a properly resourced community policing and a justice system that delivers timely and fair outcomes to victims, witnesses and the public. Police Scotland has set a clear [Vision for policing](#) focused on safer communities, less crime, supported victims, and a thriving workforce. This vision is endorsed by the Authority and the ethical and proportionate use of technology within policing has an essential role to play achieving our shared commitment and Police Scotland's vision.

Please do not hesitate to contact my office should you have any queries or wish to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely

FIONA MCQUEEN CBE
Chair