



## SLF CONFERENCE 2023

### **NOW IS THE TIME: LEADING TOGETHER TO SECURE THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC SERVICES IN SCOTLAND**

**Wednesday 1 November  
COSLA CONFERENCE CENTRE,  
Verity House, Haymarket, Edinburgh**

Anchored in our collective commitment to work together to improve the wellbeing of Scotland's people and places and ensure the sustainability of our public services, this year's event offers an energising opportunity to strengthen and deepen cross-sector networks and relationships. It is important that our work makes a difference – and with your help – we want to strengthen the SLF offer and learn from peers about their first-hand experience and the kinds of leadership skills required to lead collaboratively in pursuit of transformational change.

The theme of this year's conference clearly aligns SLF with our shared ambition to progress a ten-year programme of public service reform and the challenges that this poses around leadership. Over a decade on from Scotland's Christie Commission on the future delivery of public services, we will explore in depth the kind of collective, modern, empathetic leadership we need to navigate this in the current circumstances.

#### **AGENDA**

09:00 Registration, coffee and networking

09:45 Welcome from the SLF Co-Chairs – **Jane O'Donnell and Louise Macdonald**

10:00 *Setting the scene* – **Prof Graeme Roy**, Chair, Scottish Fiscal Commission

10:30 Break and networking

11:00 Syndicate discussions (Round 1)

12:00 Buffet lunch/ networking

13:00 Syndicate discussions (Round 2)

13:45 *Leadership in the New Now* – **Chief Constable Jo Farrell**, Police Scotland

14:15 *A focus on place* – **Cllr Shona Morrison**, COSLA President (via video-link)

14:45 Break and networking

15:10 *What do we need from Public Service Leaders now?* – **Dr Poonam Malik**, Head of investments, University of Strathclyde, New Deal for Business Group Co-chair

15:40 *Fireside chat* – **Shona Robison MSP**, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance, and **Cllr Steven Heddle**, COSLA Vice President, facilitated by **John-Paul Marks**, Permanent Secretary, Scottish Government

16:10 Wrap up: *What Next for SLF*

**16:15 Close of Conference**

## **A WARM WELCOME FROM THE SLF CO-CHAIRS**



**Jane O'Donnell, Chief Executive,  
Convention of Scottish Local Authorities**



**Louise Macdonald, Director General Communities,  
Scottish Government**

We are delighted to welcome you to this year's SLF Conference. These are exciting times for us to collectively lead the SLF – creating the conditions for a future where leadership in Scotland not only shares a common purpose of improving the wellbeing of Scotland's people and places, but actively accelerates the transition to new ways of working to ensure that we are well placed to face the challenges ahead. Time and time again we prove, that by our collaborative approaches and responses, our whole is greater than the sum of our parts.

It is genuinely a real privilege to be able to create today's opportunity to bring you all together, to understand your perspectives, to listen to your ideas and to continue to build momentum around great, collaborative leadership. We owe it to the people and places that we serve, to work better together and to remove the boundaries and silos that don't reflect their experiences. We are hopeful that there has never been a better time to innovate, collaborate and explore this together.

For those of you who were able to join the SLF Conference in October last year, you will recall the energy in the room as well as a shared sense of determination to collectively tackle some of Scotland's most challenging and entrenched issues. There was both a sense of renewed vigour and deep commitment to the collaboration which is essential to deliver the outcomes we all want to see. The SLF can have a crucial role in helping to create the conditions for change because we are absolutely stronger and more effective when we work together.

The energy we want to harness for today's conference is reflected in the sheer amount of innovative work happening every day across public services and our partners. Work that crosses sectors and joins us together, delivering in pro-active, person-centred ways. Work that speaks to the founding principles of Christie, and which is anchored in both the lived experiences and the strengths of our communities.

The SLF has always been a Forum that offers a space for us to come together, to find inspiration, support, and constructive challenge. We remain committed to the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion. We are really looking forward to working with you all to shape our new vision and approach to leadership development and practice that is genuinely game-changing and where everyone feels they belong.

**We wish you an inspiring day ahead!**

## SLF CONFERENCE 2023 SPEAKERS



### **Graeme Roy, Scottish Fiscal Commission**

Graeme Roy is Dean of External Engagement in the College of Social Sciences and Professor of Economics at the University of Glasgow. He is a former Senior Civil Servant in the Scottish Government and head of the First Minister's Policy Unit. He is a past Director of the Fraser of Allander Institute at the University of Strathclyde and former special adviser to the Scottish Parliament's Economy Committee. In 2022, Graeme was appointed Chair of the Scottish Fiscal Commission, Scotland's independent economic and fiscal forecasting body. He is an elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh."



### **Chief Constable, Jo Farrell, Police Scotland**

Jo Farrell has overall command and responsibility for the Police Service of Scotland and leads 22,000 officers and staff serving communities across a third of the United Kingdom's landmass.

Chief Constable Farrell joined the police as a constable in Cambridge in 1991. In 2002, she joined Northumbria Police, initially as a Chief Inspector, and was promoted to Assistant Chief Constable, with responsibility for response and neighbourhood policing as well as the communications department.

Chief Constable Farrell joined Durham Constabulary in November 2016 as Deputy Chief Constable before being appointed Chief Constable in June 2019. Chief Constable Farrell chairs the National Police Chiefs' Council's Digital Data and Technology Co-ordination Committee. In October 2023, Chief Constable Farrell entered office at Police Scotland.



### **Councillor Shona Morrison**

Councillor Shona Morrison is the President of the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities.

Shona is currently serving her second term as a Moray Councillor for Fochabers Lhanbryde. In the previous term and as part of the Council Administration Shona sat on the board of NHS Grampian and Chaired the Moray Integration Board. Having worked as a mental health nurse before moving into politics, the appointment onto both boards was a huge honour and the years spent working with both teams provided constant challenge and learning.

From 2018, Shona served as Convener of Moray Council and as civic head, thoroughly enjoyed representing the council both locally and nationally. As well as the above roles, Shona sat on several of the Council service committees including Economic Development and Infrastructure, community planning and Education. Councillor Morrison was elected as the 16th President of COSLA in June 2022, and is the fourth female President of the organisation.



### **Dr Poonam Malik, MBA, MSc, PhD, FRSE, FRSB, Head of Investments, University of Strathclyde** (Board Member: Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Development International & Skills Development Scotland)

Dr Poonam Malik is an entrepreneurial business strategist, Life Sciences leader and an investor in Innovation. She is Head of Investments at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow – accountable for strategic leadership of University's enhanced Investment ambition into new ventures and its portfolio of startups, spin-outs and spin-in companies. A GlobalScot, a NetZero/Climate Champion- Scottish Enterprise/ SDI Board Member and Skills Development Scotland Board Director - Dr Malik brings 25+ years expertise from technology, enterprise, research & innovation, governance, health industry and business sectors globally. She has recently been appointed Co-Chair, by Scottish Government, to lead on First Minister's 'New Deal for Business Group' representing businesses and industry- co-sharing the role with the Cabinet Secretary for Wellbeing Economy.



### **Shona Robison, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance**

Shona Robison was appointed Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance in March 2023.

Shona was born in Redcar in 1966. Educated at Alva Academy, she went on to graduate from Glasgow University with a Social Sciences MA and Jordanhill College with a Postgraduate Certificate in Community Education. Previously she worked for Glasgow City Council's Social Work Department. Shona was MSP for the North East from 1999 to 2003 and elected MSP for Dundee East in 2003. Latterly, she was Shadow Minister for Health and Social Justice and a member of the Parliament's Health Committee before being appointed Minister for Public Health in the Scottish Government after the May 2007 election.

She was re-elected in May 2011 and appointed Minister for Commonwealth Games and Sport, and was made Cabinet Secretary for Health in November 2014. She was appointed as Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport in May 2016, and Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government in May 2021.



### **Councillor Steven Heddle**

Councillor Steven Heddle is the Vice-President of the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities.

Steven Heddle is from Kirkwall and studied at Aberdeen and Edinburgh Universities, gaining a BSc and PhD in Physics. After working for both the public and private sector in research and development, he returned to Orkney in 1999 where he ran a business and technical consultancy and worked for HIE.

First elected in 2007, he was Orkney Islands Council political and civic leader from 2012-2017, during which time he shared the 2013 Herald Local Politician of the Year Award and 2014 Scottish Public Service Award for Leadership. He served as President of the CPMR Islands Commission from 2014-16, as a board member of NHS Orkney from 2015-17 and 2022-, and as a member of the COSLA Commission for Strengthening Local Democracy. He was COSLA Spokesperson for the Environment and Economy from 2017-2022 and is a visiting professor at the University of the Highlands and Islands.



### **John Paul Marks, Permanent Secretary, Scottish Government**

John-Paul Marks was appointed as Permanent Secretary to the Scottish Government on 1 January 2022. JP leads the Scottish Government civil service to deliver the full range of devolved powers and duties set out in the Scotland Acts. As the principal accountable officer for the Scottish Government, JP is personally responsible to the Scottish Parliament for the exercise of his responsibilities. This includes the management of the Scottish Government's £49 billion budget and the economic, efficient and effective use of all related resources.

Married with two children, JP was born in the Channel Islands and lives in Scotland. JP is committed to building a world-class, values-led civil service which excels in serving the public.



## The Scottish Leaders Forum: Leading the transition, a values-based approach to reform 2023 - 2033.

<b>WHY</b> Our Purpose	To support the transformation of public service delivery by utilising the power of collaborative, values-based leadership to achieve a common purpose of sustainable public services that improve outcomes across Scotland.	
<b>WHAT</b> Vision	To create a pan-public services leadership offer to support diverse public and third sector leaders in working beyond organisational boundaries to accelerate innovative solutions to meet the needs of our people and communities.	
<b>HOW</b> Mission	A values-based programme of leadership interventions that creates the conditions, inspires, and challenges leaders to drive public service reform, at scale and pace, and over the long term.	
<b>Golden Threads</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make progress against a 10-year reform programme</li> <li>• Support the missions of Equality, Opportunity, and Community</li> <li>• Achieve the NPF</li> <li>• Guided by Reform Principles (people, prevention, performance, partnership, and place)</li> <li>• Ensure belonging - equality, diversity and inclusion</li> </ul>	
<b>Strategic Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purposeful collaboration and relationships</li> <li>• Progress a values-based approach</li> <li>• Peer to peer accountability</li> <li>• Improve outcomes for current and future generations</li> </ul>	
<b>Key Interventions 23/24</b>		
<b>Scottish Leadership Academy (SLA)</b>	<b>Action Groups / Action Learning Sets</b>	<b>Scoping 'Leadership Scotland' future model</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Values-based leadership offer targeting top-tier public service leaders (pan-sectoral). Creating safe spaces for joint and peer-to-peer accountability.</li> <li>• Ambition to expand the regularity of cohorts in 24/25 and to build a potential alumni infrastructure.</li> <li>• Model could be widened to other key areas (e.g., CPPs, policy systems clusters) and creation of 'systems clusters' approach for public bodies reform</li> <li>• Could play a critical role in accelerating progression for minority leaders/young leaders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-sustaining with the SLF providing convening power whenever possible.</li> <li>• Groups might potentially self-organise around issues such as anti-racism, collective financial challenges, they may have a place-based focus, or convene around opportunities that offer the potential to collaboratively transform the public services landscape.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspired by Academi Wales.</li> <li>• Broader in scope vertically and horizontally, delivering a holistic leadership development offer – aligning across forum partners [not a replacement/duplication of sector specific development].</li> <li>• Inspirational, collaborative, values-based, inclusive approach to excellence in leadership practice which creates opportunities for new ways of working with a common approach to reform-led leadership.</li> <li>• Targeting top-tier <u>and</u> emerging leaders.</li> <li>• Commissioned and expert led.</li> </ul>
<b>Annual Conference</b>	The annual conference is an opportunity to come together in the context of the ten-year programme of reform and reflect on where we are, share ideas, reinforce connections, and give us collective confidence that we are making progress whilst offering support and insight into those places where progress is harder. It will be an opportunity to be collectively and positively accountable for the change we want to see. We will also explore options for additional "in person" gatherings under the SLF banner throughout the year.	

## Leading Together – The Future of the Scottish Leaders Forum – Leadership Scotland Overview

1. These are the most challenging times we face as a nation and as public servants. As we seek to mitigate the relentless impacts of the cost-of-living crisis, which has impacted disproportionately on Scotland's most vulnerable people, we grapple too with the ever-evolving impacts on our collective wellbeing of global conflict, environmental degradation and climate change. Scotland's people need public service leaders, now more than ever, to work *together* with energy, with urgency and with common purpose to ensure Scotland is a place we can be proud to live and work in for generations to come.
2. This is a collective challenge that requires the totality of our resources to work sustainably, effectively and with compassion. This is true for our approach to public service delivery and to pan-public service leadership support and development. We share an ambition to accelerate reform across public services over the next ten years, to help create the optimal conditions for achieving the three missions jointly prioritised by both spheres of government, and to realise the outcomes and purpose of our National Performance Framework. Indeed, the sustainability of many of our services is dependent on improving outcomes and reducing inequalities, particularly in the longer term. Excellent, collaborative leadership is a critical condition for reform, but we need to set our sights wider and deeper if we are to work with the longer term in mind.
3. As we build momentum and resources, we envision a future for the SLF that enables us to work across the short, medium and longer term, maximising the contribution that systems and values-based leadership practice can make in enabling the transition from our current systems towards new and future ways of working. We envisage an evolution towards a more collaborative approach to pan-public service leadership which brings us together, makes the best use of our collective skills, resources and energy to create the best possible environment for excellent leaders to make a difference. This is not a radical shift or an attempt to rebrand the forum, but rather a recalibration and re-energising of the SLF's longstanding mission and purpose.
4. We want to shape a 'twin-tracked' programme that we can deliver in the short-term and which will underpin the transition to new ways of working and new expectations, so that in the longer term we are aligned behind a model of collaborative public service leadership which is inclusive, diverse and agile. A model which creates fertile conditions for working differently and ensuring we are well placed to meet ongoing and future challenges.
  - [Track one, years 1-2] a programme of work reflecting the current top-tier focus of the SLF *as it is* but with some additional resources improve impact, create the conditions for change and the development of Leadership Scotland; and
  - [Track two, years 1-10] scoping, shaping and delivering a *new* incarnation of the SLF, inspired by the Academi Wales model (addressing leadership at all levels) – Leadership Scotland.



### Track One

5. **The Scottish Leadership Academies (SLAs)** will be the SLF's 'flagship' offer over the next few years and key to helping create the conditions for reform. There is considerable potential to expand the offer into areas where the opportunity to focus on common priorities and challenges offers the potential to think, deliberate and act differently. We are thoughtful that SLAs need to be open to a wide range of leaders, especially those in the early stages of their careers who have, potentially, a lifetime of public service to hone their skills and be inspiring agents for transition and change. SLAs could also play a critical role in accelerating a more inclusive approach to leadership, building confidence and creating spaces where everyone can feel that they belong. We intend to continue to offer an **annual conference and a more regular events programme (in-person + on-line)**, however we expect that our **action learning and action groups offers** will remain self-sustaining while we focus our resources on the core elements of track one and track two.

### Track Two

6. The vision for **Leadership Scotland** is the development of a collaborative, values-based, inclusive approach to excellence in leadership practice which creates opportunities for new ways of working, fosters connections across a range of leadership offers, for both top-tier and emerging leaders, whilst creating a sense of collective purpose and practice through new alumni networks. Bringing together our leadership offers wherever possible under one 'umbrella brand', this new approach aims to facilitate the transition towards new systems, structures, and practice. Leadership Scotland will be much broader in scope, vertically and horizontally, delivering holistic leadership development offers. This will not be a replacement or duplication of sector specific, skills development. In time, it has the potential to cut as deep as the Academi Wales model and deliver a quality assured, reform focused syllabus across all stages of leadership and career development. The SLF may potentially become a subsumed element of this new entity or may surrender its leadership development mission to Leadership Scotland.
7. There will be key threads that will run through everything we do: our reform principles of **people, partnership, prevention, performance, and place**; the outcomes and values set out in our **National Performance Framework**; and **equality, social and environmental justice**.

### What do you think?

8. It's important to us that this work makes a difference. We're listening and we want to understand if this feels 'right' and take your views on board. If you'd like to know more, or you have resources and/or ideas to help us bring this fully to life – please get in touch: [ScottishLeadersForum@gov.scot](mailto:ScottishLeadersForum@gov.scot)