

Strathclyde Police Pipe Band

"Diana and Actaeon was secured after a five-month fundraising campaign

Ben Hoyle, Arts Correspondent and Mike Wade

After a five-month campaign to raise £50 million, Titian's monumental masterpiece Diana and Actaeon has been purchased for the nation.

The deal was pitched as a means of securing 28 Old Masters for the price of two, and at its core was a notion of serving the public interest." From [The Times](#)
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As I write this article Strathclyde police pipe band is in the process of being dismantled by several people within Strathclyde Police. As has been stated elsewhere the band has existed since the 19th century. The pipe band unit was created by the then Chief Constable Hamill in the mid-70s. The reason for this creation was to facilitate practice times and provide a unit which was a flexible backup for divisional purposes such as city centre policing, parade and crowd control.

Succeeding chief constables and divisional commanders were delighted with both the high-profile of a successful pipe band and also the positive results in policing terms of the unit.

To date 80 to 85% of the band members policing hours are used with operations against drug dealers; executing warrants against serious and organised crime. The carryout ongoing investigations instigated by DNA identification which includes much work in elimination leading to the identification of suspects.

Three hours a week are spent by the unit in Pipe band practice. Currently there are 10 pipers, three drummers including the civilian Eric Ward and a bass and tenor drummer. The rest of the 40 strong band are either guest players or officers who work elsewhere in the force area. The other officers because of the nature of the work can attend band practices therefore they are able to be members of the band.

With the band unit being eliminated the members of the unit will be tasked with shift and weekend working which stops them from being available for regular practice, and regular engagements and competitions. Thus with the heart ripped out ~~the~~ guest players and other officers have no focal point and cease to exist as a band.

Further, once it is deemed through "career development" interviews that the officers in the newly created crime unit are unsuited to the new role then it is only a matter of time before they are scattered to work normal policing shifts in Wishaw, Kilsyth and Stevenson.

In these times of crisis and scarce resources it is easy to get cast doubt on the efficacy of Strathclyde police Pipe Band. I have been associated with the band since I joined in 1965 and at that time of full employment there was a scarcity of policemen. The situation continued in my time until 1980 when there was large influx of entrance into force. And so I contend that Strathclyde police have managed quite well with their other resources and been quite happy to accept the plaudits and other positive

feedbacks caused by the pipe band. Currently record numbers of police officers are being employed and demonstrably the pipe band unit is doing an excellent job in terms of front-line policing and providing an icon of excellence in terms of piping and drumming which the people of Glasgow Scotland and the world have always had fond memories and great support.

In my opinion this move to destroy the band, performed without consultation or any great demonstrable thought is simply an act of gross vandalism and blind prejudice. The loss to the culture of Scotland is immeasurable.

The grey days of reality television, a credit crunch and nuclear winter are upon us.

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