

Evaluation of Police and Fire Reform: Year 1 Annex 1: Evidence Review



CRIME AND JUSTICE

Evaluation of Police and Fire Reform: Year 1

Annex 1: Evidence Review

SIPR, What Works Scotland and ScotCen

Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Executive summary | 4 |
| Introduction and context | 4 |
| Achieving the aims of reform: an overview of the evidence | 4 |
| Aim 1: To protect and improve local services despite financial cuts, by stopping duplication of support services eight times over and not cutting front line services | 5 |
| Aim 2: To create more equal access to specialist support and national capacity – like murder investigation teams, firearms teams or flood rescue – where and when they are needed | 5 |
| Aim 3: To strengthen the connection between services and communities, by creating a new formal relationship with each of the 32 local authorities, involving many more local councillors and better integrating with community planning partnerships | 6 |
| Complexities of the evidence base | 6 |
| Year one evidence review conclusions and next steps | 7 |
| 2. Introduction and context | 9 |
| 2.1 Purpose and nature of the evaluation..... | 9 |
| 2.2 Broader context of the evaluation | 10 |
| 2.3 Purpose of this annex | 12 |
| 2.4 Approach to the evidence review | 12 |
| 2.5 Reflecting on evidence quality | 13 |
| 2.6 Structure of the annex | 14 |
| 3. Reform aim 1: To protect and improve local services despite financial cuts, by stopping duplication of support services eight times over and not cutting front line services | 15 |
| 3.1 Overview | 15 |
| 3.2 Police | 16 |
| 3.2.1 Reducing duplication | 16 |
| 3.2.2 Protecting and improving local services | 21 |
| 3.3 Fire and Rescue | 26 |
| 3.3.1 Reducing duplication | 26 |
| 3.3.2 Protecting and improving local services | 28 |
| 3.4 Summary and implications | 29 |
| 4. Reform aim 2: To create more equal access to specialist support and national capacity – like murder investigation teams, firearms teams or flood rescue – where and when they are needed | 31 |
| 4.1 Overview | 32 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 4.2 Police | 32 |
| 4.3 Fire and Rescue | 34 |
| 4.4 Summary and implications | 37 |
| 5. Reform aim 3: To strengthen the connection between services and communities, by creating a new formal relationship with each of the 32 local authorities, involving many more local councillors and better integrating with community planning partnerships..... | 39 |
| 5.1 Overview | 40 |
| 5.2 Police | 40 |
| 5.3 Fire and rescue | 47 |
| 5.4 Summary and implications | 54 |
| 6. Broadening and deepening the evidence review | 56 |
| 6.1 Overview | 56 |
| 6.2 Broadening the evidence review: the example of workforce surveys..... | 56 |
| 6.3 Deepening the evidence review: assessing strengths and weaknesses of evidence | 57 |
| 6.3.1 Evidence in focus: evidence from the voluntary sector | 58 |
| 6.3.2 Evidence in focus: evidence from HMFSI..... | 59 |
| 6.3.3 Evidence in focus: evidence from HMICS | 60 |
| 6.3.4 Evidence in focus: evidence focusing on workforce issues..... | 62 |
| 7. Conclusions from year one of the evidence review, and next steps | 64 |
| 7.1 Conclusions | 65 |
| 7.2 Next steps for the evidence review and evaluation | 66 |
| 8. References | 68 |

1. Executive summary

Introduction and context

- This Annex to the Year 1 report is part of a four year evaluation commissioned by the Scottish Government to examine whether the aims of Police and Fire reform have been met and consider what lessons might be learnt for any future public service reforms.
- The evaluation began in February 2015, and is being delivered by the Scottish Institute for Policing Research (SIPR), ScotCen and What Works Scotland (WWS).
- This annex provides a high level summary of the key themes emerging from the 'evidence review' element in year one of the evaluation. It takes into account publicly available evidence produced to the end of November 2015. This annex, therefore, provides a full account of the evidence outlined briefly in the separate 'Summary' document.
- The evidence review has two components. The first is a process of mapping and scoping the evidence landscape, creating a searchable evidence database. The second component is a narrative summary of these individual sources. It is the second element which is presented in this annex.
- Overall, the year one evidence review aims to describe and assess the evidence base that exists in relation to the reforms, and to summarise emerging substantive claims and conclusions.

Achieving the aims of reform: an overview of the evidence

- For each of the three aims of reform, evidence has been brought together to provide a comprehensive picture of progress in terms of developments in policy and practice.
- With reforms as complex as those which Police and the Fire and Rescue service are currently engaged in there will always be evidence gaps and challenges around disentangling the effects of specific initiatives on particular outcomes.
- This overview of the evidence recognises these complexities and challenges but also suggests how these might be addressed going forwards.
- It is also clear that there is much evidence which falls outside the immediate area of the aims of reform, but nevertheless relates to issues and factors that are indirectly connected to them. Such evidence includes that which relates to workforce; estate or procurement for example. Indeed, both Police Scotland and SFRS have undertaken extensive evidence gathering in these areas. Evidence reviews in subsequent years may take a more thematic

approach. Further work to be undertaken in subsequent annual reviews includes extending the remit to include non-published evidence.

Aim 1: To protect and improve local services despite financial cuts, by stopping duplication of support services eight times over and not cutting front line services

- Many of the changes associated with reform potentially impact on issues linked to the protection and improvement of services.
- This means that the evidence base is particularly diverse, and can be broken down into four ‘types’: (1) benefits realisation reporting; (2) performance reports, annual, strategic and inspectorate reports; (3) public perceptions data and (4) reports on strategic incidents and issues.
- Significant evidence has been generated regarding the ways in which both services are reducing the duplication of activities but there are also differences in terms of the availability of data on local perceptions of the respective services.
- National level performance statistics tend to show a fairly consistent trajectory of maintenance/improvement. However local level variations – and variations within particular typologies of incident/activity - are important to consider in the extent to which (for example) services are perceived and experienced to have been maintained and/or improved.
- Key evidence ‘gaps’ which the evaluation will help to address include a more detailed assessment of perception of front line service outcomes at a local level, and greater clarity regarding cause and effect (e.g. the extent to which an intervention was responsible for a change - or no change - with regard to front line services).

Aim 2: To create more equal access to specialist support and national capacity – like murder investigation teams, firearms teams or flood rescue – where and when they are needed

- The evidence base regarding this aim is concentrated in less diverse documents than is the case for Aims (1) or (3).
- Police Scotland’s Post Implementation Benefits Review work concludes that the ‘Operational Benefit’ relating to this aim has been met. HMICS Local Policing + reports also identify that there is increased ease of access to national resources.
- In the case of Fire and Rescue, work by HMFSI and SFRS has established a detailed knowledge of geographical variations in equipment, capacity and skills and progress is reported to be made in addressing these regional variations.
- In relation to Policing, the evidence base is most extensive around process-based and transactional issues relating to the functioning of the new

arrangements. For Fire and Rescue, there is extensive evidence of detailed consideration of variations in baseline resources and risk profiles in preparation for a more strategic approach to distributing specialist resources.

- For both services, the evidence is more limited in relation to outputs and outcomes; causal connections and inter-dependencies when evidencing progress toward this aim are not always clear, and other 'voices' within the services and communities about the impacts and implications of activities undertaken in relation to this aim need to be heard.
- Subsequent stages of this evaluation may focus on some of these evidence gaps – in particular, around perceptions of how far this aim has been achieved (and experiences of this), and understanding causal connections between service reconfiguration and specific outcomes.

Aim 3: To strengthen the connection between services and communities, by creating a new formal relationship with each of the 32 local authorities, involving many more local councillors and better integrating with community planning partnerships

- Evidence in relation to this aim is largely derived from descriptions of the establishment – and to a lesser extent, functioning – of local scrutiny and engagement arrangements and production of Local Police Plans, Multi Member Ward Police Plans and Local Fire and Rescue Plans.
- There is also some evidence regarding the nature of and approaches to community engagement taken by the services.
- Overall, evidence in relation to this aim is disparate and the causal links between the activities of reform and intended outcomes are not fully developed.
- There is also a lack of specificity around some key themes. For example, diverse 'communities' are often referenced in evidencing progress towards this aim but it would be helpful to have further evidence of how the services are strengthening their connections with different types of community and – crucially – the experiences and impacts of this. There is also a lack of evidence from specific communities about their interactions and relationships with the Police and Fire and Rescue services post reform.
- Overall, as is the case for aims 1 and 2, there is a need here to shift the evidence base from documenting the establishment, functioning and outputs to evidencing and understanding outcomes and impacts.

Complexities of the evidence base

- Evidence sources can give us important information about how far the aims of reform might be supported or hindered. Often this evidence may span a number of aims of reform and a range of wider issues rather than neatly addressing one single aim.

- In our review of evidence we have therefore ensured we have not limited the study just to those documents which engage explicitly with the three aims of reform and we have also recognised the importance of considering individual pieces of evidence in their entirety and assessing their strengths and limitations.
- We present a small number of ‘evidence in focus’ concise case studies, which summarise the aims, content, strengths and limitations of a range of evidence types across the two services.

Year one evidence review conclusions and next steps

- In terms of the overall publicly available evidence landscape, within each aim there are variations in the scope, depth and quality of evidence.
- There are similar strengths in the evidence base across the three aims. There is good documentation of the existence of new governance structures, processes and frameworks in order to deliver the aims of reform, and extensive quantitative performance data and transactional indicators.
- The gaps in the evidence base are also similar, relating to a need to move beyond descriptions of the ‘establishment’ and ‘functioning’ of new arrangements, to documenting and understanding local ‘outcomes’ and ‘impacts’, and doing so from multiple perspectives.
- Key challenges also include the development of plausible causal chains between activities and the aims of reform, awareness of any unintended and unanticipated consequences and assessing broader impacts on the justice system and wider public sector.
- It is also clear that there is much evidence which falls outside the immediate area of the aims of reform, but nevertheless examines factors that may be critical to achieving the aims of reform. Such evidence includes that which relates to topics including workforce; estate, procurement and Information Communication Technologies (ICT).
- Overall, at this stage and on the basis of publicly available information, there is plausible and credible evidence of progress being made to achieving the three main long-term aims of reform. However the evidence base tends to indicate ‘integration’ rather than ‘transformation’ of service delivery, is process rather than outcome focused, oriented toward ‘producer’ rather than ‘consumer’ perspectives, and stronger on national rather than local information. Further, it is important that commitments to develop the evidence base in relation to the three aims are maintained, as there is still scope to enhance the evidence base in ways that will allow a clearer and more robust assessment of claims regarding the achievement of the aims of reform.

- The picture is complex and the evidence presented in this Year 1 report will need to be supplemented by other perspectives (to be addressed in the next stages of the evaluation) before a more comprehensive assessment can be made.

2. Introduction and context

KEY POINTS

This Annex forms part of a four year evaluation commissioned by the Scottish Government to examine whether the aims of Police and fire reform have been met and consider what lessons might be learnt for any future public service reforms.

The evaluation began in February 2015, and is being delivered by the Scottish Institute for Policing Research (SIPR), ScotCen and What Works Scotland (WWS).

This annex provides a high level summary of the key themes emerging from the ‘evidence review’ element in year one, taking into account publicly available evidence produced to the end of November 2015.

The evidence review has two components. The first is a process of mapping and scoping the evidence landscape, creating a searchable evidence database. The second component is a narrative summary of these individual sources. It is the second element which is presented in this annex.

Overall, the evidence review aims to describe and assess the evidence base that exists in relation to the reforms; and to summarise emerging substantive claims and conclusions.

2.1 Purpose and nature of the evaluation

The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act was passed in summer 2012, bringing a major programme of reform to both services in Scotland with the creation of single Police and Fire services. The new organisations became operational on 1 April 2013. The three aims of reform identified in the policy memorandum accompanying the act were to:

- Protect and improve local services despite financial cuts, by stopping duplication of support services eight times over and not cutting front line services;
- Create more equal access to specialist support and national capacity like murder capacity teams, Firearms teams and flood Rescue where and when they are needed;
- Strengthen the connection between the services and the communities they serve, providing an opportunity for more local councillors to be involved in shaping local services and for better integration with community planning (Scottish Parliament 2012).

This four-year project was commissioned by the Scottish Government to evaluate whether these aims have been met, and what lessons might be learnt for any future public service reforms. Specifically, the evaluation is seeking to:

- Evaluate if the three policy aims listed above have been met;
- Learn the lessons from the implementation of reform to inform the process of future public service reform;
- Evaluate the wider impact of the reform on the Justice and public service system.

The evaluation began in February 2015, and is being delivered by the Scottish Institute for Policing Research (SIPR), ScotCen and What Works Scotland (WWS). The evaluation has six main components (summarised in figure one).

Figure 1: Components of the evaluation

| Task | Activities |
|--|---|
| Scoping phase | Introducing the evaluation to key stakeholders and organisations; identify key data/reports produced by relevant organisations; and identify current and future research and evidence plans of the organisations to help inform evidence review. |
| Evidence review | Gather information that can tell us more about the current 'picture' of Police and Fire Reform in Scotland. We will refresh this each year to keep the review up-to-date. |
| Key informant interviews | Identify key stakeholders in Scotland, and invite them to speak with us about their experiences of Police and Fire Reform focussing on how far they feel aims of reform have or haven't been met, and what the key lessons to learn from this might be. |
| Geographical and thematic case studies | Work in four areas across Scotland to understand local level experiences of, success factors for and barriers to Police and Fire Reform. Identify two key themes about which we will undertake more in depth 'case study' work. |
| Events and workshops | Run two international workshops to compare what is being learnt in Scotland with other countries that are also experiencing reform of their Police and/or Fire Services. Run workshops to help 'validate' our findings. |
| Report writing | This work will result in reports which will be submitted to the Scottish Government |

2.2 Broader context of the evaluation

Following the passing of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act in 2012, the resulting reforms to the organisation, governance and delivery of Police and Fire and Rescue services are some of the largest and most complex changes to the public sector in Scotland for a generation.

In terms of policing, the Act brought together the 8 regional Police forces, the Scottish Police Services Authority and the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency into two new national bodies: Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority. 'Local policing' became a statutory requirement at the level of the 32 council areas with local councils responsible for establishing local scrutiny

arrangements. The Act also sets out a normative vision for policing in the form of a set of 'principles' focussed on community well-being, partnership working and harm reduction. In relation to Fire and Rescue services, the Act established the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), replacing the eight former Fire and Rescue services and the Scottish Fire Services College. The Act also makes new arrangements for local engagement and partnership working, including a new statutory role in the Local Senior Officer and the development of local Fire and Rescue plans linked to community planning. As with policing, the purpose of SFRS has been articulated in terms of working in partnership on prevention, protection and response, and improving the safety and well-being of people in Scotland.

Both sets of reforms are set within a context of decreasing budgets and involve making significant financial savings in relatively short timescales. Police reform is forecast to save more than £1.1 billion over the 15 years to 2026 while SFRS is expected to save £328 million by 2027/28. Both Police Scotland and SFRS are also seeing important shifts in demand for their services. Although there has been a long term reduction in volume crime in Scotland (with recorded crime at a 41 year low), there are other areas where demand is increasing. These include the increased reporting of sexual offences, growing threats in relation to cyber crime and terrorism, and the impacts of broader demographic, environmental and policy changes that have consequences for policing. In relation to the Fire and Rescue service, there has been a long-term reduction in the number of Fires and Fire-related casualties and there are now on-going reviews of how SFRS delivers services in the future. These include exploring opportunities to be involved in a broader community safety role, mapping the distribution of resources in relation to risk, examining the future configuration of the retained duty system, and volunteer Firefighters who provide emergency response in many of Scotland's rural and remote communities.

A key difference between the services in the period since they were established has been the level of political and media scrutiny they have experienced. While the new SFRS has received relatively little political or media attention, Police Scotland has been the subject of intense interest in relation to the new arrangements for Police governance and its approach to delivering policing in local communities. In terms of governance, there were initial differences between the Chief Constable and the Chair of the SPA regarding the exact remit of SPA's responsibilities. In addition, the Scottish Parliament's Justice Committee established a Sub-Committee on Policing in March 2013 which has provided its own scrutiny of the implementation process. In terms of the approach to policing, the first eighteen months has seen significant attention given to a number of decisions regarding the use of tactics such as stop and search and the standing authority for trained Firearms officers to carry their weapons in public while on patrol. Scrutiny of these decisions has come in the form of inquiries established by SPA, HMICS, and debate within the Scottish Parliament's Sub-Committee on Policing.

A final observation on the context of these reforms is that Scotland is not alone in undertaking major structural reform of policing. Over the last 10 years, Denmark, Finland, Norway, the Netherlands and Sweden have all embarked on significant

administrative re-organisation of their Police forces, typically involving the merging of Police districts to create more centralized structures. The Netherlands in particular has followed a very similar journey to Scotland by establishing a national Police force in January 2013 through the merger of 25 regional forces. Most of these countries are also currently engaged in evaluations of Police reform, creating significant opportunities for international learning and knowledge exchange.

2.3 Purpose of this annex

This annex provides a high level summary of the key themes emerging from the 'evidence review' element of the work at the end of year one of the evaluation. It takes into account publicly available evidence produced to the end of November 2015. In part, this annex should be used to help further identify evidence held and published internally or externally which might fill the gaps identified and/or provide a fuller account of the evidence presented within each Aim.

2.4 Approach to the evidence review

The purpose of the year one evidence review is to draw together in one document what is currently known about how the aims of Police and Fire Reform are being addressed and the extent to which these aims have been met. In the first year it focuses on bringing together the various publicly available reports identified through the scoping phase of the research, presenting the key themes, findings and gaps to help inform subsequent stages of the evaluation. Specifically, the purposes of the evidence review are:

- To map the existing evidence landscape in relation to Police and Fire reform;
- To assess the quality of existing evidence;
- To begin to draw tentative conclusions about key substantive questions (relating to the aims of reform);
- To highlight areas in which the evidence base needs to be supplemented or improved (either as part of the evaluation itself or through feedback to relevant agencies involved in the production of existing evidence.

The evidence review has two main components. The first is a process of scoping and mapping the evidence landscape – identifying, assessing and summarising individual data sources. The output from this exercise has been captured in a directory of evidence - a searchable database containing a separate record for each document or data source included in the review. The second component is a narrative summary and analysis - a reading across rather than within - of these individual sources. It is the second element which is presented in this annex.

The 'evidence' included in the year one of the review consists largely of published reports by public bodies associated with the implementation of the reforms or with their oversight up to the end of November 2015. We draw a distinction here between data/information and evidence and regard the latter as involving a degree of analytical processing. As such, our review does not include all available

information about Police and Fire reform, but those existing attempts to collate, synthesise, analyse or understand what a particular dataset may be telling us.

2.5 Reflecting on evidence quality

It is important to recognise that, as with any evidence review, we must be aware of evidence quality and to be clear about what it is possible to claim on the basis of the evidence available. In defining and assessing the quality of evidence we recognise that, as Nutley et al (2013) conclude, 'there is no simple answer to the question of what counts as good evidence. It depends on what we want to know, for what purposes, and in what contexts we envisage that evidence being used'. We recognise too that there will be conflicting views about the merits of different forms of evidence. In order to engage with these issues, we have identified a number of criteria which we consider when reviewing evidence and at the beginning of sections 3 – 5 we provide a brief overview of the quality of the evidence landscape to aid interpretation of our conclusion. These are as follows:

- **Methodological adequacy.** This includes consideration of how the data on which the source is based has been collected; how far it is possible or appropriate to generalise from these data to wider populations or contexts; and/or what potential sources of bias there may be and to what extent these have been controlled for. Stronger evidence might include, for example, the Scottish Social Attitudes Survey or Scottish Crime and Justice Survey which are statistically robust and methodologically rigorous (although also has limitations, for example the extent to which it can tell us about very local level attitudes and perceptions). Less strong evidence might include that which draws on a smaller or partial sample size and/or has limited generalisability.
- **Accessibility.** This includes consideration of (for example) how far the data and conclusions are publicly accessible; how easily navigated and appropriately presented they might be and the extent to which they draw on or make reference to data sources that are unavailable or unpublished.
- **Relevance.** This includes consideration of how far individual sources address the aims of reform; whether they do so directly or indirectly and the extent to which they shed light on key issues such as geographic variability or change over time?
- **Independence.** This includes consideration of the source of the evidence; the nature of that body's involvement in the reform process; and how far there might be any reason to think that the evidence might be incomplete or presented in a particular light. Clearly, all evidence is produced for particular purposes from particular perspectives. However, examples of evidence which might be considered more independent include (for example) the work of Audit Scotland. Evidence can also be produced by organisations which might represent a particular community (for example COSLA) or be written from a particular perspective (for example the Scottish Labour Party report on police reform, known as the Pearson Review and led by Graeme Pearson MSP, Labour). It is important to be aware of the role that such different

perspectives may play when coming to a view on degree of independence of evidence.

- **Analytical adequacy.** This includes consideration of how far the source seeks to draw conclusions from the evidence presented; the extent to which these appear to be appropriately grounded and how far the source draws on either an implicit or explicit 'theory of change' - i.e. an account of how mechanisms might operate in specific contexts to produce particular outcomes?

2.6 Structure of the annex

This annex first summarises the evidence strengths and weaknesses as they relate to the three aims of reform (sections 3-5). It then explores in more detail a small selection of evidence sources in their entirety (section 6). Finally, implications for subsequent stages of the evaluation are identified in section 7.

3. Reform aim 1: To protect and improve local services despite financial cuts, by stopping duplication of support services eight times over and not cutting front line services

KEY POINTS

Both services have generated significant evidence regarding the ways in which they are reducing the duplication of activities but there are also differences in terms of the availability of data on local perceptions of the performance of the respective services.

National level performance statistics tend to show a fairly consistent trajectory of maintenance/improvement however local level variations – and variations within particular typologies of incident/activity - are important to consider in the extent to which (for example) services are perceived and experienced to have been maintained and/or improved.

Key evidence ‘gaps’ which the evaluation will help to address include a more detailed assessment of perception of service outcomes at a local level, and greater clarity regarding cause and effect (e.g. the extent to which an intervention was responsible for a change - or no change - with regard to front line services).

Many of the changes associated with reform potentially impact on issues linked to the protection and improvement of services.

This means that the evidence base is particularly diverse, and can be broken down into four ‘types’: (1) benefits realisation reporting; (2) performance reports, annual, strategic and inspectorate reports; (3) public perceptions data and (4) reports on strategic incidents and issues.

The evidence is generally of good quality: it involves a degree of methodological rigour, is accessible and relevant, and is analytically robust. There is also some high quality, independent evidence focused on public perceptions of police performance.

3.1 Overview

Given the breadth and complexity of this aim of reform we have focussed on the evidence which tends to make explicit reference to ‘avoiding duplication of support services’ and ‘protecting and improving local services’. To this end, the evidence relates to (i) the initiatives, reviews and programmes that have been put into place in order to facilitate transition from the eight regional Police forces and Fire and Rescue Services and (ii) the extent to which local service performance has been

maintained or improved since the start of reform. The evidence on which this tends to be based covers four broad areas:

- 'benefits realisation' reporting;
- performance reports, and annual strategic and inspectorate reports;
- public perceptions data;
- evidence assessing strategic incidents and issues.

Much of the evidence of relevance to this aim is internally focused on processes of change within Police Scotland and SFRS. As such it is able to tell a relatively detailed story about activities being undertaken to rationalise and integrate service provision and the progress towards achieving this. Where there is less evidence is in relation to the local perceptions of the outcomes of these process on local services and, in particular, the extent to which service users perceive any improvements in local service provision.

Much of the evidence produced in relation to Aim 1 is from work undertaken by Police Scotland, SFRS, or their respective Inspectorates. This is generally of good quality: it involves a degree of methodological rigour, is accessible and relevant, and is analytically robust. We provide examples of more detailed reflection on both an HMICS and HMFSI inspection in section 6. Additional evidence relevant to Aim 1 which comes from the Scottish Social Attitudes Survey and the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey is of particularly high quality and is independent. . Therefore, on balance, the evidence relating to Aim1 is generally of good quality, based on systematic processes of data collection and analysis, with conclusions largely evidence-based and linked to plausible chains of causal reasoning.

3.2 Police

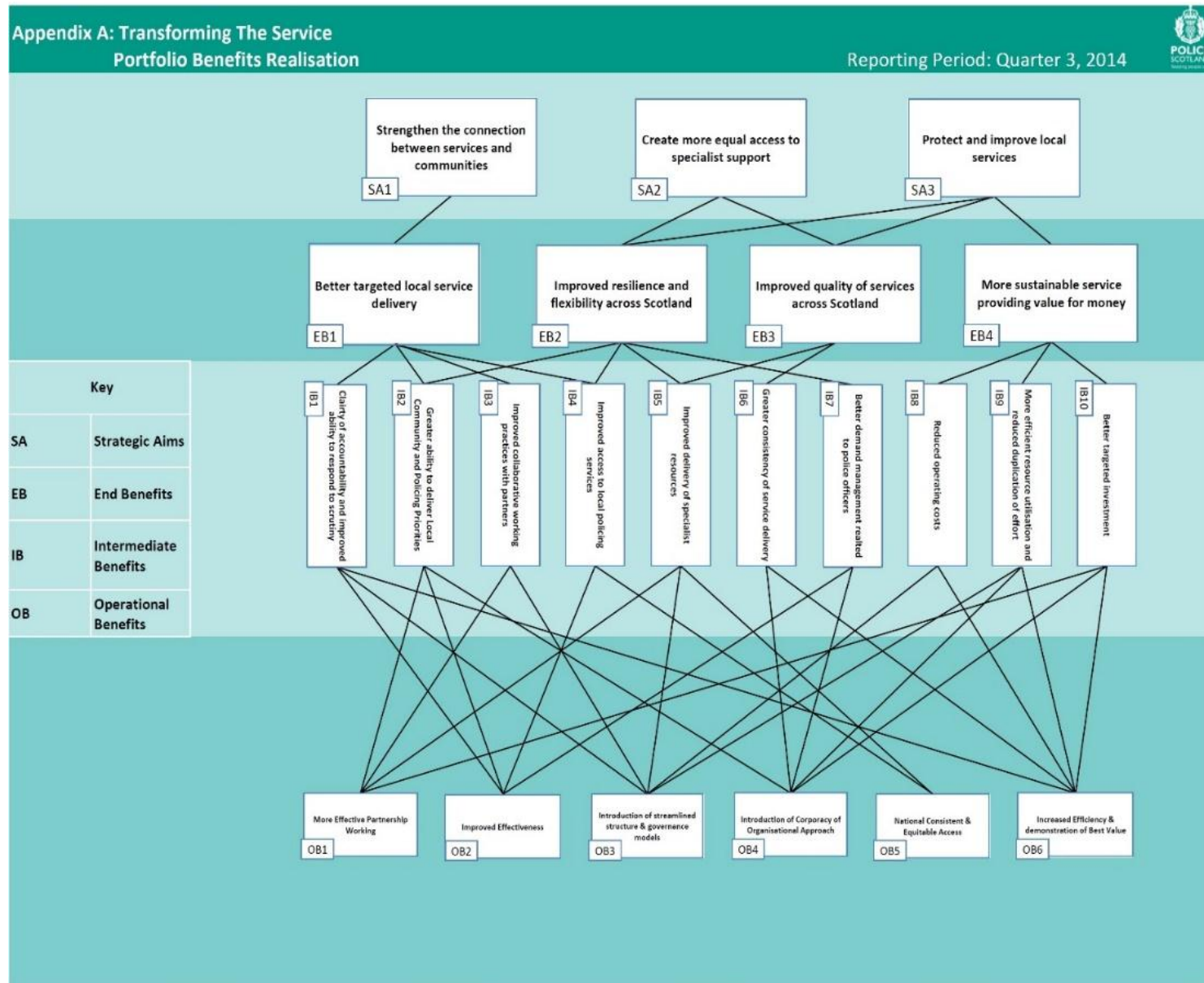
3.2.1 Reducing duplication

Much of the evidence relating to reduced duplication is contained with the benefits realisation work undertaken by Police Scotland. This work began at the outset of the Police Reform programme and involved the development of a Benefits Realisation Plan by the National Police Reform Team. It describes the benefits to be realised from reform in terms of:

- Operational Benefits focused on business or organisational outcomes;
- Intermediate Benefits focused on demonstrating outcomes for a wider group of stakeholders;
- End Benefits which relate to the broad strategic aims of reform.

Each operational and intermediate benefit has a suite of measures which when considered collectively, it is argued, enable conclusions to be drawn as to whether the benefit has been realised. The relationships identified between the benefits are set out by Police Scotland in figure 2. Intermediate Benefit 9 (More efficient

Figure 2: Police Scotland Post-Implementation Benefits Review: relationships between different aims (Police Scotland 2014a).



resource utilisation and reduced duplication of effort) addresses Aim 1 of reform most directly. The supporting measures used to evidence progress in achieving Intermediate Benefit 9 are:

- Implementation of revised staffing models which reduce duplication, measured through 'continued monitoring of the restructuring process in order to demonstrate the introduction and use of national units to reduce duplication';
- Harmonisation of roles and responsibilities, measured through ongoing monitoring of the job evaluation process and harmonisation of the terms and conditions of staff and officers;
- Re-engineering of business processes, measured through ICT enabled business change;
- Flexible workforce allowing deployment of Police staff nationally where required. Completion of measurement of this is dependent on implementation of Project Core and an assessment on the impact on use of staff (Police Scotland 2014a).

In Police Scotland's most recent Quarterly Performance report (Q1 2015/16), all of these measures are viewed as being on target for completion by end of 2016, with the exception of the 'Harmonisation of roles and responsibilities' which is marked as 'delayed' (Police Scotland 2015a).

The evidence relating to these different measures is very much process rather than outcome focused. For example, in relation to revised staffing models there has been reduced duplication of department head and management levels in areas like Analysis and Performance, Custody and Operational Support; with respect to harmonisation of roles, over 900 roles have been evaluated across different business areas. Given the focus on process at this stage in the reform journey it is therefore more difficult to assess some of the impacts and implications of the changes being introduced to reduce duplication. Some indications of the challenges involved are, however, alluded to in the HMICS Local Policing+ reports which provide evidence regarding more localised experiences of attempts to reduce duplication. In Fife for example it is found that 'Police Scotland has worked hard to rationalise the number of policies and procedures, but this has caused concerns about the volume of information being provided to officers and staff' (HMICS 2014a).

As part of the 2015/16 Annual Policing Plan, Police Scotland note that in 'building a service fit for the future' there are particular 'innovative programmes' being undertaken including developing an estates strategy; changes to the custody process, the i6 and C3 programmes (Police Scotland 2015b). To take two specific large scale programmes which link directly to the theme of reducing duplication, the i6 programme has two objectives: (i) the development of national common Policing processes aligned to operational priorities; (ii) the acquisition of a modern, scalable, extensible, national ICT solution which supports those processes and priorities

(Police Scotland 2013a; Scottish Parliament 2015a). It is intended to bring together more than 100 legacy force systems to 'deliver efficiencies and free up time for front line Policing' (Scottish Parliament 2015b). Whilst this has yet to be delivered, information regarding its progress toward realisation is ongoing (eg: Scottish Parliament 2015a; 2015b). The C3 (Contact, Command and Control) programme meanwhile focuses on a move toward fewer, larger and integrated control services and service centres, and associated changes to the processes through which contact is handled (Police Scotland 2014b; 2015c). Again, information regarding progress toward realisation is ongoing. It is interesting to note, however, that evidence at the local level suggests that changes to some processes have increased bureaucracy for officers in local Policing teams (HMICS 2015a).

The challenges and risks inherent in the process of rationalisation are starkly illustrated in the HMICS' Independent Assurance Review regarding the Call Handling of Police Scotland in light of the tragic incident involving the deaths of John Yuill and Lamara Bell when Police Scotland failed to respond for 3 days to a report of their vehicle crashing off the motorway. HMICS were directed to undertake an independent assessment of the operation, systems and procedures in place in Police Scotland's Contact, Command and Control (C3) centres across Scotland (HMICS 2015b). At the interim stage a single recommendation was made: prior to any further consolidation '... Police Scotland should consolidate and stabilise their staffing, systems, procedures and processes in both the East and West service centres and area control rooms. While this is being progressed, detailed planning for the previously agreed end-state model should continue, with consideration given to accelerating the recruitment of staff and early commissioning of the North Area Control Room' (HMICS 2015c). It was also found that improved governance and independent assurance processes must be put in place. The subsequent full report contained 30 recommendations (HMICS 2015a). Whilst the report identifies progress that Police Scotland has made, and is positive with regard to control room staff involved, key messages in terms of the challenges associated with the C3 project include that:

- Insufficient staff in place when work transferred from both Stirling and Glenrothes. This resulted in low levels of performance;
- Challenges in terms of staffing in the North;
- Police Scotland's overall approach to workforce planning requires strengthening to address previous weaknesses in assessing demand and ensuring that sufficient staff are in place at critical stage given the finding that staff were under unacceptably high levels of pressure during critical stages of the C3IR project;
- Whilst basic procedures are in place, consistency, understanding and definition of these processes all need to develop further;
- The grading, prioritisation and dispatch of officers works well for emergency and high priority calls, lower priority calls can be affected by a lack of

available officers to attend incidents and weak divisional management of these incidents;

- Risk and vulnerability assessment is strong within the area control room environment but this process should be strengthened by an increased focus in the service centre environment where the process lacks a more systematic approach;
- Training in legacy forces varied greatly in duration, coverage and quality. Further work is required to develop a comprehensive, nationally consistent approach;
- The interim ICT solution in place is generally fit for purpose in terms of basic functionality. However, the stability of these systems remains in question while network performance continues to affect day to day operations. The recording of data is not always through ICT but can also rely on written notes. Police Scotland has effective business continuity planning to respond to ICT system failures or outages;
- With regards to strategy it was found lack of clarity around the strategic vision for the national C3 model, with no alignment to wider Policing strategy; while Police Scotland has achieved annual savings of £1.8 million in staff costs, it has increased Police officer and overtime costs; identifying the true costs of the project and exact level of savings has not been possible and there is no clear framework in place to measure the benefits of the new model.

Further critique of both the move toward an increasingly centralised model of communication, command and control, and the anticipated ability of the i6 programme to achieve its aims, is provided in the recent 'Pearson Review' of Policing in Scotland. Also included in this with reference to control room performance assessment, was a concern that greater importance was being placed on the speed of call answering rather than the quality of call handling (Pearson 2015). In terms of future plans relevant to this aim we note that linked both to reducing duplication and protecting and improving local services, Police Scotland's 'Futures Strategy' will include five areas: i) Making best use of our people; ii) Reducing inefficiency in our processes; iii) Innovative use of technology; iv) Modernising our physical assets; and v) Increased partnership and collaborative working (identifying smarter ways to deliver public services. Further, it is stated that a programme will be launched as part of the 'Continuous improvement' programme to 'examine our processes to establish value and identify any wasteful or inefficient practices'. Also of relevance is work around collaboration and co-location which will 'expand opportunities to share information and develop collaborative strategies' and 'where appropriate, build upon the successful sharing of resources and co-location of services' (Police Scotland 2015b). Finally, further rationalisation is planned with respect to the future merger between Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire and Moray Police Divisions, and the proposed merger between Argyll and West Dunbartonshire, and Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Police Divisions (Police Scotland 2015d).

3.2.2 Protecting and improving local services

In relation to protecting and improving local services, the benefits realisation work provides further insight into Police Scotland's activities in relation to this aim. There are 7 relevant intermediate benefits identified and the measures associated with them are set out in figure 3 on the following page. The most recent report on progress towards realising these benefits indicates that improved access to local Policing services is now viewed as complete while the others remain on target for completion in 2016 (Police Scotland 2015a).

As with the evidence on reducing duplication, however, the evidence mobilised in relation to these benefits is largely process focused. For example in relation to better demand management (IB7), evidence is presented with respect to the Campaign Against Violence and highlights the additional hours of Policing that have been provided by this initiative; with respect to 'Greater Consistency and quality of service delivery' (IB6), evidence is presented of the implementation of monthly performance management meetings and their role in facilitating the sharing of best practice.

Assessing whether these changes are directly leading to improvements in local Policing is more difficult. Although there is performance data in relation to recorded crime, detection rates, public perceptions of crime and user satisfaction, it is not currently presented in a way which would allow for direct comparisons to be made between local authority areas across Scotland.

Whilst the data contained within HMICS supports does allow for trends in relation to particular outcomes to be tracked (such as detection rates, crimes) another difficulty, highlighted by HMICS in their Local Policing+ reports for Fife and Ayrshire, is that comparisons between user satisfaction pre-reform and post-formation of Police Scotland are not possible due to methodological differences, rendering HMICS 'unable to make meaningful comparisons between 2012-13 and 2013-14 or comment on whether user satisfaction in Fife has increased or decreased since the introduction of Police Scotland' (HMICS 2014a). This is particularly significant given that the Fife SOA includes measures regarding reductions in fear of crime and reported crime. To the extent that it is possible to compare over time, there are important local variations, as one might expect given differences in area characteristics and populations. For example, it was found that overall confidence and satisfaction in service delivery in Ayrshire was improving and is amongst the highest in Scotland, whilst the Aberdeen City Division performed 'slightly less well in the User Satisfaction Survey than Scotland as a whole' (HMICS 2015d). More recently, in Edinburgh, it was found that 'overall confidence and satisfaction in service delivery is declining and is below the national average'. Evidence of public perceptions of local service delivery pre and post reform is also available in the Scottish Social Attitudes Survey (see figures 4 and 5).

Figure 3: Police Scotland Intermediate benefits, measures and progress: Aim 1 (Summarised from Police Scotland 2014a).

| Intermediate benefit | 2) Greater ability to deliver local community & Policing priorities | 4) Improved access to local Policing services | 5) Improved delivery of specialist resources | 6) Greater consistency and quality of service delivery | 7) Better demand management in relationship to Police officers | 8) Reduced operating costs | 10) Better targeted investment |
|----------------------|--|---|--|--|--|---|---|
| Measure 1 | Local Policing Plans (LPPs) and Multi Member Ward Plans (MMWPs) in place across Scotland | Single national mechanisms to contact Police via contact centres | Equity of access to specialist resource, & frequency of deployments based on demand | Implementation of monthly performance meetings which promote and facilitate sharing of best practice | Effective deployment of officers based in departmental roles to supplement operational activities across Scotland | Reduced procurement costs | Implementation of streamlined decision making processes in respect of capital investments and national investment based on Police Scotland's priorities |
| Measure 2 | Reporting of progress against Policing plans at multi member ward and local level | Single national mechanisms to contact Police via public counters | Accessibility within divisions to specialist resources, and prioritisation of requests | Reporting process to scrutiny boards | Frequency of deployments and use of specialist skills | Overall spend of the organisation on staffing costs spend on managerial roles | Investment in partnership working against measurable results |
| Measure 3 | Police Mechanism to deliver both national and local priorities | Single national mechanisms to contact Police via electronic mechanisms / social media | Introduction of national standard processes, procedures and policies | Introduction of standardised operating procedures, guidance and communication processes | Establishment of a national events calendar | Analysis of Police overtime | Effectiveness of internal decision making mechanisms in respect of investment and business change |
| Measure 4 | | Geographical distribution of local divisional Policing specialist resources in line with local demand | National overview and coordination of specialist resources | Implementation of specialist divisions | Number of first contact call resolutions and number of crimes reported online | Percentage of spend on staff allowances | |
| Measure 5 | | Local Policing plans in place which address local needs and align to strategic priorities | | Effective management of Service Level Agreements | Major event planning | | |
| Measure 6 | | Effectiveness of mutual aid arrangements | | Evidence of consistent training approach and single centres of excellence | Streamlined command and control structure for specialist divisions providing enhanced oversight of available resources | | |

Figure 4: Creation of a national Police Force and confidence about local Policing (Data compiled from Scottish Social Attitudes Survey 2012, 2013 and 2014).

| | 2012 (%) | 2013 (%) | 2014 (%) |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Much more confident | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| A little more confident | 7 | 9 | 7 |
| Will make no difference | 44 | 52 | 49 |
| A little less confident | 26 | 22 | 24 |
| Much less confident | 16 | 11 | 14 |
| Don't know | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| <i>Sample size</i> | <i>1229</i> | <i>1497</i> | <i>1501</i> |

Figure 5: How are the Police doing in your local area? (Data compiled from Scottish Social Attitudes Survey 2012, 2013 and 2014).

| | 2012 (%) | 2013 (%) | 2014 (%) |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Very good job | 7 | 8 | 6 |
| Good job | 61 | 60 | 62 |
| Neither good nor bad job | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| Bad job | 6 | 6 | 4 |
| Very bad job | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Don't know | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| <i>Sample size</i> | <i>1229</i> | <i>1497</i> | <i>1501</i> |

This suggests that there has been little change in public attitudes in the pre and post reform periods with regard to whether having a national force makes people feel more or less confident about local Policing and how a good a job people think the Police are doing in their local area.

Whilst this falls outwith the time remit of this year one evidence review, it is important to recognise that the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (published March 2016) also contains important information about confidence in, and attitudes towards, the Police in the period since reform. With respect to percentage of respondents saying police in the local area are doing a good or excellent job, it is found that there is a statistically significant decrease nationally from 61% in 2012/13 to 58% in 2014/15. This is also shown to vary between divisions, with a 9 percentage point decrease in Aberdeen City and Dumfries and Galloway, and an 8% decrease in The Lothians and Scottish Borders, for example (Scottish Government 2016). It finds that whilst comparing between 2008/9 and 2014/15 shows a general increase in confidence in the police across six measures, between 2012/13 and 2014/15 there have been significant decreases in confidence relating to four measures (see figure 6) (Scottish Government 2016).

The SCJS is also able to tell us about variations in confidence by Police Division. The picture varies, with some divisions remaining relatively static when comparing pre-reform and post-reform figure. Others show a statistically significant decrease in confidence across all measures (eg Lothian and Borders) whilst others show a more complex pattern. For example:

Figure 6: Changes in confidence in Local Police – SCJS. (Scottish Government 2016) * marks statistically significant change.

| Percentage of adults (Very/Fairly confident) | 2008/2009 | 2009/2010 | 2010/2011 | 2012/2013 | 2014/2015 | 2008/9 to 2014/15 | 2012/13 to 2014/15 |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Investigate incidents after they occur | 64 | 68 | 71 | 73 | 70 | 7 | * -2 * |
| Deal with incidents as they occur | 58 | 61 | 65 | 68 | 66 | 8 | * -3 * |
| Respond quickly to appropriate calls & information from public | 54 | 58 | 61 | 66 | 64 | 9 | * -2 * |
| Solve crimes | 57 | 60 | 64 | 64 | 62 | 5 | * -2 * |
| Catch criminals | 55 | 57 | 60 | 61 | 60 | 5 | * -1 |
| Prevent crime | 46 | 48 | 50 | 56 | 57 | 11 | * 1 |
| <i>Number of Respondents</i> | <i>16,000</i> | <i>16,040</i> | <i>13,010</i> | <i>12,050</i> | <i>11,470</i> | | |

- Forth Valley saw a 23% point increase in respondents reporting that they were very or fairly confident in the local Police’s ability to prevent crime; an 18% point increase in those reporting they were very or fairly confident in the local police to solve crimes and a 16% point increase in those reporting they were confident in the local police to catch criminals when comparing 2012/13 to 2014/15. Increases relating to this division were the greatest increases in each of these categories and statistically significant. However, it also saw apparent changes that were not statistically significant relating to the remaining three indicators.
- The Highlands and Islands saw reductions in confidence across all measures, only half of these reductions were statistically significant and the other apparent changes were not statistically significant (Scottish Government 2016).

Finally whilst attitudes toward the Police have improved to a statistically significant degree for 4 indicators between 2009/10 and 2014/15, there are also significant differences between 2014/15 and 2012/13 with regard to five indicators, four of which are negative and one of which is positive with regard to attitudes toward the Police (see figure 7).

In terms of the performance of front-line services, the Scottish Government’s commitment to an additional 1 000 officers has been accomplished, and Audit Scotland found in 2013 that:

‘reports to the SPA board indicate that the performance of front-line services has been maintained during the move to a single Police service. In the first three months of the new service, recorded crime continued to drop by 1.4 per cent compared to 2012. Serious crimes have dropped significantly, down 16 per cent on 2012 while detection rates have remained constant. Specialist units, such as the Air Support Unit and Marine and Underwater Unit have been extended to cover operations nationwide. Operational initiatives, such as summer drink and drive campaigns, have taken place as usual’ (Audit Scotland 2013).

Figure 7: Changes in attitudes towards Police over time – SCJS. (Scottish Government 2016) * marks statistically significant change.

| Percentage of adults (Strongly/Tend to agree) | 2009/2010 | 2010/2011 | 2012/2013 | 2014/2015 | 2009/10 to 2014/15 | 2012/13 to 2014/15 | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------------|--------------------|---|---|
| Police in this area can be relied on to be there when you need them | 58 | 61 | 66 | 64 | 6.2 | -2 | * | * |
| The police in this area would treat you with respect if you had contact with them for any reason | 83 | 86 | 86 | 85 | 1.3 | -0.8 | | |
| The police in this area treat everyone fairly regardless of who they are | 58 | 63 | 61 | 60 | 1.9 | -1.4 | | |
| Police in this area are not dealing with the things that matter to people in this community | 31 | 29 | 25 | 23 | -7.6 | -1.7 | * | * |
| The police in this area listen to the concerns of local people | 48 | 53 | 54 | 50 | 1.7 | -4.1 | | * |
| Community relations with the police in this local area are poor | 28 | 26 | 22 | 23 | -4.8 | 1.6 | * | * |
| Overall, people have a lot of confidence in the police in this area | 43 | 47 | 49 | 46 | 3 | -3 | * | * |
| Number of Respondents | 16,036 | 13,010 | 12,045 | 11,472 | | | | |

Other views have, however, challenged this suggesting unintended consequences of the commitment to maintaining frontline officer numbers while cutting civilian positions have included the ‘backfilling’ of civilian staff roles by Police officers, and that the number of crimes being cleared up has in fact fallen (Reform Scotland 2015). Indeed, the Pearson Review emphasises the evidence provided to it regarding ‘backfilling’ and concerns regarding abstraction of Police officers (Pearson 2015), and research commissioned by UNISON Scotland has argued for the benefits of further civilianisation in Scotland (UNISON Scotland 2013).

It is important to note in the assessment of how far frontline services have been protected and improved that national statistics regarding both Fire and Rescue and Policing are available at the level of the Local Authority. Here, in order to ensure statistics are as up-to-date as possible, we have drawn on the most recently available data at time of writing, which has generally been published after the end of November 2015 deadline which has been applied elsewhere in this review.

For Police Scotland crimes recorded have decreased year on year from 2005/6 to 2014/15 from an average of 818/10 000 people in 2005/6 to 479/10 000 people in 2014/15 (Scottish Government 2015a). Specifically recorded crime has decreased by 5% since 2013/14 (Scottish Government 2015b). These vary geographically: relative to the previous year, the overall decrease in recorded crime was reflected in 23 of the 32 local authority areas, with four experiencing an increase (Stirling; East Ayrshire; East Renfrewshire; Midlothian) and the greatest decrease of 18% in Moray (Scottish Government 2015b). Relative to 2005/6, the percentage reductions in crimes recorded vary between different Scottish Local Authorities. Some local authorities have seen bigger falls than average since 2005/6 (including Aberdeenshire, East Renfrewshire and Fife) and some have seen smaller falls than

average (including Edinburgh, East Lothian, and East Ayrshire) (Scottish Government 2015b). Further, the total number of offences recorded has also declined, which also has a pronounced geography (it is found that every local authority area, with the exception of the Shetland Islands, showed a decrease in recorded offences (Scottish Government 2015b)). It is also possible to see the ways in which these data have varied over time (Scottish Government 2015a).

With regard to clear-up rates, there appears a picture of small short term decreases, within the context of longer term increases. With reference to the percentage of crimes cleared up, this has decreased slightly from 51.5% in 2013-14 to 50.4% in 2014-15 (Scottish Government 2015a). These have, however, increased overall between 2005-6 (45.7%) to 2014-15 (50.4%). They also vary by geography, with the highest crime clear-up rates in the Shetland Isles (82.1%) and the lowest in Edinburgh (35.4%). With regards to offences, this has also decreased slightly between 2013-14 (87.5%) and 2014-15 (86.3%) however similarly to crimes this also shows an overall increase from the earliest comparable data in 2008-9 (82.6%) to 2014-15 (86.3%). Clear-up rates vary by crime/offence. For example, in 2014/15 the Scotland-wide clear-up rate for housebreaking was 25%, whilst for rape/attempted rape this was 74.2%. These also have an element of geographical variation, for example the clear-up rate for housebreaking in 2014/15 was 18.1% in Glasgow, 32.1% in Fife, and 38.8% in Highland. For rape/attempted rape this was 62% in Perth and Kinross; 69.4% in Edinburgh and 85.3% in the Scottish Borders (Scottish Government 2015a).

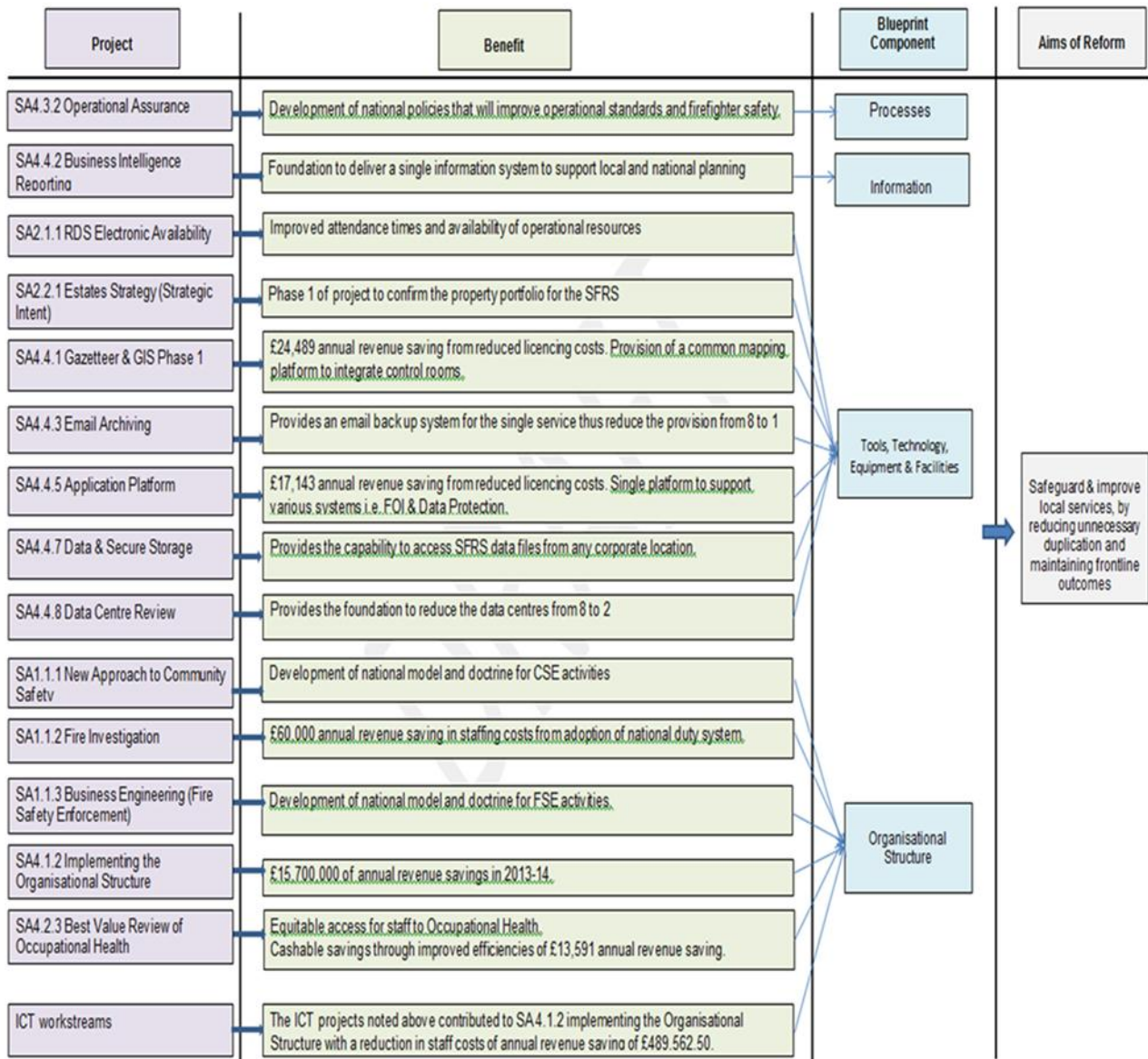
Therefore, national level performance statistics tend to show a fairly consistent trajectory of maintenance/improvement however local level variations – and variations within particular typologies of incident/activity - are important to consider in the extent to which (for example) services are perceived and experienced to have been maintained and/or improved.

3.3 Fire and Rescue

3.3.1 Reducing duplication

Like Police Scotland, the SFRS established a benefits realisation process known as the Service Transformation Programme as a way of tracking progress towards achieving the aims of reform. When the programme began in April 2013 there were 9 workstreams and over 40 projects designed to produce the Target Operating Model described in the Blueprint for SFRS. This has now increased to over 60 projects. As with the Police Scotland benefit realisation work each project is associated with specific measures that allows assessment of whether benefits have been achieved. Figure 8 identifies those projects complete as of March 2015 which 'map on' to Aim 1.

Figure 8: Projects mapped and completed as of 31st December 2014 as part of SFRS Benefits Realisation programme relating to Aim 1 of reform: “Safeguard & improve local services, by reducing unnecessary duplication and maintaining frontline outcomes” (SFRS 2015c)



Examples of completed projects relevant to reduced duplication include:

- Development of a national model and doctrine for Community Safety Enforcement activities;
- Development of a national model and doctrine for Fire Safety Enforcement activities;
- Development of a national policies that will improve Firefighter safety;
- Provision of capability to access SFRS data files from any corporate location.

Updates continue to be routinely produced for SFRS' Service Transformation Committee, regarding progress towards completion of the various projects (including additional projects opened in the course of the programme) (SFRS nd (a)) They include assessments of those projects likely to be completed within the timeframe of the Service Transformation Programme and those likely to continue following the conclusion of the Programme in its current form (SFRS 2015a). The publicly available documentation does not appear to routinely align projects to the aims of reform, however the evaluation team understand that this information is available on internal systems and look forward to including reference to this in future reports. We also understand that a publically available document will be produced in the summer of 2016 which will specifically align projects to the aims of reform in a similar way, which we look forward to including in future evidence reviews.

3.3.2 Protecting and improving local services

To understand what implications these developments are having at a local level, there is evidence contained within the HMFSI's first Local Area Inspection carried out in Aberdeen City (HMFSI 2015a). In terms of 'Prevention and Protection' it found that 'there are some pressures currently facing Prevention and Protection staff in Aberdeen City, but despite that, they are generally coping with the workloads placed upon them' along with information regarding the nature, extent and perceptions of activity being undertaken with regard to this theme. In terms of 'Service delivery' the report finds on the basis of speaking with a range of SFRS employees and station visits that 'frontline service delivery has been maintained and has not been adversely affected by reform'. Nevertheless, there was also more critical evidence of local services being adversely affected by reform:

- 'We were told by some staff that as a result of the six whole time pumping appliances that should be available in the city, one is often not available through lack of crew. We sought to follow this suggestion up with management and have been advised that there are no specific data that could confirm or refute that suggestion';
- There is an increase in attendances to automatic fire alarms as a result of changes in SFRS policy, and that routine updating of operational risk information appeared less structured than it had previously been;
- With regard to 'workforce' it was found that non-uniformed staff roles have been significantly reduced since April 2013, with a view amongst staff that cuts cannot continue further. It was also found that the area is running under complement.¹

¹ The distinct socio-economic characteristics of Aberdeen and the potential impact this may have on staff retention (compared to elsewhere) is made.

In another local inspection carried out in East Renfrewshire, there were similarly positive messages around the protection and improvements of local services. Key findings to emerge from the local inspection include:

- The SFRS is delivering satisfactory 'response' and 'prevention and protection' functions in an area with low levels of operational activity;
- There are good relationships with the local authority;
- There is a good level of community relations activity and fire safety enforcement is effective (HMFSI 2015b).

In terms of longer term trends, the number of fires is generally decreasing year-on-year (although an increase of 5% occurred in 2013/14, the downward pattern continued in 2014/15 (Scottish Government 2014; SFRS 2015f)) whilst fatalities in fires continue to fluctuate but also appear to be – in general – declining over time (SFRS 2015f). SFRS also provides information about its performance with reference to a 'performance scorecard', with indicators linked to the SFRS framework.

We also note that data is available at Local Authority level, which can help inform an understanding of the variations across Scotland. For example, the lowest rate of all fires per 100 000 people in 2014/15 could be found in the Shetland Islands (245.4) whilst the highest was in Glasgow City (720.3). Furthermore, the highest rate of non-fatal casualties per 1 000 accidental dwelling fires in 2014/15 was in Eilean Siar, whilst the lowest was in West Dunbartonshire (however it should be kept in mind that the absolute numbers on which these statistics are based can be quite low) (SFRS 2015f).

Outside of SFRS and HMFSI, Audit Scotland have undertaken work to assesses the progress the SFRS has made in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of Fire and Rescue services in Scotland within the context of reform (Audit Scotland 2015). At a broad level it finds that 'there was no impact on the public during the merger' and the 'Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's performance is improving'. It does so with reference to a range of factors including performance against the Fire and Rescue Framework and the degree of standardisation (which the service is found to be making progress toward through for example '...a standard national approach to the crewing of operational and specialist appliances'... [progress toward]... 'deploying standardised breathing apparatus for all Firefighters'...[and]... other key systems, for example payroll and an integrated command and control system').

3.4 Summary and implications

We have focused our review of Aim 1 on evidence that can inform our understanding of how far (i) duplication has been reduced and (ii) local services have been protected and improved as a result of interventions developed as part of the reform process. The process evidence is very detailed, where there are gaps in the evidence these relate to the outcomes of these new arrangements. The Benefits Realisation work in Police Scotland and the Service Transformation

Programme in the Fire and Rescue Service provide the most detailed information in relation to this in terms of activities focused on reduced duplication. Specific thematic reports (for example with regard to Police call handling) also provide detailed evidence with regard to the challenges and risks experienced in specific elements of the reform process.

In terms of the local impacts and implications, there is less evidence and it is largely being gathered through the local inspection work carried out by the relevant inspectorates. Indeed, evidence regarding local experiences and perceptions of how far services have been maintained/improved, and the consequences of programmes to reduce duplication for a broad range of stakeholders appears lacking. Further, statistical information at LA level with regard to Police and Fire and Rescue performance, and changes over time relative to the national picture, appears relatively challenging to access. There would therefore appear to be a clear potential role for subsequent stages of the evaluation to address a number of the evidence gaps identified above, particularly with reference to: (i) considering experiences and perceptions of how far services have been maintained/improved; (ii) with regard to experiences and/or unintended consequences of programmes to reduce duplication amongst a broad range of stakeholders, and (iii) deepening the evidence base regarding local attitudes and perceptions toward the services in light of reform.

4. Reform aim 2: To create more equal access to specialist support and national capacity – like murder investigation teams, firearms teams or flood rescue – where and when they are needed

KEY POINTS

Police Scotland's Post Implementation Benefits Review work concludes that the 'Operational Benefit' relating to this aim has been met. HMICS Local Policing+ reports also identify that there is increased ease of access to national resources. The specific evidence on which these claims are based, however, is not always clear.

In the case of Fire and Rescue, work by HMFSI and SFRS has established a detailed knowledge of geographical variations in equipment, capacity and skills and progress is reported to be made in addressing these regional variations.

In relation to Police Scotland, the evidence base is most extensive around process-based and transactional issues relating to the functioning of the new arrangements. For Fire and Rescue, there is strong evidence of detailed consideration of variations in baseline resources and risk profiles in preparation for a more strategic approach to distributing specialist resources.

For both services, the evidence is more limited in relation to outputs and outcomes; causal connections and inter-dependencies when evidencing progress toward this aim are not always clear; and other 'voices' within the services and communities about the impacts and implications of activities undertaken in relation to this aim need to be heard.

The evidence base regarding this aim is concentrated in less diverse documents than is the case for Aims (1) or (3).

The evidence is generally of good quality: it involves a degree of methodological rigour, is accessible and relevant, and is analytically robust.

Subsequent stages of this evaluation will focus on some of these evidence gaps – in particular, around perceptions of how far this aim has been achieved (and experiences of this); and understanding causal connections between service reconfiguration and specific outcomes.

4.1 Overview

With regard to Policing the evidence relating to access to specialist expertise is largely contained within 3 broad areas: The Post-Implementation Benefits Review work; the local Policing inspections carried out by HMICS; and the analysis of armed Policing carried out by the SPA as part of its scrutiny report. In terms of the Fire and Rescue service, the key documents include HMFSI's report regarding Equal Access to National Capacity; SFRS' Review of Specialist Equipment; SFRS' Benefits realisation and service transformation reports; and the Audit Scotland SFRS report.

For both services, the process evidence is very detailed and provides important insights into the establishment and functioning of new arrangements for accessing specialist expertise. In terms of evidence quality, a similar judgement can be made to that for Aim 1. The gathering of evidence generally displays a degree of methodological rigour, and the information is accessible and relevant, and is analytically robust. In terms of independence, the work undertaken by Audit Scotland is the main piece of work which meets this criteria. Where there are gaps in the evidence these relate to the outcomes of these new arrangements, particularly in relation to understanding causal connections and any unanticipated consequences.

4.2 Police

Within the work carried out as part of their analysis of the post-implementation benefits of Police reform, Police Scotland locate the role of reform in creating more equal access to specialist expertise at the end point of a chain of benefits beginning with Operational Benefit 5 of Nationally Consistent and Equitable Access. This is positioned as the main contributor to Intermediate Benefit 5 (Improved Delivery of Specialist Resources) and End Benefit 2 (Improved Access to Policing services). By 2015 Operational Benefit 5 was judged to be realised and Intermediate Benefit 5 partially realised (with a forecast date of completion being Q4 2015-2016). The evidence supporting these claims rests on 4 measures:

1. Equity of access to specialist resources and frequency of deployment based on demand: pre-reform it is reported that there was no formal process for requesting specialist units from other forces and cross-charging meant the demand was suppressed. Now there is a clearer process with resources available via both the Operational Support Division (OSD which includes air support, marine unit, dogs and horses, and Firearms) and the Specialist Crime Division (SCD). There are Major Investigation Teams (MITs) for the North, East and West area which focus on homicide and other serious crime. In terms of evidence of outcomes, the report notes 'Anecdotal evidence from divisions indicates these new national arrangements work very well'.
2. Accessibility within divisions to specialist resources and prioritisation of requests: under Police Scotland, specialists are now located within each division to support local Policing (e.g. divisional road Policing units, the Operational Support Division and the Specialist Crime Division). However,

there is acknowledgment of a potential disbenefit of this, with some staff perhaps unable to get access to resources and same level of service as under previous arrangements. This is to be addressed by careful logging of supported and unsupported requests with reasons for decisions.

3. Introduction of national standard processes, procedures and Polices: beneath this measure, it is noted that 7000 pre-existing forms have now been reduced to 400 as an indicator of a more consistent approach;
4. National overview of coordination of specialist resources: in the case of this measure, the report highlights that now resources can be requested from adjacent divisions, no cross charging occurs, and there are directories of dedicated and non-dedicated specialists (Police Scotland 2014a).

The local Policing reports undertaken by HMICS provide a more detailed account of the experience of this aspect of reform at local levels in Fife, Ayrshire, Aberdeen and Edinburgh. In Fife it was identified that 'Support from the SCD was described as good, especially in relation to the investigation of homicide', allowing the division to carry on normal business without further abstractions of local detective officers. 'Deployments of this nature are provided in all cases of homicide... and are a tangible example of where Police reform and the move to a single force has delivered more equal access to specialist support and national capacity'. But the report also noted that some staff had identified potential gaps in the provision of support for significant non-homicide investigations (e.g. abduction, rape, long-term missing persons). In reflecting on this, HMICS note that SCD had a process for considering requests through Tasking and Coordinating meetings. In relation to operational support available via OSD specialist resources (such as road Policing, air support, dogs, horses and specialist search teams), Fife division was found to have made good use of these. While the process of accessing these resources was viewed as straightforward, the HMICS report found some ambiguity in relation to responsibility for debriefing specialist staff and evaluating the contribution of specialist officers (HMICS 2014a). This is viewed as a responsibility of the host division and there is a concern 'that intelligence and performance monitoring opportunities are being missed by not formally debriefing officers following their deployment in the division (HMICS 2014a: Para 85 and recommendation 5).

Evidence is less detailed in the case of Ayrshire (HMICS 2015e), whilst the local inspection of Aberdeen includes a thematic focus on missing person investigations and therefore provides evidence of how specialist resources are being used locally. Those involved with the inspection interviewed officers within specialist divisions including SCD, OSD, C3 and the National Missing Persons Unit. It was observed that 'From these various sessions we gathered evidence of more equal access to specialist national resources through the capacity that arises from a single national force with unified command structures'. In the section on 'National support for local search' they use a case study of a high-risk missing person to illustrate where specialist assets were deployed to assist local Policing, highlighting the difference with pre-reform arrangements when Grampian did not have VR dogs or air support and would have relied on mutual aid. Data is also presented showing number of missing persons searches by OSD function for period 2014/15 (up to 28/2/15)

which shows the dog section was called on over 3000 times, OSU over 600, air support over 400 and dive and marine unit over 100. Their conclusion in terms of delivering the benefits of reform is that there 'is more equal access to national support and capacity around search and investigation' (HMICS 2015d).

A more critical view of the impact of creating specialist capacity emerges, however, in the Edinburgh local inspection. The report highlights concerns that staff abstractions to perform more specialist role are posing challenges in meeting local demand and that '*while the impact of creating specialist national, regional and local units has been experienced by many divisions across Scotland, we [HMICS] are of the view that Edinburgh experienced a greater impact due to the levels of legacy local Policing resources inherited by Police Scotland*' (HMICS 2015a).

One other specific piece of evidence relating to access to specialist expertise is the SPA's inquiry into the standing authority regarding firearms (SPA 2015). The issues of equal access to specialist support are viewed as being of particular relevance to the Inquiry. By introducing a Standing Authority for the issue and carriage of firearms this enabled ARV officers to carry side arms and Tasers overtly and allowed these officers to respond to routine calls and incidents (for which a firearms response was not required). In many parts of the country this represented a significant change in Policing style. Drawing on evidence from a national public attitudes survey, a series of public evidence sessions and a call for written evidence, the Inquiry came to a number of important conclusions relevant to this aim of reform:

- While maximising the use of available resources is an important principle and aim of reform, Police Scotland underestimated the community impact of armed officers being sent to routine calls which represented a significant change in approach in some areas and required better explanation and assessment of the community impact.
- The decision to adopt a nationally consistent approach to the deployment of specialist Firearms officers had an uneven impact on levels of trust and confidence in Police Scotland: most people surveyed were content with the decision, but 1 in 5 said it had a negative impact on their trust and confidence.

4.3 Fire and Rescue

HMFSI's 2014 report on *Equal Access to National Capacity* focuses on resources and activities in 4 areas of Scotland in order to assess the 'scale and nature of the inherited variation' which will impact on the ability to deliver a consistent level of service for areas with similar risk profiles (HMFSI 2014). The report tests the assumption that there are significant variations in resources across the country that are not simply a reflection of differences in risk. The key findings from the report relate both to national level issues and the case study specific concerns. At a national level the report highlights concerns about general resourcing in terms of:

- Sustainability of the Retained Duty System and volunteer units;

- The condition and age profile of Personal Protective Equipment;
- The future delivery of training.

In relation to more local issues, the key findings included:

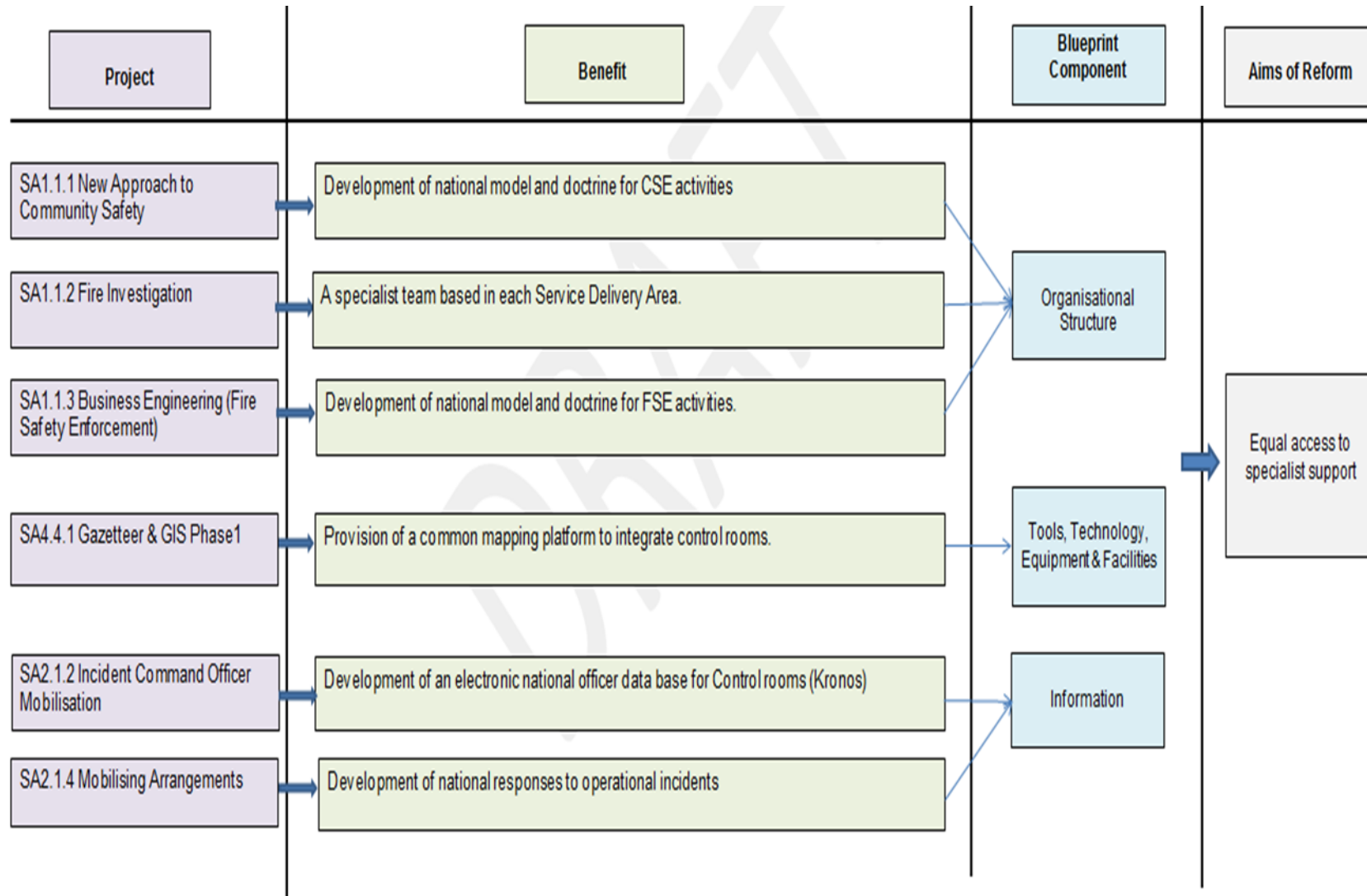
- Variation in capacity and levels of service provisions was less than expected;
- Historical differences in the level of training officer support to RDS and volunteer staff between areas;
- There are local differences in the skill maintenance programmes for RDS crews compared with whole time Firefighters;
- Historically there have been local differences in the level of home Fire safety visit activity which would make the introduction of national targets problematic;
- The availability of operational guidance varies between local areas.

In January 2015, SFRS published its Specialist Resources Review (SFRS 2015b). This found evidence that the inherited position does not meet the aims of a single service. A number of stations are overburdened with equipment and capabilities for which crew competency could be called into question given the disparity between training time and needs. Additionally the range of equipment is not standard across Scotland, and in some regards fall short of what is necessary to provide a satisfactory level of service delivery. Resources are also not strategically situated, based on legacy boundaries and available accommodation within those ahistorical boundaries' (SFRS 2015b). The report's recommendations are set out by resource and include Water Rescue, Marine Firefighting, Line Rescue, High Reach, Rescue Pumps, Mass Decontamination, and Urban Search and Rescue. The report also notes that implementation is dependent on the service's ability to deliver training to crews. The delivery timescale for change is 3 years. Although the review focuses on an operational matter an extensive process of engagement is reported, with local authorities and other stakeholders.

In relation to SFRS' Service Transformation Programme, at the end of 2014 it is identified that six of the projects that have closed to date have contributed to the second aim of reform (see also figure 9):

- Enhancement of community safety resources and supporting mechanisms to areas of Scotland with limited capacity;
- Delivery of a specialist Fire investigation team for each service delivery area;
- Enhancement of Fire safety enforcement, Fire engineering resources and supporting mechanisms to areas of Scotland with limited capacity;
- Development of a national data base that ensures all Fire control rooms have live information on the location and skill set of flexi-duty managers to support local and national mobilisation;

Figure 9: Projects mapped and completed as of 31st December 2014 as part of SFRS Benefits Realisation programme relating to Aim 2 of reform (SFRS 2015c).



- Agreement of national mobilising arrangements based on best practice as determined by sector experts;
- Provision of a common mapping platform for control rooms that supports the mobilisation at a national and local level for the full range of resources available to the SFRS (SFRS 2015c).

As earlier stated, updates continue to be routinely produced for SFRS' Service Transformation Committee, regarding progress towards completion of the various projects (including additional projects opened in the course of the programme) (SFRS nd (a)). Again, we understand this information is available on internal systems and that a publically available document will be produced in the summer of 2016 which will specifically align projects to the aims of reform in a similar way, which we look forward to including in future evidence reviews.

Audit Scotland (2015a) highlight how a 2013 overview report of the 8 former services identified marked differences in resources but that SFRS are beginning to eliminate these differences - for example by deploying standardised breathing apparatus for all Firefighters. They also note the challenge around different risk profiles (for example, Road Traffic Collisions are higher in rural areas per head of population compared with urban areas but dwelling Fires show the inverse of this pattern). Further, the report also highlights that SFRS is examining how some of its specialist expertise can be used in new ways. One specific example is in relation to the Scottish Government's Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest (OHCA) Strategy where the SFRS will use its network of stations as locations for training in CPR and locate its defibrillators where they can add most value.

The most recent HMFSI report, undertaken in East Renfrewshire, also addresses a number of issues pertinent to this theme, in part as a function of this particular area's relatively small geographical size. It notes that 'the Service has a long-standing positive working relationship with the local authority and other local partners', and that 'as a result of its position in the central belt, there are large numbers of resources available from neighbouring areas in the event of significant incidents taking place within East Renfrewshire' and 'there are sufficient specialist resources available from neighbouring areas' (HMFSI 2015b).

4.4 Summary and implications

There appears relatively strong evidence of engagement with and progress towards Aim 2. Evidence comes from a range of different organisational sources. These include internal analysis from Police Scotland or SFRS (through the Post Implementation Benefits Review and Specialist Resources Review, for example); the respective inspectorates and organisations 'external' to Police or Fire and Rescue, such as Audit Scotland. In relation to the Police, there is strong process-based and transactional evidence and evidence relating to the functioning of the new arrangements. In Fire there is strong evidence of detailed consideration of variations in baseline resources and risk profiles in preparation for a more strategic approach to distributing specialist resources.

In terms of evidence gaps across both Police and Fire and Rescue, evidence appears more limited in relation to outputs and outcomes. There is some case study evidence but this tends to be high level and could be stronger in terms of analytical rigour. Closer examination of the causal connections and inter-dependencies would also be beneficial when considering activity underpinning work relating to this strategic aim. Consideration of the unintended consequences of the increased use of specialist units would also be useful, particularly if this is seen as diluting local expertise and reducing the pool of experienced personnel working at a local level. Finally, it appears that other 'voices' need to be heard both within the services and within communities about the impacts and implications of recent developments in relation to accessing specialist expertise. This would help move from evidencing 'outputs' and 'process' to 'outcomes' and 'impact' across a wider spectrum of stakeholders.

When considering implications for the evaluation, it is possible our future work may seek to address evidence gaps at national and local levels around (internal and external) perceptions of the outcomes associated with changes to specialist services. Evidence gaps in relation to the causal connections between service reconfiguration and specific outcomes are also likely to be of interest when considering how far aims of reform have been met.

5. Reform aim 3: To strengthen the connection between services and communities, by creating a new formal relationship with each of the 32 local authorities, involving many more local councillors and better integrating with community planning partnerships

KEY POINTS

Evidence in relation to this aim largely relates to descriptions of the establishment of local scrutiny and engagement arrangements and production of Local Police Plans, Multi Member Ward Police Plans and Local Fire and Rescue Plans.

There is also some evidence regarding the changing nature of and approaches to community engagement taken by the services.

There is a lack of specificity around some key themes. For example, diverse 'communities' are often referenced in evidencing progress towards this aim but it would be helpful to have further evidence of how the services are strengthening their connections with different types of community. There is also a lack of evidence from specific communities about their interactions and relationships with the Police and fire and rescue services post reform.

Overall, evidence in relation to this aim is disparate and the causal links between the activities of reform and intended outcomes are not fully developed.

The diversity of the evidence base relating to Aim 3 makes generalised assessment of its quality more difficult than for Aims 1 and 2. There is clearly a spectrum in terms of criteria such as methodological adequacy, analytical approach and independence and this should be kept in mind when interpreting the evidence base.

Overall, as is the case for aims 1 and 2, there is a need here to shift the evidence base from documenting the establishment, functioning and outputs to evidencing and understanding outcomes and impacts.

5.1 Overview

Public concerns about the local impacts of creating national Police and Fire and Rescue Services emerged as a significant issue in public consultation exercises undertaken in the period before the legislation introducing the reforms was drafted. In an attempt to address these concerns The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 has, as HMICS have observed, attempted to place local communities at the heart of the provision of Police and Fire and Rescue services. There are three key elements to this:

1. The designation of a Local Police Commander (LPC) and, for the Fire and Rescue service, a Local Senior Officer (LSO);
2. The production of a local Policing plan and a Fire and Rescue plan for each local authority area and approved by the local authority; and
3. The creation of formal relationships between local authorities and the services' (HMICS/HMFSI 2013).

Key areas of evidence relating to the third aim of reform include:

- 3 year strategic plans, annual reports and local plans for Police and the Fire and Rescue services;
- HMICS (Local Division Inspections/Local Policing +) and HMFSI (Local Area Inspections);
- Reports from other stakeholders, including third sector groups and think tanks, local authority representative bodies, national political organizations and Audit Scotland.

The diversity of the evidence base relating to Aim 3 makes generalised assessment of its quality more difficult than for Aims 1 and 2. There is clearly a spectrum in terms of criteria such as methodological adequacy, analytical approach and independence and this should be kept in mind when interpreting the evidence base. (We reflect in more detail on an example of evidence drawn on with regard to this aim in section 6.) Some caution should therefore be exercised when interpreting smaller scale or potentially partial evidence within this aim but equally – particularly with regard to evidence demonstrating the establishment of new governance structures – there is some good evidence demonstrating progress toward achieving this aim of reform.

5.2 Police

The Post Implementation Benefits Review work identifies four intermediate benefits and associated measures relevant to Aim 3 of reform and these are summarised in figure 10. Evidence of progress toward these benefits was first published in May 2014 and Police Scotland has subsequently provided updates on progress, the most recent of which was published in August 2015 covering Q1 April-June 2015) (Police Scotland 2015e). According to this most recent update:

Figure 10: Police Scotland Intermediate benefits, measures pertinent to Aim 3 of reform (Police Scotland 2014a).

| Intermediate benefit | 1) Clarity of accountability and ability to respond to scrutiny | 2) Greater ability to deliver local community and Policing priorities | 3) Improved collaborative working with partners | 4) Improved access to local Policing services |
|-----------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| Measure 1 | Establishment of formal scrutiny and engagement mechanisms | Local Policing Plans (LPPs) and Multi Member Ward Plans (MMWPs) in place across Scotland | Collaborative Working practices are maintained and improved | Single national mechanisms to contact Police via contact centres |
| Measure 2 | Effectiveness of the scrutiny and engagement process | Reporting of progress against Policing plans at multi member ward and local level | Enhanced collaborative working | Single national mechanisms to contact Police via public counters |
| Measure 3 | Police Officer involvement in community engagement | Police Mechanism to deliver both national and local priorities | Effective Community Planning Partnerships | Single national mechanisms to contact Police via electronic mechanisms / social media |
| Measure 4 | Introduction of common performance standards | | Impact of intervention tactics utilised to tackle youth offending | Geographical distribution of local divisional Policing specialist resources in line with local demand |
| Measure 5 | Control and coordination of assets | | | Local Policing plans in place which address local needs and align to strategic priorities |
| Measure 6 | | | | Effectiveness of mutual aid arrangements |

- With regard to IB1 (Clarity of accountability and improved ability to respond to scrutiny) it is reported that Measures 1 (Establishment of formal scrutiny and engagement mechanisms) and 2 (Police Officer involvement in community engagement) are both complete, with the remaining measures on target for completion. Evidence used to support this latter measure includes a description of community engagement mechanisms employed, the identification of the outputs of this as being local Policing plans and multi-member ward plans, and the identification of the role of local scrutiny arrangements in scrutinising the plans and their delivery.

- With respect to IB2 (Greater ability to deliver local community and Policing priorities) Measure 1 has previously been reported as complete (Local Policing Plans (LPPs) and Multi Member Ward Plans (MMWPs) in place across Scotland) and Measure 2 is also reported as complete (Reporting of progress against Policing plans at multi member ward and local level). Evidence used to support this measure is similar to that described above, in relation to IB1. When considering such reporting, it is helpful to do so in the context of earlier Police Scotland documentation. For example, with regard to this measure, the Post Implementation Benefits Review document notes that ‘It is recommended that Police Scotland work with SPA, Scottish Government and other partners to develop measures to evidence the effectiveness of the Community Planning Partnership process with respect to “keeping people safe” and the effectiveness of Local Policing Plans’ (Police Scotland 2013b).
- For IB3 (Improved Collaborative Working with Partners), Police Scotland assess that two of the measures are now complete (Collaborative Working Practices are Maintained and Improved’ and ‘Enhanced Collaborative Working’). The two further measures (‘Effective community planning partnerships’ and ‘Impact of intervention tactics used to tackle youth offending’ are assessed as being ‘on target’.
- With respect to IB4 (‘Improved Access to local Policing services’), all measures are now assessed as complete.

In earlier documentation, there appears awareness from Police Scotland of the evidence gaps within the benefit realisation programme in relation to this area and reference is made to future evidence gathering plans to address these gaps. For example in relation to Measure 2 (the ‘Effectiveness of the scrutiny and engagement process’) within Intermediate Benefit 1 (‘Clarity of accountability and ability to respond to scrutiny’) it is stated that evidence is ‘dependent on completion ... [of work] to evidence at both a local and national level the impact and effectiveness of the scrutiny and engagement process... It is anticipated this will take the form of a survey to internal and external stakeholders though further consideration is required as to the most appropriate approach’ (Police Scotland 2014a).

It should also be noted that in the subsequent ‘Transforming the Service’ report there is a recognition of the need for more qualitative evidence capture and the need for external review to validate the impact of changes from the perspective of the public and key partners (Police Scotland 2014a).

Reporting on the Justice Subcommittee on Policing’s activities in the first year of Police reform, it is noted that there are four broad scrutiny models: (i) scrutiny by the full council; (ii) an existing committee, such as a community safety committee, taking on the scrutiny function; (iii) informal groupings between councillors and stakeholders (where only the councillors can vote on a plan), and (iv) a broader partnership approach, such as building on a community safety partnership or community planning partnership (Scottish Parliament 2014). In addition to the Benefit Realisation programme, the series of Local Inspection+ reports published

by HMICS go some way to updating and deepening the evidence base at the more local level. Reports undertaken in Fife, Ayrshire, and Aberdeen City Police divisions comment on local scrutiny and engagement processes with reference to the Local Police Plans; Local Planning Partnerships; Multi Member Wards; Community Planning; and Partnership working (HMICS 2015d; 2015e; 2014a). Whilst there are of course local variations in the strength of these themes, a number of common strands emerge in terms of evidence of connections with communities:

- Local level scrutiny and governance arrangements are verified as being in place and functioning;
- Compared with the pre-reform situation, there are now more local councillors sitting involved in local scrutiny groups although there is acknowledgment that consideration still needs to be given to the quality of local scrutiny;
- Some councillors on scrutiny groups have expressed concerns about their limited knowledge of Policing;
- Consultation on and awareness of Local Policing and Multi-Member Ward Plans varied between different communities with councillors more likely to feel involved, whilst those sometimes feeling less involved included younger people and partner organisations;
- The important role of the SPA in local scrutiny is emphasised;
- Reform of Multi Member Ward Plans to better map onto neighbourhood planning approaches is called for (and we note is now in progress) (Police Scotland 2015b);
- Variation in approaches to and success of community Policing are identified. For example the Fife legacy approach is commended because it 'gives the community a voice in identifying Policing priorities and holds the Police to account if they are not delivering,' as is the use of 'City Voice' in Aberdeen to capture the views of local residents;
- Local Partnership working is generally identified as being successful: for example, there is evidence of coordination with wider plans (such as clear links between the priorities in local Policing plans and Single Outcome Agreements);
- The content of LPPs and MMWPs is critiqued: Summary and critique of the nature of data included and processes of involvement in formulating them;
- Local influence on national issues is identified as an area of concern with some local communities raising concerns about the ability to comment on or influence national decisions about Policing that have an impact locally (a concern also identified elsewhere; Pearson 2015).

Most recently, the Edinburgh HMICS report took as its thematic focus partnership working, with key findings including:

- Strategic partnerships are good and there is a shared vision for community safety and wellbeing in Edinburgh.
- Partner agencies in Edinburgh reported a withdrawal of Police from partnership activity in recent years and a focus on enforcement rather than prevention. However, there is evidence that this trend is reversing.
- A lack of information sharing by Police Scotland has hampered effective tasking and co-ordinating arrangements, but there are indications that this issue may soon be resolved.
- The new service level agreement between City of Edinburgh Council and Police Scotland provides an opportunity for the council to more effectively influence and monitor how funded officers are deployed.
- Plans to align boundaries among public services in Edinburgh, including Policing, provide an opportunity to build on place-based initiatives already underway and make further progress in relation to the public sector reform agenda (HMICS 2015a).

Further evidence of the impact of Police reform on engagement with communities comes from work undertaken by the Scottish Community Safety Network (SCSN 2013). This highlights how pre-reform few Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) felt involved in the planning around Police and Fire reform, although there were some geographical variations (for example rural and small town CSPs were more likely to feel 'very involved'; urban CSPs more likely to have existing scrutiny panel to be used for single services). Further, very few joint Police and Fire local plans, or community safety plans incorporating Police, Fire and CSPs were identified. Confusion regarding the role of elected members in local scrutiny arrangements was also identified and diversity in local arrangements evident.

COSLA report a survey of Conveners of local Police and Fire committees (or other aligned arrangements) in the first year of reform (COSLA 2013). They find that in general, convenors were content with the relationship between them/their council and the local Police Commander and/or the Senior Fire and Rescue Services Officer in the development of the local planning arrangements. Further, scrutiny arrangements were felt to be sufficient to allow convenors to ensure planned outcomes are being delivered and that the number of elected members involved in planning and scrutiny of the two national services has noticeably increased with the new arrangements increasing the quality and extent of local accountability. Challenges identified included that half of respondents did not feel able to drive and influence change and improvement at a local level, however respondents generally felt that arrangements have not had enough time to bed in. Later in 2013, members of the Scottish Parliament's Justice sub-committee on Policing undertook three 'fact finding' trips to Scottish local authorities, and found 'some concern that Policing practices were being standardised across the country and an indication that targets were now being set nationally for officers to apply in local areas without the ability to use their discretion' (Scottish Parliament 2014).

Further, work undertaken in late 2013 by the Justice sub-committee on Policing involved a call for written views about how new Policing arrangements, which came into force on 1 April 2013, were affecting local Policing. Three themes were the focus of the call for evidence: (i) the impact of Police reform on the Police services in local areas; (ii) whether local Policing services have improved, remained the same, or deteriorated since 1 April; and (iii) whether local Policing services have been designed to address the specific needs particular to local areas and if there have been any changes to approach since 1 April. A summary of responses showed mixed views amongst Scottish Local Authorities. A number felt that it was too early to tell or that there was no difference. Examples of positive feedback included that it was easier to access specialist resources (Dundee City); Local Policing needs continue to be met (South Lanarkshire) and that there were now more effective approaches to tackling domestic violence, anti-social behaviour and violent offender (Midlothian).

Less positive comments included the centralisation and/or standardisation of decisions not being appropriate to local context (including Orkney and East Lothian); and limited data sharing and consultation (Midlothian and West Lothian). COSLA - on the basis of survey - identified concerns including that the ability of elected members to influence the strategic direction of local Policing did not meet pre-reform expectations and that a tension between national level decision making and local level decision making was leading to a 'collision' between the two. NGOs also responded, such as Victim Support Scotland, expressing concerns about the reduction in public counters and therefore reduced access, whilst UNISON highlighted concerns on the basis of a survey including centralisation, approaches and methods being replaced with the approach used by the legacy Strathclyde force, backfilling of Police staff with frontline officers, and low morale amongst members. Individual responses were largely in line with the above (SPICe 2014). Additional critique regarding the place of Local Policing within Police Scotland is provided by the Pearson Review of Policing in Scotland, linked to centralisation, officer abstraction to national task forces, backfilling, and tensions between balancing central coordination/targets and local sensitivity (Pearson 2015).

Particular thematic issues have also provided information regarding the nature of connections with communities. It is perhaps instructive that the thematic issues with respect to 'local Policing' that the Justice sub-committee on Policing focused on in its first year were the impact of Police reform on local Policing; stop and search; counter provision; review of traffic warden provision and the closure of control rooms (Scottish Parliament 2014). In the case of consultation regarding the potential closure of Police Counters, on the basis of 804 responses it was found that there was 'resistance to change' and a perception that closing counters will lead to the closure of the local Police station and an increase in crime (Police Scotland 2013c). Such examples are instructive in understanding the implications and unintended consequences that activities pursued beneath other aims of reform may have. Similarly the report of the SPA into the public impact of Police Scotland's Firearms Standing Authority recommended (amongst other things) that (i) The SPA and Police Scotland should set out in a public document a formal agreement on early and effective engagement to improve Police policy development and

strengthen the principle of Policing by consent across Scottish communities; (ii) The SPA should further develop the 'Partners in Scrutiny' national forum with local authorities into a more forward-looking and anticipatory partnership to identify and discuss strategic Policing issues likely to have significant public interest well in advance of any decisions being required and (iii) Police Scotland should ensure that all operational policies are subject to Community Impact Assessments and Equality Impact Assessments (SPA 2015).

Evidence of new approaches to partnership working also exists. Police Scotland have identified a range of approaches to partnership working at national, regional and local authority levels (Police Scotland 2014c) and estimated the value of this in terms of both expenditure (Police Scotland in 13/14 paid over £12 million to partner organisations) and income (Police Scotland received nearly £13 million that paid for 332 officers and 86 staff posts). A Communications and Engagement Strategy is in place (Police Scotland 2015f) and it is also highlighted that 'a Partnership Toolkit has been developed to assist consistency in partnership working across the Service and to support the establishment, management, and completion of successful local partnerships. In particular, it is stated the toolkit will assist the validation of external partnerships and the role they play in supporting the delivery of Policing priorities. This will provide an auditable process that demonstrates the resources committed to supporting each partnership in delivering good value to the Service'.

Other evidence of new approaches to community engagement are set out in Police Scotland's Quarterly Performance Reporting in relation to the Annual Police Plan Objective of 'Working Together to Keep People Safe'. In its most recent report (Q1 2015/16) Police Scotland highlights: the development of a National Community Engagement Framework (currently being piloted), and the work of the National Safer Communities Division 'which engages with several groups which have a visible local presence' and has developed a Polish and East European Network with representatives from every local division; work in partnership with Stonewall; and raise awareness of Child Sexual Exploitation and how it affects communities (Police Scotland 2015a).

Indeed, Police Scotland's Crime Prevention Strategy sets out the activities of the National Safer Communities Department which has five objectives focusing on (i) 'Provid[ing] strategic, policy, and tactical support, to local Policing divisions and specialist departments and focus on protecting the most vulnerable within Scotland's communities'; (ii) 'Support[ing] Divisions following critical incidents with advice and assistance in respect of community engagement, community impact, diversity and equality considerations; (iii) '...provid[ing] targeted interventions including multi-agency support, counselling and providing a relevant counter-narrative to challenge extremist views ...community engagement, communication and effective partnership work are all crucial to delivering the aims of the strategy'; (iv) 'support[ing], develop and rationalise the current partnerships involving Police Scotland and the various public, private and third sector organisations' and (v) 'communicat[ing] key messages about the safety of the community both internally and externally with both partners and members of the public', with one of the outcomes being to 'motivate and empower local officers, partners and members of the public to prevent crime in their own sphere of influence' (Police Scotland

2015g). As stated in the 2015/16 Annual Police Plan, linked to this is the role of Safer Communities teams 'to proactively partner with other agencies to identify, plan and respond to current or emerging crime issues and to review the outcomes of those responses', indeed the document sets out a range of thematic partnerships and programmes developed to engage with specific elements of the community, including women and girls (with particular reference to violence); young people (with a youth engagement strategy in progress); the role of community lay advisors in engaging with communities with protected characteristics; the Safer Virtual Communities Delivery Group; young offenders and those facing mental health challenges (Police Scotland 2015b).

However, there appears to be less evidence from communities of their engagement with the Police post-reform. One exception is the work by Young Scot undertaken in 2013 partnership with Police Scotland which sought to consult young people in Scotland to identify: 1) How Police are currently working; 2) How to do things better; 3) What are the issues that affect young people; 4) How should Police work and plan for the future in the context of reform? It was found that there is a disjuncture between how the Police are seen by young people, and how the Police think they are seen. It was also found that communication needs to be improved, with 65% of young people unaware of how Reform will affect them or their community; and 74% reporting that they don't know the name of their local officer. It was also felt that engagement needs to be improved with 47% of young wanting to see more engagement (for example in schools and elsewhere (Young Scot 2013).

Another example comes from work undertaken by Stonewall Scotland. In a survey undertaken between March and November 2013 on LGBT people's experience of public services in Scotland, they found:

- 42% of survey respondents lacked confidence in Police Scotland's ability to address homophobic and transphobic hate crime in their area;
- 36% of survey respondents would not feel confident reporting a hate crime directly to the Police (with regional variations ranging from 30% in Lothian to 45% in the Highlands and Islands);
- 36% would feel uncomfortable being open about their sexual orientation or gender identity with the Police if they were a victim of any crime (Stonewall Scotland 2014).

Further, the Pearson Review of Policing in Scotland found that, with regard to engagement in local plan consultation, 'Throughout the review, we have met with many local people who are unaware of any such consultation [to agree the 353 ward plans], including many councillors' (Pearson 2015).

5.3 Fire and rescue

In the 2013/16 SFRS Strategic Plan, it states that the 'main purpose of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service is to work in partnership with communities and with others in the public, private and third sectors on prevention, protection and response to improve the safety and wellbeing of people throughout Scotland' (SFRS 2013a).

Indeed, from the outset it is noted by HMFSI with reference to local engagement that 'strengthening engagement, and working in partnership with local government is a key part of the Fire and Rescue Framework, and that 'working in partnership with communities' is enshrined in the Scottish Government's description of the purpose of the SFRS'. It is found that 'this is a principle which the new Service has taken seriously' as evidenced by 17 LSOs having been appointed 'with the express aim of engaging with local government in their areas'. HMFSI also notes that 'evidence suggests that engagement with local government has been good and that the partnership working foreseen in the Scottish Government's plans for the Service is being realised'. In common with the evidence base regarding Policing, much available documentation focuses on the strategies and frameworks in place to deliver the strategic aims of SFRS, with less evidence demonstrating the outcomes of these strategies.

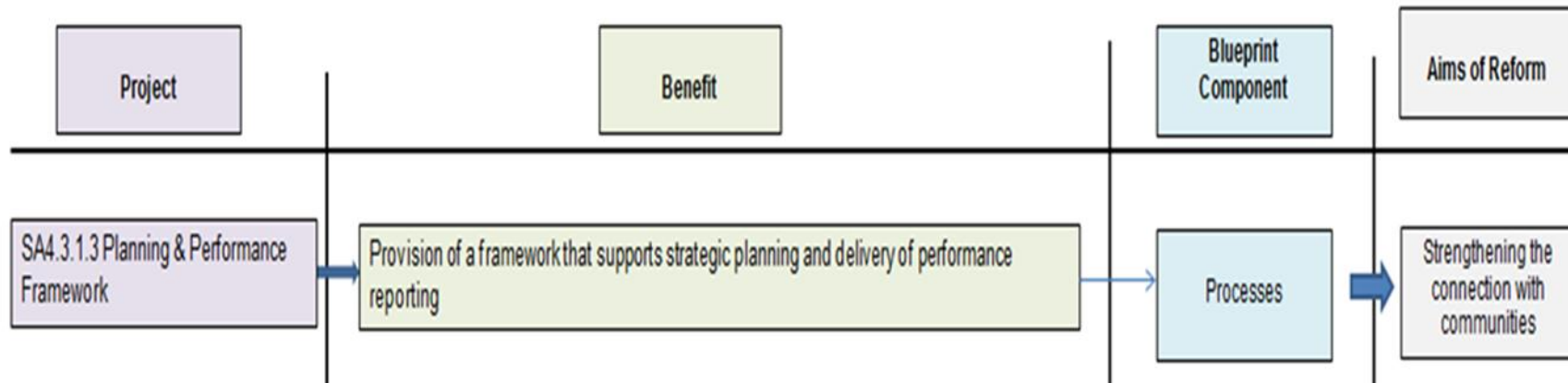
As with the other aims of reform it is important to highlight the work of the SFRS' Service Transformation Programme, which 'will be the means by which we will ensure we realise the benefits of reform' (SFRS 2013a). Organised around the four strategic aims of the SFRS as outlined earlier, we note that its actions have been directly mapped onto the aims of reform. However, we understand that it is only more recently that the 3rd aim of reform has received significant attention, and therefore that projects linked to this are at an early stage. Indeed it is recognised that:

'The [two] aims of reform to Safeguard & improve local services, by reducing unnecessary duplication and maintaining frontline outcomes and to establish Equal Access to Specialist Resources have been more prevalent in the first half of the Programme. The Programme's contribution to: Strengthen the connection with communities has been limited to date and has been a secondary or tertiary benefit that will be delivered as a future benefit. The Programme's contribution to this benefit of reform will be placed in greater focus in the summer of 2015 as we seek to engage with stakeholders on how the future service is shaped through various operational delivery based projects' (SFRS 2015c).

It is suggested that 'the third key benefit of reform to strengthen the connection with communities has been primarily driven from outwith the Programme by Local Senior Officers and the Prevention and Protection Directorate'. With reference to 'benefits realised to date (as of 31/12/14) we note that two projects in particular have been linked to aim 3: i) SA 4.3.1.3 Planning and Performance Framework also contributes to this aim as it provides a framework that supports strategic planning and delivery of performance reporting and ii) Project SA 3.1.1 Consultation and Participation Strategy, which 'provides a framework that supports the aim of strengthening the connection with communities' (SFRS 2015c) (see figure 11).

As earlier stated, updates continue to be routinely produced for SFRS' Service Transformation Committee, regarding progress towards completion of the various projects (including additional projects opened in the course of the programme) (SFRS nd (a)). Again, we understand this information is available on internal systems and that a publically available document will be produced in the summer of

Figure 11: Projects mapped as of 31st December 2014 as part of SFRS Benefits Realisation programme relating to Aim 3 of reform (SFRS 2015c)



2016 which will specifically align projects to the aims of reform in a similar way, which we look forward to including in future evidence reviews.

With reference to the SFRS strategic plan, for example, perhaps the strategic aims of most relevance to Aim 3 of reform are 'Improved safety of communities and staff' and 'Improved outcomes through partnership' (SFRS 2013a). Key activities identified in pursuit of these include: issuing community planning guidance to Local Senior Officers; developing and implementing local plans; planning and implementing local safety campaigns; establishing the community partnership unit; and developing processes and ongoing evaluation of partnerships; developing and delivering a 'business engagement forum'; establishing and engaging with a 'working together framework' allowing an ongoing partnership with representative bodies (delivered); and an ongoing 'stakeholder engagement strategy' and 'communication strategy'.

Key plans and strategies setting out actions to deliver the strategic aims include the Prevention and Protection Directorate Strategy [providing] 'a means to guide the Local Senior Officers (LSOs) who are each required to prepare a Local Fire and Rescue plan, which establishes the priorities and objectives for Scotland's 32 Local Authority areas. These plans shall strengthen the LSO's commitment to local Community Planning arrangements and will ensure that the SFRS fully contributes to the delivery of the Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs).' This includes reference to the use of the Community Safety Engagement Toolkit, development of the Local Authority Liaison Officer role in support of the LSO, business community engagement and community (safety) education (SFRS 2013b).

The Engagement Framework also identifies how SFRS 'engages with partners, stakeholders and communities in a range of ways including joint working practices, awareness campaigns, education programmes, public consultations, heritage activities and social media'. It commits to reporting on the outputs and outcomes of engagement activity through: reports to the Local and Stakeholder Engagement Committee; the Annual Performance Review; the Annual Operating Plan; and reports to local Scrutiny Committee. It highlights formation of the Local Stakeholder Engagement Committee (which amongst other functions will 'have a role in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of SFRS arrangements for strengthening community engagement') and highlights the planned creation of a Youth Engagement Framework and Older Persons' Engagement Framework. With some similarity to Police Scotland's 'National Safer Communities Department' a 'Community Safety Engagement' Team was also established to 'promote a shared approach to all activities by providing a national hub where key partners can assemble in order to develop new policies and procedures in response to local engagement requirements'. Much documentation emphasises the importance for SFRS of engaging with the wider Community Planning and SOA landscape, and with voluntary and public sector partners. It also often emphasises the key role of the LSO in engaging with this landscape and the provision of tools, frameworks and support to do so. There is a strong focus on community engagement and partnership predominantly as a means to supporting community safety. Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSVs) also compose a strand of SFRS' community engagement approach (SFRS nd (b)). There appears, however, little publicly available evidence

regarding the subsequent evaluation of frameworks and processes of engagement, or publication of planned frameworks.

In terms of evidencing the successful delivery of Aim 3 of reform, it is clear that local Fire and Rescue Plans have been developed and are in place (SFRS nd (b)). SFRS' Annual Operating Plans set out actions to be delivered each year (SFRS 2015d; 2014a; 2013c) with annual reviews for 2013/14 and 2014/15 providing more detail on progress. In addition to reflecting on the extent to which targets set out in the Fire and Rescue Framework have been met they also summarise progress toward SFRS' four strategic aims as earlier outlined. As suggested, strategic aims (1) and (3) appear most pertinent to Aim 3 of Police and Fire reform and it is around these that examples of the indicators employed to illustrate progress towards their achievement are summarised in figure 12.

Much evidence focuses on the formation of governance arrangements and structures at the local level; policies and frameworks for the delivery and development of services, and case studies of effective partnership working. Evidence is also provided regarding the approaches taken to community engagement, often framed within the context of prevention, community safety and awareness raising.

It is interesting to note that the 2015/16 action plan takes a different approach to preceding plans. In 'continuing on our journey of reform, we will focus on 3 key themes this year: Protecting Scotland's communities; Protecting and developing our workforce; Building a Fire and Rescue service for the future'. In terms of Aim 3, prevention, Home Safety Visits and working with the Scottish Ambulance Service regarding cardiac arrests appear to be areas where 'partnership' and 'connecting with communities' may be evident (SFRS 2015d).²

As with Policing, Local Area Inspections are also being undertaken for the SFRS by HMFSI. At the time of writing two reports have been produced with regard to Aberdeen City and East Renfrewshire (HMFSI 2015a; 2015b). These are organised according to the aims of reform, exploring the aims of 'strengthened connection between SFRS and Communities' themes of 'knowing the community'; 'working in partnership' and 'local scrutiny arrangements'. In addition, the local Fire and Rescue Plan and Single Outcome Agreement is also reviewed. In terms of knowing the community it is found that the SFRS in Aberdeen City and East Renfrewshire knows and engages well with the community. Whilst the evidence cited for this varies slightly between reports, this is generally on the basis of the content of the Local Fire and Rescue Plan, an awareness amongst staff within Fire stations of the socio-economic structure of the community; the existence of 'community engagement activities' such as inspections of high rise buildings, youth engagement or the use of Facebook; the availability of SFRS premises for

² HFSVs appear a consistent and increasing manifestation of community (safety) engagement for SFRS. In 2013-14 the SFRS carried out 71,000 HFSVs, an increase of 26 per cent on the previous year (56,000 visits in 2012-13). This demonstrates a rise in activity in this area since the SFRS was established, following relatively little change in the three previous years. Two in every five HFSVs in 2013-14 were to homes with an "above" or "well above" average risk level

Figure 12: Selected key indicators employed in SFRS Annual Reviews (2013/14 and 2014/15) in order to evidence progress toward Strategic Aims (1) and (3) (SFRS 2015e; 2014b).

| Improved safety of communities and staff | Improved outcomes through partnership |
|---|--|
| <p>Work with our partners in developing safer communities and improved outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance for Local Senior Officers (LSOs) on Community Safety, Community Planning and Community Engagement in place • Local Fire and Rescue Plans in place for each of the 32 local authority areas across Scotland since April 2014³ • Community Action Team made up of Community Safety Advocates, Community Firefighters and Local Area Liaison Officers (LALOs) in place • The Community Safety Partnership Unit, built to enhance our work with local service providers and partners, has been established • Engagement Framework developed which will enable the use of various toolkits and indicators to evaluate our engagement and consultation practices, and demonstrate the improvements that are made as a result. • Three Regional Resilience Partnerships formed (RRP). • National and international networking, strategic engagement with consultations | <p>Work in partnership with communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Planning Partnerships form the backbone of our contact with our local communities. • Corporate Communications Strategy to reach out to those most at risk produced. • ‘Join Scotland’s Fight Against Fire’ awareness campaign run and evaluated (SFRS 2014c). • Engagement Framework developed. • Social Media Policy developed. Media officers in each service delivery area. Number of Facebook & Twitter followers included. An ‘essential channel to connect with members of our communities...’ <p>Make partnership working an integral part of all of our business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SFRS Chair leads National Group on Community Planning. Board has begun a rolling programme of visits to Local Scrutiny Committees, Community Planning Partnerships and Local Authorities. • EG: LSOs provided with guidance on how to build relationships with local authorities and Community Planning Partnerships, giving them the skills and knowledge they need to connect with their local communities and directly benefit from reform. |
| <p>Educate and empower our diverse communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retained and Voluntary Duty systems as a means to spread Fire safety message from within the community itself and build trust • ‘Join Scotland’s Fight Against Fire’ public awareness campaign run • Frameworks to formalise approach water safety and road safety, sensory impairment and youth engagement to be produced. Draft framework with guidance on older people produced. • Extensive work in partnership with voluntary and public sector partners identified. • We have projects in play across Scotland which arise out of specific local issues and aim to provide each of our communities with the tailored support they need to stay safe | <p>Develop our public engagement and communication with stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Stakeholder & Engagement Committee formed. • Engagement Framework developed [defining] how we engage with our partners and communities • Communications Strategy, Equalities Strategy and Complaints Policy established. • EG: “LSOs worked together to produce a flexible template for their Local Plans which clearly linked to the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland and the SFRS Strategic Plan. At the same time, each plan had to be shaped by its own local Single Outcome Agreement and local risk profile. Draft Local Plans were published in December 2013. LSOs consulted widely on their content with partner agencies and the public. A survey was used to support the opinions gathered face to face. Survey results were analysed nationally, by service delivery area and by LSO area to draw out key messages and trends. People who responded strongly agreed with the priorities LSOs had chosen as the backbone of their plans, and showed high satisfaction and confidence levels for the service we provide.” |

³ It is stated that ‘with Local Plans in place, the next step is to report on progress towards the priorities we set through these plans to local scrutiny committees, and to incorporate information in our national performance reports which drills down to a local level’. This reporting is likely to be of relevance to this evaluation.

community group meetings and involvement with activities seeking to reduce anti-social behaviour amongst young people.

In terms of working in partnership, in Aberdeen City this is evidenced with reference to a range of factors. These include the presence of SFRS on the CPP and CSP, and through involvement with harm reduction measures through community safety and engagement staff. A case study of the 'Community Hub' is offered as an example of a means through which partnership working is facilitated to tackle issues such as anti-social behaviour, requiring a multi-partner approach. Examples of co-location and youth diversionary activities in which SFRS were a partner are also included. In East Renfrewshire partnership working with Police Scotland and the Scottish Ambulance Service is described as being good, the relationship between the SFRS, LA and CPP described as positive at the operational level (although weaker at the strategic level); and participation in weekly partnership briefings.

Local scrutiny arrangements are reviewed with reference to a description of the structure and processes in place and draws on evidence including attendance at the formal scrutiny meeting. In Aberdeen it was found that time available for scrutiny is limited. It is found that scrutiny also takes place through CPPs, the Community Safety Hub and on an ad hoc basis between SFRS and the Council. The engagement of senior SFRS staff with council officials is noted, as are the challenges of limited engagement opportunities for Local Authorities in national level decisions which influence the nature of local service delivery. Scrutiny of the Local Plan is complementary of the information drawn into the plan, and emphasises that it does not seek to criticise the authors of the plan themselves given the expectation that similar issues will be identified elsewhere in Scotland. It identifies a lack of benchmarking and targets; good information about the city but a subsequent absence of targeted conclusions on service delivery types and levels; lack of translation of some commentary (e.g. regarding immigration) into implications for service delivery. It notes that whilst 'there is good information about outputs (what the SFRS in Aberdeen City will do) there is much less about outcomes (what will happen as a result)'.

Further, it is noted that 'it would be useful if the Local Plan was clear on performance indicators, highlighting trends over time and how that compares to national performance, which in turn would lead to a rationale for local priorities'. It notes that operational staff 'were not well sighted on the Local Plan. With regard to the SOA the place of SFRS in achieving multi-agency targets is identified, as is alignment between the Local Plan and the SOA, with it being found in the course of discussions with representatives of Aberdeen City Council that 'local plans of other agencies such as the SFRS were perceived as feeding into the SOA and its targets'. Examples of partnership working (for example in identifying vulnerable people who might benefit from a Home Fire Safety Visit) are identified. Limited engagement by elected representatives directly with SFRS via the Service Delivery Director was noted at the formation of SFRS (via limited responses to invitations to meet) and it is hoped that this will change over time.

There are similarities and differences between Aberdeen City and East Renfrewshire. It is noted 'there are good community relationship arrangements but less community safety activity' (reflecting need) and that a single Local Authority Liaison Officer (LALO) has responsibility for engaging with three local authorities compared to some other LSO areas where LALOs deal with a single local authority which 'places an extra burden on the LALO. With regard to local scrutiny it is found that The Council's scrutiny committee receives regular submissions and performance data from the LSO's team although no comment is made on the extent of scrutiny. Information sharing is also found to be good through a new 'Greater Results in Partnership' (GRIP) community safety approach.

With regard to the Local Plan, whilst it is found that there is 'useful' background information about the area and the incident activity of SFRS, as well as incident activity for the preceding three years and a trend comparison with Scotland-wide totals it is found to be lacking targeted conclusions; little analysis of incident types and statistics, nor evidence of a risk-based approach to prioritisation. It is suggested that the Local Plan would benefit from measurable performance indicators and comparisons against national performance, which in turn would lead to a rationale for local priorities. A further suggestion is that the Local Plan should set out clear local performance targets that the SFRS can have its performance within the local authority area measured against. Finally, it is interesting to note that with regard to the SOA, the HMFSI suggest that 'rather than replicating national targeted reductions at a local level, we think it more appropriate to establish local targets that reflect local circumstances'.

Audit Scotland have also undertaken an audit of SFRS (Audit Scotland 2015a). Key findings include that 'The SFRS has maintained effective local engagement in the move to a national service' and that the 17 LSOs have 'been a successful innovation and have helped in the Fire and Rescue service's move from local government to central government'. Of particular relevance is the observation that:

'Local senior officers worked together to agree a national template of reporting to allow the service to set standards but maintain local flexibility. These reports should provide a benchmarking tool to allow the sharing of approaches that have worked well. This will help the service to demonstrate the benefits of reform at a local level' (Audit Scotland 2015a).

These reports will be of particular interest to this evaluation. Finally, it is noted that significant national variation regarding how closely board members were engaging with local authorities was found in a report to the LSEC, with the board reviewing how this might be improved.

5.4 Summary and implications

Evidence that 'new formal relationships' with each of the 32 Local Authorities are in place is relatively comprehensive, in that it has been documented the new governance structures exist. Beyond the formation of these local plans and the functioning of local scrutiny arrangements, there is also evidence regarding the nature of and approaches to community engagement taken by the services. For

example: SFRS' Engagement Framework and their use of the Community Safety Engagement Toolkit. As with aims (1) and (2), both Police and Fire and Rescue services have produced specific pieces of work which seek to map the ways in which reform activities map onto the third aim of reform (for example Post Implementation Benefits Review and the work of the Service Transformation Committee). At the more local level there is an increasing body of evidence emerging from both HMICS and HMFSI through the Local Divisional Inspections (Local Policing+) and Local Area Inspections which provide evaluations at the Divisional/Area level regarding the nature and functioning of the Local Plans, MMWPs and scrutiny process. There is a particularly strong role for this evidence in assessment of this aim of reform, and whilst there are some consistent messages emerging there is also clear variation between regions in terms of the experience of, and progress toward, reform.

However there is less evidence regarding the functioning of these new processes. It would therefore be helpful to move beyond 'establishment' to consider the 'functioning' and 'outcomes' of different types of community engagement activities. Further, much evidence appears marshalled beneath this aim is not directly referred to within the text of 'Aim 3' in that it goes beyond connections with councillors to consider strengthening connections with communities more generally. This suggests that it is important – as part of the evaluation and the assessment of the extent to which the aims of reform have been achieved – to be clear about whether it is specifically the aim regarding councillors that is being assessed, or the wider sense of community engagement that they have been interpreted in many documents.

Further, if it is the wider sense of the aim that is of interest, then being clear about the 'community' in question is important. Evidence has emerged with reference to place-based communities (for example through Multi-Member Ward Plans); virtual communities (online media campaigns and social media); communities of interest (for example the business community); particular community demographics (for example older people, younger people).

There is a clear role for the evaluation in utilising the geographical case study work to help move beyond a focus on the 'establishment' of new arrangements around community engagement to examine in more detail 'functioning' to 'outcomes' and 'impacts' in assessing the extent to which the connection between services and communities has been strengthened as a result of the activities undertaken within this aim. As part of this, it will be important to consider views and experiences from a range of perspectives and at a range of levels within communities at local, regional and national levels.

6. Broadening and deepening the evidence review

KEY POINTS

Evidence sources can give us important information about how far the aims of reform have been achieved. Often this evidence may span a number of aims of reform and address a range of wider issues rather than being focused on specific areas of reform activity.

In our review of evidence we have therefore ensured we have not limited the study just to those documents which engage explicitly with the three aims of reform and we have also recognised the importance of considering individual pieces of evidence in their entirety and assessing their strengths and limitations.

We therefore present a small number of ‘evidence in focus’ case studies, which summarise the aims, content, strengths and limitations of a range of evidence types across the two services.

Future evidence reviews, as well as the thematic case study phase of the evaluation, will develop this approach further.

6.1 Overview

The main focus of this report has been on aligning existing evidence with the aims of reform in order to provide an assessment of the extent to which the aims have been achieved. However, the evidence base relating to the impacts and implications of reform extends beyond the specific aims to include issues which are still important to understanding the nature, process and impact of reform. It is therefore important to broaden the evidence review in ways which engage strategically with topics that are important to the reform process. In addition the available evidence also needs to be assessed critically in terms of strengths and limitations. This means it is important to deepen the analysis of evidence section in order to come to a robust assessment of its contribution to the analysis of reform. This is done here via a set of ‘evidence in focus’ concise case studies, which summarise the aims, content, strengths and limitations of a range of evidence types across the two services.

6.2 Broadening the evidence review: the example of workforce surveys

It is clear that there is much evidence which does not directly address the three aims of reform but which is still of fundamental importance to the reform process. One area of strategic importance to both Police and fire and rescue services concerns the attitudes and perceptions of the workforce. SFRS undertook a ‘cultural audit’ in 2014/15 which provided important insights into the current and

ideal 'cultural profiles' of the organisation. It helped distinguish between different organisational cultures in different part of the country and between different roles and ranks within SFRS.

Within Policing, there have also been major – published - pieces of research to better understand the impacts and implications of reform on the workforce. The Association of Scottish Police Superintendents (ASPS) has commissioned two 'member's resilience surveys'. The 2015 survey finds that with regard to 'issues relating to most recent changes':

- 26% more concerned about career progression than a year ago;
- 39% more worried about personal finances than a year ago;
- 77% said demands of job have increased in the last year;
- 46% said they enjoy their work less than a year ago;
- 23% concerned pension changes mean they must work longer.

Whilst 'particular concerns' are identified as:

- Increased Work Demands;
- Decrease in Pension Provision;
- Reduced Work Resources;
- Personal or Family Security;
- Reduced Career Options (ASPS 2015).

Many of these concerns were underlined by a broader staff survey commissioned by the Scottish Police Authority and Police Scotland and published in 2015. Focusing on the experience of officers and staff (and with a response rate of 50.4%), key findings included that: 56% of respondents understood the need for change; 46% supported the need for change; 70% of respondents wanted more opportunity to influence decisions made; 12% of respondents felt they had appropriate information on what Police Scotland plans mean for them and 33% of all respondents indicated an intention to leave (with a large proportion citing pension changes as a factor adversely affecting their commitment) (Axiom 2015).

6.3 Deepening the evidence review: assessing strengths and weaknesses of evidence

Although this report has focused on the ways in which individual documents can inform understanding of specific aims of reform, it has not provided a deeper assessment of the specific strengths and weakness of individual pieces of evidence. The following section uses 4 short 'evidence in focus' case studies to provide a more holistic assessment of specific pieces of evidence.

6.3.1 Evidence in focus: evidence from the voluntary sector

Stonewall Scotland: Your services your say (Stonewall Scotland 2014)

Who has produced the evidence and why?

This report has been produced by Stonewall Scotland on the basis of research commissioned to YouGov. It explores the experiences of LGBT people in relation to public services in Scotland. It focuses on health and social care, housing, Policing, family life, post-16 education and training, and the local community.

How has the evidence been gathered?

The report states that the total sample size was 1,043 lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans adults from across Scotland. The survey was conducted using an online interview administered to members of the YouGovPlc GB panel of 350,000+ individuals who have agreed to take part in surveys. Additional open recruitment through Stonewall Scotland was used to achieve the full sample. Fieldwork was undertaken between March and November 2013. The figures were weighted and are representative of Scottish adults by region and age. The resulting data was analysed and presented by Stonewall Scotland.

What can it tell us?

- Many respondents are not confident in Police Scotland's ability to tackle hate crime in their area;
- Respondents also reported lacking the confidence to report hate crime to the Police, and would feel uncomfortable being open about their sexual orientation or gender identity when interacting with them as a victim or suspect of crime;
- More than two in five (42 per cent) of respondents lacked confidence in Police Scotland's ability to address homophobic and transphobic hate crime in their area;
- More than a third (36 per cent) of respondents would not feel confident reporting a hate crime directly to the Police;
- More than a third (36 per cent) of respondents would feel uncomfortable being open about their sexual orientation or gender identity with the Police if they were a victim of any crime.

What appears to work well?

This research appears to help address evidence gaps by engaging with a specific community to understand their perceptions of, and experiences of, Police Scotland. It contextualises Aim 3 of reform by engaging more broadly with the theme of 'community links' beyond democratically elected stakeholders. It is a relatively large scale and statistically robust piece of work.

What might be improved?

The data is not able to tell us about regional variations in these experiences. Nor is it able to specifically tell us about perceptions of reform per se, or allow us to follow changes in attitude/experience over time to give us a picture of the situation pre- or post-reform.

6.3.2 Evidence in focus: evidence from HMFSI

HMFSI: Inspection of East Renfrewshire (HMFSI 2015b)

Who has produced the evidence and why?

The local inspection evidence is gathered and assessed by HMFSI and is informed by the commitments set out in Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2013 that connections should be strengthened between SFRS and local communities. The process of local inspection is also required to provide the necessary assurance around the satisfactory delivery of local services including whether specialist national resources can be accessed locally, there are good relations with partner organisations, and that there is cooperation with other scrutiny bodies to provide 'place-based' scrutiny of service provision.

How has the evidence been gathered?

A team of 5 led by HM Chief Inspector for the Fire and Rescue Service, visited service delivery locations and spoke to managers and uniformed and non-uniformed staff. The team also viewed premises and equipment and sampled local records to assess how business is being conducted. The gathering and analysis of evidence cross-references the SFRS's written plans and is structured around the Fire and Rescue Framework, focusing on:

- The Local Fire and Rescue Plan and Single Outcome Agreement;
- Improved service outcomes and protecting frontline services;
- More equal access to specialist resources and national capacity;
- Strengthened connection between SFRS and communities.

What can it tell us?

The inspection provides key statistics for the East Renfrewshire area, including numbers of incidents attended and whether these relate to fires, false alarms and road traffic collisions. Key findings to emerge from the local inspection include:

- The SFRS is delivering satisfactory 'response' and 'prevention and protection' functions in an area with low levels of operational activity;
- There are good relationships with the local authority (although the Local Area Liaison Officer has to deal with 3 local authorities) and partners but strategic relationships are weak;

- There is a good level of community relations activity and fire safety enforcement is effective;
- There is scope for Station Managers to be drawn into Scrutiny Committee activity;
- There are specialist resources available in neighbouring areas.

What appears to work well?

The local area inspections provide important insights into local service delivery and act as a very useful mechanism for flagging up issues that might require resolution at a national level. In particular, the inspections provide a 'voice' for frontline staff to highlight matters that concern them and a sense of the way in which national SFRS policies and practices are impacting locally.

What might be improved?

There is scope for greater transparency around the methodology used in the local areas inspection programme (for example, in terms of numbers of people spoken and their roles/profiles) and also for including other perspectives and viewpoints (for example, from partner agencies, the local authority and local community). A greater focus on gathering evidence of the outcomes of activity and placing this in a comparative perspective so that the performance of one local area can be compared with that of areas with similar demand and risk profiles would also be helpful.

6.3.3 Evidence in focus: evidence from HMICS

HMICS: Local Area+ Inspection of Edinburgh City Division (HMICS 2015a)

Who has produced the evidence and why?

This evidence has been produced as a result of an inspection by HMICS of Edinburgh City Police division, in the first half of 2015. It forms part of its Local Policing+ inspection programme which aims to assess the state, effectiveness and efficiency of local Policing, under the terms of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012. Inspections are based on the HMICS framework which considers six overarching themes: Outcomes, Leadership and governance, Planning and process, People, Resources and Partnerships. During the inspection of Edinburgh Division HMICS examined in greater detail the division's approach to partnership working. This provided an opportunity for HMICS to assess the impact of change both locally and nationally in this area of Policing. Local Police custody facilities were also subject to inspection.

How has the evidence been gathered?

The inspection involved a team of eight led by the Assistant Inspector of Constabulary. It gathered evidence from a range of sources including surveys of stakeholders and councillors involved in local scrutiny of Policing; a review of data, strategies, policies and procedures; observation of community council meetings

and of divisional processes and meetings, including those done in partnership with other agencies; and over 75 interviews and focus groups involving over 160 officers, staff, partners and stakeholders along with observations of 15 meetings and briefings.

What can it tell us?

The inspection report collates statistics for Edinburgh City such as number of recorded crimes and offences, detection rates, levels of public confidence and satisfaction, and numbers of public complaints. It summarises performance against the local Policing objectives for the division. Some of the key findings from the inspection include:

- Crimes per 10,000 of population in Edinburgh is the highest in Scotland;
- Edinburgh has the lowest detection rates of all divisions in Scotland;
- The division has made positive progress in six out of 15 local Policing plan objectives;
- The division has a good approach to consultation using a broad range of methods to contribute to the identification of national and local priorities;
- The division has supported the development of effective local scrutiny arrangements by raising awareness of wider Policing issues;
- Morale amongst officers and staff is mixed. There are concerns about the impact that increasing demand alongside reducing officer numbers is having on their ability to provide an effective service;
- The division has a good approach to absence management with some of the lowest sickness rates in Scotland;
- Strategic partnerships are good and there is a shared vision for community safety and wellbeing in Edinburgh.

What appears to work well?

The focus of the local inspection on the six themes provides a useful framework for presenting a rounded picture of local service delivery. The inspection offers a view from frontline officers and staff that highlights matters that concern them. It provides a good sense of the way in which national policies and practices are implemented locally and their effect. Specific 'case studies' presented in the inspection report provide a helpful focus on specific issues identified by the inspection.

What might be improved?

There is scope for greater specifics and detail about the methods used in the inspection (for example, how many specific focus groups with what number and kinds of officer, what number of interviews) and more explicit links between findings and the specific evidence for them. There might also be benefit in making greater

use of evidence drawn from, for example, local partners, the local authority and local community to broaden what can appear a somewhat 'Police-focused' view.

6.3.4 Evidence in focus: evidence focusing on workforce issues

Axiom: Report for SPA/Police Scotland Opinion Survey 2015. September 2015 (Axiom 2015)

Who has produced the evidence and why?

This report has been produced by Axiom Consultancy – a market research organisation, based in Glasgow, with experience in the field of employee research – and appears to have been commissioned jointly by Police Scotland and the SPA. Roughly two years on from the introduction of the national force, the main aim of the survey was to provide a snapshot of officer and staff engagement. It covered perceptions of a range of issues including information and communications; line management; training and development; overall wellbeing; inclusion and equality; organisational change; organisational purpose and objectives; and individual commitment/intention to leave.

How has the evidence been gathered?

The survey sought the views of all Police officers, support staff and SPA employees across Scotland. It had an extensive development phase involving communication planning and phased design and testing of the questionnaire and mode of delivery. Employees who had no access to computers or who were absent for work (e.g. on maternity or sick leave) were sent a paper version of the questionnaire. All others were invited to complete the questionnaire online. The survey was 'live' from 18 May 2015 for approximately one month. The total achieved sample size was 11,796, representing an overall response rate of 50%. The authors of the report note that this is the highest response rate achieved in employee engagement surveys among similar large public sector organisations in the UK in recent years. It should be noted, however, that this still leaves significant scope for non-response bias in the achieved sample (see below). There is no indication that the achieved sample has been weighted to match the profile of the workforce as a whole, despite some clear variation in response rates.

What can it tell us?

The results of the survey – which were the focus on considerable political and media interest – are summarised as 'positive messages' and 'issues for improvement' (rather than 'negative messages'):

- Key positive messages included high levels of respondents reporting strong and positive connections with their job, their team and their line manager;
- Positive feedback was more common among those in national functions and who had joined the organisation in the previous two years;
- 'Less positive' views were reported to be more common among those in regional roles and/or without regular access to senior management;

- Issues that were highlighted as impacting particularly on staff engagement were information and communication, feedback, training and development, wellbeing and overall commitment (33% of all respondents indicated an intention to leave);
- The survey also captured a high degree of scepticism about whether senior managers would take action in relation to the results of the survey.

Overall, the results suggest that – two years after unification – there are some areas of key strength for the organisation but that these need to be set against (and are in danger of being undermined by) significant areas of workforce dissatisfaction.

What appears to work well?

The survey marks a serious engagement with issues of employee engagement and morale, and indicates a relatively widespread appetite among staff to have their voices heard. It highlights areas where immediate action is needed (and some of the strengths that may be built on to do that) and puts in place an important benchmark against which progress can be judged. The report itself provides summary findings in relation to all the topic areas covered by the survey and is generally accessible and clearly presented.

What might be improved?

The implications of a response rate of 51% are not discussed. In particular, the variations in response across different staff groups need to be considered. For example, the response rate was only 39% in the division/department with the largest overall workforce – namely, local Policing. Given the finding that those in local roles were less positive in their views, it is likely that overall levels of dissatisfaction would have been higher had the sample been weighted to account for differential non-response. The methods of analysis deployed are straightforward, using univariate and bivariate approaches. The absence of any multivariate analyses means that it is difficult to know what are the key drivers of positive or negative attitudes. The report refers to some 325,000 words of ‘free text’ responses, which appear to have been subsequently coded and incorporated into the quantitative analysis. It seems likely that there would be much in these responses that might also be worth examining qualitatively. Although response by region (East/West/North/national) is shown, there is no subsequent analysis of variation by geography or legacy force area. Overall, given the size of the dataset, there would appear to be significant scope for further analysis.

7. Conclusions from year one of the evidence review, and next steps

KEY POINTS

In terms of the overall publicly available evidence landscape, within each aim there are variations in the scope, depth and quality of evidence.

There are similar strengths in the evidence base across the Aims: there is good documentation of the existence of new governance structures, processes and frameworks in order to deliver the aims of reform, and extensive quantitative performance data and transactional indicators.

The gaps in the evidence base are also similar, relating to a need to move beyond descriptions of 'establishment' and 'functioning' to documenting and understanding local 'outcomes' and 'impacts', and doing so from multiple perspectives.

Key challenges also include the development of plausible causal chains between activities and the aims of reform, awareness of any unintended and unanticipated consequences and assessing broader impacts on the Justice system and wider public sector.

It is also clear that there is much evidence which falls outside the immediate area of the aims of reform, but nevertheless examines factors that may be critical to achieving the aims of reform. Such evidence includes that which relates to workforce; estate or procurement for example.

Overall, at this stage and on the basis of publicly available information, there is plausible and credible evidence of progress being made to achieving the three main long term aims of reform. However the evidence base tends to indicate 'integration' rather than 'transformation' of service delivery, is process rather than outcome focused, oriented toward 'producer' rather than 'consumer' perspectives, and stronger on national rather than local information. Further, it is important that commitments to develop the evidence base in relation to the three aims are maintained, as there is still scope to enhance the evidence base in ways that will allow a clearer and more robust assessment of claims regarding the achievement of the aims of reform.

The picture is complex and the evidence presented in this Year 1 report will need to be supplemented by other perspectives (to be addressed in the next stages of the evaluation) before a more comprehensive assessment can be made.

7.1 Conclusions

It is clear that there is evidence which supports claims that each of the three aims of reform is partially realised. In terms of the overall evidence landscape, within each aim there are variations in the scope, depth and quality of evidence.

It is also clear that there are similar evidence strengths across the three aims. Evidence regarding the existence of governance structures, processes and frameworks in order to deliver the aims of reform is generally in place. Similarly, with regard to Aims 1 and 2 there is quantitative transactional evidence of performance maintenance/improvement. It is clear that there has been much work undertaken in order to allow the forces to move forward with reform, for example baselining and risk profiling areas.

There are also similar evidence gaps across the three aims. These tend to relate to the need to move beyond evidencing 'establishment' and 'functioning' to understanding the 'outcomes' and 'impacts' of efforts to achieve reform. In so doing, understand the consequences (intended and unintended) of reform, and different experiences/perceptions from different perspectives. Further, there appears a general lack of data regarding attitudes and perceptions toward the efficacy (or otherwise) of reform.

There are challenges around the nature of the available evidence base. In the context of the broader aims of this evaluation, there has been limited work to date that maps the activities beneath all three aims of reform onto the activities of the wider Justice system, or seeks to understand in a systematic way the wider impacts of reform on partnership activities across community planning structures from the perspectives of multiple stakeholders. There are also challenges in establishing causal relationships between the indicators employed and the outcomes beneath which they are collated in order to evidence. This can influence the confidence with which claims might be made on the basis of the evidence available. We also note that much evaluation and ongoing monitoring is planned from both Police and Fire and Rescue Services.

It is important to be clear about the remit of the aims, and therefore the nature of the evidence required to demonstrate progress (or otherwise) toward their delivery. This is to some extent linked to the nature of evidence available. The aims are very specific, for example with Aim 1 stating that it seeks 'to protect and improve local services despite financial cuts, by stopping duplication of support services eight times over and not cutting front line services'. This raises questions regarding the evidence used. For example, are we only interested in evidence directly related to interventions that have protected and improved local services as a result of i) the prevention of duplication of support services and ii) not cutting front line services' or are we interested in interventions that may have protected and improved services through means other than preventing duplication of support services and not cutting front line services? We would argue that drawing causal links between interventions and outcomes is particularly challenging and therefore it is important to take account of the broader context within which indicators sit, and the factors which may influence them.

It is also clear that there is much evidence which falls outside the immediate area of the aims of reform, but nevertheless demonstrates fundamentally important factors in achieving the aims of reform. Whilst this evidence does not fall neatly within any of the three aims it is clearly relevant, and subsequent evidence reviews will develop in such a way as to take this evidence into account.

Overall, at this stage and on the basis of publicly available information, there is plausible and credible evidence of progress being made towards achieving the three main long-term aims of reform. However the evidence base tends to indicate 'integration' rather than 'transformation' of service delivery, is process rather than outcome focused, oriented toward 'producer' rather than 'consumer' perspectives, and stronger on national rather than local information. Further, it is important that commitments to develop the evidence base in relation to the three aims are maintained, as there is still scope to enhance the evidence base in ways that will allow a clearer and more robust assessment of claims regarding the achievement of the aims of reform.

The picture is complex and the evidence presented in this Year 1 report will need to be supplemented by other perspectives (to be addressed in the next stages of the evaluation) before a more comprehensive assessment can be made.

7.2 Next steps for the evidence review and evaluation

In part, this annex should be used to help further identify evidence held and published internally or externally which might fill the gaps identified and/or provide a fuller account of the evidence presented within each Aim. The geographical case studies and thematic case studies will be informed by the evidence gaps identified in year one's evidence review, and the themes emerging from the key informant interviews.

Future evidence reviews may consider a broader range of evidence, outwith the immediate aims of reform, recognising the ways in which the achievement of the aims of reform are contingent on other factors (such as workforce, for example). There is also further work to be undertaken in subsequent annual reviews in extending the remit to include non-published evidence.

There are a range of further elements to this evaluation (also summarised in figure 1):

- Key informant interviews (years one and three);
- Geographical case studies (years one and three);
- Thematic case studies (year three);
- International comparative workshops (years two and four);
- Annual evidence reviews.

The report of which this annex is part includes a summary of the themes emerging from the key informant interviews. These interviews with key informants operating

at a national level are crucial to gaining additional insights into 'how' and 'why' the aims of reform have (or have not) been met. The four year nature of the evaluation will allow this evidence review to be used as a baseline against which progress toward the aims of reform - from multiple perspectives and at local and national level - might continue to be assessed.

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