Evaluation of Police and Fire Reform: Year 3 Thematic Case Study- Partnership, Innovation and Prevention

CRIME AND JUSTICE

social research

Evaluation of Police and Fire Reform:
Year 3 Thematic Case Study – Partnership, Innovation and Prevention

SIPR, What Works Scotland and ScotCen

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Executive Summary

The evaluation of police and fire reform began in February 2015 and is being undertaken by the Scottish Institute for Policing Research (SIPR), ScotCen Social Research and What Works Scotland. The Year 2 report was published in August 2017 and focused on findings from four geographical case studies which examined local experience and perceptions of the way police and fire and rescue services are being delivered to local communities. The local case study evidence presented a consistent picture of both the progress towards, and perceived challenges remaining with regard to, achieving the long term aims of reform. Despite diminishing resources local police officers and fire fighters believed there was a strong commitment to partnership working. However, one of the wider lessons to emerge from Year 2 of the evaluation, was the need for improved communication between partner organisations to achieve the long term aims of transformational change.

This report presents the findings from a thematic case study undertaken during Year 3 of the evaluation focusing on issues of partnership working, innovation and prevention. Four geographical areas were examined, including revisiting two areas from Year 2 of the evaluation (one urban, one rural) and two new areas identified as 'sites of innovation'. Qualitative interviews and focus groups were conducted between May and August 2017 with 40 police officers, fire officers and partners (broken down in section 2.3) who had a specific remit for partnership and prevention work and the majority sat at a strategic level. In each area, the focus has been understanding the nature of local partnership working and innovation, assessing the practices of prevention, understanding the impact of reform and identifying wider lessons for public services around partnership working, innovation and prevention.

Partnership working and innovation

Evidence from the four case study areas found that there was a shared focus on partnership working, with it being viewed as a 'business as usual' approach by police, fire and partners. There are a wide variety of ways identified of 'working together' ranging from highly structured and formalised arrangements such as CPPs, local, formal arrangements such as community hubs, local partnerships to deliver initiatives and more day-to-day joint working. The impact of police and fire reform on partnership working was variable. Formal partnership arrangements remained stable but other activities, such as community policing, were felt to be negatively affected due to resource redeployment and a shift to a stronger enforcement focus. The establishment of national structures, however, was perceived to have created opportunities for consistency, co-ordination, information sharing and learning from other areas.

Partnership working and innovation were seen as addressing the Christie principles and providing an opportunity to meet demand in the context of reduced organisational budgets and fulfil the requirements of the Community Empowerment Act 2017. Organisational impacts, data and information sharing, leadership and

personal skills and qualities were all identified as factors which facilitate and hinder partnership working and innovation.

The practices of prevention

A framework by the Institute for Work and Health was adopted to help understand prevention in practice, this includes categorising prevention activities as primary, secondary and tertiary. Despite Christie's principles (2011) outlining the need to reduce demand through primary prevention, such as early intervention, many of the examples of police and fire prevention activities focused on secondary prevention, directed at preventing an existing risk from reoccurring e.g. young people engaging in anti-social behaviour.

Reform was viewed as impacting on the prevention agenda. SFRS have developed a more coordinated national approach in this area while Police Scotland, after an initial period when prevention was perceived as a lower priority, are now focusing on prevention and collaborative working. This increased emphasis on prevention for both services, is identified as providing more opportunities for focusing on vulnerability, forming different types of partnerships, expanding roles (in SFRS) and taking longer term approaches. Key to this increased focus is also prioritising prevention in partnerships and having organisational support. However, interviewees also identified that financial constraints, reactive demands and trying to get buy-in from partners can all create barriers to prevention activities. There was also an identified need to develop the skills in both services to effectively evaluate prevention activities to better understand impact.

Vignettes

As part of this report, four vignettes provide brief analytical sketches that illustrate a range of partnership working, prevention and innovation, involving Police Scotland and SFRS. The vignettes are based on focus groups conducted in each of the four case study areas and present the perspectives of both Police Scotland and SFRS, as well as the partners they were working with. The vignettes include a mental health community triage project, a community safety hub, a road safety initiative and a home safety programme. The vignettes are referred to throughout the report and can be found in Annex 1.

Wider lessons

On the basis of the thematic case study, there are several wider lessons which can be drawn from this work that are of relevance not just to police and fire and rescue but also to the wider public sector. These lessons include:

- Focus on the quality and not just the quantity of partnerships;
- Undertaking rigorous evaluation of initiatives;
- Understand how successful examples of partnership working and prevention can be spread; and
- Focus on being a 'learning organisation' in terms of the approach taken to partnership working, innovation and prevention.

Introduction

The evaluation of police and fire reform in Scotland began in February 2015 and is being undertaken by the Scottish Institute for Policing Research (SIPR), ScotCen Social Research and What Works Scotland.

The main aims of this evaluation are to:

1. Assess the extent to which the three aims of Police and Fire reform appear to have been met, namely:

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

   o 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;

   o 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.

2. Identify lessons from the implementation of reform that might inform the process of future public service reform

3. Evaluate the wider impact of the reform on the Justice system and the wider public sector

The Year 1 report of the evaluation was published in June 2016 and comprised a Summary Report[1] and Evidence Review[2]. It focused on findings emerging from the initial two stages of the work (i) a review of publicly available evidence up to the end of 2015 and (ii) national key informant interviews.

The Year 2 report of the evaluation was published in August 2017 and comprised a Main Report[3] and an Annex[4]. It focused on findings from four geographical case studies which examined local experience and perceptions of the way police and fire and rescue services are being delivered to local communities.

This report presents the findings from a thematic case study undertaken during Year 3 of the evaluation focusing on issues of partnership working, innovation and prevention. By examining these areas of Police Scotland and SFRS activity, the evaluation of police and fire reform is able to:

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[1] http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00502138.pdf

[2] http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00502122.pdf

[3] http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00523031.pdf

[4] http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00523139.pdf

- Engage more closely with Aim 3 of police and fire reform ('Strengthening connections with communities') which, as the findings from the Year 1 and Year 2 reports have highlighted, remains an area that presents both challenges and opportunities for the two services.

- Ensure alignment of the evaluation with the current strategic direction of Police Scotland and SFRS as set out in recent strategy documents: Policing 2026 and the Fire and Rescue Framework. Policing 2026[5] outlines a commitment for Police Scotland to develop prevention driven approaches with particular focus on early intervention, early resolution and diversion. The strategy links prevention with vulnerability and health and wellbeing in justice settings; and suggests communication, education, innovation and partnership working are key factors in the prevention agenda. The Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2016[6] links prevention with safety and wellbeing. It is suggested that reform should build on the Christie principles and prioritise prevention through working with partners to identify risks faced by communities and individuals to ensure that the service can target activity aimed at addressing inequalities.

- Provide an opportunity to assess the level of progress in embedding the principles of the Christie Commission in these two key public services. One of the Christie Commission's (2011)[7] key objectives of reform is prioritising prevention. This includes a move away from reactive approaches dealing with immediate problems to longer term initiatives. This is also seen as a key means of tackling 'failure demand', which is a demand which could have been avoided by earlier preventative measures.

The Aims and Approach of the Thematic Case Study

Against this background, the aims of this thematic case study are:

- To better understand the nature of local partnership working and innovation involving Police Scotland and SFRS;

- To assess the practices of prevention involving Police Scotland and SFRS;

- To understand the impact of reform on partnership working, prevention and innovation; and

- To identify wider lessons for public services around partnership working, innovation and prevention.

The approach used to undertake the thematic case study was similar to the geographical case studies undertaken in Year 2. Four communities were selected

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[5] Policing 2026: Our 10 Year Strategy for Policing in Scotland
http://www.scotland.police.uk/assets/pdf/138327/386688/policing-2026-strategy.pdf

[6] Scottish Government (2016) Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2016
https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/fire-and-rescue/fire-and-rescue-framework/supporting_documents/417276_Fire%20Framework_V2.pdf

[7] Christie Commission (2011) Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services
http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/352649/0118638.pdf

for detailed analysis and this included revisiting two areas from the geographical case studies carried out in Year 2 of the evaluation and two new areas identified as 'sites of innovation'. Revisiting two areas provided the opportunity for more in-depth examination of partnership, prevention and innovation in areas already identified as having different levels of crime and deprivation and covering both urban and rural communities. The choice of 'sites of innovation' aimed to allow a focus on areas specifically viewed by those working in policing and fire and rescue as places where new approaches to partnership and prevention had been developed. The evaluation team contacted Police Scotland, SFRS, SPA, HMICS and HMFSI to request examples of innovation in partnership and prevention activity. This produced a 'longlist' of over 50 examples, a number of which had been recognised for awards in public service excellence. From this list, two areas were selected which complemented the geographical spread of the other two case study areas.

The case study areas are as follows:

- Area A – revisit from Year 2, urban area with a range of levels of deprivation
- Area B – revisit from Year 2, remote rural area (with retained firefighters)
- Area C – rural area and site of innovation for home safety in SFRS
- Area D – large urban area and site of innovation for Police Scotland

How the data was collected

To examine the perspectives of the different stakeholders, qualitative interviews and focus groups were carried out in each of the four case study areas between May and August 2017. Interviewees were also asked to provide, where possible, any evidence including reports and evaluations, of partnership working and prevention. This provided an opportunity to triangulate the evidence provided with the experiences and perspectives of the interviewees. The evidence provided was specific to the case study areas and as such the documents are not referenced in the report as they would disclose the case study areas.

Across the four case study areas, interviews were conducted with 40 police officers, fire officers and partners. All were chosen as they had a specific remit for partnership and prevention work and majority sat at a strategic level including Community Planning Partnership board level. Interviews were conducted with the following:

- Police officers (PC, sergeant, superintendent, chief inspector, local policing commander, divisional commander) n = 12
- Fire officers (local authority liaison officer, district manager, station manager, group manager, local senior officer) n = 14
- Partners (NHS, council, social work, housing association, third sector) n = 14

Focus groups (1 focus group was conducted per area with partners involved in specific initiatives identified through the interviews as being good practice examples of partnership and prevention, based on an assessment by the research team) n = 4 . The focus group themes are as follows:

- Area A - community safety hub
- Area B – road safety initiative for young people
- Area C – innovation through home safety in SFRS
- Area D – innovation through community triage in Police Scotland

Details of each of these initiatives are set out as 4 vignettes in Annex 1.

The majority of the interviews took place face to face but a small number of telephone interviews were also completed. The focus groups were completed face to face and were facilitated by one or two researchers.

Ethical approval for the case study element of the evaluation was obtained from NatCen Social Research (NatCen) Ethics Committee. Access was granted to conduct the research with police officers and firefighters through the Scottish Government protocols.

Access to the police and fire officers was arranged through a named contact at the police or fire station. Local partner organisations were invited to take part via an email or phone call from the research team. Once the focus group theme had been identified, interviewees helped to organise where and when they would take place and invited the relevant partners.

Before the interviews and focus groups took place, the purpose of the evaluation and why they had been invited to take part was explained to all potential participants. Verbal consent was recorded before commencing interviews and focus groups.

With the consent of participants, the interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. All interview data were stored securely, with access limited to the research team. Interview data were coded with NVivo, a software package for qualitative data analysis, using an analytical framework based on the key themes discussed by interviewees. This system of coding facilitates the organisation and analysis of qualitative transcripts and provides a tool to explore the range and diversity of views expressed by participants.

The structure of the report

The report provides a summary of the themes and findings emerging from the research carried out in the four case study areas. The report has four main components: (i) an examination of the context of partnership working and innovation (ii) an analysis of the practices of prevention (iii) an assessment of the wider lessons to be drawn from the case study evidence and (iv) an Annex including four vignettes illustrating examples of partnership working, prevention and innovation.

Partnership working and innovation

Many of the preventative activities that Police Scotland and SFRS are currently engaged in are set within the wider context of partnership working and of innovative attempts to tackle complex social issues at a local level. This section sketches out the main contours of this landscape of partnership and innovation within which prevention is located, highlighting key themes and issues which emerged from data collection across the four communities.

Summary of findings from the research literature

Before engaging with experiences in Scotland, however, it is important to acknowledge that there is a significant UK and international research literature on partnership working involving the police (fire and rescue have not been subject to the same degree of research scrutiny).[8] This highlights that many early attempts to promote partnership working in 1980s and 1990s were often met with some scepticism by the police and this was attributed to the perceived tensions between an action-orientated culture in policing and the more negotiation-based approach of other agencies. Partnership working was also often associated with 'soft' approaches to policing and given a lower priority to more traditional crime-fighting activities. More recent research suggests a significant shift in police attitudes to partnership working. Among the emerging findings from this research is evidence that:

- The police increasingly see the advantages of partnership working because it allows for a more effective and pragmatic method of addressing social problems, encouraging longer term preventative work rather than short-term reactive approaches;

- Partnership working encourages strong inter-professional and inter-personal relationships with individuals from other organisations, building trust between police and other agencies to help address local problems;

- While the police may often dominate many partnerships in terms of the resources they are able to mobilize, they increasingly engage in negotiation and compromise with other agencies as they learn to work together to adopt a problem-solving approach.

Summary of findings on partnership working from Year 2 Report

Many of these positive findings regarding partnership working were evident across all four geographical areas studied for the Year 2 report. Partnership working was embraced as a concept and operationally by police officers, firefighters, councillors and third sector organisations. In terms of policing, it was seen as being given a high priority and of strategic importance and was well supported by the attendance

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[8] For a good summary see M. O'Neill and D.J. McCarthy (2014) '(Re)negotiating police culture through partnership working: trust, compromise and the 'new' pragmatism, *Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 14(2), 143-159

of senior officers at partnership meetings. Where there was co-location of police and council staff, there were particular benefits in terms of joint working on community safety issues. In relation to fire and rescue, there was similar evidence of a high level of commitment to partnership activity which was seen as a clear priority coming from the top of the organisation that was being embraced at a local level.

For both services, however, partnership working also presented particular internal and external challenges:

- Internally, local officers and firefighters felt there was scope for improved internal communication between those attending partnership meetings (typically more senior officers) and those working in communities.

- Externally, the ability of local police officers and fire fighters to work effectively in their day-to-day duties with partner agencies was being affected by the resource pressures felt by all services. There was a perception that financial cutbacks in partner services and their increased workloads had had an impact on working relationships. Data sharing and negotiating boundaries of responsibility in a context of limited resources were also issues identified by both services.

The partnership and innovation landscape

Building on the work undertaken in Year 2, the research carried out for this thematic case study has provided a range of additional contextual insights into how partnership working involving Police Scotland and SFRS is perceived across Scotland since reform, what forms it takes, and how it links into innovation. This section summarises these high-level findings.

'A collaborative ethos': Across all four case study areas interviewees observed that there is a shared focus on partnership-working by all partner organisations and that it is now regarded as 'business as usual' and 'the way forward' for police, fire and other partners to work together. Although this 'collaborative ethos' pre-dates police and fire reform (one interviewee observed, "it's been years since I've been at meetings where I haven't seen individuals, other partner agencies not buying in (A10 Fire)), the sense from interviewees was that there was now much wider and deeper exposure to partnership working in their organisations. For those people across organisations who did not engage in partnership working in the past, it is now seen as routine. Where partnerships were central to their roles in the past, they identify as now having a deeper exposure to partnership working. This growing breadth and depth of knowledge and experience in partnership working, contributed to what one interviewee described as an increasing 'maturity' in partnership working. That maturity could be seen reflected in a practical and pragmatic understanding of the inevitable problems and issues that are inherent to partnership working, and the respective challenges faced by partners - of 'knowing where they come from'.

A diversity of organisational arrangements 'Partnership working' tends to be used as a catch-all term that in practice refers to a wide variety of ways of 'working together'. Interviewees describe a continuum which ranged from quite informal activities involving keeping each other up-to-date ('in the loop') about their respective activities to more formal arrangements that included cooperation between partners and coordination of their respective activities to highly integrated joint-approaches aimed towards shared outcomes. A basic typology of organisational arrangements for partnership working would therefore include:

- Highly structured and formalised arrangements created by statutory requirements to work in partnership: For example, CPPs and Local Resilience Partnerships.

- Locally developed, formal arrangements which bring multiple partners together operationally on a regular basis: Examples of this kind of organisational arrangement include Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordinating (MATAC) groups operating locally to tackle community safety and 'hubs' bringing partners together to identify early interventions with vulnerable and 'at risk' members of the community (see Vignette II). Co-location & secondments (in and out) were two (related) organisational arrangements that were viewed as helpful in developing personal relationships and sense of collective 'team'. Such arrangements provide the opportunity to get 'beyond the uniform' and for people to get to know each other personally and the ability to work less formally. In one of the case study areas, for example, a police officer had been seconded into the local authority to work as part of the community planning team. This was a strategic decision by the senior management in that division and was replicated in each of the constituent local authorities it worked with, as part of deliberate provision of resource under the Community Empowerment Act.

- Local partnerships to deliver a particular initiative: In addition to generic partnerships operating as community safety hubs and addressing broad issues of vulnerability, there are also more specific partnerships focused on particular risks. Two examples examined in this study were the mental health triage (Vignette I) and a road safety education initiative (Vignette III).

- Day-to-day joint working with little formal arrangements: This would include local community policing activities involving regular contact between agencies with a community or neighbourhood focus, such as youth workers, anti-social behaviour workers, community wardens and schools.

Impact of police and fire reform on partnership working The nature and extent to which police and fire reform were seen as directly impacting on partnership working was quite variable. In relation to some formal partnership settings, such as Local Resilience Partnerships, the view was that these continued to perform effectively throughout the period of reform because they had maintained stable representation from the different agencies. By contrast, community policing was described as being negatively affected by a combination of resource redeployment from local policing teams to specialist services and a shift in priorities towards more enforcement focused activity. The combined effect of these changes was to send a

signal that community policing and partnership working were of low priority for the new force. Although engagement rather than a narrow focus on enforcement is now a much more important part of Police Scotland's approach, the perception of interviewees was that a legacy of negative experiences can continue to be significant in shaping perceptions of partners long after policies and priorities have changed.

More positively, some police and fire interviewees pointed to the benefits of reform on the consistency and coordination of approaches in partnership settings. National guidance and support was particularly welcomed and exemplified by the Prevention and Protection (P&P) agenda in SFRS with national meetings of P&P managers being viewed as a valuable forum for information-sharing. The creation of national organisations was also seen positively in terms of the ability and opportunity to share and learn from the experiences of local areas, although there was also a perception that national consistency of approach should not be at the expense of a diversity of local activity.

The meaning of innovation Interviewees were also asked to identify examples of innovation and typically described it in relation to seeking a new local solution to a problem, or being creative in the use of existing resources. Some also described it as doing something already practiced but in a different way, such as fire service engagement with young people, or delivering a Fireskills course to a new audience of young offenders.

The following interview extracts illustrate how interviewees defined innovation:

'So it's looking at the wide range of activities that you can offer, or giving people opportunities to do something different, and film making was quite different, so it certainly in [Area D] it was innovative. We hadn't done that before.' (D01 Police)

'Youth engagement has always been there between the Fire Service and youth groups. But it was just a different way of delivery because normally they would attend from schools and they'd do a one week course at a fire station…having longer contact with them over the summer with one day per week.' (B13 Fire)

The drivers of partnership working and innovation At a strategic level, the commitment to partnership working and innovation is clearly in line with the Christie principles set out in the introduction to this report but there are also more immediate drivers of partnership activity and innovation:

- Reduced organisational budgets and growing demand: Interviewees reflected on the continuing reduction in real-terms funding for public services as a shared pressure which was giving further impetus for partnerships to make better collective use of their resources to tackle issues more effectively and efficiently (see Vignette IV).

'If I was being entirely honest, I do think lower budgets has... it's no **forced** us in to partnership working, but it's made it far more important than it's been in the past.' (DO2 Police)

'We're all trying to do more wi' less. So we're all subject to austerity. All the.. the sort o' the Local Authorities and, you know, all your public sector workers, you know, we've less money, less resources, so we're trying to do the same job .. In fact, probably the problem's larger, and there's more people demanding our time. How do we do that? Well, the only way we can do that is by sharing our resources, getting our collective heads together.' (B02 Police)

Interviewees also identified that the environment of reduced budgets by necessity could also act as an incentive for creativity and innovation. The following interviewee illustrates how partners made collective use of their staff resource, identifying how to work together better, without the need for additional financial commitment.

'Having less money...certainly in small scale stuff its encouraged us to be more creative in how we work. Doing more with less and certainly a lot of the small partnership projects that I've been involved in didn't involve any money, just involved partners coming together and doing things slightly differently and trying things. I think we're being...I've certainly been actively encouraged and supported to be a bit innovative.' (D03 Police)

Innovation and creativity were also identified as necessary to maintain and sustain current levels of service and impact, given reduced resources.

'We need to think more creatively and innovatively about how we create the same impact and achieve the same outcomes … We need to think far more creatively around that, and try and get that investment from all the partners.' (C02 Police)

- The 2017 Community Empowerment Act (CEA): The CEA has placed new statutory imperatives on partnership working. This includes new requirements for coordinated planning (in the form of Local Outcome Improvement Plans and Locality Plans) and widening the set of bodies with statutory responsibility for leading community planning- which now includes the police and fire and rescue service. The impact of the CEA was identified by interviewees as another common driver for partnership working:

'But between the focus through the local outcome improvement plan and the financial situation in public services, that, you know, that's the new reality.' (C20 Partner)

At the same time, interviewees reflected on the need to be more judicious about when and how to work in partnership. They emphasised the time, effort and resources it involved, particularly in the context of shrinking resource and increasing demand. This increasingly required a greater focus on where

partnerships were necessary, and could be most effective so being clear about the 'collaborative advantage'[9] that partnerships can deliver.

The new Local Outcome Improvement Plans (LOIPs) that Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) must produce under the CEA was identified as an example that encouraged greater focus on partnership working. The development of LOIPs was explicitly focused on the local issues on which partnership was necessary to make progress (so-called 'cross-cutting' or 'wicked' issues). LOIPs sought not to include those activities and issues that individual CPP organisations rightly focused on alone. This more focused approach to LOIPs was compared favourably with the breadth of the prior CPP Single Outcome Agreements which had tended to include the priority activities of each partner (described as a more aspirational but unrealistic 'sunshine and apple pie' approach by one partner). A partner interviewee described it in this way:

> 'It's easy for everybody to pile everything in because they want to showcase what they're doing, but the criteria for getting in to the LOIP is about 'it must be done in partnership'. So I think there's been quite a recognition in the last few years – particularly on a budgetary position – that there's things now we will **have** to do in partnership because we can't do them on our own.' (B21 Partner)

Facilitators and barriers to partnership working and innovation: the importance of organisational contexts, leadership and personal experiences

The analysis of partnership working and innovation across the four case study areas provided important insights into factors which can either facilitate or hinder these activities. Some of these factors relate to the organisational and structural contexts within which Police Scotland, SFRS and partner agencies operate. However, there are also 'softer' elements relating to the skills, attitudes and personal attributes individuals bring to partnership working and innovation, either through their leadership roles or, more generally, as participants in collaborative activities.

Organisational impacts on local partnership working: Interviewees spoke of several examples where national organisational changes had affected local partnership working in a negative way, such as the rapid withdrawal of police funding for traffic wardens in some areas of Scotland following reform. However, there were other cases of national level changes where the process of communication with local areas was seen as being good. For example, changes to the fire inspection regimes of houses of multiple occupancy involving a reduction in fire service input but increased local authority responsibility were introduced over a

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[9] Huxham and Vangen (2005) *Managing to collaborate: the theory and practice of collaborative advantage*, Routledge: Oxon.

period of several months, allowing time for the change to be communicated, understood, and for its implications to be taken into account.

A number of police and fire interviewees that contributed to CPPs held some concerns about the relationship between their CPPs and the local scrutiny committee that they reported to. They were regarded as partnership settings that might potentially (or in some instances actually) create competing priorities. There was a question for some local leaders of how better to reflect the local experience of partnership within these local scrutiny arrangements. More specifically, there was consideration of how to integrate the policing plans developed for the purposes of reporting and accountability to the scrutiny committee with the police contribution in LOIPs for the CPP. One interviewee reflected positively on the ability to work in partnership to make a single coordinated report to the local area committees.

Data and information sharing: Interviewees working in community policing/ community safety hub partnership settings highlighted the ability routinely to share information quickly and easily about common issues and problems. There was a recognition that partners held different information about people (such as those identified as at risk or vulnerable), or on local issues and that the sharing of that information allowed for partners to work from, and provide a service that reflected, a better (three dimensional) picture. The requirements of data protection were understood but not identified, or presented, as an insurmountable barrier to the ability to share and use information collectively.

Practical challenges associated with different IT systems and the nature of data protection protocols between organisations were identified by some interviewees. In the following extract an interviewee articulates the importance of information sharing as a central element of partnership working. They highlight the significant impact of instances where one organisation feels unable to share information. This can have negative implications not simply for practical communication, but also for the quality of the relationship and the trust and mutual understanding on which it depends.

> '[Information sharing] can make or break partnerships. It causes frustration sometimes when one organisation thinks information should be shared, and the other organisation thinks it shouldn't be shared…
>
> the main source of friction within a partnership can be that side of things, it's "Look. Why are you no telling us that? We're partners. I thought we understood each other."' (B02 Police)

Leadership: The interviews highlighted the importance of leadership in partnerships, both within the police and fire services to encourage, support and stimulate partnership working, but also within partnerships themselves as a way of contributing a sense of collaborative leadership.

> 'I've heard all of the different Chief Execs speak at different times, it comes very much from the top of the tree this very strong commitment to partnership working and if you like we're enabled and empowered to...at our own levels in the

organisation. I think particularly about X where I've got a lot of experience because I worked as a Local Authority Liaison Officer, you're empowered to build these partnerships and these relationships and encouraged to do and expected to do so. I know it will be the same in the other areas, but X where I was very immersed in that, from the top of the tree down there's a strong vision and commitment around working together to improve outcomes for people.' (D03 Police)

Some interviewees spoke of a culture of partnership being created when leaders provide a strong and consistent message within their organisation that then gets picked up at different levels of the organisational hierarchy.

'It's very much about the Chief Execs, but then you look at the teams they have built round about them who are all of a similar mind... er... and it feeds right down through the organisation, so that at an operational level … There'll be examples of partnership working, you know, at an operational level that we're not even aware of, because that's the culture of their organisation and that's how they're used to working.'

Some interviewees reflected on the different leadership role they play in certain partnership settings, where they seek not simply to reflect their organisations' narrower perspective and priorities:

'As the partnership Strategic Board member I try to go into that room and to a certain degree take my fire service head off and see myself as a Strategic Board member making decisions on direction around about strategy for the partnership. But it's difficult to do that sometimes when I know as I've just pointed out that the needs of the community in their eyes maybe dinnae match the needs of my organisation's eyes.' (B12 Fire)

Police and fire interviewees recognised the importance of actively and tangibly demonstrating their commitment to partnership working. The following interviewee describes their efforts to be visibly present in different local partnership settings, particularly in demonstrating this in a new role:

'Think I'm out 4 nights next week, and it's all partnership-based, and I have no hesitation about turning up to any of them, and, again, relatively new guy in town, I'm .. I'm keen to be as visible as I can.' (D02 Police)

Sometimes this leadership could take a more directive form. Examples described by interviewees included the police placing pressure on partners to respond to issues that included demands that were specifically experienced by the police, and to which they could respond alone only in limited ways (e.g. emergency calls to instances of mental health crisis; youth anti-social behaviour in local communities). As the following interviewee reflects, active police leadership of this kind can

contribute a constructive dynamic and lessen the risk of 'collaborative inertia'[10]. But it can risk alienating partners if not applied in a moderated and modulated way.

> 'We are very 'can do'. We tend to drive agendas, and push on things. Sometimes we do that a bit too much, and forget to take people with us.' (A04 Police)

This could be seen as reflective of the experience of the police service as the agency of 'last resort' for a broad range of issues. These issues are regularly experienced as routine demand on the police service, and about which other partners may be unsighted or organisationally 'blind'. Taking a problem-solving, preventative and more long-term approach arguably requires the police to take these issues to other partners with different capacity and capability to take 'upstream', earlier interventions.

A number of interviewees reflected on the role of supportive, empowering leadership in encouraging innovation. For example, all partners involved in the community mental health triage work, acknowledged the support and backing from local senior leadership in the police, council and NHS:

> 'That was very very clear throughout. So we knew that, as we were going along, we had their backing in terms of taking this forward and developing it, and that definitely helped I think, you know.' (FGD)

This support does not simply involve encouraging people, or giving 'permission', to be creative. There is inevitably an aspect of risk to innovation, from the uncertainty about whether a new approach or way of working will achieve the expected improvement. Support and encouragement from leaders to be innovative thus also involves some degree of an acceptance of that risk, of the possibility that the innovation may in practice not deliver the anticipated benefits. Providing leadership support to instil creative confidence in individuals and teams to 'go for it', to take risks in a 'safe' environment and not fear failure or blame is an important aspect.

A police interviewee described how as a member of the local command team they sought to create the opportunity and culture for creativity and ideas from anyone.

> 'We've had very much an open door policy that, as a command team, we will listen to ideas, thoughts, processes, whatever, you know, if there's improvements that can be made. So I guess through the process of that form of engagement… that space to contribute ideas around creativity and innovation are kind of I guess highlighted at those meetings.' (C02 Police)

Personal experiences and qualities: Many of the interviewees reflected on their personal experiences of partnership working. They highlighted the importance of building personal trust, respect, credibility, mutual understanding of respective roles

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[10] Huxham and Vangen (2005) *Managing to collaborate: the theory and practice of collaborative advantage*, Routledge: Oxon.

and organisations, and getting over technical language/jargon to a shared understanding. The worth and benefit that comes from high quality relationships has been described as 'relational capital'[11]. As such, it can serve as an important resource which can be drawn on to sustain partnership working, as the bond to collaboration, particularly at times when it is placed under strain by wider organisational or cross-organisational challenges.

Some interviewees pointed to partnership working requiring particular skills, abilities[12]. Some also pointed to the importance of personality traits and characteristics.

'I can work on my own, I can use my own initiative, I can liaise wi' people. If I'm no sure how to do something, I'm not scared to go and ask. I think you're either suited to this kinda Police role, or you're not.' (B03 Police)

Strong personal commitment to partnership working was also expressed by some interviewees, and was recognised and valued by partners.

'I would say personally I absolutely live, eat and breathe partnership working.' (D03 Police)

Building strong inter-personal relationships was not just important in its own right. Interviewees also reflected that building wider and deeper networks with partners was a significant and important resource on which they could draw. Relationships are a key foundation for better communication and information sharing. Interviewees in police and fire commonly expressed a sense of being empowered and supported to pursue partnerships. Some went further and expressed it as a responsibility.

'In terms o' like fostering those relationships, and driving forward initiatives in line wi' our agenda and our priorities, and the CPP's, I'm kinda absolutely feel empowered and **responsible** if you like for it.' (B10 Fire)

Despite this personal support and encouragement, interviewees reflected on the competing demands they had to cope with to meet organisational requirements alongside those of partnership. Constraints on resources were also mentioned, both in terms of available funding to support partnership activity, but also in certain partnership settings the number of staff available to work on partnership activity.

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[11] Morse, R. S. (2010). Integrative public leadership: Catalyzing collaboration to create public value. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 21: 231–245.

[12] Similar findings in Williams, P (2012) *Collaboration in Public Policy and Practice: perspectives on boundary spanners*, Policy Press: Bristol.

'The biggest issue is that, you know, there is a lot of pressure put on people because of workloads, as opposed to difficulty. It's down to, to, again, just back to capacity again.' (C01 Police)

Individuals identified the need to play a range of different roles working in partnerships. Those who worked across different local authority areas recognised the need to 'navigate' through different structural arrangements.

The Practices of Prevention

Making sense of prevention: definitional issues

To understand how the services are defining and implementing prevention, a framework has been adopted which was developed by the Institute for Work and Health[13]. This framework uses three categories of prevention which help better understand different types of prevention activities:

- Primary prevention aims to prevent a threat/risk before it occurs through, for example work in schools.

- Secondary prevention aims to reduce the impact of a threat that has already occurred by introducing initiatives to prevent the threat/risk reoccurring, for example work to tackle anti-social behaviour.

- Tertiary prevention aims to soften the impact of an on-going threat/risk through for example rehabilitation initiatives.

Across the four case study areas there is evidence of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention work taking place involving SFRS and primary and secondary prevention involving Police Scotland. The following section will examine examples of prevention activities provided by both services in each of the case study areas.

What we know about prevention in practice: examples of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention

Primary prevention: The Christie Commission (2011) outlines that all public services need to reduce demand through prevention and early intervention to tackle root causes of problems. Primary prevention exemplifies this as it aims to prevent a threat or risk before it has happened by early intervention and education. There were good examples of primary prevention activity in three of the case study areas where the police and fire service worked in partnership with other organisations to deliver road safety programmes. These programmes focus on delivering advice to young people under driving age and include talks in schools and in one area the opportunity to drive a car with supervision, contributing to long-term early intervention strategy to increase road safety (see Vignette III for more details).

Secondary prevention includes introducing an initiative to prevent a threat/risk from reoccurring. Many of the examples provided by Police Scotland and SFRS fall into this category of secondary prevention, as much of their preventative work appears to be focused on preventing certain groups from continuing to offend, for example, young people engaging in anti-social behaviour. For SFRS examples were provided across the case study areas of fire safety and fire reach programmes being delivered in off-site schools, young offender institutes and specific courses with young people identified as engaging in anti-social behaviour. These courses

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[13] Institute for Work & Health. What researchers mean by primary, secondary and tertiary prevention https://www.iwh.on.ca/wrmb/primary-secondary-and-tertiary-prevention

are delivered either in partnership with other organisations such as the Police, Army, Prince's Trust or other organisations such as schools providing them with access to young people.

As well as these courses, Police Scotland also conducted secondary prevention through co-location and multi-agency tasking and coordinating groups where they worked with partners from the council, anti-social behaviour teams, housing and fire service to identify potential issues in the community and work together to tackle them (see Vignettes II and III). An example provided of a secondary prevention strategy included housing and the council providing the police with addresses where there is risk of anti-social behaviour, such as noise at night, and the police would attend the house and warn them not to engage in noisy behaviour. Similarly for SFRS, they have taken a more targeted, risk based approach to home fire safety visits.

Tertiary prevention aims to soften the impact of an ongoing threat/risk through for example rehabilitation initiatives. There were no examples found of tertiary prevention strategies carried out by Police Scotland in the case study areas. For SFRS there were examples of tertiary prevention in three of the case study areas, in relation to fire safety in the home for elderly community members suffering from dementia. These approaches include supporting vulnerable community members to continue to live in their homes with extra safety measures in place such as signs to remind them to switch off their gas cookers. In one of the case study areas this approach has been delivered in partnership with British Gas.

The lack of tertiary examples of prevention are not surprising within Police Scotland, where it could be argued that providing on-going rehabilitation is not within their remit and that this arguably should be the responsibility of other services such as social work or health.

Impact of reform on the prevention agenda

For SFRS, in each of the case study areas, being a national service meant that the activities are more coordinated and resources better shared throughout the country than under legacy arrangements. There has also been a move towards a more risk based approach which has led to them taking more time to assess who is more at risk in the community and as such they are conducting more preventative work in the home environment. Across the case study areas, SFRS identify the benefits of having new national strategies for prevention and the guidance which is provided by the Directorate for Prevention and Protection[14], which appears to have led to greater clarity about their role and increased accountability.

> 'A big positive for the service nationally is the guidance for Prevention and Protection. It is very thorough...it gives a clear direction as to what to do. And…it's monitored and it's audited, and reviewed….every month so you get a report every month.' (C11 fire)

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[14] SFRS (2013) Prevention and Protection Directorate Strategy 2013-2016 http://www.firescotland.gov.uk/media/627263/pp_strategy_final_v1.0_20feb2014.pdf

New roles have also been created in Prevention and Protection which highlights organisational commitment to the prevention agenda.

For Police Scotland, there is a perception among partners that in the initial period following reform there was a dip in prevention work across the case study areas due to the focus on large scale structural changes required to establish a single police service. However, there is now a stronger focus on prevention and an understanding of the importance of working collaboratively. In particular, there appears to be a strong desire to conduct prevention work amongst the middle-managers in the police service in the case study areas: 'it's not about how many things we've detected. It's how many we've reduced.' (A04 police)

Overall for both SFRS and Police Scotland, reform was a factor impacting on the prevention agenda but it was not the only one. Other factors identified included the implementation of the Christie principles, the Scottish Government's 'Justice Vision and Priorities'[15] and the need for more joined up working due to funding cuts across all organisations due to austerity.

The Benefits of Prevention

While the primary benefit of prevention for both police and fire and rescue is seen in terms of reduced demand, a focus on prevention is also associated with a wider set of changes of benefit to the services and local communities. These include targeting the most vulnerable, forming different types of partnerships, re-defining the remit of SFRS, using police and fire and rescue resources more efficiently and the opportunity to develop long term solutions to local problems.

Focus on vulnerability – One of the strategic focuses of both services is on vulnerability. The 'Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2016' and 'Youth Engagement Framework 2016-19[16]' outline the need for SFRS to identify the most vulnerable community members in their prevention work, as a means of targeting activity where it is most needed and to make an effective contribution to tackling inequalities. Policing 2026 states the need for resources to focus on preventative support on high impact issues such as vulnerability. There was evidence in each of the case study areas on preventative work taking place with identified vulnerable community members for both services. This was demonstrated on the focus on children and young people in the road safety initiative in a rural area (discussed in Vignette III). There were also examples in each of the case study areas of the police and fire services taking part in preventative work with community members with dementia, young people engaging in anti-social behaviour (both in the community and in residential settings), looked after children, young offenders, migrants, those at risk of suicide, the elderly, violence against women and those with mental health issues. The focus on vulnerability is also highlighted in the innovation chapter in the vignette of mental health triage.

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[15] Scottish Government. (2017). Justice Vision and Priorities Delivery Plan 2017-18
http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00522271.pdf

[16] SFRS (2016) Youth Engagement Framework 2016-19
http://www.firescotland.gov.uk/media/975769/youth_engagement_framework_2016_19.pdf

Forming different types of partnerships - In each of the case study areas, fire and rescue could identify multiple examples of prevention activity, which all included working in collaboration with other agencies. The shift in focus to vulnerability also led to the forming of different types of partnerships in the case study areas. For example, in area A the fire service formed a partnership with British Gas to support those with dementia to live safely in the home by installing gas valves to prevent the risk of fires. In the road safety initiative discussed in Vignette III, this included a partnership between the police, fire and ambulance services with private business owners. These business owners provided both cars and use of an airfield for the young people to drive on, because they had a concern about young drivers. Initiatives had been taking place in this area to try and tackle the issue, but were deemed to be ineffective. Partnering with local business owners provided the resources to move away from their traditional methods of delivering PowerPoint presentations and showing hard-hitting films in schools, to a hands on driving experience for pre-driver age young people.

> 'And you could see it genuinely is prevention. It's getting guys before they're old enough to get their licence to say, "This is the kinda the dangers of driving, and the impact it can have on people's lives, so think about it, guys."' (A21 partner)

In area A the police also discussed reaching out to private businesses to help them in secondary prevention activity to divert young people from anti-social behaviour. The example was provided of the police approaching the manager of a fast food restaurant to provide some funding for diversionary activities to prevent young people congregating outside the premises and engaging in anti-social behaviour. These initiatives were viewed as an important means of freeing up police resources from needing to respond to anti-social behaviour calls from the community.

Reconfiguring the role and remit of SFRS – In each of the case study areas, there are examples of SFRS joining partnerships to carry out prevention work in fields not traditionally viewed as the responsibility of the service. For example, they have been delivering fire reach courses in young offender institutes in Area B and working with a Violence Against Women partnership in Area D. The latter is a good example of SFRS taking a risk based approach to prevention activity in areas that traditionally they have had less involvement in. They recognise that by tackling the causes of violence, they could also indirectly reduce fires, as domestic violence and fires in the home have similar risk factors.

> '…was approached by the Councils to be on the Violence Against Women partnerships. And at first, I thought it was .. it was a good idea just because…. we could do our bit to help…we're still predominantly a male organisation, and, if I can promote that within … But, after receiving training from Women's Aid, who gave … some stats that helped reinforce that message for me ….and it was that women who suffer fae domestic abuse are I think 15 times more likely to have alcohol problems, 9 times more likely to have substance abuse problems, suffer from mental health issues, and also be living chaotic lifestyles….And when you look at the contributory factors for fires, they are the same kinda broad headings….So if you can help actually prevent the root cause, which is the

violence, then you are actually inadvertently also reducing the chance o' fires.' (D10 fire)

Trust was also identified as an important factor for the fire service in being able to develop their role within the community and in their work with other agencies. There are examples of SFRS providing training in fire risk to organisations such as health and social care, and housing who are often first through the door in hard to reach community members homes.

'And we train them up on what to look out for in relation to fire-risk, so that if they then establish that people have maybe got cigarette burns on their clothes, on their bedding, round about their carpet, on their chair – that type o' thing – then they then know that they can then make a referral through to us, and we can do either a visit ourselves, or, probably more likely, we'd maybe do a joint visit so that we can maybe like build on the trust that's maybe already established through the relationship of the, say, the Housing Support Worker.' (D10 fire)

Longer term approaches – Though fewer in number there were also examples of longer-term approaches used by the police service, for example, the use of campus officers in schools and colleges. In areas with campus officers this was viewed positively by both the police and partners, as a means of building relationships and trust with young people. This is also highlighted in the literature where the wider benefits of building trust are identified, such as young people seeking advice on issues ranging from drug taking to bullying and campus officers having enhanced intelligence of the area as the young people shared information with them[17].

There also appeared to be more opportunity for longer term approaches due to the use of co-location in each of the case study areas. This was discussed in more detail in the partnership section of the report, however, in relation to prevention this was seen as a positive means of building relationships and trust with partners, sharing data and having more opportunity to problem solve and find solutions together for prevention activities and potentially some longer term approaches.

Enablers of prevention

The interviewees in each of the case study areas identified two key enablers of prevention: the prioritisation of prevention in partnerships and organisational support.

Prioritisation of prevention in partnerships - Policing 2026 and the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2016 both demonstrate a strategic commitment to prevention approaches and partnership working. In each of the case study areas prevention was viewed as a high priority for Police Scotland, SFRS and the local partners, with all of them being able to describe some form of preventative collaboration work. For some interviewees the SFRS framework had helped provide

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[17] Frondigoun, L, Smith, R, and MacLeod, I. (2013). The Scottish Campus Officer Past, Present and Future. http://www.sipr.ac.uk/downloads/Scottish_Campus_Officer.pdf

greater clarity about their role and increased accountability. For Police Scotland, senior officers in two of the case study areas discussed how Policing 2026 had led to a change in philosophy in the service towards prevention, partnership working and focusing on inequalities. The prioritisation of prevention in partnerships in the strategic documents appear to have helped clarify the role of the services as well empowering the interviewees to work collaboratively in preventative work.

Organisational support – Prevention being outlined at a strategic level has helped to provide clarity and empower the interviewees to be proactive in preventative work locally. The interviewees also discussed the importance of feeling supported in prevention on a day-to-day basis.

In SFRS there has been a clear shift towards a more prevention orientated culture, with senior officers in two of the case study areas stating that prevention is seen as 'the normal now' (A14) amongst all partners and that blue light responses are viewed as a last resort or even a failure in the system 'If somebody is dialling 999 there's something went wrong and we need to go back to the beginning of that cycle and prevent that wrong from becoming a right' (C10). In area A in particular, prevention was viewed as being engrained not only in legislation and strategy but there were also focused roles dedicated to both partnership and prevention. The use of community safety advocates with a specific remit in engaging with hard to reach community members was believed to demonstrate the services commitment to prevention. Partners in area A also viewed SFRS as providing leadership in the prevention agenda and moving away from crisis to prevention.

For Police Scotland in the case study areas prevention was viewed by senior officers as a core element of their role. One of the local policing commanders explains that he tries to create an environment which encourages good practice, creativity and innovation. This highlights the importance of leadership empowering officers to focus on prevention. According to this officer, this is achieved by providing staff with divisional responsibilities to strengthen their sense of ownership in prevention work and creates resident experts that partners can contact. But, as well as creating 'experts' a key element is also about all officers feeling that prevention is a part of their role not just performed by particular officers. All of the officers interviewed in the case study areas had a remit for prevention work, for some it was their main focus, for others it played a part but was not their sole focus.

Barriers to prevention

Feeling supported and empowered by their organisations was viewed as being essential to prevention activity. There were however, barriers identified for prevention working. These included limited resources, meeting reactive demands and the sharing of resources amongst partners.

Financial constraints were believed to be impacting on the preventative work the services are able to do. One local senior officer in SFRS explains it would be useful to have some extra money for prevention, so they could financially contribute to partnerships for prevention activities rather than just providing staffing and available resources.

'I mentioned budgets before, and, you know, some seed corn money would be absolutely useful because it's amazing what you can achieve by throwing £100 in a pot if you like.' (A14 fire)

This senior officer goes on to explain that he would like some funding to be made available to provide to the partnership, even just as a 'gesture' (A14). This was also the case for other preventative activities such as the road safety initiative in a rural area (see Vignette III) where the police and fire services were only able to provide staffing and resources but no financial backing to the initiative.

Reactive demands on time also led to a general sense amongst the services that there is a fine balance between operational work and prevention, and due to a lack of staff there are restrictions on the prevention work they can do. This may suggest that prevention is yet to be mainstreamed and has not yet become core business for all of the interviewees. Another common barrier identified by both services was other demands within their roles such as response, impacting on their ability to develop preventative work, as demonstrated in the following extract:

'Well for all middle managers and strategic managers you've got the response element where you're on call, you drop everything, you're getting phoned from Fire Control having to disappear to wherever when you're on call' (A10 fire)

Some Interviewees suggested that responding to out of hospital cardiac arrests in some areas has also increased demand of their time, impacting on prevention activity.

Buy-in from partner agencies was another area of concern for both the police and fire service, with capacity, funding and resources in partner agencies impacting on their ability to work collaboratively on prevention work. However, one issue identified by the council in one of the case study areas was the need to define prevention work and to gain a better understanding of what each of the partner organisations can contribute. The following quote highlights an important point about being able to disentangle different preventative activity and assess what made an impact:

'If you prevent a road accident happening, it saves, you know, so many millions'…Yeah, but what actually contributed to that road accident not happening? Was it the Safe Drive Stay Alive which the Fire run… or is it the road alterations that we've put in place as the Council, or was it the Police stopping some dangerous driving in that area? …that creates that really difficult thing to say, "I have done that, and that has prevented that occurrence happening.' (C21 partner)

Evaluating prevention

As explained by the council worker in area C, it is important to be able to evaluate the impact of specific prevention activities. This was a common theme in the case study areas for both police and fire. There were a few examples of initiatives being evaluated both internally and occasionally externally, most notably in three of the

areas the road safety initiatives were being externally evaluated. In one of the urban areas, a partnership unit had been formed in SFRS which was carrying out evaluations of new initiatives. However, on the whole many of the initiatives were not being evaluated and the interviewees demonstrated a lack of knowledge and skills in how to carry out evaluations of preventative activities, as highlighted in the following quotations.

'And arguing the toss if you remove that prevention work how many would you really have? And as usual who knows? So how many fires have we stopped? We don't know, you can't measure that. But if you measure how many we have and they're reducing there's an assumption you can make with that.' (A11 fire)

'That's the problem at any prevention activities like this – educational stuff in particular. It's very difficult to measure.' (B11 fire)

Despite the lack of knowledge and skills of evaluating preventative activities, there was an understanding of the benefits and how they would fit into the direction of the services. For example, a group manager from SFRS discussed how evaluating initiatives would lead to increased sharing of good practice throughout the service.

'I think the direction the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service want to go in. If you're doing an initiative, you identify an issue, you will just take something off the shelf, it's all ready to go and you're able to run with it. It'll tell you what partnerships...what partners you need to get involved to make it worthwhile, and it will all be there for you.' (A10 fire)

The strategic documents for Police Scotland[18] and SFRS[19] clearly outline their commitment to evaluation as a means of learning from 'best practice' as stated by Police Scotland and 'continuous improvement' specified by SFRS. However, as shown in the four case study areas, there is some evidence of evaluation but it is not embedded in their practice.

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[18] Policing 2026: Our 10 Year Strategy for Policing in Scotland
http://www.scotland.police.uk/assets/pdf/138327/386688/policing-2026-strategy.pdf

[19] Scottish Government (2016) Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2016
https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/fire-and-rescue/fire-and-rescue-framework/supporting_documents/417276_Fire%20Framework_V2.pdf

Conclusions and wider lessons

Conclusions

Partnership working focused on prevention is now firmly embedded at both strategic and operational levels within Police Scotland and SFRS. Although taking a wide diversity of organisational forms, partnership working is widely seen as 'business as usual', is founded on a strong collaborative ethos, and is driven by a combination of policy priorities and economic necessity. The reform of police and fire and rescue services may have initially disrupted some aspects of partnership activity that had been established under legacy arrangements. The current strategic direction of Police Scotland and SFRS clearly places partnership and prevention as high organisational priorities. This is further highlighted in the Justice Vision and Priorities, which outlines the need to 'continue to develop genuine partnership' and ensuring that 'prevention and early intervention are at the heart of what we do to further reduce crime, prevent offending and improve life chances' [20].

By mapping aspects of this diverse and dynamic landscape, this thematic case study has provided insights which enable better understanding of the facilitators and barriers of effective partnership working and innovation. It has also allowed analytical distinctions to be drawn between the different forms of prevention activity which Police Scotland and SFRS are currently engaged in and to highlight where there are gaps in knowledge and scope for improvement. On the basis of this, there are several wider lessons which can be drawn from this work that are of relevance not just to police and fire and rescue but also to the wider public sector.

Wider lessons

- **Focus on the quality rather than the quantity of partnership working:** this report has highlighted a range of issues which influence the quality of partnership working, ranging from structural considerations around the organisational forms of partnerships, to 'softer' issues regarding leadership, 'relational capital' and issues of trust. Developing these 'softer' skills is important to ensuring high quality and high performing partnerships so programmes to coach and mentor staff involved in partnerships would be of significant benefit.

- **Evaluation matters**: understanding which partnerships work, where, for whom, and why, and how and why they contribute to prevention, needs to be a high priority and requires a strong commitment to evaluation. At present there is little systematic, independent evaluation of partnership and prevention activity across Scotland. Addressing this could involve a combination of upskilling the workforce in evaluation methods and using external researchers by, for example, forming local partnerships with universities.

- **Understand how successful examples of partnership working and prevention can be spread**: where there is evidence of successful partnership

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[20] Scottish Government (2017) Justice in Scotland: Vision and Priorities
http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00522274.pdf

and prevention initiatives, consideration needs to be given to how to 'spread' this as a deliberate approach to change. The literature in this area identifies several key issues including:

- o a sound understanding of what contributes to the effectiveness of an approach, alongside the scope to make adaptations necessary to suit the new setting/context;

- o a clear assessment of the readiness and compatibility of the new setting/context to which an innovation is to be spread;

- o a shared and common understanding about, and belief in, the innovation among those who will adopt the innovation; which might be described colloquially as 'heads and hearts';

- o enabled and empowered staff in the new setting/context – not passive recipients of change;

- o preparation, time, sustained commitment and resources;

- o distributed leadership; across levels and between collaborating partners;

- o collaboration and networking, knowledge exchange; and

- o supporting infrastructure proportionate to the size and complexity of the innovation.

- **Focus on being a learning organisation:** Drawing together the points highlighted above, successful partnership working, innovation and prevention requires all agencies to focus on being learning organisations. This involves routine environmental scanning to consider examples of activities around prevention which might have been tried elsewhere and could be adapted to the local context; embedding a culture of evaluation so there is a robust evidence base providing insights into successful and unsuccessful local initiatives; and embracing experimentation as a way of developing and improving approaches to prevention. The mental health community triage project (Vignette I) provides an exemplar of this approach. This involved identifying a potentially promising approach from another area, understanding the importance of adapting this to the local context through a local needs assessment, then designing local practice using this evidence and ensuring a programme of communication and engagement with police officers and mental health staff before it began.

As Police Scotland and SFRS build momentum around an agenda of 'transformation' as part of the current phase of the reform journey, there is much they can learn from existing practices of partnership working, innovation and prevention that they are currently engaged in. The insights presented in this report around 'facilitators' and 'barriers', knowing 'what works' and 'what doesn't work', and having a clear strategy around the 'spread' of effective practice are all vital to ensuring an effective and sustainable programme of change.

Annex 1

The following four vignettes provide brief descriptions that illustrate a range of partnership working, prevention and innovation, involving Police Scotland and SFRS. The vignettes are based on focus groups conducted in each of the four case study areas and as such present the perspectives of both Police Scotland and SFRS, as well as the partners they were working with. The vignettes focus on the following issues:

- Vignette I provides an example of innovation for Police Scotland through a mental health community triage in area D
- Vignette II highlights Police Scotland and SFRS working together with partners through a community safety hub in area A
- Vignette III is an example of Police Scotland and SFRS working with partners to deliver a primary prevention initiative focused on road safety in area B
- Vignette IV highlights an example of innovation for SFRS to improve safety in the home in area C

Each vignette addresses four key questions:

- Why was the initiative needed?
- What does the initiative involve?
- Who participates?
- What impact has the initiative had?

From these vignettes and the wider analysis of the data collected across all four case study areas several high level themes emerge which help define the broad contours of the partnership and innovation landscape within which Police Scotland and SFRS operate.

Vignette I: Mental health community triage

The following vignette provides a detailed example of local partnership working to provide a response to individuals coming to the attention of police in a state of mental health distress and to reduce the number of people being taken to hospital emergency departments.

Why was this initiative needed?

The police in Area D were concerned about incidents they dealt with of individuals in mental health difficulty 'out of hours' and that too many of these people were being brought unnecessarily to be seen at hospital emergency departments. This was identified as an issue of providing a more joined-up approach that made better use of resources, and delivered a better service to people with mental health difficulties.

Following concerns raised by the police to the chief officers group for child and adult protection, a review of NHS services for mental health crisis was undertaken in 2014. The review recommended that the mental health Crisis Resolution Team should establish a closer working relationship with the local police to provide a community based assessment for individuals where the police attend an incident involving a potential mental health difficulty. In 2015 NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde and Police Scotland piloted an approach that provided a mental health telephone triage service for out of hours incidents of mental health difficulty attended by the police. An evaluation of the pilot showed these incidents could be resolved by a telephone consultation with a mental health nurse and removed the need for the police to take them to hospital. The learning from the approach in Glasgow helped informed a decision to undertake a data gathering exercise locally to provide a clear picture of the nature of the problem and how it was being dealt with.

What does the initiative involve?

An NHS mental health nurse was seconded to the police and began by undertaking a scoping study to identify the nature and scope of the issue locally. The work was overseen by a partnership steering group comprising representatives from Police Scotland, NHS mental health, the local hospital.

Following the report, new arrangements were put in place that allowed police officers at an incident of someone in mental health difficulty to call a mental health nurse and get advice. If necessary, the nurse provides a telephone consultation with the individual, often in their own home.

Who participates?

The initiative was developed by a partnership between the local police and NHS crisis mental health. It was overseen by a steering group that also involved the Health and Social Care Partnership, Council, social work and emergency department of local hospital. Funding was secured from a Scottish Government Mental Health Innovation Fund. This helped to pay for the secondment of the mental health nurse, and the subsequent additional mental health nurse provision

out of hours to cope with the additional demand that came through the new triage service.

What has been the impact?

It was felt by those involved that the number of individuals taken to hospital for a consultation or held in police custody was greatly reduced. The time spent by police officers on each incident was also reduced. The quality of service to the individuals was also felt to be much higher- attendance at busy and noisy emergency departments, or police custody, was regarded as an outcome to be avoided unless absolutely necessary.

Vignette II: A Community Safety Hub

The following vignette exemplifies the wider themes of partnership working, including organisational, cultural and personal. It describes day-to-day partnership working in a community safety hub in an urban area, a model that has been replicated in other areas across Scotland. It includes a model of co-location for the police in a council building, with weekly MATAC (Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordinating) meetings taking place between police, fire, council, housing, anti-social behaviour teams and Victim Support, to address community safety issues.

Why was this initiative needed?

The Community Safety Hub was formed a few months before reform, towards the end of 2012. Before this time there would be regular meetings between partners but there were no co-location arrangements in place. It was believed by the senior management that there was a need for the partners to work more collaboratively through a model of co-location.

What does this initiative involve?

This model of co-location and weekly MATAC meetings is seen as an opportunity to share information on specific incidents, problem solve and co-ordinate required responses. As well as the weekly meetings they have daily, informal data sharing arrangements. It is felt by those involved to open up opportunities for different types of actions and move away from punitive responses to more coordinated approaches.

Who participates?

The police, council, anti-social behaviour team and housing are all co-located on one floor in a council building with an opportunity for informal interactions and sharing information on a day-to-day basis. They also have weekly MATAC meetings which also includes fire and Victim Support. This is not their only opportunity to see fire and Victim Support who though not co-located stay in regular contact with the teams.

What has been the impact?

The partners involved in this example of co-location explain that their approach should not be viewed as innovative, instead they believe it should be seen as '*'the norm'* and they insist it is a *'sensible'* approach. They have faced some challenges, such as not having a shared IT system. However, the benefit of co-locating is stated as them having an opportunity to speak and share information on a daily, informal basis.

This example highlights the development of relationships between partners, in which the hub provides an informal environment to break down barriers, increase understanding of each other's roles and organisational limitations, build trust and develop solutions together. They all feel supported and empowered by their respective organisations to work collaboratively with each other.

Vignette III: Road Safety

The following vignette outlines how road safety is being used as an early intervention, primary prevention approach to tackling deaths and serious injury amongst 17-24 year olds in one of the case study areas.

Why was this initiative needed?

The focus of this initiative is an early intervention approach for pre-driver age young people. The decision to focus on this group was a response to concerns by the partners to deaths and serious injury rates amongst 17-25 years particularly in rural areas. As such, this initiative was intended to reach young people before they became drivers and introduce good attitudes towards driving and provide a long-term solution through an early intervention approach.

What does this initiative involve?

This initiative was a one day training course for pre-driver young people aged between 14-17 years who were taken by their schools to an airfield, where they were provided with an opportunity to drive a car. During the driving experience they had two coaches who were representatives from two emergency services (police, fire or ambulance). During the coaching session they were shown how to operate the car and provided with road safety advice. An added element to the day is that when the young people were not driving they were shown a crashed car and SFRS and the ambulance service would show them how they deal with car accidents. The focus of the initiative was providing young people with a real life situation which they may experience in the future and provide early intervention before they become drivers so they are aware of the possible consequences.

This approach was viewed as innovative and different from other road safety initiatives by the police, fire, council and private partners due to the young people being given the opportunity to drive. This approach is seen as moving away from the more traditional methods such as PowerPoint presentations and showing films, and instead provides the young people with hands on driving experience.

Who participates?

The police, fire and ambulance service worked in partnership to deliver this initiative, with some funding from the council and Scottish Government. It however, could not have taken place without private investment from local business owners who provided the cars and airfield for the training to take place on. These business owners had concerns about road safety amongst young people and were keen to become involved. They also took on a coordinating role including liaising with the local schools for them to bring the young people during school hours to the initiative. The emergency services all provided their staff time and equipment.

What has been the impact?

This initiative is in the process of being independently evaluated. It is not clear at this stage what the long-term impact will be of this one day input on the future young drivers. However, the partners involved in the initiative looked at similar approaches being used outside of Scotland including teaching young people under

age 17 to drive and found that the likelihood of them being involved in accidents in their first year of driving reduced significantly.

Interest has been shown from other areas and they are in the process of sharing their learning. The approach has also been nominated for national awards for innovation and partnership working and has received national media coverage. The sustainability for the initiative is based on receiving funding through Transport Scotland at the Scottish Government.

Vignette IV: Safety in the home

The following vignette provides an example of SFRS working in partnership through a community safety hub to ensure safety in the home. This is highlighted as an area of innovation due to the holistic approach to identifying risk factors and vulnerable community members through multi-agency working. This is also an example of day-to day partnership working, where the hub is providing a 'business as usual' approach.

Why was this initiative needed?

The community safety hub was established in October 2013. Before this time, the agencies believed that they worked in silos, in which there was little communication. It was felt that there was a need for more joint working but due to the expansive rural location, co-location was not a practical option. Instead a hub was created to provide daily contact between the agencies. It was acknowledged that due to limited resources across the agencies, working in regular partnership would ensure they could better target the resources they have.

What does the initiative involve?

The agencies involved in the hub refer to it as a 'virtual hub' as they are not co-located in the same building. Instead, the community safety officer produces a daily briefing in consultation with the services on what has been happening in the area over the last 24 hours. This enables them to set daily tasks. They have a face-to-face meeting once a week between all organisations which are well attended. Working in this way has felt to have led to more effective targeting of vulnerable groups.

Examples are provided of joint training, information sharing and joint home visits to identify 'at risk' community members. This type of working is seen as an opportunity for more early intervention approaches, as SFRS are able to identify potential vulnerabilities and refer them to the appropriate agencies before emergency action is required. One example, is SFRS alerting the council of community members who are hoarding items in their homes which may be a fire risk as well as potential indicator of mental health issues. Other examples, include SFRS attending flu jab clinics to provide CPR training and offer home safety visits to elderly community members and looking for risk factors in the home in relation to domestic violence. SFRS are viewed in the hub as providing the most referrals to other agencies due to risk factors they look for when conducting home safety visits.

Who participates?

The community safety hub consists of SFRS, housing, anti-social behaviour teams, community safety teams, Police Scotland and community care access teams.

What has been the impact?

The community safety hub has not been evaluated however, this approach is believed to provide a more holistic way of working with vulnerable community members. It is also thought to lower response times as the agencies work together

to problem solve and share tasks. The biggest benefit of this type of working is viewed as 'communication, communication, communication'. The agencies involved identify shared aims as well as a shared understanding of each other's roles and how they can effectively work together.