Justice Committee

Post-legislative scrutiny of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012

Submission from the Scottish Government

Please find attached the Scottish Government’s evidence to support the Justice Committee’s post-legislative scrutiny of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (‘the Act’). As the Act created new arrangements for the structure and governance of both police and fire services, the submission covers both police and fire reform.

Police and fire reform is one of the most significant public sector reforms since devolution. The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 passed by the Scottish Parliament sets a clear modern purpose and principles for both the Police Service of Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

Despite the fact that the reforms were introduced through the same legislation, it is worth noting that the services are working within different contexts meaning the experiences of Police Scotland and Scottish Fire and Rescue can be quite distinct.

In terms of policing, reflecting on recent Parliamentary scrutiny, the Scottish Government considers that the legislation is fit for purpose, but like Susan Deacon, we accept there is work to do in terms of how it works in practice. That work is already being taken forward and will continue.

We are keen to use Justice Committee scrutiny as an opportunity to get Parliamentary input into that process of improvement and to listen to any wider suggestions resulting from that scrutiny.

Police and Fire Reform - Summary

1. Police and fire reform is one of the most significant public sector reforms since devolution. The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 passed by the Scottish Parliament sets a clear modern purpose and principles for both the Police Service of Scotland and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

2. In 2010, it was clear that Scotland’s public spending was facing unprecedented pressure, with projections that it could take until 2025-26 for public spending to return to 2009-10 levels. To date, these projections have been borne out, with public services across the UK facing unprecedented cuts in funding.1 That context set the substantial financial challenge facing Scotland’s 16 police and fire services in Scotland, making the legacy structure for the delivery of police and fire services unsustainable.

3. However, reform was not just about fiscal necessity. The report of the Commission on the Future of Public Services (the Christie Commission) supported the view that reform could improve the quality of public services to better meet the needs of people and communities. This is reflected in the three key aims of reform:

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

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1 The Institute for Fiscal Studies suggests that overall police budgets in England and Wales fell by 14% between 2010-11 and 2014-15. The BBC’s Reality Check calculates a 20% cut in police funding in England and Wales in real terms between 2010 and 2017.
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; and

To strengthen the connection between services and communities, involving many more local councillors and better integrating with community planning partnerships.

4. Bringing together legacy arrangements into single services with appropriate governance and oversight has undoubtedly been challenging, particularly in policing. However, there is clear evidence that the aims of reform are being delivered.

5. The Evaluation of Police and Fire Reform has published a number of reports providing evidence of the progress made against the aims of reform. This independent evaluation is undertaken by a consortium led by the Scottish Institute for Policing Research (SIPR) working with ScotCen Social Research and What Works Scotland.

6. While recognising the complexity and challenges associated with reform, the evaluation demonstrates there is plausible and credible evidence of progress being made towards achieving the three long-term aims of reform.

- Evaluation of Police and Fire Reform: Year 1 Report and Annexes
- Evaluation of Police and Fire Reform: Year 2 Report and Annexes
- Evaluation of police and fire reform: Year 3 Thematic Case Study - Partnership, Innovation and Prevention
- Evaluation of police and fire reform: Year 3 National Key Informants Report and Summary of Evidence

7. Part of the evaluation of police and fire reform is to consider international experiences of reform. Other countries, e.g. Norway and the Netherlands, also have a similar commitment to reform and enhancing the national capacity of their services. There are often similar drivers underpinning reform in these other countries. For example, a desire to improve performance in the face of changing demand and technological change.

8. The final year of the evaluation will consider the experiences of other countries in more depth. For the police, the focus will be on four countries/areas which have experienced some kind of structural reform with a particular focus on strengthening connections to local communities, as this is relevant to Scotland. For the fire service, we will examine two countries that have experienced reform and two countries/areas where we understand there are interesting examples of prevention activity, with a focus of all the interviews being on reconfiguring the fire officer role and strengthening connections with the local community.

9. More widely, evidence cited in the Scottish Government’s Justice in Scotland: Vision and Priorities paper published in July 2017 sets out that Scotland has become a safer place. Overall levels of crime and victimisation have fallen. We are less likely to be a victim of violence or property crime, or to be injured, or die, as a result of a fire.

10. A recent and hard won success for both police and fire services has been the removal of the requirement to pay VAT. The SPA spent in the region of £25 million per year on VAT and SFRS spent £10 million – a combined loss of £35 million per year to these vital front-line services. From the period April 2013 to March 2018 this equates to £175 million. The Scottish Government has ensured that Communities will benefit in full from Police Scotland and SFRS being able to reclaim £35 million VAT from March 2018 and Ministers will continue
to press the UK Government over the £175 million paid in Police and Fire VAT over the last 5 years. Our most recent request was included in the Pre-Spring Budget Statement letter to the Chancellor from the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Constitution on 6 March 2018.

Police Reform

11. The Act for the first time provided statutory policing principles including a core purpose to inform the strategic plans and priorities for policing in Scotland. The policing principles set out that the main purpose of policing is to improve the safety and well-being of persons, localities and communities in Scotland and that the Police Service, working in collaboration with others where appropriate, should seek to achieve this in a way which engages local communities and promotes measures to prevent crime, harm and disorder.

12. Under the Act, Ministers set Strategic Police Priorities to provide an outline of what is expected of the police service. They are not intended to direct specific areas of operational policing activity but rather are intended to give broader strategic direction to Police Scotland and the SPA on the priority issues for policing in Scotland. The Strategic Police Priorities were refreshed in October 2016 following extensive consultation. Ministers demonstrated their commitment to the community focus of policing by identifying localism as one of the strategic priorities. Whilst set out under discrete headings, the seven Priorities are closely related and interdependent:

- **Localism** - Ensure that the needs of local communities are understood and reflected in the planning and delivery of policing at a local and national level.

- **Inclusion** - Ensure our police service is accessible and responsive to the needs of all people in Scotland.

- **Prevention** - Ensure our police service works to protect people by preventing crime and reducing fear of crime through communication, education, innovation and partnership working.

- **Response** - Focus policing on improving the wellbeing of individuals and communities by tackling crime and responding to and investigating incidents effectively and efficiently.

- **Collaborative Working** - Ensure that our police service works productively with partners at local, national and international levels to deliver better outcomes for people in Scotland.

- **Accountability** - Continuously improve public confidence in policing and inspire trust by being transparent, accountable and acting with integrity, fairness and respect.

- **Adaptability** - Ensure our police service takes advantage of new opportunities and meets emerging threats and challenges.

13. The Strategic Police Priorities have informed the ten year Policing 2026 Strategy published by the SPA and Police Scotland in June 2017 following extensive consultation. The SPA Board recently approved a ten year Finance Strategy, and Three Year Implementation and Finance Plans to support the delivery of the Policing 2026 Strategy.
14. There has been significantly increased scrutiny of policing as a consequence of reform. It was recognised at the time of the creation of the single service that a robust governance and scrutiny framework would be required to support a single service and hold it to account. This framework is provided through a number of bodies including the SPA, HMICS, PIRC, Audit Scotland and the Scottish Parliament.

15. Reflecting on recent Parliamentary scrutiny, the Scottish Government considers that the legislation is fit for purpose, but like SPA Chair, Susan Deacon, we accept there is work to do in terms of how it works in practice. A number of improvements to governance have already been made, putting in place clear lines of accountability for the delivery of Scottish policing. As part of an extensive programme of improvement initiated by SPA Chair, Susan Deacon, improvements will continue and will also incorporate recommendations from the review of the SPA’s Executive function, requested by Scottish Ministers and published in March 2018. HMICS intend to monitor progress on improvement under the new management arrangements.

16. The policing budget totals over £1.1 billion per annum and the Scottish Government has made a commitment to protect the police budget in real terms for the duration of this Parliament – providing an additional £100 million by 2021. Police Scotland has also received reform funding each year to support reform and, latterly, the delivery of Policing 2026. The Scottish Government’s 2018-19 budget provides reform funding of £31 million to allow Police Scotland to invest in service transformation, on top of the £42.4 million increase in the operational budget for service this year.

17. Audit Scotland’s report of the Scottish Police Authority Annual Audit 2016-17 recognised that financial management has been strengthened in the SPA and Police Scotland, and gave an unqualified and unmodified opinion on the SPA accounts for 2016-17.

**Assessment of police reform**

**Policing services have been protected and improved, and duplication has been reduced.**

18. In the five years after reform, police officer numbers have been maintained at around 1,000 higher than in 2007. This contrasts with a decrease of 20,038 (-14.1 per cent) from March 2007 to September 2017 in England and Wales.

19. Official recorded crime statistics show that:

- From 2012-13 to 2016-17 the number of crimes recorded by the police fell from 273,053 to 238,651, a reduction of 13%.

- All but three local authorities have seen a decrease in the number of crimes recorded between 2012-13 and 2016-17.

- Since 2012-13, the clear up rate has remained higher than in any year between 1976 (the first year for which comparable records are available) and 2011-12.

20. The Scottish Crime and Justice Survey informs National Outcome 9 “We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger”. It presents statistics on the extent of crime in Scotland, importantly including crime that is not reported to the police, providing a true picture of crime and public confidence in the police in Scotland. The 2016-17 Survey found that:
• The majority of adults, 58%, said that the police were doing a good or excellent job in their local area.

• Most adults (86.6%) did not experience crime in 2016-17.

• The number of crimes committed against adults fell from an estimated 815,000 in 2012-13 to 712,000 in 2016-17, an estimated reduction of almost 13%.

• In 2016-17, the majority of adults were also very or fairly confident in their local police force across the six measures of confidence asked about in the SCJS and since 2008-09, there have been increases in confidence across all six measures.

• In 2016-17 the risk of being a victim of crime was 13.4%. This is 7.0 percentage points lower than the baseline year of 2008-09 and a reduction of 3.5 percentage points between 2012-13 and 2016-17.

More equal access to specialist support and national capacity has benefited all of Scotland’s communities and Scotland’s reputation.

21. Since its inception, Police Scotland has safely and securely delivered a number of major international events, such as the Commonwealth Games, Ryder Cup, major political, sporting and cultural events, with a minimum impact on community policing or other services.

22. It is widely accepted that the establishment of Police Scotland has opened up access to a set of national specialist capabilities that would not have been possible in the past, allowing a more effective response to issues such as terrorism, child protection, major investigations into complex crime, human trafficking and extremism.

23. Where issues have come to light in relation to, for example, stop and search, armed policing or call handling, the existence of a single command structure has supported Police Scotland to drive the necessary improvements and to implement these consistently.

As a result of reform, there are now significantly more local elected members involved in scrutiny of policing, with those individuals playing a central role in the development and agreement of local police plans across the country.

24. When the Scottish Parliament’s Justice Sub-Committee on Policing took evidence from representatives of Police Scotland and local authorities regarding the planning and delivery of services in May 2017, the views expressed were generally favourable.

25. This view was borne out by the Evaluation of Police and Fire Reform: Year 2 report (August 2017) focused on local areas and concluded that those working in local areas recognise much in the way of progress and positive achievements around reform. Notable achievements were around continuing to provide a valuable local service throughout the reform process, improvements in accessing specialist expertise and better outcomes as a consequence and a strong commitment to partnership working. However, the report also found tensions between national and local priorities with decisions at a national level having unintended local consequences.

26. The Scottish Crime and Justice Survey reports that the public remain positive about the general crime rate in their local area. The proportion of adults saying that the local crime
rate had stayed the same or reduced in the past two years was 76% in 2016/17, compared to 75% in 2014/15, 76% in 2012/13 and 65% in 2006, the baseline year for this indicator.

27. The Review of the SPA Executive makes recommendations for the SPA to refresh and improve its engagement with stakeholders, including local government. SPA Chair, Susan Deacon has highlighted increasing engagement with partners to shape policing in Scotland as a key area of focus for the Authority, describing working with local authorities as “particularly important”.

28. In terms of the operational approach, the Policing 2026 Strategy’s focus on Communities as one of five priorities and the first three year implementation plan (2017-2020) details action Police Scotland will take to ensure its services are tailored to local needs, including establishing a dedicated “local approaches to policing” programme to develop and test evidence-led policing models which are tailored to the needs of local communities.

29. The Evaluation of Police and Fire Reform: Year 2 report (August 2017) acknowledges that the commitment to localism in Policing 2026 provides an “excellent starting point” for the development of more locally oriented approaches.

30. In December 2017, the HMICS 2016-17 Annual Report highlighted that inspection activity and engagement with COSLA and local authorities across Scotland shows that relationships with local commanders are strong; and that the recent changes in community planning and community empowerment are providing opportunities to streamline local scrutiny.

31. The HMICS Local Policing + rolling inspection programme will continue to provide a consistent means of assessing the quality of local policing across Scotland in terms of effectiveness of local scrutiny and engagement, and the contribution policing makes to the wellbeing of communities.

**Collaboration, prevention and response**

32. The first year three report of the Evaluation of Police and Fire Reform found that partnership working focused on prevention was firmly embedded across both bodies and considered to be ‘business as usual’. It also highlighted a number of strong local examples of co-operation, including:

- Police Scotland working closely with the NHS to reduce the number of individuals in mental health difficulty taken unnecessarily to Accident and Emergency or custody
- Police and Fire teams working with the Scottish Ambulance Service to teach young people to drive to reduce the likelihood of them being involved in accidents
- A community safety initiative to improve fire safety awareness among vulnerable people involving SFRS, Police Scotland and local housing and community teams.

33. Scotland’s Violence Reduction Unit and initiatives such as No Knives Better Lives have been at the forefront of preventative approaches to violent crime. Locally delivered and underpinned by strong partnership working, these initiatives have supported a 47% reduction in violent crime over the last decade.
34. The first year three report of the Evaluation of Police and Fire Reform reported that the establishment of national structures was perceived to have created opportunities for consistency, co-ordination, information sharing and learning from other areas. In terms of the emergency and non-emergency call handling response to the public, the SPA and Police Scotland have completed a significant programme of improvement.

35. The Independent Assurance Review: Call Handling was published in November 2015 and a comprehensive improvement programme was established within Police Scotland, with oversight provided by the SPA and HMICS.

36. HMICS has published two update reports in January 2017 and 22 May 2018. The latest update noted that considerable priority and effort has been applied by Police Scotland to ensure that all 30 recommendations contained in the initial report have been discharged. It indicated overall strong performance in relation to police call handling and concluded that the governance, programme management and quality assurance approaches adopted by C3 Division represent good practice. The report included 8 recommendations for further action, many of which align with the broader transformation work now being pursued through “Policing 2026”.

37. In line with the priorities in Justice in Scotland: Vision and Priorities and the Policing 2026 Strategy, Police Scotland is working with partners to enhance the service response to vulnerable service users. Police Scotland is one of the first police services in the UK to implement mandatory mental health and suicide intervention training for all officers, up to and including the rank of Inspector. Over 17,600 officers and staff in Police Scotland have completed this training.

38. Increasing collaboration between emergency services and between policing and health services has the potential to transform the service to vulnerable users. Examples include the delivery of forensic medical services to victims of sexual crime by health professionals in health settings; and Community Triage, which provide police officers with out-of-hours telephone access to Community Psychiatric Nurses, who offer professional support to both police officers and to those in distress.

39. Commitments to continue to develop preventative and collaborative approaches and improve response are provided in the Policing 2026 Strategy.

Inclusion

40. Recent SPA Chair and Board recruitments have seen the appointment of candidates with a diverse range of experience.

41. Police Scotland has an important role in tackling discriminatory behaviour, such as hate crime and gender based violence, and works closely with a range of partners to promote inclusion. Inclusion and diversity is a theme that runs through the Policing 2026 Strategy.

42. A key focus of the Policing 2026 Strategy is to empower, enable and develop Police Scotland’s people. Deputy Chief Constable Designate Iain Livingstone has described as ‘fundamental’ the wellbeing and development of everyone working in Police Scotland, regardless of rank or role.

Fire reform
43. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) is the largest fire and rescue service in the UK and fourth largest in the world, with 356 fire stations, 422 pumping appliances and circa 8000 personnel in total. Between 2013-14 and 2016-17 the service responded to almost 350,000 emergency incidents including over 100,000 fires. In the same period SFRS conducted around 280,000 home fire safety visits and installed over 220,000 smoke alarms.

44. Fire reform has had a positive impact on how the service works to keep communities safe by increasing capability, improving distribution of resource and protecting frontline services. A number of initiatives, operations and ways of working such as increasing access to specialist equipment and expertise would simply not have been possible without the single unified service.

45. The Scottish Government’s 2018-19 budget provides additional spending power of £15.5 million to allow SFRS to invest in service transformation, on top of the £21.7 million increase in the operational budget for service last year.

46. The Act placed a statutory duty on Scottish Ministers to prepare a Framework setting priorities and objectives and providing guidance to the SFRS on the execution of its functions. This is the key document that sets out Ministerial priorities which SFRS must have regard to and it is against the Framework that SFRS is held to account. Since the formation of the single national fire service there have been two Fire Frameworks:

- The **Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2013** provided priorities and objectives for the SFRS on the carrying out of its functions. The first Framework was intended to cover the 3 year ‘reform’ period following the merger of the 8 legacy fire and rescue services into the national SFRS.

- The **Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2016** is less prescriptive than the 2013 Framework, a reflection of the fact that SFRS is now an established national body. It also challenges SFRS to explore new ways of working to allow it to contribute an even greater role in the protection of Scotland’s communities.

47. The 10 strategic priorities in the 2016 Framework are outcome focused, set within the context of Scottish Ministers’ Programme for Government, and can be broadly categorised under the 4 pillars of the Christie Commission – people, performance, prevention and partnership. Priority 6 specifically relates to service transformation:

“The SFRS should continue to ensure that the benefits of Fire Reform are fully realised, evidenced and tracked, and it should explore through Service redesign new and innovative ways in which it can improve the safety and well-being of communities throughout Scotland by building on the traditional roles carried out by the Service.”

48. The SFRS consider that the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2016 provides sufficient direction. SFRS have developed a vision for their next phase of transformation and the public consultation ‘**Your Service Your Voice**’ asked for views on how the Service could respond to changing risks, such as the needs of an ageing population and changes in how we live and work. It closed on 14 May 2018 and has given the opportunity for anyone to contribute to sharing their views of how the **SFRS of the future** might be shaped.

49. A fully considered and well thought out programme of transformation will be more successfully and robustly implemented. Evaluation of reform demonstrates that cultural change of this scale and nature takes time. It is better to ensure that the SFRS takes its people and stakeholders with them on this journey of transformation. Robust programme
and project management arrangements are in place to support further development and implementation of transformation solutions.

50. The SFRS Board holds the Chief Officer, as Accountable Officer, to account through the internal delegation of responsibilities for expenditure on fire and rescue services, and is responsible for preparing annual accounts to be audited by the Auditor General. Scottish Ministers then arrange for a statement of accounts to be placed before the Scottish Parliament.

51. The SFRS Governance and Accountability Framework requires the Scottish Government to undertake a formal review of the SFRS at least twice a year with the responsible Scottish Minister meeting with the SFRS Chair at least once a year. SFRS performance is assessed taking into account the Fire and Rescue Framework for Scotland 2016 (Annex B provides the links to the relevant performance reports, Local Fire and Rescue Plans and Annual Reports and Accounts).

Assessment of fire reform

52. The Audit Scotland reports relating to SFRS published since reform provide evidence of progress against the aims of reform. The 2015 Audit Scotland report on the reform of the Fire Service commented that the merger of the 8 services was managed effectively, and the Board was working well and was focused on continually improving performance. The initial phase of reform was the focus of this report and concluded:

- The Scottish Government and the SFRS followed good practice and managed the 2013 merger of the eight former fire and rescue services effectively. There was no impact on the public during the merger and the SFRS' performance is improving.

- The board of the SFRS was starting to perform well. The move from eight local fire and rescue services to a national organisation had enhanced the scrutiny and challenge of the fire and rescue service.

- Although the SFRS was on track to exceed expected savings of £328 million by 2027/28, future cost pressures and likely reductions in funding produced a potential funding gap which were estimated at £42.7 million in 2019/20.

- The SFRS faced a major challenge in reviewing how it delivered a sustainable national service that meets current and future demands in the context of decreasing budgets. Completing these reviews and developing a long-term (five to ten-year) financial strategy were matters of urgency.

53. The development of a long term financial strategy was a recommendation of the Audit Scotland report in 2015. The SFRS long term financial strategy was approved by the Board on 14 December 2017. The LTFS highlights that the savings made from the merger and integration have largely been achieved and future savings have to come from changing how the SFRS provides its services. The strategy sets out potential future funding scenarios. It is a valuable high-level tool for the board, to set context for the range of decisions yet to be made in terms of transformation.

54. The independent evaluation of police and fire reform provides evidence of progress towards meeting the aims of reform.
Further evidence of SFRS progress against the aims of reform can be found in the relevant Her Majesty’s Fire Service Inspectorate (HMFSI) reports and SFRS responses to their recommendations.

**SFRS has made progress towards reducing duplication while maintaining frontline delivery. Additionally, it was suggested that aspects of service had been enhanced in ways which could not have happened without reform.**

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service publishes two statistical bulletins (covering incident statistics and operating statistics) each year. Until 2015 statistics about the fire and rescue service were published by Scottish Government.

The number of fires has fallen by 30% since 2009-10, from 38,737 to 27,240 fires in 2016-17. Over the same period, the range and number of other types of incidents has increased by 7.4%, from 11,495 in 2009-10 to 12,344 incidents in 2016-17. Other risks to the population are now apparent such as more frequent severe weather, the threat of terrorism and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of an increasingly ageing population, with the over 75 population expected to increase by 79% by 2041.

While the number of fires has reduced over the long term, other types of emergency calls involving the SFRS are increasing in range and number. In 2016-17 there were 12,344 non-fire incidents which made up 14% of all incidents. This is an increase of 13% compared to the previous three-year average.

From the statistics, there is evidence of changes in the risks to communities and other factors that are contributing to the need for the SFRS to continue transform, along with the demographics of Scotland, lifestyles and the risks to the population shifting. When incidents occur, small or major, the importance of SFRS remains.

**Accessing specialist expertise and national capacity is now much easier following reform.**

Evidence suggests that of the three aims of reform, this was the one in which greatest progress could be demonstrated. Responses to major incidents are perceived to have improved, including the capacity to maintain ‘business of usual’ at a local level during times of high demand.

Since reform SFRS has integrated different ways of working into common national arrangements as a result of merging eight organisations into one. This has included restructuring arrangements to efficiently utilise combined resources such as training facilities, migration of control rooms to the three control room model and support staff. This has also included developing and implementing strategies, policies and procedures for the national service such as corporate annual operating plans, a response and resilience strategy and standardised procedures for activities such as property inspections. This has been progressed with no fire station closures and no compulsory redundancies of firefighters or support staff. Since the formation of the single service, SFRS has successfully delivered a number of achievements:

- Water rescue teams have increased to 20 and new water rescue units were delivered in Dumfries (2017) and Oban (2018);
- Delivery of a refurbished state of the art control for East Service Delivery Area (SDA) in Edinburgh (2015);
- Delivery of a new East SDA HQ and asset resource centre in Newbridge (2016);
• £1m investment for a new North SDA HQ in Aberdeen (2016);
• A new North SDA asset resource centre in Dundee (2016);
• £2.6m invested to provide new state of the art control for North SDA in Dundee (2017);
• £2.7m invested in a major refurbishment of Stornoway fire station and new training facility (2017); and
• £12m to deliver hi-tech training facilities for the East SDA at Newbridge (to be completed March 2019).
• Harmonisation of support and uniformed staff terms and conditions

There has been establishment of local scrutiny and engagement arrangements and the production of local plans to achieve a strengthened connection with communities.

62. The 2012 Act ensures an enhanced focus on local delivery of fire and rescue functions. The second annual report from the Evaluation of Police and Fire Reform looked at local areas and found that local communities recognised the contribution that fire and rescue made to community well-being and how prevention and partnership working were now key parts of the firefighter’s role.

63. The first year 3 report from the Evaluation of Police and Fire Reform found that partnership working was firmly embedded at both strategic and operational levels within SFRS and is considered ‘business as usual’. Reform was perceived to have created opportunities for partnership working and innovation, mainly around consistency, co-ordination, information sharing and learning from other areas.

64. Evidence of partnership working can also be seen in the delivery of the Safe and Well House. Used by SFRS staff and wider partners such as health and social care, housing, third sector and other emergency services, this facility provides practical, interactive, experiential safety education for both SFRS staff and those from partner agencies. Funded by the Scottish Government’s Technology Enabled Care Programme, it aims to improve fire safety within Scottish homes and to create a more person centred approach to support health and wellbeing. It also gives SFRS and its partners greater scope to provide people with information on how to keep their home safe from fire and a range of other hazards such as falls. Digital technology being trialled in the house has the potential to address some of the barriers that come from people living in remote and isolated communities. The Safe and Well House builds on the Christie principles and brings into sharp focus SFRS’s prevention agenda.

65. Whilst the SFRS and Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) have distinct frontline roles, close collaboration between them can provide real benefits for the public and help each service better meet the demands and challenges they face. This has already been proven through the Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest (OHCA) co-responding trials where SFRS initially made over 40 potential lifesaving interventions.

Conclusion
66. In conclusion, in light of the above evidence, the Scottish Government considers the legislation is fit for purpose and that there has been significant progress in delivering the three key aims of reform while maintaining and strengthening policing and fire services to Scotland’s communities.

Michael Matheson
24 May 2018
Police – links to further evidence

- The **SPA** maintains policing, promotes the policing principles and continuous improvement of policing, and holds the Chief Constable to account.

  Strategic Police Plan 2013-2016
  Ten Year Policing 2026 Strategy: Serving a Changing Scotland

  Annual Review of Policing 2013-14
  Annual Review of Policing 2014-15
  Annual Review of Policing 2015-16
  Annual Review of Policing 2016-17

  Annual Report and Accounts 2013-14
  Annual Report and Accounts 2014-15
  Annual Report and Accounts 2015-16
  Annual Report and Accounts 2016-17

- **Police Scotland** has a duty to participate in community planning and a requirement to produce an Annual Police Plan and to submit local police plans for approval by each local authority in Scotland.

  Annual Police Plans
  Local Police Plans

- **HMICS** provides independent scrutiny of Police Scotland and the SPA to support the delivery of services that are high quality, continually improving, effective and responsive to local needs. HMICS has produced four annual reports following reform:

  HMICS Annual Report 2016-17
  HMICS Annual Report 2015-16
  HMICS Annual Report 2014-15
  HMICS Annual Report 2013-14

  Further details of HMICS Inspection Framework, scrutiny plans and scrutiny reports can be found here [https://www.hmics.scot/publications](https://www.hmics.scot/publications)

- The **Police Investigations and Review Commissioner** (PIRC) replaced the pre-reform Police Complaints Commissioner for Scotland, with an extended remit to provide more robust scrutiny including providing a new independent investigatory capacity outside the Police Service. PIRC deals with the most serious cases and cases where it is in the public interest to have an independent investigation. PIRC reports can be found here [https://pirc.scot/publications/](https://pirc.scot/publications/)

- **Audit Scotland** gives independent assurance to the people of Scotland that public money is spent properly, efficiently and effectively. Since reform, it has carried out four annual audits of the Scottish Police Authority:

  Report: Scottish Police Authority Annual Audit 2016-17
  Report: Scottish Police Authority Annual Audit 2015-16
  Report: Scottish Police Authority Annual Audit 2014-15
  Report: Scottish Police Authority Annual Audit 2013-14
Fire – links to further evidence

**SFRS Strategic Plans**
The following SFRS strategic plans provide evidence of the Service working towards to the Scottish Government Fire Frameworks:

- Summary of SFRS Strategic Plan
- SFRS Strategic Plan 2016-19

**SFRS Public Annual Performance Reviews**
Evidence of assurance that SFRS are delivering against priorities is provided through public annual performance reviews that are carried out every year:

- Annual Performance Review 2016-17
- Annual Performance Review 2015-16
- Annual Performance Review 2014-15
- Annual Performance Review 2013-14

**Local Fire and Rescue Plans**
The 2012 Act ensures an enhanced focus on local delivery of fire and rescue functions. The SFRS is under a statutory duty to ensure adequate arrangements for fire and rescue services in all 32 of Scotland’s local authority areas. Local Fire and Rescue Plans provide evidence of the connection between the service and communities:

- North local plans
- West local plans
- East local plans

**Audit Scotland Reports**
Assurance that SFRS is delivering against the aims of reform is also provided through Audit Scotland reports:

- Report: Scottish Fire and Rescue Service annual audit report 2016-17, March 31, 2017
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service - An update, due to be published March 31, 2018

**Her Majesty’s Fire Inspectorate (HMFSI) Reports**
Evidence of SFRS progress against the aims of reform can be found in the relevant HMFSI reports and SFRS responses:

- HMFSI reports and publications:
  - SFRS Response to HMFSI Report - Equal Access to National Capacity
  - SFRS Response to HMFSI Report - An Overview of the SFRS

**Annual Reports, Statement of Accounts and SFRS Long Term Financial Strategy**
An annual report is produced by the SFRS each year and laid before Parliament with the annual accounts. The report details progress made towards the delivery of the three-year strategic plan and assesses SFRS performance in acting in accordance with the Framework.

- Annual Report and Statement of Accounts 2012-13
- Annual Report and Accounts 2013-14
- Annual Report and Accounts 2014-15
Annual Report and Accounts 2015-16
Annual Report and Accounts 2016-17

SFRS Organisational Statistics

http://www.firescotland.gov.uk/media/1184265/fs_org_statistics_2016_17_v1.0.pdf