



University of  
**Strathclyde**  
**Glasgow**



# **Scottish Policing and Community Wellbeing: Past and Present**

## **Witness Seminar**

### **The Health-Justice Nexus: Crime and Justice as Social Determinants of Health in Scotland**



Funded by the CSO (AHRP/23/70)

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# Scottish Policing and Community Wellbeing: Past and Present

Witness seminar held 23 February 2026, 10.00-16.30, Strathclyde's Technology & Innovation Centre, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.

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**Note to readers:** This transcript records a witness seminar in which participants discussed events in which they were involved or which they observed. The views expressed are those of the individual participants and should not be taken as representing an agreed or definitive account. As with all retrospective testimony, recollections may differ and may be influenced by subsequent events and perspectives. The value of the seminar lies in capturing these contemporary reflections, interpretations and memories, which form an important historical source alongside documentary evidence and other records.

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## Contributors (and transcript key)

### Chairs

**Professor Katherine (Kat) Smith (KS):** Kat is Professor of Public Health Policy at the University of Strathclyde. Her research focuses on health inequalities, public health policy, evidence use in policymaking, and the social determinants of health. She has led and contributed to a wide range of interdisciplinary research projects examining the relationships between health, inequality and public policy in Scotland and internationally.

**Professor Elizabeth (Liz) Aston (LA):** Liz is Professor of Criminology at Edinburgh Napier University. Her research focuses on policing, police reform, evidence-based policing and police wellbeing. She is former Director of the Scottish Institute for Policing Research (SIPR) and has worked extensively with policing and justice partners across Scotland.

### Expert Panellists (morning)

**Nick Fyfe (NF):** Nick is the founding Director of the Scottish Institute for Policing Research, a strategic partnership between a consortium of 14 universities, Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority. After 12 years in this role he became Dean of Social Sciences at the University of Dundee and is now Vice Principal for Research and Regional Engagement at Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen. He is a trustee of the Police Foundation and Visiting Professor at the Norwegian Police University College. In 2016 he received the Outstanding Achievement Award from the Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy at George Mason University, Washington DC. Much of his recent research has focused on police reform in Scotland and Europe. His publications include *Centralizing Forces? Comparative Perspectives on Police Reform in Northern and Western Europe* (2013), *Moral Issues in Intelligence-Led Policing* (2017), and *The Abstract Police: Critical Reflections on Contemporary Change in Police Organisations* (2022).

**James Mitchell (JM):** James is Professor of Public Policy at the University of Edinburgh, having previously held professorships at the University of Strathclyde and the University of Sheffield. He has written extensively on Scottish and UK politics, devolution, governance and public service reform, and has contributed to debates on public policy and institutional change in Scotland for many years.

**Will Linden (WL):** Will is Deputy Director of the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit (SVRU), a role he has held since the Unit's establishment in 2005. He has played a leading role in developing and delivering the SVRU's public health approach to violence prevention, including initiatives focused on youth violence, trauma-informed practice, prevention and partnership working across policing, health, education and the third sector. Will has contributed to the development of violence prevention

approaches nationally and internationally and has extensive experience supporting multi-agency responses to vulnerability, inequality and community harm.

**Neil Richardson QPM OBE (NR):** Neil became Chief Executive of Turning Point Scotland in 2017. Originally from Keith in Moray, he joined Lothian and Borders Police in 1985. He was awarded the Queen's Police Medal (QPM) in 2011 and appointed Deputy Chief Constable of Police Scotland in 2012. He was awarded an OBE for services to policing in Scotland in 2017. From 2019 to 2020, Neil was Deputy Chair of the Drug Deaths Task Force. He has also served as a Board member of the Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland and as a Non-Executive Director for the Scottish Government.

### **Expert Panellists (afternoon)**

**Tom Halpin (TH):** Tom was appointed Chief Executive of the community justice organisation Sacro in 2009. Prior to this, he served as Deputy Chief Constable at Lothian and Borders Police, having previously worked in Strathclyde Police where he held divisional command roles and several CID positions, including Head of CID Operations. His career specialism was as a Senior Investigating Officer and he led numerous high-profile investigations involving murder, organised crime and terrorism. He also led national portfolios relating to public and child protection and contributed to Scottish Government groups supporting legislative and policy development.

**Craig Naylor (CN):** Craig is His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS), appointed in March 2022 to lead the independent inspectorate responsible for scrutinising Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority. His policing career began in 1989 with Lothian and Borders Police, where he served in uniform and detective roles including professional standards, firearms command and public order policing. He later held senior leadership roles in Lincolnshire Police before joining the National Crime Agency in 2019 as Deputy Director of Investigations. He brings more than three decades of operational, investigative and leadership experience to his current role.

**Jimmy Paul (JP):** Jimmy is Head of the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit, Scotland's national centre for expertise on violence prevention. He has experience managing health and social care services, leading charities and contributing to care reform, including serving as co-chair of Scotland's Independent Care Review. Prior to joining the SVRU, he was Director of the Wellbeing Economy Alliance Scotland. He has represented Scotland internationally through organisations including the World Economic Forum and the British Council and is committed to ensuring that people with lived experience are central to policymaking and service development.

**DCC Alan Speirs (AS):** Alan is Deputy Chief Constable for Professionalism and Enabling Services at Police Scotland, where he oversees professionalism, partnerships, strategy, assurance and corporate functions including People and Finance. He joined Strathclyde Police in 1988 and has held senior leadership roles across local policing, professional standards and operational command. Over a policing career spanning more than 35 years, he has focused on organisational culture, governance, professional standards and community engagement. In the 2025 King's New Year Honours he was awarded the King's Police Medal for Distinguished Service.

### **Audience members, in attendance, who provided additional reflections or asked questions**

**Amanda Coulthard (AC):** Amanda is Head of Strategy and Performance at the Scottish Police Authority, which involves leading the SPA's approach to developing and reviewing the national policing strategy, maintaining a system of performance assurance and reporting to support best value and maintaining public confidence in policing. Amanda is a member of Scottish Institute for Policing Research's Executive Committee. Prior to joining the SPA, Amanda was the performance advisor to the Chief Executive and Elected Members of West Dunbartonshire Council.

**Mary Fraser (MF):** Mary is a police historian and Honorary Research Fellow with the Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research at the University of Glasgow. Her research examines the history of policing and police work in Britain, including the role of policing in disaster management and wartime food production during the First World War. She is Vice Chair of the Police History Society and edited a 2025 special issue on police history for *Policing and Society*. With a background in clinical nursing, she brings practitioner and historical perspectives to policing research.

**Susan McVie OBE (SM):** Susan is Professor of Quantitative Criminology at the University of Edinburgh and Co-Director of the Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime, one of the largest and longest running longitudinal studies of its kind internationally. Her research focuses on inequalities in justice, offending behaviour, victimisation, youth transitions and the social determinants of crime and harm. She is a strategic advisor to Police Scotland on stop and search, youth violence, and demand and productivity. She was awarded an OBE in the 2016 Queen's New Year's Honours List for Services to Social Science.

**Kirsten Horsburgh (KH):** Kirsten is Chief Executive Officer of Scottish Drugs Forum (SDF). With a background in mental health nursing and more than a decade working at SDF, she has played a leading role in supporting evidence-based and compassionate approaches to drug policy and service delivery in Scotland. She was closely involved in the development and coordination of Scotland's National Naloxone Programme and has advised international organisations including the

World Health Organisation (WHO) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). She is also a Trustee of Harm Reduction International.

**Rob Hay (RH):** Rob is a Chief Superintendent in Police Scotland and President of the Association of Scottish Police Superintendents (ASPS). He has extensive operational policing experience and has contributed to national discussions on police leadership, officer wellbeing and policing reform in Scotland.

**Adam Lloyd (AL):** Adam is clinical academic with a background in emergency care. Having worked with the Emergency Medicine Research Group in NHS Lothian and the Resuscitation Research Group at the University of Edinburgh, Adam is currently a Lecturer-Researcher at Edinburgh Napier University. His research focuses on out-of-hospital cardiac arrest, end-of-life/palliative care at the interface between the pre-hospital and emergency department environment, and emergency nursing care.

**Andrew (Andy) Tatnell (AT):** Andy supported this witness seminar, including much of the background research, in his role as Research Associate at the University of Strathclyde on *The Health-Justice Nexus: Crime and Justice as Social Determinants of Health in Scotland* programme, which he held until March 2026. A former police officer, his research work concentrates on policing with a particular interest in police professionalisation through education and learning, especially for early career police officers. He also has an interest in the relationship between policing and health, particularly around social and health inequalities and dementia.

**Joanne McEwan (JMc):** Joanne is a Temporary Chief Superintendent in Police Scotland, and works with Policing Together. Joanne began her policing career in 2000 with then Fife Constabulary and has performed a range of policing roles including response and community policing, as well as collaborative harm reduction initiatives.

**Michelle Grant (MG):** Michelle is a Chief Inspector within Police Scotland's Policing Together Division. Her work has included partnership activity with schools, colleges and local communities to support crime prevention awareness, youth engagement and public safety. She has contributed to preventative and community-focused approaches to policing across Scotland.

**Inga Heyman (IH):** Inga Heyman (IH): Inga is an Associate Professor in Policing and Public Health at Edinburgh Napier University and an honorary forensic nurse consultant. Her research, clinical practice, and educational interests focus on the intersection of policing and health, including custody healthcare, mental distress, neurodiversity, substance use harm reduction, and police–healthcare collaboration.

**Jillian Matthew (JMa):** Jillian works with Audit Scotland, where she contributes to scrutiny and improvement work relating to public services and public sector performance in Scotland. Her work focuses on accountability, governance and supporting improvement across public sector organisations.

**Gethin Rees (GR):** Gethin is Senior Lecturer in Sociology at Newcastle University. His research focuses on the intersection between healthcare and criminal justice, particularly policing and police custody healthcare. He previously led an Economic and Social Research Council funded project examining equivalence in police custody healthcare in England. His work has also examined forensic medical evidence in sexual offence cases and sleep-related evidence in criminal trials. He is currently completing a monograph on police custody healthcare and preparing a further monograph examining the relationship between medicine and criminal justice.

**Fiona McHardy (FMc):** Fiona is a Research Fellow in the Scottish Health Equity Research Unit (SHERU) at the University of Strathclyde and has expertise in poverty, inequality, social security, homelessness and housing, and public policy in Scotland. Much of Fiona's research to date has involved working closely with disadvantaged communities in Scotland.

## Section 1: Introduction

This report forms part of a wider programme of research, [\*The Health-Justice Nexus: Crime and Justice as Social Determinants of Health in Scotland\*](#), which examines how crime, criminalisation, victimisation and public services intersect to shape health and wellbeing outcomes, particularly in Scotland's most disadvantaged communities.

Within this programme, Work Package 3 (WP3) focuses on policing. Its purpose is to provide a reflexive assessment of Scotland's shift towards public health and prevention informed approaches to policing, examining how policy commitments to improving community wellbeing and prevention, are being interpreted, operationalised and experienced in practice, and identifying opportunities for strengthening these approaches.

Central to this strand is Section 32 of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (see Box 1), which places the improvement of the safety and wellbeing of people, places and communities at the heart of policing.

### ***Box 1: Section 32 of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 - Policing principles***

The policing principles are—

- (a) that the main purpose of policing is to improve the safety and well-being of persons, localities and communities in Scotland,
- (b) that the Police Service, working in collaboration with others where appropriate, should seek to achieve that main purpose by policing in a way which—
  - (i) is accessible to, and engaged with, local communities, and
  - (ii) promotes measures to prevent crime, harm and disorder, and
- (c) that the Police Service should be candid and co-operative in proceedings, including all investigations.

This legislative articulation is distinctive and of international interest. However, despite growing policy and practice interest in prevention, partnership working and public health approaches to policing in Scotland, there remains limited empirical evidence about how these ambitions have been implemented, how they are understood by key actors, and what impacts they are having in practice. This witness seminar, and the broader research programme it is part of, seek to help address this gap.

## Research aims and approach

Within the broader Health-Justice Nexus programme, our original guiding research question was, ‘How are policy actors and practitioners operationalising and implementing public health approaches to policing, and how might this be strengthened?’ In the context of a growing interest in prevention, we are adapting this question as follows:

*‘How are policy actors and practitioners operationalising and implementing public health and prevention orientated approaches to policing, and how might this be strengthened?’*

To address this, we will be combining multiple qualitative methods to develop both a national overview and contextually grounded insights.

An initial phase of data collection, conducted between June 2025 and February 2026, involved 18 semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, including senior police leaders, policymakers, and individuals working across public health, community justice and related sectors. These interviews explored both the origins and intent of Section 32 and the realities of its operationalisation.

Building on this, we convened a witness seminar in February 2026 to deepen, test and extend these emerging findings. This report provides a full transcript of the witness seminar discussions.

## Why a witness seminar?

Witness seminars are a qualitative method used to document and interrogate complex policy developments by bringing together individuals with direct experience of them. Rather than relying solely on individual accounts, it facilitates collective reflection, enabling participants to compare perspectives, challenge interpretations, and reconstruct shared understandings of past and present developments.

This method is particularly well suited to our research for three reasons:

- **Multiplicity of perspectives:** The intersection between public health, prevention and policing in Scotland has developed through the interaction of policing, public health, government and third sector actors, each with partial and situated knowledge. Witness seminars aim to bring some of these perspectives into conversation.
- **Evolving policy and practice:** Section 32 is not a discrete intervention but part of a broader, ongoing shift towards prevention and wellbeing-oriented policing and we wanted to be able to situate historical conversations alongside discussions about more recent developments.

- **Need for reflexive analysis:** The aim is not only to document what has happened, but to assess how and why developments have unfolded and what this implies for future practice. We therefore wanted to take a qualitative approach, allowing participants space to provide their reflections alongside their accounts of specific events and developments.

The seminar was recorded and transcribed, and all contributors have been given the opportunity to review and amend their contributions prior to publication.

## **Preparation for the seminar and pre-circulated insights**

To support focused and informed discussion, participants were provided in advance with a pre-read document summarising emerging findings from the interview phase and relevant documentary analysis. This pre-read was designed to:

1. Establish a shared evidence base regarding the development and implementation of Section 32; and
2. Stimulate critical discussion by presenting provisional interpretations and areas of debate.

In particular, the pre-read highlighted four overlapping narratives explaining the inclusion of ‘wellbeing’ within Section 32:

- as a **codification of existing practice** within Scottish policing;
- as part of **wider public service reform**, particularly in the context of devolution and the Christie Commission;
- as a response to **fiscal pressures and the need to manage demand**; and
- as an attempt to articulate a **distinctive Scottish approach to policing**.

It also summarised emerging findings on the operationalisation of Section 32, including:

- challenges associated with police reform and organisational centralisation;
- tensions between enforcement-oriented performance frameworks and preventative approaches;
- the role of leadership, culture and local partnerships; and
- more recent developments in public health–informed policing, including collaboration with health and other sectors.

These insights provided a structured backdrop for the seminar, enabling participants to engage directly with, refine and challenge the research team’s initial analysis.

## Structure of the witness seminar

The seminar was structured in two parts to reflect both the historical development of Section 32 and its contemporary operationalisation, in line with WP3's aim of linking policy intent with lived practice:

- **Morning session:** focused on the **origins and early implementation** of Section 32, including the policy context in which it was developed, the intentions behind the legislation, and experiences of its operationalisation in the early years, following police reform.
- **Afternoon session:** focused on **recent and current experiences**, examining how ideas of wellbeing, prevention, public health and partnership working are currently shaping policing in Scotland, and exploring ongoing challenges, innovations and opportunities for strengthening practice.

This structure enabled participants to move between retrospective and forward-looking perspectives, supporting a more comprehensive and reflexive assessment of public health policing in Scotland.

## Scope and limitations

Participants in both the interviews and the witness seminar included individuals who have played significant roles in shaping, implementing or scrutinising policing and related public service developments in Scotland. Their contributions provide valuable insight into the historical, political and organisational contexts surrounding Section 32.

However, despite extensive efforts, it was not possible to include all key actors involved in the development of the legislation, particularly some former officials who have since retired or could not be traced. Both the analysis presented in Section 2 and the transcripts in Sections 3 and 4 should therefore be understood as partial and we welcome further suggestions for additional perspectives.

## Structure of this report

The remainder of this report is structured into three further sections:

Section 2: Preliminary findings from interviews and documentary research;

Section 3: Transcript of the morning discussions in the witness seminar: the origins and early implementation of section 32

Section 4: Transcript of the afternoon discussions in the witness seminar: current interpretation and operationalisation of section 32

## Section 2: Origins and Drivers of Section 32 and the inclusion of ‘wellbeing’: Four Narratives

This section summarises the findings from our initial phase of qualitative data collection conducted between June 2025 and February 2026, which were shared with witness seminar participants ahead of the event. Using a purposive and snowball sampling approach, we completed 18 semi-structured interviews. These interviews provided rich, in-depth insights into both the policy origins of Section 32, including the inclusion of ‘wellbeing’, and the realities of its implementation within Police Scotland.

Participants included key actors who, in some cases, were - and in others remain - strategic-level policymakers or influential figures within their respective organisations and Scotland’s wider policing and public health landscape. Their accounts offer valuable perspectives on the historical, political, social and cultural contexts that shaped the development of Section 32 as legislation, and on the extent to which its wellbeing principle has subsequently been embedded in policing practice.

There was general agreement amongst participants that partnership working, and community wellbeing had deep roots in Scottish policing culture, predating formal legislation. Interviewees were generally in agreement that the move towards partnership working which aimed to improve aspects related to community wellbeing in Scottish policing involved a gradual, ‘organic’ progression rather than a sudden legislative change or major shift in policy direction. Indeed, by 2010-2011, nearly all Scottish local authorities had formal partnership structures, sometimes with joint analytical resources and co-located teams (e.g. the West Lothian model).

This view is reflected in the dominant explanatory narrative, expressed by the majority of interviewees, particularly those who served as police leaders, inspectors, and those with experience of working in (or alongside) the regional police forces that pre-dated the Act. In this account, Section 32 is understood not as a fundamental change, but as a codification of a longer-standing shift towards partnership working, prevention, and harm reduction, particularly in relation to violence reduction, public protection, drugs, and youth work. The establishment of the (Scottish) [Violence Reduction Unit](#) (VRU) in 2005 was widely cited as an example of the shift in Scottish policing that had already occurred. Developed within Strathclyde Police in response to persistently high levels of serious violence, particularly knife crime, the VRU represented a deliberate move away from enforcement-led responses (Fraser and Gillon, 2023). Drawing on public health principles such as early intervention and attention to risk and protective factors, it foregrounded the social determinants of violence, including poverty, trauma, addiction, and inequality, and normalised multi-agency responses. From this perspective, Section 32 is understood as a constitutional update: a way of modernising the legal articulation of policing’s

purpose and moving beyond the outdated 'guard, watch and patrol' framing of policing implied in the [Police \(Scotland\) Act 1967](#), rather than as an attempt to drive new operational behaviour. Interviewees expressing this view tended to emphasise continuity over rupture, often noting that the legislation largely reflected what 'good policing' already looked like in Scotland, albeit with acknowledgement that these approaches were unevenly spread across the country.

A second, related but analytically distinct narrative, most strongly articulated by civil servants, policy designers, and some strategic actors, locates the inclusion of wellbeing within wider public service reform rather than policing reform *per se*. In this account, Section 32 emerged because policing needed to be repositioned as one contributor within an integrated public service system shaped by devolution, community planning, and the [Christie Commission's](#) emphasis on collaboration, partnership, and prevention. Legislating wellbeing was seen as a way of aligning policing with a broader move towards outcomes-based governance, making its role more intelligible within a broader architecture of public service delivery. Interviewees advancing this explanation often stressed that 'wellbeing' was intentionally broad and non-technical, designed to signal a wider public good rather than a specific health agenda. Here again, Section 32 is viewed as enabling of change, rather than directive or prescriptive. However, this narrative suggests that the legislation implied a need for significant changes to policing practices (along with other public sector services), reflecting the Christie Commission report conclusion that, '*Scotland's public services are in need of urgent and sustained reform to meet unprecedented challenges*'.

Likewise, the third and fourth narratives we identified suggest that Section 32 was intended to help achieve substantive changes to policing practices in Scotland. The third narrative, which was widely acknowledged (and linked to the Christie Commission narrative) emphasised financial pressure following the 2008 financial crisis and Scottish budget pressure. From this perspective, Section 32 formed part of a wider attempt to grapple with the growing mismatch between demand, resources, and the limits of enforcement-led policing. Prevention and wellbeing reframed policing as part of demand reduction rather than endless response, offering a new logic for managing complexity and cost across the system. This implies (and some interviewees explicitly stated) that Section 32 was intended to achieve substantial changes to policing practices – changes that would achieve significant savings for the Scottish Government. Indeed, one interviewee recalled feeling that savings associated with reform were effectively 'banked' by civil servants before they had been realised, noting their frustration that the legislation was being celebrated as an achievement in itself rather than being understood as one part of a complex process of organisational and cultural change which was likely to take at least a decade to achieve.

The fourth narrative, articulated by a minority of interviewees, frames Section 32 as an attempt at normative reorientation and symbolic differentiation from England. In this account, legislating wellbeing was a conscious effort to redefine what policing is for and to articulate a distinctly Scottish vision of policing grounded in prevention, partnership, and consent. From this perspective, the inclusion of Section 32 was partly an attempt to contrast approaches to policing in Scotland with perceived developments in England and Wales. This was in the context of an SNP-led Scottish Government keen to prove its ability to govern Scotland distinctively. While interviewees expressing this view often acknowledged that practice did not consistently follow, they nonetheless saw Section 32 as an aspirational statement of Scotland's distinctive values and identity; an explanation that aligns with a broader literature identifying a distinctive Scottish policy approach (e.g. Cairney, 2016; Fraser and Gillon, 2023). This narrative was rarely expressed by frontline practitioners and was generally treated with caution by others, who warned against overstating Scottish exceptionalism in relation to policing.

Taken together, the interviews suggest that Section 32 did not arise from a single, coherent motivation, but from the convergence of multiple logics: historical continuity, public service reform, fiscal constraint, and, to a lesser extent, symbolic differentiation from England and Wales. Disagreement within the data is therefore less about the origin of Section 32 than about whether legislation was expected to lead to change, reflect existing practice, or signal values in the absence of clear, operational mechanisms. These differences in interpretation are closely tied to where interviewees were positioned within the system, when they were involved, and whether they were reflecting on intent, implementation, or impact (it is worth noting that several interviewee accounts incorporated multiple narratives, sometimes combining continuity narratives with narratives implying significant change was expected).

## **Operationalisation of Section 32 by Police Scotland: the early years**

### ***Implementation: Challenges and Barriers***

The early operationalisation of the requirement for Police Scotland to work with others to improve the wellbeing of people, places and communities faced a range of significant challenges. Interviewees consistently attributed these difficulties to a combination of organisational, leadership, cultural, and resource-related factors, many of which were intensified during the initial years following police reform.

### ***Centralisation, Leadership and Strategic Direction***

The creation of Police Scotland in 2013 (see Timeline on pp22-23) marked a shift towards a highly centralised, national model of management. While this was widely recognised as enabling greater consistency and efficiency, several participants suggested that, in its early years, the organisation prioritised operational survival over partnership working and community-focused initiatives. This focus was widely

perceived to have contributed to the erosion of local partnerships and community-based practices that had previously supported wellbeing-oriented work.

Interviewees offered differing explanations for this shift. Some were of the view that the first Chief Constable did not fully subscribe to the notion that policing's role extended beyond maintaining safety and order. From this perspective, the purpose of policing continued to be understood in terms broadly consistent with the traditional 'guard, watch and patrol' model set out in the [Police \(Scotland\) Act 1967](#). However, one retired chief officer noted that, while he recalled that wellbeing was rarely explicitly discussed at chief officer level during this period, it was nonetheless implicitly reflected in broader strategic language around safety.

Others, particularly those who worked closely with senior leadership at the time, emphasised the scale and pace of reform. They argued that the rapid merger of multiple forces into a single national service created significant operational, legal, and cultural challenges. From this viewpoint, early leadership decisions to prioritise compliance, risk management, and public confidence were seen as pragmatic responses to organisational instability, even if they came at the expense of local partnership working and wellbeing initiatives. In areas where collaboration with regional police forces had been well established, several interviewees recalled partner agencies expressing strong objections to what they perceived as a retreat from earlier ways of working following the creation of Police Scotland.

There was broad agreement across interviews that, as a result of these pressures, there was little strategic discussion or planning focused specifically on the wellbeing dimension of Section 32 during the early years of Police Scotland. Several interviewees noted that the aspirational and non-prescriptive nature of the legislation itself contributed to this, creating uncertainty about ownership, accountability, and how wellbeing-focused activity should be prioritised or measured in practice. In the absence of clear operational guidance, interviewees suggested that localism and partnership working were often undermined by immediate operational demands, and the wellbeing agenda was widely described as receiving 'lip service' rather than sustained attention.

Several participants noted that the Scottish Police Authority (SPA), which was also created by the 2012 Act, did sometimes work to promote more preventative approaches to policing. However, there was also some agreement with a [2019 HMICS inspection report](#) that governance issues combined with a lack of clarity about the balance between the SPA's role in supporting and scrutinising the police had hampered the SPA's influence in its early years.

While examples of effective partnership working did exist during this period, interviewees noted that these were typically driven by individual commitment, professional relationships, or local leadership, rather than by organisational

structures or national strategy (indeed, one interviewee shared an example of a local collaboration between police and schools which continued despite clear instructions from the Chief Constable to stop this type of work). Several participants suggested that greater emphasis on partnership and wellbeing only re-emerged later, under subsequent leadership, once the organisation had stabilised.

#### *Wider systemic barriers to operationalisation*

Beyond leadership and organisational change, interviewees identified a number of broader systemic barriers that further constrained the operationalisation of Section 32 in the years immediately following the 2012 Act coming into force. These included the continued dominance of enforcement-oriented performance frameworks and scrutiny regimes, which made preventative and partnership work difficult to evidence and therefore less visible or valued within the organisation. At the same time, participants highlighted the erosion of capacity among partner organisations, particularly local authorities, health services, and the third sector, limiting the feasibility of sustained multi-agency working and increasing pressure on the police to act as a service of last resort.

Several interviewees also pointed to the gradual loss of organisational memory following reform, noting that earlier partnership-based practices developed within legacy forces were often poorly documented or no longer well understood. Together, these factors were seen to limit the ability of both Police Scotland and its partners to translate the wellbeing principles set out in Section 32 into consistent and sustainable practice in the years immediately following this section coming into force, despite broad support for the underlying intent of the legislation.

## **Operationalisation of Section 32 by Police Scotland: the recent and current context**

#### ***Local efforts to overcome challenges to operationalisation***

Interviewees reflected that, alongside national initiatives, efforts to re-establish a collaborative, preventative, and wellbeing-focused approach to policing have increasingly been driven at the local level. Our data suggests that, despite the tight grip on police activity being exercised by the centre during the early years of Police Scotland, local collaborative, preventative working continued ‘under the surface,’ often without recognition or support from national leadership. Some argued that this reflected a disconnect between national priorities (driven by siloed targets and indicators that still reflected a criminal justice, law enforcement focus) and local realities (the specific needs of particular communities and the importance of partnership working).

Several interviewees pointed to a period of strategic recalibration from the late 2010s onwards, associated with the development of the [Policing 2026 Strategy](#) and subsequent strategic frameworks. These documents were seen as signalling a

renewed emphasis on human rights, prevention, and partnership working. However, interviewees also noted a continuing tension between rhetorical commitment and operational focus. While prevention features prominently in the Chief Constable's [2030 Vision](#), several interviewees observed that references to wellbeing tend to focus primarily on the internal wellbeing of police officers rather than on communities, limiting its practical resonance for local partnership working.

Interviewees with experience of working in Police Scotland nonetheless described a range of local examples of enhanced multi-agency collaboration aimed at improving community wellbeing. These included place-based partnership models, mental health triage arrangements, trauma-informed practice in schools, and multi-agency youth engagement initiatives such as [Operation Stardrop](#) (a violence prevention initiative led by Police Scotland and partners to address violence affecting children and young people). Participants involved in these initiatives reported that they had strengthened relationships between police, health, social services, local authorities, and the third sector, and, in some cases, contributed to reductions in violence and antisocial behaviour. However, interviewees consistently cautioned that impacts were difficult to evidence robustly and were often highly dependent on local context.

Interviewees also reflected on the importance of cultural change within policing. Several noted evidence of shifting attitudes among newer cohorts of officers, including greater awareness of trauma, vulnerability, and the value of compassionate policing. The widespread [uptake of Naloxone](#), despite initial resistance from the Scottish Police Federation, was frequently cited as an example of this generational shift towards more empathetic and informed approaches to addiction and harm reduction. The pandemic was also framed by several participants as bringing wellbeing and public health to the forefront, with policing in Scotland emphasising education, engagement, and prevention over enforcement. Collaboration with academics, including via the [Scottish Prevention Hub](#), were cited as positive examples of partnership working.

At the same time, participants emphasised that local efforts continue to be constrained by risk aversion, rigid procedures, and limited frontline discretion, which can inhibit preventative and collaborative practice. Missed opportunities for integrated public service delivery were also attributed to structural barriers, misaligned geographic boundaries, and fragmented governance and accountability arrangements. Several interviewees argued that addressing these challenges would require not only changes within policing, but wider public sector reform. Interviewees also highlighted the need for collaborative leadership to drive these kinds of developments (such as via the Scottish Prevention Hub), the need for more shared language across agencies, and sustained support for early adopters to enable successful local initiatives to be embedded and scaled up. Some participants also stressed the importance of strengthening evidence-based practice, arguing that

clearer data and evaluation frameworks are necessary to align strategic intentions with operational realities and to support learning across the system.

### *Resource Constraint, Financial Pressures and Organisational Silos*

A key challenge that many participants identified related to budget cuts and the drive for cost reduction. Financial pressures continue to have a profound impact on both police and other public sector agencies' capacity for preventative and partnership working, thereby limiting their ability to deliver upstream interventions around wellbeing. Organisational silos were generally recognised as being a consequence of these budgetary constraints which have the potential to hinder cross-agency working, with middle management sometimes positioned as driving a focus on individual organisational priorities, thereby stifling cross-sector innovation.

HMICS (His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland) was described as playing an important role in highlighting issues and attempting to influence policy but was acknowledged to have faced resistance. Accountability via Local Scrutiny Panels and SPA was noted to have improved in recent years.

### *Reflections and lessons learned*

Interviewees consistently reflected that, while progress has been made, the integration of prevention and community wellbeing into Scottish policing remains an ongoing and incomplete process. Participants emphasised that success in this area depends on sustained investment, stable leadership, and a willingness to learn from both local innovation and international experience, rather than reliance on policy statements or legislative principles alone.

Several interviewees stressed the importance of greater honesty and openness in how progress is assessed and communicated. One strategic-level participant argued that Police Scotland collectively needs to be more candid about the limits of what has been achieved to date, cautioning against inflated or overly optimistic claims that risk undermining credibility and learning. From this perspective, meaningful progress requires acknowledging where ambitions have outpaced capacity and being open where structural barriers remain unresolved.

Interviewees also reflected on the need to balance national consistency with local flexibility. While the creation of a national service has improved access to specialist expertise and enabled greater standardisation and coordination, participants warned that excessive central control can weaken local partnerships and constrain innovation. Equally, interviewees emphasised the importance of valuing both quantitative and qualitative measures of success, noting that many of the benefits associated with preventative and wellbeing-focused policing, such as trust, legitimacy, and reduced harm, are not easily captured through traditional performance indicators.

Overall, interviewees reflected that Section 32 continues to provide an important statement of intent and legitimacy for partnership-based, preventative approaches to policing and is evident in Police Scotland's [2030 Vision](#), which aspires to a public health approach to violence prevention. However, they cautioned that its effective operationalisation depends less on legislation itself than on the alignment of leadership, governance, resources, and culture across the wider public service system. The experience of Police Scotland was therefore widely seen as offering broader lessons about the challenges of translating aspirational policy principles into sustained practice in complex, resource-constrained environments.

### ***Arguments for a Preventative, wellbeing, partnership approach***

Across the interviews, participants expressed strong and consistent support for a preventative, wellbeing and partnership-based approach to policing. Interviewees argued that many of the situations that the police are routinely asked to respond to involve issues of vulnerability, victimisation, addiction, mental health crises, and family harm (i.e. issues that are not primarily criminal in nature and cannot be addressed effectively by policing alone). From this perspective, collaboration with health, social services, local authorities, and the third sector was seen as essential, both to improve outcomes for individuals and communities and to make better use of public resources.

Interviewees emphasised that wellbeing operates across interconnected levels, with harms experienced by individuals reverberating through families, communities, and wider society. Several participants stressed that addressing the root causes of harm, such as poverty, inequality, trauma, and addiction, requires long-term, generational change and sustained multi-agency intervention. Preventative, public health-informed approaches were therefore seen as offering holistic benefits, including reduced demand on policing, improved societal outcomes, and safer communities. Some interviewees explicitly framed this relationship as 'safety through wellbeing,' arguing that the two are inseparable and that investment in wellbeing is foundational to effective policing.

At the same time, interviewees offered important caveats. While broadly supportive of a wider police contribution to community wellbeing, several participants warned against the over-extension of policing into roles better fulfilled by other services. Some expressed concern that police are often the only agency unable to 'say no,' leading to situations where officers spend significant time dealing with health or social care issues, such as prolonged attendance in emergency departments. Interviewees emphasised that police should contribute insight, coordination, and support within multi-agency systems, but should not be expected to substitute for adequately resourced specialist services.

## Critical Reflections

We have not been able to identify definitive evidence explaining precisely how and why Section 32 of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 was developed, particularly the principle requiring policing to work with others to improve the wellbeing of people, places, and communities. However, our analysis provides strong support for the conclusion that multi-agency, partnership-based activity aimed at improving health and wellbeing had already been evolving within Scottish policing during the 1980s, 1990s, and early 2000s, largely without direct top-down direction from government. The subsequent establishment of statutory Community Planning Partnerships (which often formalised partnerships that had already begun to emerge, more organically), alongside the publication of the [Christie Commission Report](#) (2011), appears to have played an important role in shaping the context in which Section 32 was developed.

We are also confident that the new policing principles introduced through the 2012 Act were not intended to be overly prescriptive. Rather, they were designed to articulate a more contemporary purpose for Scottish policing, moving beyond the traditional 'guard, watch and patrol' model towards principles aligned with wider public service reform, including collaboration, partnership, and prevention. However, whether due to the necessary prioritisation of operational delivery during reform or the preferences of senior leaders for risk management and performance, much of the wellbeing-focused partnership working that had developed incrementally over previous decades was either lost or significantly diminished during the early years of Police Scotland.

From around 2020 onwards, interviewees described renewed efforts to reintroduce public health and preventative approaches, both locally, notably in Glasgow, and nationally, including Naloxone carriage and developments within police custody. More recently, participants pointed to signs of re-established or reinvigorated activity at both national level, through initiatives such as the Scottish Prevention Hub, and locally within policing divisions and local authority areas. The [piloting](#) of a revised operating model in Forth Valley Division was highlighted as a particularly significant development, although evidence of the impacts are still being gathered.

Despite these positive developments, interviewees consistently identified ongoing barriers to the effective operationalisation of Section 32. These included sustained budgetary pressures, organisational and cultural differences within Police Scotland, unresolved tensions between centralised control and local autonomy, and continued variability in the scale and effectiveness of preventative, wellbeing-focused partnership working across Scotland.

Reflecting on the interviews undertaken so far, it is notable that there were few references to public health expertise or public health organisations, aside from some

brief mentions of Public Health Scotland's role in partnership working. Indeed, with the possible exception of early violence prevention initiatives, the shift towards a wellbeing-focused approach appears to have been driven as much by local collaborations/experimentation involving the police as by a national level prevention-oriented policy agenda, with relatively limited health input. Similarly, few national third sector organisations are mentioned in the interviews, and those that are mentioned do not appear to have been key to the development or operationalisation of section 32.

## Timeline of key events

|      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1998 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UK Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (July)</li> <li>• Scotland Act 1998 (November)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 1999 | Scottish elections, Labour & Liberal Democrats lead administration, opening of Scottish Parliament                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 2002 | First deployment of Campus Officers to schools in Scotland                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 2003 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 (February)</li> <li>• Scottish elections, Labour and Liberal Democrats form Government (May)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 2005 | Violence Reduction Unit founded                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 2007 | Scottish National Party (SNP) win most seats in Scottish elections so form new administration. 'Scottish Government' is adopted in place of 'Scottish Executive'.                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 2008 | UK financial crisis – collapse of Lehman Brothers – triggers pressure on public spending                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 2011 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Consultation on the Future of Policing in Scotland (February)</li> <li>• Scottish elections, SNP form Government (May)</li> <li>• Christie Commission on the future delivery of public services reports (June)</li> <li>• Consultation on Reforming Police and Fire and Rescue Services in Scotland (Sept)</li> </ul> |
| 2012 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scotland Act 2012 (May)</li> <li>• Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (August)</li> <li>• Section 32 of the 2012 Act comes into force 1 October 2012</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                 |
| 2013 | Establishment of Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) (April)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 2014 | Unsuccessful Referendum on Scottish Independence                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 2015 | Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scotland Act 2016 (March)</li> <li>• Scottish elections, SNP form Government (May)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 2017 | Draft 10-year strategy Policing 2026 published for consultation (February) and final strategy published (June)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 2019 | Drugs Death Taskforce established (June)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

|      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2020 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police Scotland establish Drug Strategy Board and Naloxone Delivery Steering Group</li> <li>• 'Covid-19' declared a pandemic by World Health Organisation and first 'lockdown' commenced in Scotland (March)</li> </ul>                                        |
| 2021 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnerships, Prevention and Community Wellbeing Division (PPCW) created (April)</li> <li>• Scottish elections, SNP form Government (May)</li> <li>• Public Health Scotland and Police Scotland launch collaboration framework (July)</li> </ul>               |
| 2022 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision to roll-out Naloxone (February)</li> <li>• Strategic Public Health Collaboration Unit created with PPCW division (July)</li> <li>• Scottish Prevention Hub established (August)</li> <li>• Policing Together Strategy launched (September)</li> </ul> |
| 2024 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SPA form Oversight Group to provide assurance on Police Scotland's development of a Revised Model for Policing (May)</li> <li>• Police Scotland outlines 2030 Vision (September)</li> </ul>                                                                    |
| 2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Thistle safer drugs consumption facility opens in Glasgow (January)</li> <li>• New model and approach for Local Policing piloted in Forth Valley</li> <li>• '<a href="#">Mental health – distress framework for collaboration</a>' launched</li> </ul>     |

## Section 3: Seminar Transcript (morning): The origins and early implementation of section 32

*Exploring how and why Scotland passed legislation stating, 'that the main purpose of policing is to improve the safety and well-being of persons, localities and communities in Scotland' (section 32 of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012), and how this principle shaped policing practices 2012-2019.*

KS: Good morning everyone, and thanks very much for attending this session. So, we're running this as a witness seminar, which is a slightly unusual way of having this kind of seminar event. I'm going to do a few opening comments that basically talk us through the process and so everyone's clear on that.

We really appreciate you all giving up the time to come to this event. It's been a long time in the making for us, and it's a really important part of the project. I know everyone's busy, really, really appreciate it. It's part of a five-year programme of research that's looking at the intersection of health and justice systems in Scotland. And our motivation for this wider programme is the sense that research on policing, community justice, healthcare and public health, there's a lot of all of these areas of research in Scotland but they're not always that well connected. So, we've brought together a team in the programme that has experience across these areas, it's got people with expertise in policing, expertise in health inequalities - that's my area - healthcare, prisons research, and we've also got people in the team who are justice experienced, and we've got Andy who's a former police officer. So, it's bringing together people who have got quite different experiences into the team.

It's a collaboration between the Universities of Glasgow, Strathclyde and Edinburgh Napier University. This particular bit on policing and health is co- led by myself and Liz Aston. I think many of you will know Liz, many of you in the room. Liz is a Professor of Criminology at Edinburgh Napier University, and she's formerly director of the Scottish Institute for Policing Research. So, that's more years than we would probably care to remember (Liz and I are the same age) doing research on policing in Scotland.

I think I'm probably known to fewer of you in the room. So, my background is in public health. I'm Professor of Public Health Policy at the University of Strathclyde. And my interest in this is really on health inequalities. And researching this over the last two decades, one of the things that I've become more and more aware of is that when you interview communities, the communities where health outcomes are the worst in Scotland – and we know we've got big health inequalities – it's the same communities where justice outcomes are also not great, and there's a big intersection between the two. And some of the core issues, alcohol, violence, mental health issues, impact both of those areas. So, the programme is really about bringing these together.

The other team members of this particular bit of the research are Dr Ruth Friskney who brings expertise in policing research and experience of working in policy, and Dr Andrew Tatnell who, as I mentioned, is a former police officer turned researcher. And I think many of you already know Andy.

So, our motivation for running the seminar is that the decision to embed in legislation a principle that centres people's wellbeing as a core purpose of policing is pretty unique. There are a small number of other countries that have something a bit similar - Norway and New Zealand have something slightly similar, but no other country that we've found uses the wording that Scotland uses. So, it does seem pretty progressive and, we think, of international interest. But it hasn't been widely researched.

So, Section 32 is a key part of Scotland's post-devolution development in terms of what's specific about Scotland and different to the rest of the UK. But the motivations and consequences of developing this policing principle, as we say, seem a bit under-researched, and so we're hoping this conversation today will bring together really people's experiences and expertise of why this policing principle came to be developed as it was, and what the consequences are.

As we explained ahead, we're going to be recording the session today. This way of doing things is widely used in public health and oral history. It's a well-developed method in those areas, and it's called a witness seminar. When we started talking to people about this being a witness seminar, in the justice context, 'witness' means something quite different, so we dropped that term and we just called it a seminar!

But the idea is that we record the conversations today and then we will produce a transcript. We will check the transcript for accuracy, and we will then send it to everybody whose voices are captured on the transcript. The idea is that everybody who talks, your comments will be attributed to you on the transcript and we will publish the transcript. But that doesn't mean that you can't say anything today that you don't want in the public domain. It's absolutely fine to do that and just to say to us, 'this is not for public record,' or 'I don't want to share this bit,' and then we will edit it out of the transcript.

But a key thing is that we are going to time limit the period we give you to check the transcript. So, if your voice is captured in the recording today because you're one of the panel or you've asked a question or shared a reflection from the floor, we will then be emailing you the transcript. And we will be giving everyone three weeks to check the transcript. If you know that you're going to be away for those three weeks if you let us know we can give you a little bit longer. But we wanted to time limit it just so we can get it out there before the summer period. We'll be publishing it on the programme webpages the University of Strathclyde are hosting. And the idea is that it creates a resource that other people can use and refer to as well.

Does anyone have any questions about the process? Hopefully everyone had their ethics form signed, looked at that? Seeing a few nods, that's great.

The other things that I have to do before we get going are the boring housekeeping stuff. As far as we know, we're not expecting a fire alarm, so if there is a fire alarm we have to leave the building. There are lots of toilets on this floor but they are very far away, as I'm sure you've discovered. This morning's session is running till one o'clock, so it's quite long, so I will try and give us a ten-minute comfort break in the middle of that. The tea and coffee should be left out there. If you want a caffeine refresh, teas and coffees should be where they were; just feel free to leave at any point and top yourself up.

So, format wise: this morning we have four panellists. We also have a roving mic here, I'm going to give Andy the roving mic, and then if you wave your hand if you want to come in. The other key bit of information I have to say, if you want to come in, because we're recording this and we want to make sure that we've got the right bits of conversation attributed to the right person, if you could introduce yourself just before you speak, even if you've spoken before, that would be really helpful.

We've got four panellists. I do have some questions that I'm going to ask, but it's not like an interview based thing; the questions are just to get us going. You should all feel free as the audience, you're all here because you've got particular expertise, relevant expertise, so you should all feel free to come in, share a reflection, ask a question. And panellists please feel free to ask each other questions as well.

We have one apology which is Karyn McCluskey. I'm sure you see Will is not Karyn, and we are hugely appreciative to Will for standing in. So, our panellists are Will Linden, who's Deputy Director of the Violence Reduction Unit in Scotland, and has been there since 2005. Will's responsible for the developments of many of the successful approaches the Violence Reduction Unit has taken, so brings with him a really good understanding of the history of what led up to this policing principle and what has happened since.

We've got Nick Fyfe, who's currently Vice-Principal for Research and Regional Engagement at Robert Gordon University. And before that, Nick was founding Director of the Scottish Institute for Policing Research. He also led the Scottish Government's evaluation of police and fire reform, and has extensively studied policing in Scotland and internationally.

We've got James Mitchell who's Professor of Public Policy at the University of Edinburgh and one of Scotland's leading scholars of government and public service reform. So, his work helps us understand the broader context, the kind of Christie reforms and so on and how all that played in.

Then we've got Neil Richardson who's Chief Executive of Turning Point Scotland and former Deputy Chief Constable of Police Scotland. His expertise combines senior police leadership and the development of cross-cutting support services, giving him a unique perspective on the links between policing, vulnerability and community wellbeing.

I've kept these introductions relatively short because you've got longer bios in the pre-read that we sent out.

I think that is everything that I needed to say. I'm probably one of the people with the least expertise in the room, so I'm going to now turn to our panel. I'll start with my first question which was directly on the pre-read.

So, we've been doing quite a lot of interviews to try and understand the development of Section 32 and so far we've identified four kind of dominant narratives that seem quite distinct, that explain the motivations behind Section 32. One is the codification of existing practice. This is the idea, the police were already working in this collaborative way and it was really just the legislation getting up to speed with what was happening. The second is wider public service reform, so the Christie Review and so on and that prompting this wholesale change towards a more preventative approach. The third relates to that, but much more focused on budgetary pressures. So, the third is that following the 2008 financial crash there was a real need to ensure that police were not costing as much as they were, and so this preventative approach was seen as a way of achieving that. And then the fourth is more about this distinctly Scottish approach to policymaking. So, Scotland doing things a bit differently to the rest of the UK.

I think these narratives, so they are not mutually exclusive, but they're interesting because the first of them suggests that legislation was catching up with what was already happening. But the other three all suggest that there needed to be substantial change to policing practices. So, I'd like to start by asking the panel to what extent you think Section 32 was expected to lead to substantive change in police work, or was it simply an attempt to capture what was already happening in practice? Who would like to kick us off? Nick, do you want to go first?

NF: It's a pleasure to be here. Probably I feel all four narratives have some resonance and relevance here. I think in terms of codification of existing practice, I mean policing in Scotland, as a lot of people say and others in the room, it has a really strong tradition of being rooted in communities and community policing has been important to policing, and how that has driven partnership work and the focus on issues of vulnerability and so on. So, at that level the focus on wellbeing I think to some extent builds on that tradition of policing being very rooted in communities.

But having said that, the time before reform when there were eight forces there were definitely variations across the country in terms of the level of that commitment. Because I can remember the Scottish Parliament's Justice Committee ran an enquiry into community policing just ahead of the

reform, and even at that time you could see some really significant differences, particularly between Strathclyde and the Chief there at the time, Stephen House, having a very different view of community policing to many of the other Chiefs that came in front of that Committee. So, it was never a, kind of, uniform sort of commitment to that partnership approach.

But I think too there's always been a recognition, particularly through policing research, about the way in which the overwhelming demand for policing services from the public is basically driven by issues of wellbeing and vulnerability. It's not really driven by issues of crime; 80 per cent of the calls that come in to the police don't result in a crime report, it's much more to do with issues around vulnerability and wellbeing. To that extent, I think there are elements of codification of existing practice.

Just a couple of other points. James will speak to Christie. I think the fiscal pressures are really important. We were talking a little bit earlier about this, I think people forget that when police reform came along it wasn't just about restructuring eight forces, it was also about making significant financial savings. And in many ways the police were caught in a perfect storm: they were told A, restructure the organisation; B, your budget is going to be reduced; C, you can't reduce the number of officers you've got – there was this magic number, 17,234; but you've got to find all these savings. So, they had to close local police stations, they had to get rid of police staff. And that I think compromised some of the ability to focus on these issues of wellbeing because they had all these other issues to deal with.

And the final point I'll just make which is about that relationship with police in England and Wales. I thought it was very clever move on the part of the Scottish Government to talk about policing principles as a deliberate echo of the principles of policing that Robert Peel had in 1839 and which have become the basis of the Metropolitan Police when it was formed and continue to resonate even today, but to recast them in a very progressive way through that focus on wellbeing. At the time you had Theresa May in the Home Office saying that the only job of policing is really enforcement and it's crime fighting. I felt Scotland was in a very good position to say, actually, policing is about a lot more than that, and to shift the focus into issues of vulnerability.

KS: Who wants to come in next? James?

JM: Yes, I was struck by the four narratives that you outlined because it struck me that these were relevant to public services generally, not just to police reform. And the other thing I would stress is there's nothing new in all of this. I've got a book written by a woman called Mabel Atkinson, published in 1904, and she's discussing all of these issues. There's a chapter on prevention and policing, there's chapters on collaboration, community and such like. I think the message I would want to pull out, and I'm sure Mary Fraser knows this very well, as a historian of policing, is these issues are never finally resolved; these are issues that need to be readdressed, I was going to say every generation - every day really.

I think there was an impetus that came at that time, and part of it was budgetary. We'd had the crisis in public finance that followed the economic crisis in '07-08; we had the independent budget review report in 2010, I think one of the most important documents produced in the devolution years, and one of the most neglected documents. Read that. I used to encourage all people who worked in the public sector to read it. But don't do it late at night because you'll have a sleepless night - it's scary. But we just simply ignored much that was in it.

Having said that, that wasn't the only reason for the reforms. Christie was set up very much as one of the recommendations of the IBR [Independent Budget Review]. I was a member of that commission. I have to say doing the work that we did going round Scotland I think then, as indeed for many years previously, I was well aware of extremely good practice across public services, including policing - amazing commitment on the part of key people, particularly at street level. That's where I think we need to have much more focus, on that street level. Perhaps I will come back to that.

The other thing is I think that there were also ample examples of structural problems, systemic problems and weaknesses. I think, as Nick has rightly pointed out, there was a lot of good practice and a lot of bad practice as well. I think if Christie has any value, and actually now I question the value of Christie - I'll come back to that - then it was to try and provide something to which people could make reference for reform. My problem is that there are lots of references to prevention and to the four different principles we outlined in that report, a lot of talk, but not as much action. I always say if I was paid a quid for every time Christie is invoked, I'd be rich. But if I was paid a pound for every time it was actually acted on, I wouldn't be quite so rich. And I think one of the things that I've hammered away at for a very long time in public services here is the implementation gap. And that gets us into these debates about whether it should be top down or bottom up. It has to be both. It has to be both.

And I think what was really interesting is that Police Scotland reform, that reform took place alongside Christie, because it started before we started to meet. In fact, I remember going to meetings on it during deliberations, and that was interesting. It slightly concerned me that we were looking at one service at a time, and looking at it in silos as it were. Fortunately, that's not quite what happened in practice. But unless and until we recognise the point that you made yourself, Kat, at the beginning about those health inequalities and justice inequalities and all these issues are all wrapped up together - I can't stress enough, Mabel Atkinson was talking about this in 1904 - then we're not going to make progress. And I fear that we've not made as much progress as we should have and could have; notwithstanding the level of commitment from individuals across Scotland and in certain institutions. I'm very much struck by that, that that continues to be the case.

What I think we've not given sufficient attention to is how do we create that change. I often give lectures on public policy and how you deliver services, I talk about sticks, carrots and sermons. Sermons is getting that message out, and I think we've done a lot of sermonising. It's hugely important. The piece of legislation that's sermonising. It's non-justiciable, in that sense it's performative. But it's also valuable because it sends out a message. But if you've only got a sermon you're not going to get anywhere. Have we incentivised? And I've often asked senior folk in public services, when was the last time you promoted someone for really good work on prevention, on collaboration? More often than not, particularly in certain services - health's the worst by far - it's dead silence. And I think we've got to think about how do we achieve the change as much as anything. We know what we want, and a lot of good talk, but I have to say, looking back, because I remember that Commission, a bit disappointed.

KS: Thank you for that. Will, I'd like to bring you in terms of that. Because I suppose in terms of the success stories, one of the success stories that is told about Scotland is on the violence reduction side, so it would be really good to hear your perspective on it.

WL: Yes, I'm just sitting listening to Nick and listening to James, I feel a bit of a fraud sitting here, because I'm looking at it from the perspective of actually looking at what it was like to deliver, what it was like to be around at that stage. And it was challenging. From a violence prevention point of view, we had started this journey back in 2005, so way before the conception of what Police Scotland was going to be or the amalgamation of forces. And it was a real challenge for us because we were trying to shift an agenda and shift the way that people looked at things and looked at it through that prevention lens rather than a criminal justice lens. And that took time and that took effort and it took people and it took relationships. And I feel like it's a move forward into a shift towards Police Scotland and a shift towards wellbeing and a shift towards this kind of prevention agenda is that we took the words with us but we didn't take the actions. We really struggled with that, partly because of the complexity of the problem we faced in that transition.

Now, that transition towards the forces was a difficult time. And it was difficult for us, sitting in the wee island of prevention that was the Violence Reduction Unit, because we were preaching one thing, but across Police Scotland they were looking at performance, they were looking at targets, they were looking at how they could drive that singularity of behaviour across the country. Which is not easy to do when you're trying to follow a prevention agenda when there is no targets, where there is no hard metrics and outcomes et cetera, so it's difficult to change behaviours. So, from our perspective working across there it was seeing a lot of people saying the right things but we didn't see a lot of the action delivered. It was a real, on one part you'd read the legislation and you'd have hope, and then you'd see the action that followed it and then you'd feel a little bit of disappointment in terms of what's been delivered.

Now, I don't blame any individual, any organisation for that; I think that's what was mentioned - the systemic problems that we faced and the challenges that were there that it was really difficult to deliver. But I feel like we missed an opportunity, we missed a massive opportunity to actually take forward prevention at that stage, to actually make a difference. Now, Police Scotland tried their best and tried really hard ever since then to actually introduce prevention, to actually be a preventative organisation. But it's, how do you bring the rest of your partners together? How do you bring the rest of civil society? How do you bring the third sector, the private sector, the public sector all into this prevention agenda? The problem is the legislation was sitting on Police Scotland's shoulders, and if it's only sitting on one organisation's shoulders it's not going to work. And that was the issue from the very start.

NR: For those that don't know I, for my sins, authored the document, the change document. For my sins they then asked me as a consequence of that to direct the phase of creating Police Scotland and the arrangements to go into place. So, when Andy raised this question with me about the legislation and one of the fundamental basis, it really caused me to do some deep thinking and I suppose cast my cloudy memory out to one side to try and actually remember, what was that all about and how significant was it and did it feature?

I suppose where I've got to, and I don't have a clear answer because, as Nick said, four perspectives and depending how you're approaching this you could probably put some shoulder behind any of them and argue the case, but for me there's a really strong important part of the context, and that was we were creating change from a position of strength and not weakness. And I've said many, many times it's not that it's easy, but if you have a very clear crisis or a very clear problem because of an immense failure of highly public weakness in your structures then that change becomes more straightforward in the sense that everybody can buy straight into that: we need to make this change however painful because that's broken and it needs to get fixed.

That wasn't the case with policing. In fact, quite the reverse, policing was riding a wave at that time, irrespective of all that other contextual stuff around the 2008 crash and all the rest of it, policing numbers were the highest level in history. Rightly or wrongly 17,234 was the highest number that policing had enjoyed. Public satisfaction rates were an anomalous thing that had been studied by researchers many times because they were consistently higher than in England and Wales, but nobody really knew why. But it was a consistent thing and we obviously in the police had great fun with that at conferences down south, and we would come up with all sorts of reasons as to why that would be the case. But it was true. We had individual forces that took massive pride, as they rightly should, in terms of their areas. And Chief Constables were appointed to first and foremost look after that area. So yeah, we worked together, but actually communities in the main were pretty content and weren't necessarily observing the governance issues that were actually a primary driver for change, i.e. the

police boards didn't really hold individual forces to account. There was no real evidence of demonstrating how that discourse at board level really either held forces to account or drove activity; it was more of a box ticking exercise. But local communities didn't feel that and certainly those involved didn't recognise it.

So, there was that. But the point was that policing was doing pretty well. So, when I reflect back there were a number of things that became very clear drivers, and the financial picture was definitely one of them. I had a view just at a personal level that if we didn't make some really significant change, firstly, it would definitely mean a detrimental outcome for policing across the country; and secondly, I was pretty clear that if we didn't do it ourselves, it would be done to us, and it might actually reach a point where it's done in a crisis kind of way, which I really was worried about. I thought that that would be a really destructive way to approach a service and a profession and a vocation that I held dear. So, in a way that, I guess with a heavy heart, all of that stuff nobody likes change, but actually there was a mandate there to say no, this is the right thing to do and we need to do it and we need to control it and own it.

So, I guess from that perspective what was emerging for me was a narrative that I found myself having to fight rather than advance. So, in trying to find the burning platform that I was talking about that everybody could get behind, what was emerging was money: money's tight, we need to make savings. If you make fundamental change to policing services based on, we've only got so much cash, in all likelihood you're going to get to the wrong place. So, I ended up having to fight quite hard against that financial picture. And I deliberately asked the teams, let's not talk about money, we all know it's there, we need to work with that, but let's try and over-emphasise the other things that are important.

And some of that, I dusted down the benefits plan that we created, there were three objectives in that benefits plan, not only three – obviously there was an awful lot more there – but the three primary areas for focus: one was about equity of service. Again, this is something that again however strongly it comes out, I do believe this was a real win out of policing. As the Deputy Chief Constable in Strathclyde, I had a helicopter. None of the other forces had helicopters. So, if something happened in my area I could deploy a helicopter. Fantastic. If something happened that was equally or even perhaps more significant and deserving of a helicopter they would have had to come me, and I would have had to decide whether I was in a good mood that day or not, am I going to let them have this helicopter or have I got something that I think is more important? And if I am going to let them have it, am I going to charge them for it? These kinds of things, from a public point of view, started to make me feel a bit uneasy, actually, when we say we're a small country and we should be providing public service from a position of need and equity.

There were lots and lots of examples in policing, and the helicopter is just an obvious one, but there were lots where that just didn't, kind of, add up.

So, there was something of an opportunity to try and clear the landscape. So, that was the first priority.

The second priority was making services more relevant to communities. And so that engagement between services, and certainly when you become more national, whether it's serious organised crime or whether it's major things that local forces would always have needed a bit of help with, then it becomes more important to give the confidence at a local level that you've got access to all this kind of stuff.

And the third thing was the part that relates to the question, and that was about community wellbeing. And it was linked to community planning and all of these things that were happening.

I'll say one more thing and then I'll shut up because I know I'm going on a bit. But it was that part where effectively in terms of the idea of... Sorry, it's gone straight out of my head. I'll pause there. I'm sure it will come up later.

KS: Thanks, Neil. So we're just going to open it up to the floor before we move to operationalisation. So, if anyone's got any comments or reflections or questions, and this is about the kind of what motivated Section 32? And if I could just remind you to introduce yourself.

AC: My name's Amanda Coulthard I work for the Scottish Police Authority. Neil, I was thinking about a question and then you mentioned community planning and I have to ask it now. So, lots of what you said resonates across all panel members, and there have been real challenges. We seem to talk on a daily basis about how Christie didn't really deliver on its ambition. But Will, you made a comment about the legislation for policing and the fact that it was only on policing. Where does the community empowerment legislation come in there? What about the duty on all other partners? And have we had the same conversation about the responsibilities on other public sector partners as we have regularly about the duties on policing for wellbeing?

JM: These conversations are going on all the time across all the public services. On community planning partnerships: it's such a great idea and it's one of the biggest challenges we've always had in terms of governance in any democracy is how you avoid silo working, how you get organisations to work together. And I think we've not got that right at all yet.

Community planning partnerships when they were set up originally were a really good idea. But frankly, I mean I used to say it reminds me of Voltaire's comments on The Holy Roman Empire - nothing holy, Roman or an empire about it. Not much community, certainly at the outset; planning, hardly from the CPPs, or partnership. Things have improved and, crucially, it varies hugely across Scotland. I think when we talked about it earlier, a lot of it comes down to relationships, and if those get disrupted there is a problem. But the conversations are happening. I would argue that the incentives aren't there and I do think we need to look at this.

One of the biggest challenges, I hate to keep coming back to finance but it's something I've become a bit obsessed with at the moment, all the time actually, if you think of finances, all finances are done in silos. And that is a problem. We're not getting the bang for the bucks in the way that we should be. And when it comes down to it, having a bunch of chief executives or whoever around a table talking and then go like, that's my money, you're not getting a bit, then you've got a problem.

And of course, we've got to recognise the pressure on providing acute services is immense. So, while I'm very publicly critical of health, I have to say I would concede that in health service there are immense pressures on acute services and it's not easy. But there also are vested interests there, and I don't think there's been a political will to address that. That's part of the problem.

WL: I would agree with that. We don't have structural levers and that one structural lever around about finance doesn't exist across organisations. And that's probably the one lever that is both the best and the worst lever because it can encourage action, but it can also encourage the wrong action, as we can see through cuts and through different ways of addressing things.

Also one of the biggest problems we've got in Scotland and also... one of our, probably it's both our biggest challenge and our biggest benefit at the same time, is we do things on relationship based practice, we do things in a relationship based way. We get things done because we know each other. We get things done across organisations because we turn up to the same meetings, we know each other, we know each other's organisations. We are, for want of a better word, act almost like friends than colleagues. And that's brilliant for doing change, that's brilliant for getting things done; but it's not great for long-term sustainability. And that makes things much more difficult.

So, if you compare ourselves to England and Wales, which I don't like doing very often, but it's that way of we work differently. We work differently because we work on that relationship-based way. England and Wales work on a levers-based, sort of legislative, 'you will do because I've said,' sort of way. Just because of that relationship... our relationship to government, our relationship to policy, our relationship to each other. So, if we want to encourage our other organisations to come to the table to deliver on prevention we need to look at the levers. We need to look at those levers and how we make that work, how as an organisation Police Scotland can work better, with whether it's health or education or dare I say the communities, and actually what's the levers that make other organisations work with us? That's the one biggest challenge that we have.

KS: Do you want to come in here?

NR: Just a brief comment in relation to that. Again, it's a really valid question. I remember these were the kinds of closed conversations that never broke into the light of day, but there was a lot of acceptance across the table, and I'm talking about from the cabinet down into the operators, that police and fire, as scary as it was at the time, was a way in which to break the mould and move into something much more significant. And we were talking about health reform, we were talking about local authority. But to move straight into that was going to be terrifying, and probably with all the intelligence out there and research from failed attempts elsewhere in the world you wouldn't want to start something like that and then have the consequences.

One of my great frustrations in truth with police and fire is that it should have continued to be treated as that, a ten-year plus change endeavour where the learning was being harvested and used to inform and drive what comes next. So, it shouldn't ever have been seen as a reform of one part of public service; that's a real own goal. It should have been seen as an integrated part of something greater. But that ability to think strategically, maybe I'm being naïve, maybe with the democratic arrangements that we have which are calendar driven and nobody really takes a long-term view because it becomes too difficult with an election coming up and all of that stuff, maybe that's just where we're at. But it certainly felt at the time that there was an idea that what we were doing here would enable an escalation, I suppose, in terms of some of these ambitions. Maybe even enable some of the ambitions that were already a strong part of the discussion around Christie, at the time, around how we make progress. And actually, really importantly I suppose, moving forward into things that are, at that time, not even thought of. I felt that that was part of what we were doing.

But actually, for various reasons I know we'll come onto, that seemed to become less and less important, oblique, significant in terms of what was driving the activity. And I feel that that's a real shame.

KS: I'm just going to summarise where we're at and move us on to the operationalisation. Because the sense I'm getting from the conversations and from the interviews we did before there was quite a lot of buy-in to Section 32 - we haven't really come across anyone saying, I thought that that was a really bad idea. But the issues came with the operationalisation of it, and we've already begun touching on that. So, I just want to ask you all to comment on what you felt were factors that most constrained this shift towards focusing a bit more on community wellbeing in the few years afterwards. And I think it picks up on some of what you've already said, Neil, so maybe I'll start with you. And I'll have a sub question there which is how much the role of legacy forces played in how this was operationalised and how it played out?

NR: Maybe I'll start with the bit I forgot earlier on, and that is what we were seeking to do was refresh a piece of legislation that went back to 1967 and it was pretty old. And therefore with the passage of time, it had had sticking plasters put on it to enable it to keep pace with the modern requirements of policing. But it definitely needed to be refreshed. So, in creating new

legislation, it's a real balancing act because it needs to be prescriptive enough to provide clarity to everybody as to what is expected; but if it is too precise it becomes restrictive and effectively just creates bad legislation that has to be amended every five minutes and then it becomes really difficult to use very quickly.

So, what we were seeking to do, and the question originally kind of implied that we were trying to consolidate what was happening at the time, and I think there was a bit of that, but what was informing it was the thinking from Christie and from community planning and some of the practical activities and some of the real successes, let's be clear, of policing across the country. Some of the strongest partnerships, some of the strongest examples of partnership activities were happening not in the big forces but in the small forces, because these relationships were driving it. And it was powerful, really. So, there was no desire to get rid of that; it was around how you build on that.

But rather than galvanising or looking back, I think part of the trick with good legislation is to look forward. So, where is it we want to go that will make this piece of legislation endure and not have to be amended every five minutes? And so I don't remember being party to deep meaningful discussions about wellbeing, there just weren't. It was a much broader discussion, in my recollection anyway, I might be wrong.

But the other thing with this was that, rightly or wrongly, the Government had a really strong view that the legislative part, i.e. the framing and the drafting of this legislation, was something that was very much for them and not us. And ultimately would be something that would be provided to police authority to then effectively, kind of, own moving forward and certainly used as a tool. So, there was a real disinclination to allow people like me to get too heavily involved in all of that and become directive. You can take a view on that whether it was right or wrong. I was party to the discussions, I was included, but not in the framing parts of it; that was something for them. And it wasn't a hill for me to die on frankly. In terms of the changes required there were way enough challenges and plenty to keep me busy without worrying too much about that. And I kind of had a confidence that what would emerge would largely reflect the needs. And I think it did. But I didn't overthink some of that at the time.

So, moving on to why some of that has been quite difficult to implement, there's a whole series of things you could point at. But the legacy forces, which is the key point, is maybe an important one. So, I think there's a couple of things maybe to say about that. One is that there was a sense of loss from individual areas, and we were not able to, or maybe we were not energetic enough in articulating what the alternative proposition was. So, at a local level a lot of what was valued, whether it added value or genuine outcomes is another matter, but what was valued at local level was the fact that a number of people in the community environment, social environment would meet with chief officers, even if it was only quarterly or even annually, they were able to do that. When you move from eight forces to one, that

was no longer going to be possible. And so from their perspective, well we used to have a meeting with really important people and now that doesn't happen, or if it does happen, I'm now meeting a Superintendent and not a Chief Constable. And that doesn't feel as important. You're obviously de-priority. They felt that. What we didn't do as a service, we heard it, but we didn't act energetically enough to address it in my view.

And there's also another part of this, just to be completely blunt about it I suppose, is that everybody involved in this process is a human being, human beings don't like change. At a Chief Officer level, it was really clear that there was a lot of opposition and various cases were articulated in opposition to change. It reached a point where it was clear well, the Government has made up their mind and we're now moving ahead with this, so many outwardly said, right, fair enough, I've said my piece, I've not won it, I'm now putting my shoulder to it and getting on with it. But what emerged was something a bit different, in my experience. And some of the discussions that were happening at a local level were feeling a notion of loss and of reduction, not doing what they said, which is now we're all putting our efforts into making this single entity and this transformation a success. So, I think that added to the problem. And I suppose in my head I thought, look, this is a short-term thing because we have to get through this, this is just part of the pain of making an omelette, but we can get through that and allow some of the evidence to then start to provide a narrative to say look, this has been worth the effort. But I, looking back, think that was one area we should have been a bit more active and a bit more energetic with.

KS: So setting out that vision?

NR: Yeah, providing the evidence, providing the narrative, actually just communicating, addressing, even if it's just through conversations to say look, we've heard why you think this is going to be a loss, here's why we think it's not. We didn't do as much of that as we should have.

KS: Anyone else want to come in on factors that were constraining... Nick?

NF: Just a few things to add to what Neil said. I mean, I think one of the issues in terms of the operationalisation of Section 32 was in those early years of reform the focus was on integration rather than transformation. It was about how to make those eight organisations work in one organisation. I was talking to a colleague in Norway, Norway was going through a very similar process of structural change, and interestingly one of their key motivations for that change was prevention. But they said one of the key messages they had to get across to people was to be patient, this stuff doesn't happen quickly, reform is a process not an event, and all that sort of stuff. So, I think that was an issue, the transformation agenda wasn't at the forefront because there was a lot of basic operational stuff there to be brought together to integrate the eight organisations.

I think there's almost been a tension between the principles of reform and the aims of reform. As Neil said, the aims of reform are around efficiency, they were around effectiveness and they were around engagement. And that became, I think, the real focus for a lot of the activity within the first four or five years. Whereas the principles of reform got pushed into the margins and particularly around Section 32. I think there are two or three very important reasons why that was.

One, it wasn't a priority for the leadership at that time. I still remember Sir Stephen House gave the Apex Lecture in 2013 and that was one of his first public pronouncements after becoming the Chief of Police Scotland, and the theme was around partnerships. And I went back and had a look at it just in preparation for this and he talked then, he said partnerships are not under threat from Police Scotland, but he says we're not a solutions agency, we are a restraint agency. And all the headlines in the days after that Apex Lecture were about Police Scotland and enforcement, and that then became a narrative that things like stop and search played in to, and then armed policing in the Highlands, all the narrative in the press and elsewhere was about Police Scotland being an enforcement focused agency and there was all talk about the use of performance management systems that again emphasised that dimension of what they were doing, rather than the preventative agenda. That's not to say that work with partners wasn't going on. I think there were a lot of people locally that were still trying to make that happen. But there was this wider narrative that indicated that that was less important than this focus on enforcement.

And then the final point I'll make, and I know we're going to come on to this, I think the governance arrangement around Police Scotland were so – I'm not using this in a pejorative sense – but were so immature at that point. The SPA [Scottish Police Authority] was being built from scratch basically. And whereas policing had had a bit of time to prepare for this, and there had been work by ACPOS [Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland] and others to almost build a shadow organisation, the SPA was being basically constructed as Police Scotland came into being. There were all sorts of issues around the interpretation of the legislation and the differences in interpretation. But there was a very tense relationship between SPA and Police Scotland that was focused on things like finance and focused on resources. And at a local level there was a similar sense of turmoil that there were these local scrutiny engagement committees that were being established in all sorts of different ways across different parts of the country. They were unclear about what powers they had, what influence they had. Basically, they had very little formal influence because SPA was the key governance body. And local commanders were having to build relationships with these new organisations.

I think, again, it's important not to look back at this and think that all of this was pre-formed. It wasn't, it was being built at the time that Police Scotland had been created. And that very uncertainty and turmoil meant that a lot of things were not primary focus.

JM: I think the answer that you've just given explains something that Neil raised, and that is why did this not lead to further reform. Because the perception amongst politicians and officials was, 'bloody hell, that looks difficult and we don't want that.' I heard many people say, 'we're not doing that - look what happened with police reform.' Not that it hadn't been successful; but they hadn't anticipated things that frankly anyone who'd done any research on institutional reform should have been aware of, and the essential need to think things through.

Scott [Ward] is a colleague of mine that I work with and he's an expert in parliamentary draftsmanship and he always says one of the big problems he's got with a lot of legislation that's passed is it's purely performative and it's meaningless otherwise. And he always encourages people, he's got a reading list, to read. And it's all about very much what happens next to the legislation. I look at that box one, Section 32, that's meaningless, it doesn't tell me anything about implementation. And from a policy perspective that's fine for a bit of legislation; you must think things through beyond that. And it's not the fault, it's certainly not your fault, but there hadn't been sufficient thought to what should come next in terms of implementation. And the governance issues I think were troublesome.

One of the lessons I think from big institutional, and this was big institutional reform, is take your time, not just in the process of implementation, but take your time in drawing it up. Think through the problems, the anticipated problems. There will always be unanticipated problems; build that into your timetable. And if you don't do that then you're going to be in trouble. And I do think one of the reasons why there's not been further reform is because of a perception. And yet, there has been success as well. And what has always interested me is that speaking to people around that period and for many years thereafter people would point to police reform; nobody would mention fire and rescue. And I would point out same thing had happened at the same time. It was all the heat was on the police. And there were lessons to be learnt from both, and probably not as much lesson learning between the two. But I think we've got to recognise firstly the scale of change. It almost sounds easy, eight into one. It never is. It never is.

I argued on Christie against others who wanted to have massive recommendation on institutional reform because we had far too many institutions, people have been saying this for ever, a plethora of institutions and all the rest of it. I said just be careful, take your time, I want to see that happening but it's probably a 30-year project, the kind of thing we need to do in Scotland. We started with police reform; we haven't moved forward since then. And I have to say too much of it is just performative. Wellbeing? What does that actually mean? And that's not easy to answer. I mean, what are the measurements? We are obsessed with inputs and outputs, not outcomes. We're obsessed with round numbers, you know, a thousand... Every bloody election is the same thing, parties will give a thousand more this, a thousand more... That should alarm us. What are the chances that we precisely need a thousand of anything?

So, I do worry about the public policy literacy of our decision-making class in Scotland. Sorry, I sound really obsessed.

KS: Will, I was hoping you could come in here? Because I asked about the constraining factors, but obviously violence reduction did manage to do things a bit differently and there were some successes there. So, maybe you've got a slightly different perspective?

WL: We did stuff despite the challenges. We were, how can I put this, a little bit slightly pushed aside at Police Scotland. And I wouldn't use the word, well I am going to use it, but we were probably a wee bit ostracised at the time because the challenges that Police Scotland faced in terms of that move towards a single force, they didn't really want us being that voice of conscience around about prevention and around about the challenges they faced.

You had a lot of anger with the problems with governance. Governance was a major issue. There was a whole psychodrama playing out in the press between SPA, Police Scotland and the Government at the time as well, which didn't help. You also had what was seen as, you know, Neil talks about the unhappiness and the conflict et cetera, but actually I'd probably go further in anger across certain areas in terms of what was happening. And then you had what was viewed as the Strathclydisation of policing whereby we're taking the Strathclyde policing model and trying to apply it across the country, whether it be appropriate or not, and nor did they get that consistency. It was about, very much about the sort of wholesale policing model of arrest, deter; it was very much a criminal justice model that we've tried to move away from in terms of what we do.

So, for us, we got to operate in an island in terms of what we were doing, which helped us in certain ways because we could develop partnerships, we could develop new relationships with organisations, we could move around some of the challenges we faced. Our biggest partner at the time wasn't policing; despite the fact we partnered with policing, it was hard for us to do things with policing at the time. It was quite the challenge. Since then we've worked really well with policing in terms of getting things done and doing prevention work. But at that time, it was almost the VRU existed and delivered despite policing and not alongside policing.

KS: Interesting. Okay, I want to open it up to the floor on this question about constraints?

MF: I'm Mary Fraser, I'm the police historian that James talked about a minute ago. Thanks James.

I wanted to come back to the issue of collaboration, because I've done some work on it during the COVID disaster when the services were bound to work together, and they were pushed together really quickly to cope with the COVID pandemic. And particularly, as I understand it, the police went into the ambulance service to help to train ambulance drivers, and in some

cases to actually drive ambulances to overcome this disaster. And this was before the vaccines were available, so we were at the height of the crisis in January 2021. And my understanding is that although the police weren't actually trained in health disasters, they very quickly were able to develop skills in this area. And my question really is that there must have been from that some sort of feedback and something which would allow evaluation of how that went. My question really is, where did the organisational memory of all that go? Because it must lie somewhere, and it might be really useful in looking at future collaboration between organisations, because as I understand it once a disaster is over gradually the funds get diminished and the people get moved away and the whole thing tends to take more of a back seat. But the organisational memory ought to be there somewhere for future reference in disaster management.

KS: That question I think we need to bring in to the afternoon session because this morning we are going 2012 to 2019, and then this afternoon we're moving on to the pandemic period. So, is it okay Mary if we take that question to the afternoon session?

MF: Sure.

KS: Okay.

SM: Hi, everyone, I'm Susan McVie from the University of Edinburgh. I have to say it's a bit like a therapy session actually, this, going back - it's amazing to have so many institutional memories in the room. I guess we probably don't all have the same memories, but that's always a good thing.

I wondered if you could say a little bit about the politics of the whole thing? I want to talk about the Politics with a big P and politics with a small P. I mean, obviously around the time of policing reform the SNP [Scottish National Party] were still on the rise, there was a big nationalisation agenda, I think, as James has said, Police Scotland got caught up in that nationalisation agenda, and many other organisations afterwards went, 'woah, we don't want to go down that route'. So, one of the issues for some of the operational aspects of policing is still you've got one single service and multiple health boards, for example, so that causes a lot of problems around dealing with health issues. But there was the nationalisation agenda. I mean, it was difficult not to see pictures of Stephen House, Vic Emery and Kenny MacAskill, on many, many newspapers. There was certainly a lot of debate and discussion going on, and behind the scenes, probably a bit of disagreement but at face value it seemed there was harmony. But I think we've already heard a little bit below the surface there wasn't necessarily.

And then something that nobody has really mentioned, I don't think it's in the papers, about the Commonwealth Games and huge pressure for policing to get its act in order to demonstrate that it could, as a single service, effectively police a very major sporting event. So, that's the big P level.

And then at the small P level, I think Will has just mentioned, about the Strathclydification of policing, certainly at local level. And I was involved in the stop and search work; I was part of the independent advisory group that was set up by the Scottish Government to look at that. And we brought in the code of practice around that, some of which reflects some of the wording I think in the Act. But that work, it became a cottage industry internally in terms of the number of officers who were dedicated to looking at that - I lost track of the number of advisory groups and various bodies internally that were dealing with that as an issue. But even when we got to 2015 and we were rolling out the training, and I attended a lot of the training, officers were still at that point, this is well after reform, at least a couple of years, three years maybe, still talking about the Strathclydification of policing and had a real sense that this wasn't our problem, we feel like we're being punished for something that was happening in another legacy force.

I mentioned some disagreements between SPA and the Police Scotland - particularly at the very early stages there was no agreement about who was going to be in charge of what and who was going to get money for what.

There was also – and I don't think anyone's ever really written about this – a sudden proliferation of Scottish Government SpAds [special advisors], who started proliferating into various policing groups and organisations. You couldn't move at the SPA for various Scottish Government people. And meetings going on that were un-minuted, meetings happening, pre-meetings. And also added to all of that, you have to remember that a lot of people lost their jobs. There were seven Chief Constables that were no longer Chief Constables. And many of them ended up somewhere else in the system, so there were tensions there as well because some of the disagreement flowed through into that.

So, I would be interested to get your take on some of the Politics with a big P and politics with a small P, that might have influenced a lot of this work.

KS: Who wants to come in on that?

NR: So, 13 years on in the relative safety of a recorded conversation [laughter], if you take the emotional language of the Strathclydisation of all of this - I heard that, of course I was aware of that. I was the Deputy in Strathclyde just for clarity. But if you strip all of that stuff away and just put a logic head on, you're faced with a really, really significant change requirement and you need to make decisions as to how you're going to get this done. You can't do everything overnight, you can't cover it all, because if you try, it's going to fail. You have to make some choices. And don't forget this had gone from flash to bang in about a year, that's a ridiculous pace. So, that was the mindset, we need to absolutely focus on what matters, get the framework in place, move at pace all the way through.

One of the ways to do that is to effectively take what we know works and be quite crude in its implementation with a view to get the framework in

place, get it up and running, then modify and adapt moving forward. So, in terms of the leadership of that, I was party to discussions – this was pre Chief Constable being appointed – where the plan was, and I'm saying this from the point of view that much of what happened that I believe got right in the way of the progress and even now has hampered the delivery of some of the benefits that could have played out, they were foreseeable, predictable and avoidable, and they are part of effectively a lack of big P strategic oversight: where does this fit in the big plan? Because that wasn't happening, the conversations at a local level were that there's a lot of pain and angst around this change, what we need is a leader that can come in, crack the eggs, get the omelette created and see once it's ready to eat, we then switch out. That's a short period of time where a fixer comes in, because the skills required to do that crushing are very different to the building, the diplomacy skills that are required to take this new entity and really breathe life into it.

That was openly discussed. We openly said that was the tactic and that's what we needed. What we were doing was sitting around the table talking about a temporary contract or a very short contract. But then through a process of officials doing what they do with HR having a look, well it's going to restrict your market if you go in and have a very short, it won't be as attractive and blah, blah, blah. So, what emerged was just a normal contract. [...] So, actually the notion about having somebody to come in, do all the horrible stuff that everybody hates, and then leave to let somebody come in and move on to the next stage was removed.

That then flowed in, and Kenny MacAskill liked Steve House, there's no doubt about that, but he also wasn't vested, he wasn't the one that was sitting there saying he's got to get a four-year contract - this just emerged. And so that was I think, really quite unhelpful.

And in terms of what came after that in terms of a self-generated chaotic period of the SPA that was generated by briefings from Scottish Government. And then they appointed another chair of the Authority that had a different perception and apparently no checks and balances to let him go on a very different route that eventually caused chaos. All of that, had it been properly planned through, could have been avoided in my view. And why this is so important is that I think James is right in terms of this hasn't generated the momentum around broader change; but what that now means is that change needs to happen. Go to Fraser of Allander, go to the Audit Commission, go to everyone and they'll say, and have for some time been saying, that public service in Scotland is way behind the curve - we need to make reforms. That means we need a police and fire reform about three times the size of police and fire to basically wipe the nose of where we currently are. And we've not got the skills, we don't have the homework in place to really get off and running with that. So, it's going to happen at pace and probably from a point of crisis.

That is the big issue with this, and we should have all along been taking the learning from police and fire reform and using that, even if it wasn't going

to be a gradual integration, it should now be getting used as the basis for the thinking around what comes next.

JM: I remember having conversations with Stephen House after his appointment and I was a wee bit staggered because I was there with my background and talking about prevention. He said, 'oh, we don't do that.' I was, 'but you have to - it's policy'. 'No, we don't do it.' I thought, 'this is weird', you know. And I have to say, on the one hand, I thought this was awful, but on the other hand, I thought, well at least he's honest - he didn't want to do that, he was going to approach it another way. When I speak to people in many other public services, they will list off all the examples of prevention, I think, 'shit, we've been doing that forever - that isn't new, that isn't prevention,' whatever else. So, it was a bit of honesty we got from him which I have to say I appreciated, even if I didn't like what he was saying or doing.

But Neil's right, I think when you're going into these kinds of talks, and with the timescale, you need a particular type of leadership that knocks heads together and gets it done. And I suppose he kind of did that, but he also did it badly inasmuch as he had these big fallouts with the SPA and such like. That said, that should have been resolved within government. That was a government responsibility. And actually my sense, well more than my sense, I know from some conversations at the time that the Government just sat back and thought, 'let him get on with it.' And that was not good; that was really costly. So, I think that there really are issues there.

I think on the nationalisation agenda, Susan, I assume you mean the fact to create a national thing so you've got a Scottish force. There was something in that. My sense is, even from the Justice Secretary, that wasn't his primary concern. I think his primary concern was around policing and finance and that was it. And he was somebody who didn't just want to become a minister just so that he could have someone drive him about in a posh car, he wanted to do things. Now, whether you liked what he was doing, he did do things; whereas the others just sat on their hands and enjoyed the life of being a minister to some extent.

The SpAds issue, I could sit here forever. You may have seen my comments on SpAds. It is a major problem in our system, the power these people have, and they do not know anything about public policy, they are not experts, but they wield enormous influence. And that comes down to issues of presentation and all the rest of it, vacuous stuff, and it really worries me. I work, I wrote a book recently with Henry McLeish and we argue in that that we need to have a real cull of SpAds, or else gets SpAds who were in policy. We need more of that, much more policy into it.

But I think the fundamental thing that's come through doesn't surprise me, and I think Neil is making this very clear, is one, the preparation and the timescale change are really, really important. And I think the disruption, Strathclydisation, it went beyond policing. If you're speaking to people in local government you have this all the time. Having said that, actually, got

to be careful here, because in some parts of Scotland it wasn't as disruptive. In some parts of Scotland, it was very disruptive - people being moved around, that kind of disruption, so it was all about relationships you were making. So, I think there was a serious issue.

For me the great tragedy of it is the perception, I would stress perception, was so negative that it has held up other reforms. And I'm worried about crises, because if you have not got a well-planned set of reforms in place that thinks things through and you hit a crisis, you can make bad decisions. Crises work for change for the good if, and only if, you've got work in place. People say to me, well look what happened after '45, the National Health Service. The amount of work that was put in preparation was immense. You know this Mary, you've looked at the archives as I've done - if you don't do that and you hit a crisis, and we are heading to one, then you are in big trouble. That's where I fear we are.

KS: We've got two questions here.

KH: Thanks very much. I'm Kirsten Horsburgh, CEO of Scottish Drugs Forum. I don't have the same knowledge and background in terms of the specific legislation and the detail around it, but where I do have some experience is around the long hard slog that was introducing the naloxone into the hands of the police. I remember back in the early days, when it was individual forces, we were having conversations on a local level and getting some really enthusiastic people in police forces locally who were really keen to introduce naloxone provision for their officers. But of course, before that came to fruition there was the change to the national force and, a bit like Will was saying, then everything sort of started to happen by relationship rather than by design. And then people would move on from their roles and you would have to start from the very beginning again. And also the people that you were trying to progress things with often didn't have the status, the position, the influence to really drive national change.

And of course, with the introduction of a national force then comes more structures, more decision-making bodies, more bureaucracy - that can limit the potential for local areas.

So, my question is, did stifling local innovation feed into some of those issues in the early days? And is that still an issue today? I know we're going to be talking about today later. But was that a feature back in the early days?

KS: We'll take both questions and then we'll get to the panel.

RH: Rob Hay, I am the president of the Association of Police Superintendents in Scotland. I'm also a chief superintendent within Police Scotland. And I guess I just wanted to pick up on the point a number of members have talked about, the Strathclydification. It is a bit of a misnomer; probably would more accurately be described as a Steve Housification, because actually Strathclyde the previous Chief Constable before Steve took up post, Willie Rae, you couldn't imagine two more different people in terms of their

approach. But actually, that rolling out Steve's approach into Scotland is definitely something which we all felt the effects of internally at that time. And actually, as a Strathclyde officer who went and worked in different parts of the country, it was a bit of a cross to bear at times with almost visceral reaction from other parts of the country, like oh, you're just here as a missionary to rollout particular practices and things like that as well. So, culturally it was really difficult.

But I think what's often forgotten is when Neil described the Chief Constables with their eight territorial responsibilities, we were, at times, all talking different languages. Even when we had common terms for things, they often in practice meant something hugely different, depending on where you were in the country. So, the necessity to get people on to a common language quickly, regardless of how bruising quite frankly that felt at times, was a huge impetus to maintain that frontline service delivery throughout that point.

And in terms of the constraints, I guess my question would be around about, there are things that we have built in almost by design that are a constraint to Police Scotland. So, the status as a Non-Departmental Public Body prevents the Chief Constable from maintaining reserves or borrowing, as other Chief Constables have elsewhere in the country, and has at times pushed some quite perverse behaviour based around about which date the budget is going to come on, and when we have to get properties sold in a particular amount of time. So, there are elements to that which I think in terms of the broader reform agenda within Scotland, we could certainly learn lessons from and incorporate those going forward.

So, it's understanding where the reflections are around about some of those constraints, both cultural and functional, with the benefit of now 13 years of looking back.

KS: Thank you. Do you want to come in on either of those questions?

WL: Innovation. I think the problem, what happened post the joining towards Police Scotland was innovation did become massively slowed down because everything was then pushed towards committee - it was pushed towards decision-making by numbers. No one actually took responsibility for areas like that because of that push towards reform and that push towards making sure everybody was doing the same thing. So, when it came to doing things differently, like the introduction of naloxone, or even some of the violence prevention work that we did, trying to win people over and find the right people to speak to and find the right people, the right decision makers, those with access to funds, those with access to resource to do it, became much more difficult.

When you're working at a local level, we'd done some really great work working across a number of individual local forces because we knew who to speak to. We knew at an individual level, we knew where the decisions were, we knew where the decisions were being made. But in those two

years post introduction to Police Scotland, it was just difficult. It wasn't easily done.

NF: Just picking up on that point about innovation, one of the things that I remember when we were setting up the Scottish Institute for Policing Research when there were eight forces, one of the really exciting things was that each force was kind of doing innovative stuff and there were various champions for different initiatives. I remember Lothian and Borders were doing some really interesting stuff around procedural justice; I remember the Fife Constabulary were doing some stuff borrowing an idea of community policing from Chicago and adapting it further. So, it was really interesting to see that level of innovation.

What wasn't really happening was that being then diffused across other organisations. There was always this slight competitive element well, they do it in Strathclyde, you need to do it in the Borders, that kind of thing.

There was also a problem that a lot of these innovations were doomed to succeed, as somebody told me, because there wasn't really a culture in evaluation. So, people were doing all of these things but not really establishing whether it worked or didn't work and so on.

But I absolutely agree with the points that have been made, when Police Scotland came along, I think that innovative dimension was really stifled and people didn't feel that they were empowered to do things differently. And I suppose the irony of that was that within the legislation local policing became a statutory requirement, which is one of the most striking things about that Police Scotland legislation. And again, when I speak to colleagues internationally, they say that's amazing, you made local policing a requirement, local policing plans a requirement. But when you looked at those, the first iteration of those local policing plans the only thing that was different was the photograph on the front of the division or district that it related to, because very little work was actually done to develop things which were reflective of the needs, priorities of the local communities. Now, again that has changed over time.

And one other final point. There's a network of local scrutiny and engagement committees now that again were formed as Police Scotland became established. But I don't think there was any real understanding at that point about how little power they had; in statutory terms, they don't have any power - that sits with the Police Authority. Again, there are a number of incidents that brought that into focus, but for local politicians it was the issue about armed policing in the Highlands of Scotland, there were a couple of police officers that walked into a MacDonald's carrying their firearms when they weren't required to, they were just responding to some dispute about a hamburger. But it led to this huge debate about, well suddenly the local politicians realised they couldn't determine what influence and what kind of style of policing was delivered in their local communities. So, it got escalated to the Police Authority and then the Police Authority challenged the Chief Constable. The Chief Constable said, well it's an operational

decision, it's my decision. And I think that was the moment where a lot of local politicians suddenly thought, hang on a second, this is a very different world to the one which they had lived in.

KS: James, are you going to come in on Rob's point?

JM: Just come back to the finance point. An important point, particularly given that finance was one of the drivers. I think it relates to the issue of prevention. If you're succeeding at prevention, and you make financial savings amongst other things, it's not the most important thing, where do the savings go? I argued that some of the savings at least should go back into the public bodies. Now, there's sometimes a problem with that because attribution is difficult. We're all going to claim it was us, it's the police, it's the health service, it's something; but it should be going back into our communities. And that, I think, convinced John Swinney of working that through - unsuccessfully. But I think we need to look at these issues. I think you can look internationally at some really good examples of how we incentivise financially prevention. Some really good work in Australia, in Victoria in Australia on this which I've written about, which Ken Gibb at Glasgow University is really very informed about, and I think we need to do that.

I guess behind your specific point is the issue of flexibility, and I get the reason why our system isn't very flexible because of the accountability issues. But sometimes I think that lack of flexibility is creating problems. You do not want to find, as a separate government, that we've given the flexibility and then you're really in deep trouble financially in the next year. So, we've got to think this through. And I think I would be inclined to look at some examples of small-scale flexibility in either of these ways, but certainly with regard to trying to show that there is some evidence that you're hitting it, and you should get the payback for it if you're succeeding at doing that.

It comes back to that point I was making at the start is that we're good at certain things and not good at...Incentivisations work. You can use a stick, you must do this; it's not a good way of doing policy. It damages relationships, it's not a good way. But we're not in the space we need to be thinking financially and otherwise - it doesn't have to be financial incentivisation, and flexibility, which I would certainly think is worth exploring...

KS: We've got two more contributions from the floor, and then we'll have our five-minute break.

AL: Hi, my name's Adam Lloyd from the Scottish Ambulance Service. I think a phrase that pinged my ears back slightly was the Scottish approach to the way we do stuff in the public service. And I guess the lens of my question comes from an experience that feels in the spirit of the Scottish approach. About a decade ago I was fortunate to do some interviews, I interned in Scot. Gov., and we were asking interviewees about some of the cardiac arrest work that was emerging around in 2014, the cardiac arrest work that

was coming from the ambulance service, coming from emergency care, but very much reached out to police and fire, that said, 'we maybe could do some co-response here, this feels like a win-win.' If you chuck a defib in a police car you co-respond, you shock somebody, everybody goes home happy. And I remember asking and interviewing the police and fire and healthcare staff about this and what was interesting was this disconnect between the sentiment of the Scottish approach and the way we go about doing this type of business - the way we go about implementing acts and laws. And the sentiment is always very progressive; it makes us feel very good, very consultative. But the disconnect appears to be, or at least what this experience was in the cardiac arrest one was to say, well Scotland's a very unhealthy place, and we seem to be doing the Scottish approach to public health policy, but we have a lot of heart disease, we have a lot of obesity, we have a lot of drug problems. And I remember saying this to the Scottish Government, and I was probably rather naïve at the time, and they told me, 'well, you need to take this section out that says we're not doing very good at this stuff as an outcome.' So, I appreciate your sentiment, James, when you said we should outcome based.

And I guess the framing of this thought and a question to yourselves is, I've highlighted a bit of the text here in some of the findings, and it feels as though and reads as though, and the quote in here is, 'much of the wellbeing focused partnership working that had developed incrementally over the previous decades was either lost or significantly diminished', at the point when the Act should have consolidated that. And I guess probably a question to the group is to say, when you think about the operationalisation, is there something in the Scottish approach which, there's a disconnect from the sentiment in which we do things - very progressive - and the outcomes, which is, we just don't seem to reach the sentiment levels in a way? That's a bit of a third question.

KS: Thank you.

TH: Tom Halpin, I'm a member of the SPA board. I was a Deputy Chief Constable on a legacy force. And in between I ran a third sector organisation in justice. So, I've got quite a wide perspective of this.

There are some points that I've noted for myself. The legislation could be better in defining what operational independence means, as opposed to accountability. And that throws in a lot of things there, it starts to explain the discourse where the bodies were at different stages of this.

The other one is recognising its formation. I joined the board in 2018, so we're talking five years afterwards - they were struggling with the structural deficit in their funding. So, no matter what all the goodwill is and all the rest of it, you're starting the year trying to find additional savings on top of savings, and that then starts to interrupt the progress in terms of the health agenda etcetera.

I don't remember seeing, I could be wrong, but I'm not reading many papers talking specifically about culture in policing around the storytelling. My experience of policing is there's a real deep story from the operational level right through to leadership, and that then promulgates that discourse that we're talking about. So, we haven't really considered the impact of culture on this.

There's an absence in Scotland of joined across public leadership, within the performative stuff. We've all been called to conferences and talked about it. But actually, if you were in a group position with companies, they would have a very clear understanding of where the group's going, and at the moment, there's a gap in that. They talk about it, but actually turning that round...

In terms of partnership working, when I was at Sacro, there was no shortage of Police Scotland, not just at local but also coming from the national level, cooperation with us around health-related initiatives, around sex workers, around honour-based violence. There was absolutely no lack of willingness to do that but it always came back to that structural deficit because, at the end of the day, how did you fund this? It's coming back to the third sector organisation to go and find that funding...

KS: Who wants to come in on either of those?

NR: In relation to the question, what I've seen is there was a pragmatic reality buffing up against a strategic reality. Sometimes it seems that that just isn't coherent. But the reality is that sometimes trying to make simple things happen is just frankly too difficult. Kirsten was talking about naloxone and that is great example – initially, there was some resistance there, and I know it took a little bit of time, but we eventually got there. But part of that is coming from a cultural position that says the police, for as long as I've been associated with them - 13 years in the service - is the service of first and last resort. And without checks and balances, the police will just absorb every deficit in a social structure and force themselves into a position, not by design but by default, where they're just spread too thin. And therefore, with that reality, and I moved to a social care organisation when I left policing, a bit like Tom, one of the reasons for that is I came up through a service where way too often you realise that somebody has been put into a criminal justice line largely because there was nobody else there to pick up the slack, or you go and it's a young person that's got themselves into difficulty, they've got a few deficits but social work's got nobody on call, blah, blah, so you end up in a police interview room, which is the last place they should be, and yet there's not another alternative. So, the system sometimes just works against itself when we're talking about outcomes and trying to deliver the best possible end.

I guess what I'm saying with that in mind is that, when you're trying to make progress, in my experience, through police and fire reform were three things – and I've said this a million times and I continue to say it to this day – there are three major blockers that got in the way of police and fire reform and

continue to get in the way of meaningful change that would start to address some of these challenges that you're raising now. One of them is the distribution of public funding. And I know that's difficult but as long as it keeps being channelled the way it is channelled, which is a very siloed, very definitive, very public finance manual kind of way where you can't carry over, all of that stuff, you are going to get a limit to how much flexibility and interagency cooperation you're going to be able to achieve. Second thing is governance, and the third thing is accountability. And in terms of that, James said it much better than I can, we are obsessed with outputs and figures and all of this sort of stuff that are inherently short term, but outcomes less so. And the system seems to me to be built around that; it's about proving that we were right in doing a something, rather than actually driving towards an outcome. And that's problematic.

And the other part in relation to governance is if a head of any organisation is appointed generally, they're appointed with a mandate, and that mandate will say, here's your core responsibilities, that's what I need you to deliver on; if you've got any time and any budget and any inclination then there's stuff in the margins that you could do. And a lot of what we as a country require to be done is in that marginal space. We need people, and the Government can say all they like, we need people to come together, this is a distributed reform model we're putting forward, you are professionals, you should be coming together and talking about it. That isn't going to work unless the structures behind it support that and enable it. And at the moment these three things absolutely prohibit it and they will always limit the progress.

So, the kinds of things that would look different, with the challenge that you raised, if that model was changed, is you could start having a meaningful conversation about accountability, a meaningful conversation about who's going to put their name to this, how's the finance going to get redistributed to ensure that this can happen? At the moment, these are all buffers that you just can't get them done.

KS: James?

JM: The Scottish approach thing is really interesting. And as far as I understand it, the first person that came up with the term is Peter Housden, the Permanent Secretary. And I remember speaking to Peter about this, 'what's this all about?' Because Peter had come to become Permanent Secretary in the Scottish Government from a career in local government in England and then in Whitehall as a Permanent Secretary. And I always thought, perhaps because Peter is coming in anew to this environment, that you're suddenly aware of something different. Because as far as I was concerned, we did things pretty differently across the board for a very long time. My doctorate thesis was on the Scottish Office, a million years ago, 40 years ago, and there was always these claims that, 'we're doing it different, we're all very collaborative'. We weren't then, but that was the myth. On the one hand, this is daft calling it the Scottish way; on the other hand, from a public policy perspective, I thought it's a resource, you could use that as a

resource to make the case for these changes and get behind it. But I don't think that's happened.

I'm old enough to remember we used to have debates to the extent to which we were getting collaboration at the Scottish level between the different departments in the Scottish Office and at the local level. But I do think one thing that we haven't really mentioned is local government here, the way in which local government has been basically destroyed. [...] We've hived off things into silos. I mean, we've reversed where we were in the 19th century. The 20th century was about trying to bring things together in governance terms. But we've been, over a very long period of time now, doing like this [hand movement].

And if we're talking about having that local accountability, you should be looking for it through elected bodies, I would argue. At the moment, people don't stand for those parts of local government as much as they should. Why would you? It's a hellish job. You don't get the resources, you've not got much autonomy, but you've got a lot of responsibility. I'm not saying this applies necessarily to policing; policing is a special case. But there's a lot more we could be doing, particularly in health, that should be under local government. So, that's why it's a 30-year project as I see it. But we should be talking about these things, thinking about these things. And local government should be funding a lot of this stuff but they haven't got the money to do it. That's where we've really got to start being serious and using it, we've got to keep talking about the Scottish approach, use it meaningfully and not just like a slogan, 'aren't we bloody different?' That's so irritating, just difference for its own sake. What's the point?

And we do need to get to the point of asking ourselves what's happening in terms of our outcomes? That was one of the things Christie was absolutely emphatic about: outcomes were important. And that's one of the things that seems to largely have been forgotten. That was the main message in fact, it was about outcomes. Of course I'm not here this afternoon, but that's where we really need to think very clearly about what's going on, on the ground. It's not just up there, it's not just the chiefs; it's how can we incentivise, how we make the change where it counts? Too often it's the mavericks that do it. The Violence Reduction Unit, these were mavericks, [John] Carnochan, he's an old maverick and God love him for it, but how do we make sure people like that have got the space and are encouraged to do it? Because most folk working for public services want to go home at night and not worry about something they've done and whether they'll get in trouble for it, even though they know it's the right thing to do.

So again, I think there's an issue there around, not just accountability, but supporting people who will be innovative. And I don't think we do enough of that. We are so risk bound, risk averse in our system.

KS: Will or Nick, do either of you want to come in?

WL: I don't think I can say that any better. I think sometimes the Scottish approach, first of all, we use that as a shield to protect ourselves from lack of implementation. But also, it's a way of sometimes comparing us against other nations, so we don't do it because that's not the Scottish approach, or we do it because that's the way we do stuff here. It's just somewhere to hide behind sometimes. We've seen enough implementation failure in Scotland across a number of organisations to know that sometimes we're just not good at it, sometimes we're just not putting the groundwork in, we're not doing the planning.

On the innovation side, and obviously what James is bringing up there, we struggle with finance, we struggle with financing anything that's prevention. And we'll touch on more of this this afternoon rather than where we were. Because where we were was bad; but where we're going, I'm not entirely sure it's any better. So, I think we need to restructure in terms of thinking how we apply our models, apply our way of changing things into an actual structured way. We need to look at our finance in terms of how that's structured.

Part of the problem is not necessarily the break down between for example policing and public sector across the board, it strikes in government. Government doesn't work in the way that it should work in terms of finance. We don't finance the right way. It's too siloed at that level. And if it's siloed at the top, it becomes even more siloed at the bottom. So, if we want to look at the implementation, want to look at systemic problems and want to look at structural problems we need to look at how the money has been financed at the very top and whether or not that means actually a relationship with Westminster as well and how the money comes into Scotland, and then how that's brought down. If we manage to fix it at that level that will allow us to help the bottom levels, because if we don't fix it there, we'll always just be trying to chase the money.

NF: Yeah. Just very briefly, I worry that using the term Scottish approach just leads to a kind of parochialism, you stop looking outward. And the challenges that we see health and fire face in Scotland are not very different to what they face in New Zealand, what they face in the Nordic countries and so on, and they don't talk about the Norwegian approach you know.

I think one of the big opportunities of police reform and reform more generally is to become a learning organisation, to think about how we can do things differently, how you innovate. And I just think we've missed a lot of those opportunities because people, as we've heard, have become just very risk averse. They just retreat into their, I feel more comfortable doing it in this way, or we haven't got resources and so on. One of the massive opportunities of police reform is to become more of a learning organisation and that's still a problem.

WL: I'll ask a separate question to the panel: how much does the fear of failure come into this from the last few years, even since police and fire reform and

actually that terror of error has fallen into decision making, across not just our organisations but across the whole of the public arena?

JM: It's a huge issue. It comes to that risk averse attitude. I think that's where perception of what has evolved in Scotland – and I stress perception because it wasn't all a failure – has had a very negative impact. And I guess again one of the biggest problems we've got at the moment is we are facing massive challenges, financially and otherwise, and that discourages innovation - it encourages fear. And that is a bit of a problem. Again, that's why I'm worried something is going to have to give, and if we're not ready and have a good set of ideas well worked out, then that's very, very worrying.

If I sound today a wee bit, 'whatever', that's because some of us have been battering our heads a very, very long time with this. And I don't think people who innovate necessarily get rewarded as much as they should. And actually, you've got to recognise that sometimes innovation will fail, and as long as there is good reason for innovating and it hasn't really cost people's lives and such like, then the next level up and right to the top should defend that, should come in and say, 'yeah, well done, you tried, and whatever else.' You learn from failure. The private sector is vastly better than the public sector in this. Edinburgh has got a library of failures, mistakes, and it's a wonderful institution and they occasionally deal with the public sector so maybe this should be taking place there. But they learn, they learn all the time. And I suppose it's because partly democracy is the problem because to admit to making a mistake from a politician's point of view is a disaster. But we, as a society, should be willing to accept and embrace that and accept that things aren't easy. And the kind of stuff we're talking about is not easy - it is not easy, mistakes will be made. And that's how we move forward.

NF: But also, I think we make it more difficult for ourselves because of the way we go about this. I keep referencing Norway because I'm a big fan of how they approach reform. So, they introduced reform around about the same time as we did in Scotland, the focus on prevention, how could they get more prevention into policing? And they had 27 policing districts that they had to restructure. They didn't say, 'let's change all 27 now' - they said, 'let's change ten of them and design something and see whether it works and try out new stuff', and so on, 'and once we've done that, we'll think about applying that to the other parts of the country'. And it's just that incremental approach of learning as you're going. Whereas the approach here was like, well let's go for this big bang of trying to change everything at the same time. And it's kind of doomed to failure because you're never going to be able to have the capacity to manage that.

KS: Okay, we're going to have a five-minute break. When we come back we'll only have 40 minutes and then get a much longer break.

[Break]

Welcome back. We've got 35 minutes, and there's a couple more questions that I'd like to ask, but then I want to make sure that I give time for everyone in the room who hasn't come in yet to make a contribution. But the question I want to start with is, reflecting on the discussions we've had so far, with the benefit of hindsight, are there things that you think could have been done differently that would have contributed to an easier implementation and operationalisation of this wellbeing principle in Section 32? So, if you could go back in time and had control over everything what are the things that we should have been doing that would have enabled this to work a bit better?

WL: Listening to conversations this morning and what we're talking about, I think the most pressing or the most important thing that you could have done is taken our time. That sort of ripping the band aid off to actually deliver this has probably caused a lot of the challenges that we face. Because we've not taken the time to develop the structures that sit underneath it, we've not developed the time to look at the governance, which has been mentioned, and we've not looked at the time to think about, what are the implications of what this is actually going to be?

Now, that's not to say if we took two, three, four more years to develop this, it would have been the panacea and it would have been brilliant and everything would fall into place and all of the challenges would have been met. Absolutely not, that wouldn't have been the case. But it might have put us on a stronger footing.

Secondly to that is if we really wanted prevention in in terms of that wellbeing, we needed to understand it better, we need to understand the outcomes and what we were trying to achieve. What does community wellbeing look like and how does that apply to policing and how does that apply to the partners in Scotland? None of that was considered, none of it was considered in terms of what we were looking at.

So, those two things: take the time and actually think about the outcomes you want to achieve.

KS: Thanks, Will. Who else wants to come in?

NR: I guess I agree with that. There's something around the frustration, I suppose looking back in relation to that perception. I'm sure, this isn't meant to be a criticism, but at times it felt like a cash grab rather than a strategic change. And so many of these, even in fact some of the funding for change was coming from efficiencies. That's not a particularly helpful way to drive change. And at the time, I'm attracted to James' description of a 30-year change proposition, at the time I kept screaming about a ten-year change proposition. But because of some of the obstacles and things that we hit on the way ten years was way too short.

The truth is around this kind of stuff, it's really, really important that you have that broader mindset and use that to draw you back on line consistently.

I've got huge sympathy for the police at the moment because I think there's some really, really difficult problems, and some of these have come about, not all, but some of them have come about as a result of taking our foot off the pedal around some of what was originally set out as that transformation. So, the IT is a classic; some of the benefit that we were seeking to achieve was by introducing an integration of legacy systems to enable forces to speak. Thirteen years down the road, I'm not decrying the work that's taken place, there's good reasons that this hasn't happened, but that should have been a screaming priority for government to invest in, to make happen, to enable, to deliver the benefits and then inform other changes.

The policing model, I've had interesting conversations about this, but at the time, we deliberately did not change the policing model because you can't do everything at once. And the idea was that that is something that's better done once we have a stability, because there's going to be things that we haven't seen coming, let that stabilise, let the benefits generally flow out, and from there reset that policing model. That never happened. So, there's been incremental changes along the road, but you're now in a position where it's almost an impossible task because numbers have dropped, because budget pressures have meant those numbers have to drop. So, you've got a demand, and new demands are increasing all the time. So, this idea about a policing number and a static demand profile isn't right. There are new crimes, new demands, there's cyber, there's all these things that require a different approach. But that hasn't been factored into the model. So, that's a problem because it will now, doubtless, as we move forward, if there are failures on the back of that, it's seen as reform failure, which isn't actually true.

There's something about communication. I don't know exactly how to define this, but we've talked about where we were getting feedback and we maybe just didn't energetically enough address that. There was something about maybe mobilising the right approach to the information that was coming in at the time and on an ongoing basis, because trust is right at the heart of policing. It was then and it is now. And there's something about that ongoing progressive growth of what it is we were trying to achieve. It feels as though, it's a, that's the way it was, that's the way it is now, kind of thing. And that was never really likely going to be a success.

And there's probably other things but they're the stand outs.

NF: I agree with what's been said. One other area which we haven't really discussed is investing in the training and skills of the workforce to do prevention effectively. There were a couple of things, James and I were involved in in the evaluation of police and fire reform and we spent quite a lot of time talking to local officers about their experience of reform and so on. And one of the points that they kept making to us was the lack of investment in their training. And what they could see was that those who were moving into specialist departments and into national units and so on, there was training for many of those people. But basic training and education around what works and what doesn't work around things like

prevention and community wellbeing is just absent from the way in which we develop the workforce in policing. And I think we absolutely need to make that a priority: invest in our people to give them the skills to be able to do this effectively. There are lots of other structural things we need to think about as well but I think that's fundamental to what we're talking about today.

JM: Yeah, I think we should call all this the Norwegian approach, not the Scottish approach. I mean, incremental change is always good because you can test the water, and if it's not working then it's a failure, but let's not call it a failure; it's a lesson, it's about a learning organisation.

I think the training is important. I remember asking many times in the past about when the training takes place do new recruits, when they come in, do they get told about prevention? What do they get taught? I don't know, and the people I asked didn't know either, which is a wee bit worrying. But I think, more importantly than the training bit, is what's happening on the job, are you encouraged to think in this way, operate in this way? Have you got the person above you and above them signalling, incentivising you? Could get promoted if you do this kind of work, or is it largely locking up the baddies, pure and simple? Which of course has to happen, and getting that balance right. It's systemic, but you're right, I think training in any organisation is important.

I used to teach, many years ago, the selected sergeants course, a long time ago, and I used to go on about all these things. And it was clearly then - this is a very long time ago, we're talking about the '90s - it was news to these people, who were all on the verge of being promoted. All this kind of stuff was totally new to them then. I'd like to think, I don't know, I assume these days, it's done at floor level and it runs through the system to get that... No, it doesn't happen. I'm getting a look from Andy there.

AT: It's fizzled out.

JM: There's a question to challenge and find out and encourage that because, I mean, I've done a lot of work with the fire and rescue service and one of the challenges they've got in terms of prevention is that they recruit predominantly men, which is a problem, and they're big guys who come in because they're attracted to driving about in these big red trucks with blue lights flashing and becoming heroes. And that's great. But they're no use, that kind of mindset, in terms of getting into our communities to prevent fires, going in to speak to older people. And that's been a big challenge. And they've been debating for a very long time whether even the name of the service needs to change with prevention in it. And they are doing everything they possibly can to get a more varied - it's not that they want to stop these big guys coming in, but to get a more varied recruitment and to run it through the force. And I wonder, I don't know, maybe that's something that needs to filter down in terms of policing. I don't know.

KS: Does anyone in the audience want to come in on this, with the benefit of hindsight, are there things that could have been done differently?

JMc: Joanne McEwan, Chief Superintendent in Policing Together division. And I was thoughtful about the discussion about legacy forces and Rob's reflection. I was legacy Fife constabulary. And I think from those forces that were not Strathclyde there really was a sense, whether it was real or perceived, a lot of it was a retrograde step for us. I was thoughtful about, our tagline in Fife was reinforcing the quality of life in Fife - bit wordy. For me, integral to that is wellbeing in that. And that goes way back to probably 2003, 2004.

I was a community sergeant when we transitioned to Police Scotland, and I was thoughtful about, was the diversity of the leadership team right in terms of taking in all of the different regional variations? It didn't feel like that at the time.

But one of the things that perhaps we haven't discussed today was change fatigue. Now, I felt as an operational sergeant that so much of our effort and energy was focused on just understanding the changes to systems, processes, day to day. It felt like, in the 13 years I had been in the job before, that we'd had very little change; there was a lot of stability. And then in a few years, and again I think this was particularly if you weren't legacy Strathclyde – I don't know if that's right – but we felt that everything changed, the basics of our job. And so our energy and focus was so pivoted towards that, were we able to have innovation in that space?

And just another small point that I would raise is scrutiny, whether it's political scrutiny, PIRC, HMICS, to Kirsten's point about naloxone, and I've got responsibility for that now, everything we do now is so scrutinised because we're a national service. I think we were much more agile as legacy forces. And the Deputy may mention this later, there was another comment about COVID, and I was part of Op[eration] Talla [codename for policing response to the COVID-19 pandemic] when that came out. One of the things I liked about that is we were more agile than we are now.

So, those are just some of my reflections. Thank you.

KS: Thanks, Joanne.

AC: Amanda Coulthard. I guess, just based on some of the things I've heard over the course of the morning, with the benefit of hindsight and given the conversation you've had about being the service of first and last resort and how often policing steps into the void that's left, particularly by disinvestment decisions on other services, would a more clear and detailed definition have made a difference to what the service looks like today?

KS: That's great because that was one of my questions that I didn't have time to ask, so that's really good. I also wanted to pick up, Joanne, on your reflections. And your colleague next to you – sorry I don't know your name.

MG: Michelle.

KS: Michelle, yeah, we were chatting in the break and you were just saying things felt quite different. Would you be okay to share your reflections?

MG: Yeah, so the Chief Super's my boss so I need to be really careful here. Michelle Grant, Policing Together. I'm a Chief Inspector so I've got violence prevention, national stop search [...] as part of my portfolio. So, I was a Strathclyde officer for about the same length of time as I've been a Police Scotland officer, and yet I think the perception from Strathclyde, I was a temporary sergeant at the time, and I felt, as did others, that we were losing our self-identity as Strathclyde officers and our language was sort of changing, we were becoming more aligned to maybe colleagues in the East, from Lothian and Borders. So, we felt that we were losing our sense of identity for Strathclyde. So, it's quite interesting, but again whether that's just perceived or reality, I think it's that feed of change. Yeah, so that was my reflection.

KS: It's really interesting, getting those perspectives alongside each other. Thank you for that. Panel, do you want to come in on either those different experiences and what was lost, but also this question of wellbeing which I didn't get to ask?

JM: Can I just come on the change fatigue? It's amazing how many people don't get change fatigue across public services and the wrong kind of innovation rolls in and part of the problem is, I think, this is seen as important in terms of promotion. Look at universities if you want to be crackling up, to be the Dean, to be Vice Principal, to be the Principal of the university, and it's true across all public services, you have to create big change. And it's disruptive and pointless and it's a disaster. And you're seeing that too often. I don't know what's happening [...] but you're certainly seeing that across a lot of public services - people are exhausted. Schools, speak to teachers, what they're having to do. So, it's a problem that's general across our public services. And it does mean that the agility, you rightly pointed to, is stifled because the kind of change we need is just not possible. There is so much of your time is restructuring organisations and then hitting targets and all that kind of stuff, and you're losing sight of the outcomes. So, I think that change fatigue is a problem.

Now, one way, if you want to have the change – and that's what we're talking about, we need that change – is don't do it all at once. Again, it comes back to what we were talking about earlier, everyone saying take your time. Crucially take your time and take people with you, listen to people. It's the folk out there who are actually doing the job. Government Ministers deliver one main thing; speeches. But public services are delivered in our communities. And if we don't take account of the frustrations and the issues there, and change fatigue is a big one, then it doesn't matter the speeches and all the rest, and God knows, all of those bloody documents that get produced and strategies, and good God. We

could do with just focusing and listening to people on the street. In public policy, we talk about street level bureaucrats, police officers, teachers, social workers - they're where it's at. And we do need to take a much more bottom-up approach, I think.

And one final point because I'm not here this afternoon and I want to pick up on the COVID thing. I'm really sorry, I didn't know about the police and driving ambulances and such like, but what you were saying and what you've just been saying is what I was hearing throughout COVID. I was online convening and facilitating a lot of meetings with local authorities and health people, and it was really interesting how so much was let go and we were able to get on with it, and so little has been kept. There was a lot of good practice there. That was an example I suppose – I'm going to contradict what was said earlier – crisis creating a positive change. But we haven't learnt from that. [...]

NR: I'd agree with that. I was just struck by your comments in relation to perhaps it was a contrast of experience in relation to change. And I suppose one of the important parts that I hope comes out of an event like this and the work is that there's some general learning that can be used to inform whatever comes next. And I've been really frustrated, if I'm totally honest, that the learning that I think has come from police reform has not been adequately considered and used to drive other reforms.

But it's making sure the framework is considering that and thinking it through for the future. [that] we don't allow ourselves to go into a place that actually is not accurate. It sounds defensive, and I don't mean it to sound defensive, but it's just that point of fact: before any Chief Constable was appointed, and Steve House is guilty of many things and deserves a fair amount of criticism, but in terms of some of the change stuff that his name has been attached to, it's not necessarily true. During the change piece, the whole of policing was divided into 16 areas, but it was vitally important, at least from my perspective, that no one area dominated. So, what we had is we had contributors from all forces to that, and effectively as a design authority we created a model for policing. That model was in place when the Chief Constable was appointed, and 85 per cent plus of that model was not changed. And it came from not one force or not one person, it was the coming together of what effectively at least presented as the best and strongest experiences of individual units. And some of these were the smaller forces because they were most experienced in certain aspects of policing. That's what then generated the proposals that went forward. And I think often the narrative is that Steve House came in and he slam busted his own opinions on it.

There's a truth there which I think is also important that a leader only has, a bit like ICE in America right now, they are doing all sorts of crazy stuff partly because I'm sure they've been told to do this, but they're interpreting I would assume what the direction of travel is and what the permissive areas of acceptable conduct is, and doing what they think the boss will like rather than stuff that they are actually being told to do. And I think in the narrative

we already had here where Steve had a preference around particular aspects of operational policing, didn't have much interest in other parts, but he did have a reliance because he knew it couldn't all happen with just operational stuff, he had a reliance on other people doing that. He just didn't have any interest in it. But there were many people picking up on that and then acting in the way that they thought he would favour. And so that's part of the problem. And that's part of the challenge of leadership to make sure you don't allow that to run away. But again, it's just that point in relation to I suppose being careful about apportioning the experience to what actually drove them.

KS: I want to ask a question here which partly reflects my own background coming more from public health, but picks up on some of the things that have already been discussed so far. So, if we set the early violence prevention work to one side, apart from that, when we've done the interviews and looked back through documents, I would have expected public health and other third sector organisations to be really part of this discussion of changing policing work, and a necessary part, as the point has been made. Because many of the issues that people face that police come into contact with communities for aren't things that the police themselves can resolve. But when we've looked back, public health organisations, third sector organisations are not very visible. And I was wondering is this a deliberate choice or a missed opportunity or just simply a reflection of this focus on organisational reform for police that took up so much energy that there wasn't really much time for much else?

NR: My view on it is that that's a fair articulation. There was a scripted consultation process that we went through and that will have included some representatives from the broader social network, but it was by necessity. As I said, this thing went very rapidly, it was a year of planning, and therefore that level of consultation didn't take place.

At the time, we've talked about Norway quite a lot, but one of the strongest relationships I had at the time was with Holland. Holland was ahead of us in the game. They had 26 forces that they were seeking to merge into a single national force. And, as I said, they were ahead of us. And I framed some of my thinking on their experience, which was really, really helpful. But what they then did was they tried to get more consultation. They tried to make sure that some of these other areas were more actively embraced in the journey. That led to an elongation of the process, and that elongation led to what was effectively a collapse of that. It eventually did happen. If you go in and ask, they would say at best it's been a marginal change in terms of benefit, and some would say it's been a failure.

So, there is that part, and I've said it often enough, I think the politicians of the day deserve some credit for having political bravery and running it at the pace they did, because that carried risk for sure. There is an optimal, I don't know where that optimal timeframe is, but I think it needs to be way more rapid than anybody's comfortable with. So, in our case yes, there's things that we could and should have done, arguably, that time did not allow

us to do, but that doesn't mean to say if you would have your time again and you would adjust the timeline I would probably say no, let's not adjust that timeline. So, I think it's a really valid point. And now as Chief Executive of a social care organisation, I might have a different view from that perspective. But at the time, I think, maybe there was something about getting the structure right and then increasing that discussion with key agencies afterwards.

KS: Thank you. Anyone else want to come in on that?

JM: I just wonder if even talking about police reform [...] and I don't know. And I was struck and said at the time, there's something odd going on, that you've got a look at the whole shebang from Christie, we spoke to just about every service, and then had this thing going on over here and it was well advanced. And it just didn't seem right to me, and it did make me wonder how serious the public service reform was then. And I don't know how you get round that. I don't think there's an easy answer to that because you can't not talk about police reform if you are reforming the police. But I do think you need to look at it in that way. It makes it much more difficult. It means there's a lot more time required. But it comes back to the point that the time and taking people with you, and learning from them as well. I wonder if we'd done that it might be different. I don't know.

NF: One other just brief observation. I don't think it was deliberate. The focus was very much inward looking at that time. But I do remember going to a discussion where there were a lot of third sector organisations there, along with the Chief Constable, with the Chair of the Police Authority and so on, and the discussion moved on to the strapline that Police Scotland had developed which was 'keeping people safe'. And there were a lot of people in the audience who were actually quite angry and annoyed at that because they said, well we keep people safe, we're health organisations, we're third sector organisations, it's not just a police thing. And I think they felt quite frustrated that Police Scotland had almost hijacked that phrase as, 'this is what we do'; and other organisations were thinking well, we're part of all of that as well, we could say we're keeping people safe. So, I think there was a bit of tension around this.

KS: We have ten minutes left and I just want to open it up completely now for anyone on the floor who wants to come in. Anything that relates to this period, so the initial implementation in these early years, from 2012 to 2019. When we get back from lunch we'll be talking about from 2020 onwards.

KH: Probably going to break the rule a little bit. Kirsten Horsburgh, Scottish Drugs Forum. I just wanted to touch on something that's come up from a few people, so around culture, fear-based decision making, learning and development or lack of, change fatigue, all of these things and that public scrutiny. It's struck me over the last ten years having delivered training to hundreds of frontline police, the lack of support, supervision, reflective practice. We're dealing often in some extremely traumatising and traumatic events, not having that space for debrief, the scrutiny, all of that mixed

together, how can we properly improve community wellbeing while we're neglecting the wellbeing of our own staff? So, I just wondered what measures have been there in the past to improve that situation? The evidence from the research, from the naloxone piece of work, was that there were high levels of stigma towards people who use drugs. I don't think you need a further bit of research to say there's compassion fatigue there as well. So, with all of that, how do we improve that situation for getting the best out of people who are actually doing the work?

KS: Thanks. Anyone else want to come in? Susan?

SM: I'll try not to do the academic thing which is to ask a really long question. I wanted to come back to a point that Neil made earlier about public trust and confidence in policing. And you said quite rightly, Neil, that prior to reform, the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey and its various components almost always showed that levels of public trust and confidence in policing and satisfaction with policing were higher in Scotland than they were in England and Wales. And of course, over time, particularly at the point of reform, we saw that start to diminish. And actually, when I did a piece of analysis with the crime survey data, what it showed was that it diminished amongst the people that used to trust you. So, it wasn't that the people that didn't trust you got worse; it was actually that the people in the more affluent areas and older groups who'd always had high levels of trust, that diminished a lot.

Now, I'm not saying necessarily that the reason we've got this error terror and fear of failure is actually because all public sector organisations are under much more scrutiny by the public and we've got the online warriors who will attack individuals in public. And who would want to be a politician these days? I do not know because of the amount of abuse that they get.

But I just wondered if you could reflect a little bit on whether you felt you brought the public with you around the reform agenda, and where the public is now? And what would need to be done to regain that trust or has it gone forever?

KS: Two good questions there. Who wants to come in?

WL: That's a really strong point, Susan, in terms of how trust has waned. It's hard to say whether or not it was bringing the public with you in the reform agenda, because generally I don't think the public actually care about the reform agenda - they only actually care what service they see, what service they feel, what service they think they're getting. Rather than a reform agenda whereby we combine eight forces into one, or do we do it in three or do we do this or that. Largely people don't care. That's for us to worry about or us to debate about.

I think one of the parts of the problem, post-reform et cetera, due to financial pressures we've seen changes in how the communities were being policed; we've seen changes in the numbers of closures of police stations; we've seen people who generally when they voted in surveys about how much

they supported policing had very little interaction with policing before. Generally, they vote dead positive towards policing. Have you spoken to a police officer? Have you ever been a victim of a crime? No, not really, but I'm really positive towards policing. And that's fine, but what they're then seeing in local press is closures of police stations, they're seeing less police officers available, and that started to affect how people thought about policing. So, this wasn't necessarily about the changes in the forces and the changes in what it looked like; this was about the practical challenges that are faced because of the finances and because of actually the structural changes that were happening across the organisations and how that affected how people thought about policing and the stories that were getting told.

NR: From my perspective it's a brilliant question. Has trust gone? I don't think so. [...] I don't think there's ever a situation in terms of that, kind of, public discourse that can't be worked on and recovered.

I suppose in terms of the policing experience - it's a really difficult job, and that hasn't got any easier; and as money's got tighter these pressures become more significant. Could there be more focus, more effort in terms of that local relations, oblique, trust? Call it what we will. Yes, I think that would probably be right - it would be a good use of resource. But equally, you don't want to be creating false promises and then just continue a series of false promises that have let you down.

So, I think that there is something about where we've been. There's been a series of conversations and consultations around justice more generally. But generally, at least from my reading of them, much of it has been silo based. So, the reality we're currently in with prisons bursting at the seams and we're having to let people out after only a small part of their sentence and all of this stuff, when we have a social care infrastructure that's not equipped and not funded to deal with the fallout of that, and yet they're exactly the ones that are dealing with the fallout of that, this whole thing feels disconnected. And so, some of that trust that we're talking about in relation to that public, that apportionment thing, will come in: who do they blame if something happens, and there's something happening on their doorstep or whatever else? Is that the fault of the police? Is it the fault of the social work department? Is it the fault of the judicial system? These things are all connected. So, that's why we talked about prevention endlessly, these things all come together. Yes they do, but they don't appear to be.

I would love to see a position where we start to actually, practically bring these things together, rather than individual elements all having to find their own way. And I think, with the best will in the world, public finance is leading to a position where increasingly you have no option about that; we are going to have to drive a much more integrated way of thinking and delivering public service, and the police are one component part of that.

So, in terms of trust, my experience since I've left the service, I've had a small number of occasions where I've need to engage with the police, it's been really positive. When the chips are down, there's a lot of guys and girls out there trying to do their level best, but it's a really complicated system that they're trying to operate within. And I suppose it's just taking a breath on that and realising what could we do to unlock that. I think there's nothing more important than investing in the people that you're asking to do that job. What does that investment look like? Well, I guess within constrained budgets, all of that will look a bit different. But absolutely people need to feel that the system has got their back, that they are able to use the delegated authority that, on paper at least, they've got. Maybe they won't because they'll feel the consequence. We need to move to a position where people do feel that they can actually do the job that's been asked of them in a progressive way. And that does not necessarily look like a decision in Glasgow is going to be the same as a decision in Inverness, but there has to be latitude to enable that kind of decision-making to take place within a single structure.

There will be elements of that right now, but I think with public trust, at the heart of it, I think there's more that could be done.

KS: Do you want to come in? This will be the last point from the floor because we're near the end of the session.

TH: Thank you. It's as much a reflection of the conversation at the moment. I think there's a direct relationship between Section 32 and trust and confidence. Where we've seen a real policing focus on wellbeing, think of the pandemic, think of the Violence Reduction Unit and reducing violence as a health issue; that directly correlated to rises in trust and confidence. So, if you get that bit right, trust and confidence follows in behind it.

KS: Any closing reflections, especially the two of you in the middle if you want to come in?

NF: I think going back to trust I very much agree with Tom's point. I think one of the wider issues the police now face is just the breadth of challenges that they have to deal with. So, if you think about the things that people are most likely to be victims of now, it's online fraud, it's cybercrime and things like that. Where do the police fit into that picture in terms of all the other agencies that deal with that? How do the police continue to deal with the demand, as I see it, of mental health incidents, which is a huge drain on their resources? And, as others have said, they're not necessarily the right agency to deal with those things. The priority given to violence against women and girls, again policing has a huge role in that as well as other agencies, so how do they manage that?

And the other thing is climate change. The police are now thrown into situations where they're having to deal with floods and fires and other sorts of risks; again, that's another massive demand on their resources. I know people raise this question every ten years about what the role of the police

is, but this is as good a time as any to revisit some of that because the breadth of demand on policing is just ever increasing. And if they're going to earn the trust of the community then there has to be some kind of consensus about what it is that they should prioritise.

KS: James?

JM: I suppose many of those issues, particularly on policing, are felt across every public service. Go and speak to people in other public services as I do, good god, the pressure is on. You've got demographic change, growing elderly population, environmental crisis, you've got so much and the money is tighter for all sorts of reasons. We do not, in my view, take the economy seriously enough. If you've got a thriving economy, it's the best prevention measure ever, people having secure, reasonably well-paid employment helps mental and physical health. It probably means they're not going to be in the justice system. If you want to really get to the root of this, in terms of prevention, we need to focus on some of that as well. I'm not saying that's for the police, but as a society and as government we are not doing it.

One of my biggest criticism of the Scottish Government is its failure in terms of the economy. A lot of bullshit is said and spoken about the economy. There have been 17 strategy documents over the last period; they all say the same thing, each presented it as something new. So, I think we need to do that.

Another thing, I hate to say it, but if you want a public service to be really effective and fit for purpose you've got to pay for it. We've got to challenge our politicians and our communities, our communities: how are we going to pay for it, as long as we don't have to pay more tax? If we're obsessed with saying no more tax cuts, you've got to accept you're going to have to make cuts. Even if you can get the services to work together, that will not be enough. Improving public service integration will not be enough. So, come May, I'm not telling you how to vote because I don't know what they're going to say, any bloody politician says they're going to reduce tax ask them what services they are going to cut, because that is the consequence. And we've got as a society, we have got to give space and proper debate on these issues because we've not done that. For me it's one of the biggest failings.

KS: Thanks very much. It's been really interesting discussions and reflections this morning. Thank you very much to everybody for coming and participating. Particular thanks to our panel, so to Neil, Nick, James and Will. And a special thanks to Will because he had a bit less time to prepare. It was literally this morning that we asked you to stand in for Karyn, so it was really appreciated, thank you.

We've got an hour's break for lunch now and then we're coming back this afternoon to focus on the more contemporary time, so 2020 up to the present day, and thinking a bit about the future as well. If there was anything that you wanted to say, especially if you're leaving at lunch break because not everyone can stay for the full day, we've got a QR code which has a

few questions, which basically tries to sum up the core of the questions that we've been discussing since this morning. So, if you've got anything else to add do use the QR code. They're at the back of the room and we've put a few around the building, or you can go to the form's link that's there and just add any additional thoughts that you might have.

Also, if you are leaving at lunchtime there's a very short evaluation form, just to allow us to reflect when we're planning any other events, which you should all have a copy of on your chair. So, if you're leaving if you could fill that in and drop it off with Pam at the desk outside that would be massively appreciated.

Yeah, just a final note of thanks. It was brilliant discussions, really insightful, and thanks to everyone who contributed from the floor as well. And enjoy your lunch.

[END OF MORNING SESSION]

## Section 4: Seminar Transcript (afternoon): Current interpretation and operationalisation of section 32

*Exploring how Police Scotland has interpreted and operationalised the principle 'that the main purpose of policing is to improve the safety and well-being of persons, localities and communities in Scotland' (i.e. section 32 of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012) from 2020 onwards.*

LA: Thank you so much for rejoining us, or joining us if you haven't been here for this morning's session. My name's Liz Aston and I'll be chairing the session, and I'm co-leading the policing workstrand of this CSO [Chief Scientist Office] funded Health-Justice Nexus project. So, good afternoon and welcome to our seminar which is focusing on policing and community wellbeing, more on the recent and current situation. Whereas this morning we were reflecting the past, the introduction of Section 32 in the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act, and the legislation which states that the purpose of policing is to improve safety and wellbeing of people, places and communities in Scotland. This morning we were focusing on the how and why of the introduction of that legislation and how it was embedded and implemented in the early days following the reform up to 2019.

Today we're moving on to 2020, mark of a new decade. COVID seemed to be a bit of a turning point so we thought we'd take that as a marker for the start of this session. So, we're going to be focusing on the more recent period and exploring how Police Scotland and partners have interpreted and operationalised Section 32 from 2020 onwards, and what lessons can be drawn for policing public services and community wellbeing going forward, which is important to our project.

So, as with this morning's session, I know some people have joined us this afternoon and not been present this morning, the aim is to create a reflective conversational space where people can share their insights and experiences. We are recording the session and you've all signed consent forms if you wish to contribute. Just to remind you that there will be an opportunity to check that transcript. If there's anything you say that you don't want to be on public record you will have an opportunity to remove that or to amend anything to what you would wish it to say. The aim of this method of having a witness seminar is to create a public record so that the learning can be taken forward into other areas going forward. So, thank you so much for your participation.

I'll chair and guide the discussion. I'll introduce the panellists. I'll start off with some questions, but we very much want your contributions. I know this morning we had a lot from the panel and some questions from those in the room. I know some people are here because they have more recent or current expertise and experience so I do really want you to come in and share your thoughts, comments, questions and your own reflections in addition to the panel's. So, I'll do my best to guide that and keep us to time.

In terms of housekeeping, there are no fire alarms planned. If you hear a fire alarm please proceed to the nearest exit. The toilets are on the other side of the floor. If you need to go at any point please leave the room. We will take a five-minute comfort break somewhere round in the middle of this session because it is quite long. I think that's officially what I need to do. We'll be running until 4:25 and then Kat will just provide some closing follow-up points about how you fill in our evaluation and things like that.

So, we're really grateful to you all for contributing and we will get started at this point. Obviously when you run events like this there are always things that crop up. Unfortunately, poor Jimmy is not feeling well so he's been kind enough to not pass on what he has to us today for public health reasons, but we hadn't planned this as a hybrid event so please bear with me as I attempt to chair with someone online as well as in person.

I'll just briefly introduce the panel. I'll start with Jimmy. As many of you will know Jimmy is the current director of the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit, which, as we've discussed this morning, has been central to many of the innovations bringing the public health approach to violence reduction. His background also spans health, social care and major national reform programmes, and his work focuses on addressing the root causes of harm and embedding prevention and wellbeing for public services. So, we're very pleased to have him on the panel today. Welcome, Jimmy.

Craig Naylor again will be known to many of you. Currently His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland, leading that independent body responsible for scrutinising Police Scotland and the SPA. But also with 30 years policing experience including leadership roles in Scotland and down south.

We're also very grateful to Tom Halpin who has stepped in at the very last minute, as of a couple of hours ago, to fill in for Fiona McQueen who was unable to be here. Tom will also be known to many of you I'm sure. Again, a long police career, and having been an SPA board member since 2018, and that's the capacity that he's here representing the Scottish Police Authority. So, very grateful to you, Tom. And in the middle was also leading SACRO 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisation, so again rich and varied experience.

DCC Alan Speirs is here representing Police Scotland with responsibility as DCC for professionalism, which also covers partnerships and organisational strategy, so very central to a lot of what we're discussing today. Alan has a 36-year policing career and has played a key role in shaping many aspects of culture, governance and partnership working, operationalising some of things we're talking about today.

So, thank you very much. More of the bios are in the pre-read if you want to look in more detail.

So, without further ado I'll move on to some of the questions I've prepared to try and get us to the crux of some of what we're looking at. We've

encapsulated in our pre-read a lot of what we've found from our 18 interviews we've done so far. If we're repeating some of that that's okay; it sort of says we've understood things correctly. If there are things we've missed, please come in and let us know.

In the morning we discussed historical development, so moving on to more recent times, so 2020. We'll chunk it into two bits, so the first question I'll ask you about 2020 into sort of 2023, around when we had change of Chief Constable; it seems like a natural point to discuss. So, just going to the panel first of all, how would you say Section 32 was interpreted and operationalised in those COVID years into 2023? If you don't mind, Tom, I'll go to you with your SPA hat on.

TH: This is one of the areas where you are glad to go first, because if you take that period and you think of the purpose of Section 32, clearly the pandemic would be key to that. And when I think of the pandemic, it shaped this Section, shaped Police Scotland's response and the Authority's response to oversight as well. Because the Chief Constable, if you remember, approach before would be to explain to people, to encourage people and to engage with them, and then at the end of that, it was about enforcement. So, there was a long way to go. Now, I'll give you a visual representation of that: think of what we saw in the media at the time of enforcement, then go into the hills and people walking their dogs in Derbyshire and the drones up and enforcement there. And if I think of some of the anecdotes here, some surfers in East Lothian on the beaches there, the police seeing them, and they're coming up from the surf saying, 'oops, I'm going to get arrested,' or something like that. And the police saying, 'no,' explaining about crossing boundaries, etcetera, 'however, if we see you here again there will be enforcement action.' And we got some real good feedback there, and cooperation.

That coincided with the Authority at the same time commissioning public polling around it, showing that confidence in the police rose during that period, and real confidence in the police's ability to respond and adapt quickly, and working with that. So, those are key examples of where this was operationalised in that period.

Jointly, the Policing Authority also engaged in projects. One example I can give, which would be around community confidence, action research in areas of multiple deprivation in Fife, in Perthshire and Ayrshire, and working with people about what did it look like, how did it feel like to live? And people were feeding back that they surprised that the police were doing so much. So, they learnt a lot about communication, at that time, in building public confidence. So, those are examples of the driver of this important area of community wellbeing being right at the forefront of things being implemented.

LA: Some good pandemic examples there. Alan, if I could come to you next around this time, your thoughts around how that Section was being interpreted and operationalised in those years of Police Scotland?

AS: Well, taking the police response to COVID first, what I thought was going to be a couple of months became three years. I don't think it ever really pulled down Section 32 to give me the moral compass of how we should deliver policing, and I don't think it should do. I think the approach we took, first and foremost, was values-based. Now, that doesn't mean to say other forces in the UK don't take a values-based approach, but it was an abnormally, unusual period of time because, on one hand, it was, 'how do you police the pandemic?' And Tom's absolutely right [...], the number of instances where we took enforcement action were few and far between, but they were also quite extreme, so it was always the last resort.

Also, when I reflect back on that period in time, we're a big part of the UK in terms of land mass, so actually the variation in policing, one size doesn't fit all in Scotland. And, at different times, you'll recall different local authority areas with different rules of engagement and different guidance in place. So, I think it was very much a values-based driven decision. The heart of it was trying to do the right thing to support the communities of Scotland.

And probably bring it right up to date, without going down the rabbit hole, but if you look at how we would police protests, even in very recent months, again I'm not going back to look at Section 32 but it's a value-based approach to policing in matters around Palestine for example - very different from how it's being policed in other parts of the UK. But I'd say similar principles have applied.

The context of all that was people didn't get the service from the police that they would hope to get. So there's a lot of things that we had to compromise on. It was a very reactive service. So, we were doing a different role, a very unusual three-year period. We had a COVID response model where what we would normally attend, we didn't attend, so the number of actual policing matters that we went to were much fewer. So, not everything during COVID was wonderful. And at the same time to balance that, it was the same rules apply to the workforce, so we had to live by the guidance for COVID and, at the same time, try to police it. I think we did it reasonably well. We had a number of reference groups which added a lot of value. We had the independent reference group chaired by who's now Lord Scott, those types of barometers helped us in terms of the approach we were taking. We took a lot from that and used that principle for the whole thing.

LA: Thanks, Alan. Craig, is there anything you'd like to add?

CN: Yeah, I suppose I come from a slightly different perspective, and similar to the panel this morning (Nick's at the side of the room and he may be challenging this). 2019 to 2022 I was working in the National Crime Agency, and led the operational response to Operation Talla and the COVID pandemic. I also led a lot of the work we did and how we were preparing for no common border in Northern Ireland, no sea border in the North Sea, the drugs, migrants etcetera through that route, and the challenging space that we were looking at. We also had Operation Frenetic, which any of you

having an interest in serious organised crime, the biggest operation ever conducted in the UK against serious organised criminals. Police Scotland, I think, had about 300 arrests on the back of that, and the most effective disruptions we've ever seen, some of the biggest criminals that Scotland has ever exported, now all serving long sentences. That was all delivered during what I would describe as a really unusual period of time.

From the National Crime Agency's perspective, we didn't really think about Section 32, despite the fact that we have to sit and follow within the law because we're partners within the Organised Crime Taskforce in Scotland, but it was very much a values-based decision making about when do we pull someone through the mill, when do we think the risk will come into that space, are we going to create an international incident by taking a lorry out as it comes across the border from the South of Ireland into the North of Ireland that's heading to a ferry port that's coming in to Scotland knowing that it's got 35kg of heroin? So, were we harm focused? Yes. Were we prevention focused? Yes, but from a very operational side.

I often go back to the very early days of the Violence Reduction Unit, where people talk about it as a public health approach. It wasn't just a public health approach; it was a very hard-edged operational enforcement side with a very strong collaboration conventional approach. And that's what we were trying to do back in those days.

In the last two or three years there's an awful lot of really good stuff that Police Scotland do around prevention and around harm reduction. Now, for me that adds and contributes as an outcome to the wellbeing of the community. Some of the things, Joanne's sitting here, my team have spoken to Joanne and her team in the last couple of years around missing persons, around drug harm reduction, around health, and the position that Police Scotland occupy in that is very much, are we the first resort, people that are always in the room, that are always delivering, that are always trying to make the outcome for the people who are needing the service the best outcome they can have? That doesn't happen by chance; that happens because there's a really strong, clear message from the top of the organisation that this is something we value and talk about. But that doesn't come easy. The Chief was talking last week, at a board meeting, about there needs to be a step up from other partners, particularly around mental health, particularly around where the partnerships are, where policing is constantly left to pick up the pieces, when it shouldn't be.

So, for me operationally yes, it's happening. Could it be better? Well, there are some things we called out in drugs harm reduction recently around, it's difficult for a cop on the ground to understand what to do with someone with five wraps of heroin in their pocket, whether it's a public health approach or it's a criminal justice or it's a bit of both. So, be clear on your messaging, be clear on your decision-making around that, is where we need to see more activity. And it's coming from a good place.

- LA: That's really helpful. I'll just bring in anyone in the room at this point, particularly in terms of looking 2020 to 2023 period. And then we'll move on to the more recent discussion a little bit more as well. We have some examples in the pre-read around innovations or positive practices. But it can also be examples of how Police Scotland or partners are operationalising Section 32, looking at wellbeing, harm reduction, preventative work, a range of different terms. We don't just have to focus on wellbeing, but that broad understanding. Is there anything we've missed in the pre-read, any examples of that taking place or examples of how it maybe isn't taking place? I know we've talked about COVID a bit. Amanda?
- AC: Thank you. You'll be sick of hearing from me by the end of today. I'm Amanda Coulthard, SPA. I guess just that point that you made, Liz, about where it's not been happening. If we think about some of the decisions that other public sector partners took during the pandemic, to retract their services, there was very much signposting to policing as, 'we're not going to be doing it, but we know who will answer.' And ASB [Anti-Social Behaviour] is probably a really good example where that localised ASB and community cohesion became a real blind spot for particular local authority and housing association partners, with an expectation that policing would pick up the slack. I guess, as we think about the going forward – and we'll get into that later in the discussion today – but as we think about how we take the Section 32 responsibilities forward, then how do we have the conversation with partners about reestablishing their responsibilities in that space as well?
- CN: It's a really interesting point. The Secretary for Communities is very, very focused on uptake around things around electric motorbikes, scooters, that really city centre but also very rural use of things that is causing chaos in communities. If you go across, every local authority in Scotland is required to have an antisocial behaviour strategy under the 2004 Act - there's one that does, I think it's my old local authority, but I'm not going to blow smoke up their proverbials, but if they're not writing about it, they're not writing it down, if they're not following the law on what we have to do, how can we show that they're actually committed to doing it? And the bit for me is police holding them to account. So, we've had these conversations with ministers, we've had the conversation with Cab Sec and said, 'you need to keep going back to partners and saying, 'you need to step up and do what we're obliged to do by law'.'
- TH: Yes, this area of social behaviour, just to be clear right away, I was a member of the Scottish Government's independent working group looking at antisocial behaviour legislation last year. And we took evidence across Scotland. And there's real risks of stigmatisation leading to risk of blame, not the reality of the situation. How many bus journeys where young people maybe cause a problem, take the cards away from everyone, all that sort of stuff. And one of the stark things that was said to me about the health connection was a woman from the Polish community, and she said, I was surprised when I experienced all this, particularly the disrespect; the reality is happy people don't commit antisocial behaviour. And it was so stark, you

know, just something like that - if you actually give people good lives etcetera and you move on that.

And I've been struck by, both of you said in those operational settings, Section 32 wasn't foremost in my head. It would certainly be foremost in your head if it wasn't there and restricted what you were able to do. So, that's why it's so important. That behaviour, a rights-based approach that's been explicitly adopted by policing in Scotland comes about because that's there and that is defined a culture and a practice that's been longstanding here. So, it might not be right in the front of your head, but it certainly would be if it wasn't there.

IH: I'm just conscious poor Jimmy's been sitting there and not had a conversation. Inga Heyman from Edinburgh Napier University. It's more just a question around the COVID, and probably for Mr Speirs, about the COVID response. I think we hear a lot about how health asked police to be involved with naloxone and a health response to policing. I think during COVID health data were really calling the shots on how policing worked because they were telling us where we could be and where we couldn't be and what we were doing. How did that feel, I suppose from a policing perspective, when health were being that directive to how police behaved or practised in a different way?

AS: So, there's been a shift in that perspective, where there were some academics in the room talking about, 'most of the people will just comply with the regulations and those who will completely ignore them'. So, I think having that diversity of viewpoint to it on a daily basis definitely helped and shaped our thinking. But there was lots and lots of conversations behind closed doors where there were things that we're not going to do, we're not going to walk into private businesses and check whether or not they've got 2m distancing, and we're not going to get police out of town retail car parks, nor are we going to start to stop people on the boundary of local authority to work out if they can actually cross over the boundaries. So, there were a lot of really strong conversations. And to be fair, in a lot of cases did listen. However, there were a lot of cases that were incredibly reactionary. So, members of the public were listening to the First Minister on everything, where it was revising the guidance at the same time as we were taking notes as we didn't quite know what was coming. And that was elements that weren't so good, but we did pick up a lot of knowledge.

I think what it did do was, obviously there were lots of our business - routine stuff - that became a lot lighter. So, we didn't have the public piece where licensing trade are at, the night-time economy and the like. So, fortunately there was a shift in terms of people could do it or they just [...]. But there was a lot of the stuff that we did that we didn't feel comfortable doing, knocking on somebody's door to check how many people you had in the house and were they all from the same household. That's why, I'm trying to find... that core values-based approach became a little more.

LA: Thank you.

SM: Susan McVie, Edinburgh University. It'll be no surprise to any of the three of you in the room that I'm going to ask a data question as well. Going back to Op[eration] Talla and the fact that, during that period of time, I'd never seen data flow like that within policing and then between policing and other organisations as well. And I hope that all of you would agree that that was a good thing, at that time. And one of the reasons that we can actually say in Scotland that enforcement was a very small aspect of all policing activity is because Police Scotland were the only service in the whole of the UK to create a data system to capture that information. And I think that's a really, really good thing. And obviously there was sharing, and it was the first time we had data linkage as well; we had data linkage between police and courts data, we had data linkage between police and health data.

So, I wonder coming back, given Christie was saying this many years ago, that in order to improve public sector and to get that reform and to get it right we need better data, we need better data sharing, we need to understand more about how public sectors and how public sector organisations intersect together. And actually, during the pandemic when we were able to look at that data between police and health for example really just highlighted that squeeze in terms of those individuals with underlying health vulnerabilities, who really struggled during the pandemic and had been let down by the fact that services disappeared overnight and there was no impact assessment on many of those groups. So, there was a big political question there.

But I wonder if you could reflect now on whether you think that, within policing and more widely across public sector, we've capitalised sufficiently on some of that really great work that allowed us to get insights to areas of policing that we would never have been able to do before? And whether you think we're doing enough to make sure that if there is, as James has predicted, this big bang coming, we've got enough data to measure where we need to do things and what we need to do for the best for the public?

LA: Thank you, Susan. A very important question, considering the space of data and seeing it as central to a public health approach. Who would like to take that question? Any reflections?

AS: I'll take it, and the short answer is no. I think I'll also go back to day one of Police Scotland where, because of the urgency with which a single force was created, we had multiple systems. Fast forward to 2026 and we still have multiple systems that they don't talk to each other. So, we are right behind the curve in terms of where we are with technology and digital data. There's no real point of celebration that we're rolling out body worn video in our forces when they probably had it down south 20 years ago or so. It just tells you how far behind the curve we are. I think I recognise the criticism that comes of us that we need to get smart sharing with the third sector. I think that's still got a way to go, Susan in sharing. At times we still spend 80 per cent of time looking for data, before we can actually manipulate the data, so we're definitely a distance behind it. And I don't think we're any

different to many of the health spaces just now in terms of that five-bar chart, trying to find what's useful. We've a journey.

LA: Thank you. Craig?

CN: Yeah, it's like a point Neil Richardson made this morning when he talked about the reform journey and how much money was saved, and it felt like a cash grab from government at the time to take the cash out while not investing in infrastructure particularly. I went to Lincolnshire police force in the early part of 2017 - now they were roughly a tenth of the size of Police Scotland. I arrived, I sat down with the DCC, we were doing mobile data platform with a COS [Core Operational Solutions] type system. My capital budget at that time, remember a tenth of the size of Police Scotland, my capital budget was £28 million. Police Scotland's capital budget the same year was £48 million. So, mine was more than half for an organisation a tenth of the size. What did we do with that? Very, very quickly, and I won't take credit because it was all in train before I arrived, we got Niche [Record Management System] which did all our crime, our intelligence, our custody, our vulnerability issues, all of that. We had mobile data on a priority platform, 28 apps within a year. Every one of my officers was able to do everything that we needed to do in the police system from a mobile device, whether that was a phone, a tablet or a laptop. That freed up at least 15 per cent of my frontline officers, and we were evaluated by a local university. Incredible game changer for us as we were right in the crossline of change - it gave us the ability to look at our data far better, data dashboards came into being within six months and changed our game.

It also allowed us to push data out to, particularly, the councils. We had a two-tier council model, which was challenging, so the county council and district councils. But we could do things around sharing of data on child protection matters, on vulnerability of adults, on various others in a way that we had never done before. It changed the game.

And I totally recognise what Alan says, Police Scotland still struggles with that. But I think the reason they struggle with that is they've not had the capital to spend on doing COS and doing DESC [Digital Evidence Sharing Capacity], which both are fantastic. Body worn, we're on third generation body worn now. So, you are considerably behind. But that's not for lack of ambition; that's lack of money.

I suppose the bit for me that is more forward looking, we are doing some work just now with Healthcare Improvement Scotland, Care Inspectorate and HMIE [His Majesty's Inspector of Education], looking at group-based child sexual abuse and exploitation. And one of the big things, Susan, we're trying to understand, is where does the data sit? Police Scotland have got a lot of really good data; it's hard to pull that out and then compare it against what is sitting within councils, within health boards, if you can get the health boards to release the data to you, and so on and so forth. So, we do not maximise the situation we hold. And if I go all the way back to what happened in Cambridgeshire in the management of police information, we

are not very much better off now than we were then. There's still stuff on our system that we don't use, that we don't know we've got. And that worries me.

LA: Thank you. Tom, do you want to come in?

TH: Yeah. I've got the hat of scrutiny, oversight and governance, which is different. I recognise both of you, what you're saying and the frustrations etcetera. I'll call it out, and this is not just policing, it's public sector, it's risk averse when it comes to data. Very often those technical solutions are used as an excuse not to release it. And, as I leave the SPA, it'll be one of my greatest frustrations in terms of the way the public sector protects its data needlessly. We need to actually trust people more and get it out there. There needs to be a real definable reason not to do it.

I chaired the forensic services committee and I saw the first report, it was presented to me in private, of the nitazene graphs and the recoveries of that. And if I superimposed that in drug deaths in Scotland, it would have mirrored it. And that was going to be kept it private. And I said no, it's a public issue, it's going out. And that was quite a battle to get it out there. It went out, it was no surprise to any partners. So, that data the public have a right to that data, and I think that we're still risk averse across the public sector and certainly in Police Scotland.

LA: Jimmy, would you like to come in on the data points?

JP: Yes, very briefly. And first of all, afternoon everyone. Liz, team, thank you for letting me dial in, it's much appreciated.

I didn't work in policing in 2020 to 2023. When I joined the VRU was '23. But I did work in the care system, I worked in charities. And Tom, when you started talking there, you're spot on. There was that window of opportunity early on in COVID where we could change the rules of the game, permissions were lifted in the care system, all of a sudden local authorities were now able to give money and support to families that were on the edge of the care system in ways they couldn't before. And as soon as we started to come out of the lockdown and rules came back to normal, we retrenched a little bit. And that's a shame. And that's really difficult. And the same extends for the data and the discussions around data the other panellists have described.

I think from a VRU perspective, we've long taken that public health approach. We've heard the Glasgow miracle spoken about; and I was quite surprised that the data available to us at the start of that public health approach, the first part, is understand what the data is telling us, is very much police data, which we can get access to, which is fantastic. But it is hard to get data from the other agencies: education, local authority, health, third sector. And so you rely on your relationships. And that is difficult, that is challenging.

But I just wanted to shout out, I think Clair Thomson is in the room, the Edinburgh Futures Institute, the Prevention Hub, which obviously Police Scotland is backing and supporting, I am really excited about the direction of that work and the common data platform. And I think we need to continue to work diligently towards the sharing of data in as live time as possible as we can get to inform the progress that we're making to evidence what we're doing. And also to set the direction for the future of where we need to work as well.

LA: Thanks very much, Jimmy. If it's okay, I'm going to stick with you and move to the next question, which is basically the same question but moving from 2023 into 2024 and up to the present day. If there's examples of how Section 32, how wellbeing, public health approach, harm reduction is being operationalised by Police Scotland and partners, if there's examples from VRU or anything more widely that you'd like to draw to our attention? Or areas where that isn't being done as much as it could or should be? And I'll bring in the audience in a moment. But I'll go to you first Jimmy on that question please.

JP: Yeah, thank you. I can only speak for the VRU rather than wider Police Scotland. We're a separate part of the organisation, if you like, with our own delivery plan. But we're closely connected. We're part of Policing Together. I would say Section 32 for us is the founding point, even though we don't reference it. And the DCC spoke to this earlier, in a very similar set of terms. As we're generating new projects and ideas, we look at the data, we speak to those in intelligence, we speak to partners on the ground to really understand what the challenges are, what the opportunities are, and where's the unique role that we could play to support that.

And in terms of specific examples, I would say it's across every single piece of work and project that we do but specifically our place-based work, both in Niddrie, in The Hays in the east end of Edinburgh, and also in Fife, in Levenmouth. Now, in Fife, the focus initially was on the school, and we quickly realised you can't just focus on the school; the school is an anchor organisation that is a part of a community and you've got to work as part of the community. And almost in reverse fashion, in Niddrie, we focused on the community, but realised that particularly significant opportunities lie within the school, and we needed to make sure we were involving them.

So, there are two parts to our approach when we work in places: the first is understanding what the data is telling us and building community voice alongside that, so bringing people together, if that doesn't already exist; or if it does giving that more opportunity to be heard by those with power and influence. And the second part is delivering tailored interventions that work. And sometimes we will fund those; sometimes we will part fund those; or sometimes we'll signpost to those with resources so that they can help to deliver those.

The challenge is for us, we can't just go into a community and deliver that; you've got to work with partners that are already established. We go in with

our VRU badge two or three years ago when we were setting up in these areas and you've got a lot of work to do to build trust. You've got to be consistently present. There's a guy who wrote a book called *The Trusted Executive*, one of my favourite books (because I'm a geek like that) and he speaks about the three tenets of trust. And this extends to our work in those communities. The first is ability, you've got to prove that you have the ability to go and deliver; the second is integrity; and the third is benevolence. And I think benevolence is particularly key to the work we do. We almost need to prove that we are there in those communities to work with them, to support them to achieve their goals, and we're willing to adapt our approach completely to make that a reality.

So, it's particularly challenging, building that trust, that's why we go to these areas for two or three or four years before we then build a sustainability plan and hand over and leave that with the area to continue that good work. But it's not easy. And that's why we've got to work with partners. At the heart of this, Section 32's principles are partnership working, power towards communities, and really long-term sustained change and a commitment to that.

So, in Levenmouth we've worked really closely with a community trade hub, with Clued Up, a fantastic charity doing street work and working with young people; Street Soccer Scotland, of course the school in Niddrie and The Hays, with the added focus of bonfire season disorder. If that wasn't an issue, we would have been there anyway, but it provides an added focus. Housing has been a key part of there, where they haven't in Levenmouth, the school has been key, the local authority, some of the other charities. Even though there's a real dearth of youth work provision in Niddrie and The Hays, they've been crucial, the ones that are around the area and supporting those young people to make different decisions and support them into healthier choices.

A few examples there. But my message is that, a few people have said this on the panel as well, it looks different in different areas based on the makeup of the partners that are prevalent there. In some areas you'll have a Barnardo's, in others you won't; in some areas you'll have really good or well-resourced community policing, in others that might be more of a struggle. So, you've got to work with where they're at.

And the two things I'll leave you with are: as the VRU, we're an innovation unit and we shouldn't be operationalising activity ourselves, we shouldn't sustain activity forever. And a big challenge for us is when you go to an area, you deliver some place-based work with the Section 32 principles underpinning it, but then we need to go and do other work elsewhere, and times change and challenges and pressures on us change as well. So, we need to make sure that we're involving funders or those with resource or those with the ability to carry on good work very early on in order to sustain meaningful change. And that's not always easy when headlines change or pressures change. But ultimately we've learnt what works in the last 15, 20 years in Scotland.

And the second thing is, it can be quite tricky to be honest about the challenges, be it about trust, like I've already spoken about, but also in the time of great public sector challenge where every penny is a prisoner, being honest and saying look, we tried something new and innovative and different, maybe it didn't work as well as intended. And that can be challenging. I never shy away from it myself, but I know others really struggle with that.

So, I'll finish my contribution there.

LA: That's fantastic. Thank you very much. I'll just bring in any other panel members who want to add to that any recent examples in the last couple of years. Craig, do you want to add anything, either reinforcing some of the things that are in the pre-read or any additional examples?

CN: Yes, there are lots of really good things happening across Scotland, and you come across them in various different ways. And one piece of work we're trying to do [...] is looking, trying to do a place-based scrutiny model. It's never been done. We're working with Audit Scotland, with Healthcare Improvement Scotland, the Care Inspectorate, various others, and we're probably going to try and pilot it in the next year looking at a piece of work in Clackmannanshire called the STRIVE [Safeguarding Through Rapid Intervention] Project. Which, Jimmy, sounds very similar to what you're doing in Niddrie and in Fife, very much focused on early and effective intervention in the lives of young people who are either going through trauma or being abused or have other issues around attendance at school and wellbeing. We want to do this to try and lift the heavy footprint of scrutiny, because as we said before, policing in Scotland is hugely scrutinised, and if we can do things at a lighter touch to greater effect that's where we want to be.

But the bit for me is, we've made friends with the STRIVE Project, we've become trusted partners - Jimmy talked about it there, about ability, integrity and benevolence. You going through that, I'd never heard it described that way, but that's exactly what we do just now to build our relevance to that piece of work. Getting data from some partners is proving challenging, but when you look at it and look at what they're doing, it's really good. We want to use our ability to scrutinise that, to lift them up and show them as a good model of effective interventions in communities.

So, I don't know if that's what you are looking for, but Section 32 sits right at the very heart of that from what we're coming from, but other partners are doing it without that piece of legislation, which is interesting.

LA: Also community-based, so that's helpful. Alan, do you have anything to add in terms of recent examples of operationalisation?

AS: Yeah, a range of initiatives, Jimmy's touched on a couple, around the Scottish Prevention Hub, the rollout of naloxone, I think the approach that

we've taken around mental health and actually just standing up a taskforce are themes that cut across it. But I would say probably for the first time since Police Scotland came into being, we got behind the vision, so we put a lot of time to work through what does the vision of policing in Scotland look like. And I think at the heart of that when you think about less crime, safer communities and better supported victims that's us I would suggest trying to take the corporate Scottish wide approach to how we would address the details of safety. We'll come back to that a little bit later. But these are all good examples, and of course there are lots of other ones that are coming on. Some of it is about gathering data, so [...] just drawing on data as it relates to young people and violence is a really important prevention issue.

LA: Thanks. Anything to add to that, Tom?

TH: Other than the parallel, we're all capable of giving specific operational examples. But in terms of governance for the SPA this partnership working is key. I sit on the Policing Performance Committee and there are a number of areas of deep focus in that around live facial recognition and the rights, human rights issues. If we talk about trauma informed practice coming in and violence against women and girls, victim and witnesses and justice reform act - these are all areas of active discussion and scrutiny by the SPA and its committees. So, it shows you that this work is embedded through that thread of accountability.

I also have a framework agreement with COSLA and Councillor Chalmers who leads in the area around community planning sector for COSLA sits on the Policing Performance Committee. And we've met with the president of COSLA etcetera. So, that governance thread goes right through there as well.

A word of warning. We've discussed early and effective interventions, but we have Fern Gillon in the room - if you were to ask her about the impact on that and GIRFEC in Scotland of austerity etcetera, it's not a pretty picture. So, we need to really look at how we sustain this as well. We can't just sit here with an initiative and talk about it. It's how do we actually fundamentally follow the principles of this Section and our responsibilities going forward?

LA: Thank you. So a really good point to bring in anyone in the audience who would like to add to what's been happening in the last couple of years? Adam, do you want to go first?

AL: Adam Lloyd, Scottish Ambulance Service. Jimmy mentioned the work that Clair is doing at the Scottish Prevention Hub, and that's something that's really struck a chord with myself, and my colleague Catherine, who's our head of mental health, and Lisa, from the University of Edinburgh is working with us one day a week and is really working in the space of knowing that the Prevention Hub has evolved and it's morphed into something that's even bigger than it was when it was just the seedling of an idea when it started. And I think that for me symbolises in a way even what we were

speaking back to earlier. James mentioned something around, our organisations want to sit and we go, well this is our money, this is our remit, these are our boundaries, here's my money. And even within our organisations are different directorates and divisions hold their money back here. And I guess I sit and I think to myself here is a moment where I think you've got the might of Police Scotland, you've got some academics, you've got Public Health Scotland, and the type of people that we see suffering, people that are suffering from substance use disorders, from mental health issues, suffering from alcoholism and essentially social despair – this is some of the work that Lisa is bringing in the ambulance service, this idea of despair – people are coming to harm and suffering. And I think here is an opportunity where we can get the right people in the right room. And I just feel like we're limited in a way that maybe we all sense this frustration.

And when I think about the identity of Police Scotland is what is that next step? I want to be able to bring my high intensity user team, my mental health team, our clinical academics into that space to say let's really do something here. We had a discussion with Susan last year and Research Data Scotland about trying to do some applied work, do we need to research and understand things better before we make that big organisational leap, before we go to our chief exec and say this is the answer, this is the solution?

And so it's probably just echoing some of what the group are saying that we felt in the last few years, Police Scotland are potentially ahead of us in some regards in terms of some of this public health approach and the applied things that Police Scotland are doing. So, it's probably just a little note to say we too see this area, and I guess we have the will and we have that desire to be at the table. But I guess it's to think, how do we work differently and really move the dial, so to speak?

LA: Thank you. Let's take Inga's input.

IH: Of course, we're on the same wavelength usually. So, just a couple of things. Inga Heyman, Edinburgh Napier University. First thing is we just finished the evaluation, well last year, of the consensus statement in England and Wales around police, fire, ambulance and health. And that consensus statement was delivered around that. One of the strongest things that came out around that was the language, which has not been put into place, the language that was being used and the word public health approach to policing. There are significant antibodies to that, not to bring a health lens on that. But it was really uncomfortable for a lot of the police leaders because it was like public health coming in and telling them how to police. So, I suppose that's just a comment to say that the language that we use if we're looking at partnerships and moving forward is really important.

My question really for the panel is there's such exciting work going on around the mental health side of things, neurodiversity and thinking about Mr Sutherland's work, he's leading neurodiversity in Police Scotland,

substance use, mental health, is there a risk of us becoming siloed in our approaches to partnership that does not really take into account the individual at the middle? Do they get overshadowed because, as we all know, nobody comes with just one challenge in their life, or very frequently maybe come with mental health, neurodiversity, substance use, homelessness, all sorts of things? Is there a risk that because we get so enthusiastic about building certain approaches that we miss the individual?

LA: I'm just going to pass along to Audit Scotland for input and then put it to the panel.

JMA: Jillian Matthew from Audit Scotland. I was chatting to people at lunch and saying that a lot of stuff that's come up this morning and then again this afternoon, there are so many common issues that we come across, across all services, it's not just the police, which I'm sure a lot of people are aware of anyway. I think in relation to the conversations just now about data, that's something we come up all the time. Anyone that reads Audit Scotland reports, we always talk about data issues. And it's not that there isn't a lot of data out there; it's not necessarily the right data or, as you say, it's not been shared effectively, or it's not the data that you need to actually measure outcomes, it's measuring certain things and it's not necessarily particularly useful or able to really measure the impact that services are having. And then that's where you can get the evidence to show and get that financial backing if you're trying to roll out or expand services.

Something that comes up a lot when we're doing our audit work is this data protection, and it's back to that risk averse approach as well, I think. So, we're always looking for – contrary to common belief, we don't just look for things that go wrong – we're always looking for good practice examples as well. Because I think sometimes when you can actually illustrate practically where it has gone well, where you've got people working together and it is actually for the benefit of the people that you're delivering services to, it's not just about collecting data because you have to do it.

So, in a report we did late 2024, we published on alcohol and drug services we included an example around sharing data. It was actually from the Ambulance Service, and it was as a case study just to illustrate from a personal point of view someone that had a near fatal overdose, and then an assertive outreach team came in and then coordinated different services and was able to, had that permission to share the data because it was helping that person get to the right services. So, we do see it happening well, but it is pockets and it's not necessarily being done systematically, that really rolling it out. We come up against it all the time, but being able to illustrate where it's being done well and there's not been that kickback or people haven't been penalised or it hasn't all gone horribly wrong, the more we can illustrate that I think to try and get other people on board and to see that it is actually for overall benefit.

TH: It's decided on the individual, and it doesn't go without risk, because if you're putting all your resources into that, they'll be some woman

somewhere doesn't get a response to domestic abuse or violence. So, these are about decisions, and so long as it's the right decision, it's logical etcetera, then we can all understand that.

But going back to the point you made about showing good examples that show it works, that's really important. But it's not enough. We need to explicitly tell organisations that they're able to [share]. My time in the third sector, we had one area and it was about protecting young people, it was part of GIRFEC arrangements and a public body refused to share information while our staff were in the room because they were not a public body - they were a third sector organisation. But that was the organisation that was working with the young person. Now, the local authority took Counsel's opinion, who came back with the opinion and said you can share that information. So, the public service responds to that opinion. Another public authority took Counsel's opinion and had the same input because they were defending their position. Now, that is nuts when you get into that, but it's a real example of how we lack confidence in this area.

So, yes the good examples are really, really important, but I think we need real guidance in terms of this. And actually, I think there should have been a duty to share information.

LA: Thank you, Tom.

AS: I'm going to be maybe slightly more controversial, I think there's no question we need to collaborate better and work collectively far, far better because the same service users are reaching into every service. But I think about mental health, I worked on setting up a mental health taskforce, the Chief bought into it. And by God, it feels as though we're fighting a solo battle, to be perfectly blunt, in this room. We're in a space that we shouldn't be in, taking 500 calls a day, 90 per cent of that is generally not about crime, it's not operational policing business. I'm getting criticised, and rightly so, by some of the staff associations because we're not equipping officers to deal with the stuff that we're asking them to deal with day to day. So, the reality for me is that that's a perfect example of quite simply the space that we shouldn't be in. I sit on all the different groups of policy, mental health, I sit on the ministerial group. The only service user that sits on the mental, that particular ministerial steering group. No disrespect, Scottish Ambulance Service are not there, NHS are not there - we're there, talking about stuff that, in the nicest possible way, we've got a limited knowledge of.

Fast forward to the budget announcement only a month ago, and we've got a massive hole; we don't have enough money to stand still so we're going to have to look at what goes. And you can see why at different times, different forces across England and Wales have taken mental health, have looked at 'right care, right service', taken approaches that have had a mixed bag of how well they've landed.

We rollout mental health pathways, great. In over two years we've diverted 15,000 incidents away from frontline police officers. That's set against

350,000. So, we're on the very, very edges of it. So, I think from a policing perspective, when I listen to ACC Paton giving evidence at the Criminal Justice Committee, she talked about, health isn't a justice issue. And when we get into a space, we're thinking about custody, what we actually enforce; whereas we're dealing with people who need care, support and a service. So, there is something about, just from a policing perspective, where does this sit? I know I'm being quite honest, but it's 2026 moving towards 2030, what does that look like when we don't have budget provision to provide the service that some will expect us to provide?

LA: Thank you, that's helpful. Craig?

CN: Maybe just to back up Alan's point, we did a piece of work on mental health about two and a half years ago, and we worked with service user organisations to get them to help us listen to the voices of the service user. And massive feedback from right across East Central Scotland, but some places in the North, was when Police Scotland come along and they're usually very good, they're usually very compassionate, they stopped me from killing myself, which is a good thing, but it's not good for my wellbeing being put in the back of a police van with blue lights on and handcuffs on.

So, when you look at it are Police Scotland actually delivering Section 32 when they're responding the only way they can to mental health issues? Our argument, no. That means there's someone else has to do it. We said to government it needs a national strategic review of mental health services. They've done bits and pieces around the edges of it with mental health pathways and taskforces and various things that are making maybe a small difference, but not the difference it needs and not the difference in communities. And that for us is where I think the Scottish Government and other partnership bodies are letting people in Scotland down.

LA: We can maybe come back to that in a bit more detail. I'm just going to take Mary's reflections and then Gethin and Rob.

MF: Thanks very much. I'm really interested to hear that at least two of the panel members have talked about police benevolence and the working with police benevolence societies. And of course this has a very strong history. At the moment I'm working on the police aided scheme to clothe destitute children, which started in Edinburgh in 1893. And after I've finished looking at that I want to then bring this up to date, so I aim to talk to people who are currently working with benevolent organisations to do a comparison. So, I'd be interested to come back to you.

GR: Hi, thanks and apologies, a view from down south. My name's Gethin Rees from Newcastle University and I've just finished a project looking at the work of healthcare professionals working with police and police custody. But one of the things I've really got into a bit of a tizzy about, and why I'm here today maybe, is because about 'right care, right person'. Some of the comments really, really stuck with me there, and I really appreciate the input from the panel on some of this. But the way I understand it and the way I see it

actually going forward is that you've got a street level bureaucrat, who we heard about a little this morning, making a decision about whether this is a criminal justice case or this is a healthcare case, and that's a difficult decision when, as your question came to, it could be they're in a mental health crisis but lo and behold they're also intoxicated so maybe certain other teams won't get them. And then there'll be a sort of reversion back to the police because bottom of the barrel. And what's happening in England is they're also being told well, this isn't your responsibility because this is a mental health problem. And so you can see that stigmatisation doubling down even further.

So, a reflection, the numbers were stark and I absolutely get the problem. Even the beloved Nordics are dealing with the same problems at the time. But I've been glad to hear today some of the positivity, I think, and supportive work that's being done in Scotland compared to what I see is only going to be a problematic doubling down on stigma down south with 'right care, right person'. So, I would counter against any more thoughts around that sort of problem.

RH: Rob from ASPS (Association of Scottish Police Superintendents). I'm going to disappoint Gethin unfortunately because I'm going to speak about 'right care, right person'. And you've heard from him, Alan spoke about the mixed responses, and there have been mixed responses in terms of the perceptions around about that. But where there have been real definite results are every force in England and Wales has experienced a reduction in demand for incidents of that type. And at a time where Police Scotland is facing a budget that isn't even sufficient to stand still, then looking at how we can start to close that delta in terms of demand, I think, drives the force closer and closer towards some sort of Scottish version of that. And I know that the Chief and others have committed to the current provision, overcommitted some might say in terms of that, but what Craig raises about the body of international evidence, I know we're in a place where evidence based practice is really, really popular, suggests that sending people with batons and handcuffs to incidents that require clinicians and therapists has bad results for them, and also leads to further undermining of that relationship of trust and confidence with the public as well.

So, the current position is becoming less and less sustainable, and some would argue is already unsustainable in that in terms of police commitment to mental health. And even Police Scotland are lucky to have a workforce that is the highest trained, in terms of first aid, in the UK. However, the result of that is when ambulance control run out of ambulances to send, they'll contact police control and we'll send a police response. Now, the police we don't have somebody else that we can phone to go and take reports of crime or things that we do, so we are there as that service of first and last resort, as Neil Richardson said this morning.

But the current Chief, Jo Farrell, has been really clear and has said that that's not our role, to be the service of first and last resort. So, I guess my

question would be, if we're no longer the service of first and last resort, what is going to change?

AT: Hi, Andy Tatnell from the project team here at Strathclyde Uni. My question for the panel is something that does build on these two, is to what extent do you think Community Planning Partnerships are helping or hindering this partnership working and making sure that people access the correct service, the right people?

CN: I'm going to be slightly controversial, which is not like me. I think Section 32 is part of the problem. I think the fact that we use the word wellbeing to define what it means has given free range for partners to move back from certain services. It's a while since I've worked operationally in Police Scotland, but when I was an on-call commander, when I was a divisional commander, the night shift social work services was decimated in the early part of austerity, mental health services, outreach services that were on the streets every weekend was decimated, third sectors were not funded. So, all of the infrastructure around policing that were the handoff points for particularly mental health crises, had not been wiped out, but not been far off. So, they aren't there anymore. If you phone a social work crisis duty team at 3 o'clock in the morning, unless it's a child who is needing a supervised bed overnight, you're not getting any support. Whereas you go back ten years, you were.

All of that is challenging because everyone's budget is struck. But best value, Scotland colleagues very recently talked about policing in Scotland as being well led, delivering effective services operationally, but also talked about the fact that double the amount of money of reform was taken out of policing over a period of ten years. So, try and balance those two sides of the equation, they don't work.

So, I don't know what the answer is, but I do know the question. The question is there needs to be an initial service, whether that's an emergency mental health service, or an emergency health service that deals with mental health crisis, there needs to be something that takes away from police officers turning up with batons and handcuffs and blue lights to deal with the most vulnerable in society at their worst point.

LA: Alan, Tom, does anyone want to come in on the key points we've just had?

AS: I agree entirely with Craig. Let me make a simple illustration of a colleague that came up on the mental health taskforce about an individual in crisis, social services said to bring him in for a further assessment because his suicidal ideology had accelerated. The individual didn't get in a taxi. We then took the phone call. We went to the house. Refused to open the door. Then suggested they'd got a knife. We then sent somebody with a gun, pointing a gun and arrested them. And if you just cynically wind back, what was the crime? The individual didn't want to get in a taxi, and they were in mental health crisis.

So, I'm utterly in the space that Craig is in that you don't send an ambulance or a nurse to cut somebody out of a car. We've got a particular skillset, and I firmly do believe that we will contribute to community wellbeing if we can demonstrate that the communities that people in Scotland live in are safe. If you're the victim of a crime, we'll give you the best possible service to support that, and we will seek to drive down crime. So, at the heart of those three elements of our vision, I think has got community wellbeing right at the heart of that.

I don't think Community Planning Partnerships, to Andy's point, are adversely impacting the space that we are in. But it's not joined up in a sufficient way. And if it was, I think we could probably spend less time in this space.

LA: I'll just take a final reflection from Tom.

TH: I recognise we've all experienced similar scenarios; but Section 32 didn't create them, that was always happening before. Section 32 enables you to work in that area. What's wrong is that we've not got clear definition of responsibilities and boundaries. If you take someone in crisis from there to a health setting, to a GP or wherever, and you take them there and you register them they're in a place of safety at that point. Because you don't have the resource to go over there and the time, we all know the anecdotes of multiple police vehicles and crews tied up in A&E, we all know that scenario, but that's a handover, that's a different issue. It's not about Section 32. I would argue for Section 32.

LA: So, I'm keen to move us on to having a five-minute break soon. I just wanted to cover one question as briefly as possible, and we've already touched on it a little bit, which is given the legislative framework for policing does differ from other parts of the UK with Section 32 etcetera, when it comes to day-to-day policing practices – and I know we talked about this quite a bit this morning about the implementation gap and the difference between strategy and practice on the ground – but does the panel have any reflections on whether the approach to community wellbeing differs in Scotland as compared to other parts of the UK? It has come up from some of the audience and we discussed it earlier, so it's just any additional reflections that anyone wants to give? Craig, I was maybe going to go to your first. I know you've spoken to this a bit already, so just anything additional you'd want to add before we give everyone a five-minute comfort break.

CN: Yes, very briefly, I choose to live in Scotland and not Wales because of the service we get in Scotland, both from the health side of things, and my parents have gone through health issues recently, but from a policing side of things, there is a very different approach. I know we talked about it this morning, Nick, and there was a bit of well, 'let's not have the Scottish exceptionalism'. It is a different model. It's not that we're better, it's just a different approach. And I think 32 does drive that. But I think it drove it before 32 was created.

And I go back to the former boss David Strang and people like that really focusing on prevention in the early 2000s, Willie Rae as well, people like that who really drove the agenda about improving the wellbeing of the community, without actually describing it as improving the wellbeing of the community, through effective enforcement, through effective partnership working, through child protection services that, down south ten years ago, were better in Scotland than in England and Wales, where it wasn't joined up meetings, there wasn't joined up child protection case conferences in the way that we'd had in Scotland 20 years before that. And that shocked me, that really, really shocked me. And we started putting in place a lot of the practice that we'd seen back then, doing things jointly in collaboration with the police. But it was hard yards, hard yards that we didn't have to go through in Scotland because we were already doing it.

So, it is a very different approach in England and Wales; it's far more enforcement led without recognising that enforcement was just one aspect of the toolkit of the police officer, as we see in Scotland.

LA: Very useful reflections? Tom or Alan, have you anything to add?

TH: There's a historical perspective that gives us a sense of the difference. Why do we not have community support officers in Scotland? The conversation at the time was that it had to be everyone's role to deal with antisocial behaviour and issues like that. And if you put resource only into the police, the police then had to take responsibility for the whole of antisocial behaviour. Now, that money actually stayed in local government and you had antisocial behaviour teams etcetera, alongside with police and working collaboratively. Now, that has been diluted over time, as austerity has kicked in and a lot of these teams have disappeared. But the fundamental thinking of that which was different was that the response has got to be more universal across the public sector than just policing in terms of antisocial behaviour. That's the key difference in approach.

LA: Alan, anything to add?

AS: No, fine for the break.

LA: Anything here or we will move to a five-minute break at this point? We'll come back at 20 past three and then we'll move on to the next section.

[Break]

One hour to go, still lots to discuss, so please do bear with us. So, we touched on some differences there, but what I want to move on to now is reflection on aspects of policing practices, or elements in the context that are enabling police to contribute to community wellbeing and public health in Scotland, so factors that are enabling that, or some of the biggest challenges and barriers to that in Scotland. I know we've touched on some, we've talked about data, we've talked about some of these things, but anything additional you could reflect on. I'll go to you first.

AS: I'll try and be positive.

LA: You can be both, it's okay.

AS: The work we're doing through the Prevention Hub, our commitment in that space to look at the common data platform, for me, is incredibly important. I also think the criticism that Tom levied about sharing and the reluctance to share is right and I agree with that, but actually at the same time there is a willingness and an appetite to be less risk averse and to share more data. So, I think that's relatively positive. So, I think there are green shoots of an absolute willingness to do much more in this space.

I think our biggest challenge moving forward is, we're biting the hand off of the Neuk in Perth, the Nook in Glasgow, so where we're being as engaged as we can be at a time when we've got very limited resources, we have got a Policing Together function, so victims' partnership, trying to do that in a joined-up way. There's a lot of resource focused in Policing Together. This conversation is at the heart of the work, that that team would do, Joanne and others in that space, it's a commitment that's there. I'll just measure that against we're moving into 2026 and the budget position looks incredibly bleak. So, we get naloxone, we give it to every officer, it's brilliant, you'd be surprised about how frequently we use it - it's really positive. But the next time that we have to replenish that stock, we've got to do it ourselves. So, it will become a question of, that is that the only use of a quarter of a million pounds? I suspect we will be committed to that space. But it's just another example of the music stops and I'm holding 'n' thousand kits [...].

I think we're going into a really difficult space. There is no question that in '26/'27, we cannot provide the same service we provided in '25/'26, set against the budget, set against the resources leading the whole thing. So, something somewhere will have to give from that perspective. I did start being positive. Apologies, it's just the reality.

LA: That's okay, thank you. Craig?

CN: We've done a lot of work in the area of Policing Together the last two or three years, and Joanne and my team. We've starting looking at some of the things around missing persons and how Police Scotland contributes to the wellbeing of getting people back who have gone missing either voluntary or otherwise. And [...] we were benchmarked across six or seven forces in England and Wales and none of them had the same service - some of them had the same returns rate, none of them had the same approach. Particularly, what is interesting to me, are the young people who are care experienced. So, if you look at someone who is going regularly missing from a care home, has been in all sorts of trouble throughout their life, has probably come from a very traumatic background, they are the most vulnerable members of society. And Police Scotland in general, I'm generalising, but from what we've found, deal with them well.

The group-based child sex abuse work that we're currently doing will be focusing on that. Alexis Jay talked about that in IICSA [the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse] and various other reports she's done. I was the beneficiary of her experience running [Operation] Stovewood, which is the Rotherham child sex abuse inquiry, and unfortunately every victim we spoke to was care experienced, they would be plied with drink, alcohol, fags, smart shoes, yada, yada, yada, and nobody was picking up on that. Police Scotland do. I don't think it's perfect, but I think there's a lot of experience that we saw, particularly in places like Edinburgh, where the team, still the same when I was divisional commander there, [Police Constable] Yocksan Bell has been there for goodness knows how long. But the positive contribution to the wellbeing of young people in that space is incredible. Is it the right thing to do? Surely? I don't think it's wrong because who else is going to find someone that is voluntarily [...] But it's challenging, it's hugely resource intensive.

When we did governance oversight, what we found when we did that inspection was it's there. Should other parties be more involved? Absolutely. We'd love to see the Barnardo's project who are doing return home interviews, particularly for care experienced people, right across the country, whether it's Barnardo's or something else, but that sort of approach, rather than a cop in uniform appearing to say to a drunk 15 year-old girl, 'where have you been?' Someone who can build the trust and a bond maybe the next day, and then feed that information back into the vulnerable persons database so that next time they go missing, that can be used by Police Scotland to hopefully short circuit and perhaps find them.

So, in terms of that, loads of good practice. And I am eternally optimistic, there are lot of good things being done by Police Scotland. The difficulty is, they are expensive, difficult to sustain and they're not bound by a good dataset behind them - lacking investment or lacking capital to invest in these things. And that's not going to change.

LA: I was just going to bring you in at this point, Jimmy. Any reflections on the enablers or constraints, challenges and barriers?

JP: Yes, a few thoughts. So, any activity that brings us closer to communities is exciting. And specifically, in Police Scotland, we at the VRU have benefited from this. A couple of years ago, Police Scotland advertised for two youth engagement officers, and we've done some fantastic work with them. They've given us routes into schools, so we've spoken to hundreds and hundreds, if not thousands now, across the last two years ,of young people, and spent time with them listening to make sure that we are visible and we understand who they are and what their challenges are, and vice versa as well. We are a friendly face of the organisation. So, the youth engagement team, that's been a fantastic investment from Police Scotland.

We, a couple of years ago, produced an animation with the organisation STAF, the Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare Forum. And it's an animation on an issue of the same stop and search, but one from the perspective of

a young person and one from the perspective of a police officer. And this was coproduced with young people who have care and justice experience. This was huge for us because we weren't sure if that would work or if the young people would be up for that, but they were. And a big part of that is to try and build that trust and shared understanding and that shared sense of humanity between young people and...you know, we can forget that young people are humans and they can forget that police officers are humans as well. We've had some really good feedback from young people on that project. It's available on the website, you can google it, 'STAF stop and search' if you wish.

A couple of other things. That ongoing commitment to the long term. I'm obviously very enthused with the Chief Constable's vision that has outlaid, especially in terms of community policing and that commitment, the ongoing commitment to the public health approach. Specifically, I can talk around violence, but we've had approaches at the VRU from partners like Cyrenians who work in homelessness. And that has been alluded to today, homelessness and substance misuse, I've heard in the room. But they want to understand how we have taken the public health approach, how we've used it and what learning they can take from us for the issue of homelessness. And I think sharing our learning for others in other parts of Scotland is a huge part of accelerating good progress, building that trust in communities and making positive change a reality.

And the last thing I would say is enabling, is school based officers, sometimes known as campus cops. We're lucky in that we get to bring them together two or three or four times a year to train them and help upskill them in topics, and we have speakers from all across Scotland who can give them the latest knowledge in whatever we feel is really pertinent, or the latest training that can be offered to them. Done well, that can be an incredibly strong resource. And young people have told us that, having that friendly police presence in a school can be incredibly helpful. If I was pressed to choose between a school based officer and a youth worker I might lean slightly more towards a youth worker because of their skillset, for example, but young people have told us that having a face that they know they can go to an issue with and it will be dealt with by someone who is an officer has been incredibly helpful. So, done well – and there are challenges in that because it's not always done well, sometimes you think is that the right person in the role for example? But it can be life changing.

In terms of barriers, short termism, and that creeps in the year-to-year funding cycle, that's particularly challenging for us. And obviously it's been discussed on a Police Scotland level today as well. Sometimes we know what needs to be done and we don't always invest the time to think about how best to do it before we do it. And I'm thinking specifically on issues like engagement. I'm not talking about Police Scotland; I'm talking about the public sector here. And that can be really challenging. We've got to make sure that we're engaging people in ways that keeps them safe, that's trauma informed, that's authentic, that has the right voices in the room, that follows Laura Lundy's model of participation for example. You can't skip

some of those steps. And even though we might be well meaning in our intent to get to somewhere and achieve something, we've got to make sure that we follow the right steps and take the learning from the right people. I'm not sure that always happens across the public sector.

We've spoken about data. Also, I think we've alluded to the systematic defunding of our core services and structural issues like poverty and trauma. The JRF, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, report came out last year, and even though we celebrate the figure of a reduction in poverty in Scotland when everywhere else in the UK is on the up, well the proportion of those in deep poverty is increasing at a really worrying rate. And we know through research that has been done, like through Gormley and Batchelor, the repeat victims of violence study, about two-thirds of all the violence in Scotland is concentrated on about 1 per cent of the population. And if you have an increasing proportion of people growing up in really deep poverty, I'm worried that percentage will increase. So, there are massive challenges there.

And the last thing I would say is, I quote this, I don't know officially where it came from so bear with me, but I often say that change has never been this fast and it will never be this slow again. And we live at a time of great change, be it public sector funding, social media, post-COVID life, post-pandemic life, AI and automation, all of these things create massive uncertainty for communities and young people. But it's not good enough to keep responding; we've got to anticipate what the challenges are. I guess a barrier that could be turned into an opportunity is if we hit that sweet spot of understanding what the data is telling us across agencies, what intelligence is telling us in Police Scotland, but also what communities are telling us, what people who are affected by these issues are telling us, and if we can hit that sweet spot, we're much more likely and able to anticipate not just react.

LA: Thank you very much. Anything to add, Tom?

TH: There's a couple of enablers that are not recognised enough. There's a review of local policing in the service delivery review, and that's fundamentally looking at how Police Scotland engages with partners at a local level. That strategic approach is very much informed by, and I think this is a much more significant development in policing than we recognise, Policing Together, bringing together those areas of responsibility around girls, around gender-based violence, those around areas around culture, in the organisation culture, and how the services are delivered, etcetera, link it through to that local policing service delivery. That is not stated anywhere in Police Scotland 2013 as a result of the 2012 Act. It's a natural evolution delivered by the organisation itself. And that will fundamentally shift how we deliver services for policing and public wellbeing in Scotland. Particularly with Policing Together, I think there's more to come from that.

We always say, is that a priority? Well, watch where the money is. There's a rebranding, there's a chief officer investment; this is not without financial cost. And I think you can recognise that and understand it better.

LA: That's really helpful. I'll just bring in anyone from the audience now. And then I'm going to move on to the next question. So, anything more about enablers, barriers or challenges? The next question I'm going to be moving on to is any further examples of enablers or initiatives where there's good practice or significant contributions to wellbeing and health. Kat first.

KS: Thanks very much. Kat Smith, University of Strathclyde. I wanted to pick up on a point that Jimmy Paul made about the importance of trust in communities. It's an issue that I don't think has been touched on that much so far. So, obviously a few years ago we had, at a senior level of Police Scotland, an acknowledgement that discrimination, racism and sexism were an issue in Police Scotland. And so obviously building trust with communities when you've got those kinds of issues, I assume, is a challenge and a barrier. And I just wanted to ask the panel if there's examples of good practice that are going on in those spaces to overcome those challenges, when we're thinking about the diversity of communities across Scotland?

LA: We'll take a second point and then we'll take answers from the panel.

KH: Hi, thanks very much. Kirsten Horsburgh, Scottish Drugs Forum. There's been a couple of mentions of the drug strategy and drug harm prevention within Police Scotland. And I've been on the drugs strategy board for a number of iterations now with different ACCs leading that process. And whilst it's a good structure, it does feel that it gets prioritised based on who the ACC is at the time, and that sometimes that can get dropped down the agenda. And it could actually be quite a powerful force for movement in a positive way.

I think in terms of a barrier, there's always going to be differences in visions between partner organisations and police, while people who use drugs are continuing to be criminalised. So, there's always going to be that balance between enforcement and public health or support for people who use substances. But I do think something that we're not good at is recognising how some of the enforcement activity actually increases the risks for people who use drugs, and how that's at the point where we need to be better connected with some of the partner organisations.

I think there are also issues with, a few years ago there was a major change in policy where we applied recorded police warnings to all substances, regardless of classification. But there's no data to support how that policy is being delivered, what that looks like in practice, and how that's affecting people differently depending on what location they're at in Scotland. Because what we hear from people who use substances is that they can get a very different response if they're caught with substances in Glasgow than they are in the Borders, so there's variations there.

So, my question is the vision and the values and everything at the higher levels in Police Scotland around drugs policy are really supportive of bringing in that public health approach. I think the naloxone programme has really helped with some of the shaping of that. But what doesn't happen is that voice, vision, values getting down to people who are actually working on the frontline. So, when local areas are introducing things like partnership activity to refer people into services that can look like people being held up against a wall and searched and then being referred on to services. So, how do we get better at improving the dialogue that happens at drug strategy board level and at senior level down to the people who are actually on the interface with people who are using substances? Thank you.

LA: Any reflections?

AS: Very good question. So, one size doesn't fit all. And you're absolutely right, how we police the Scottish Borders is very different to how we police Glasgow and the East End of Glasgow and the West End of Glasgow. And commanders will tell you that they're held to account by 32 scrutiny panels, and so the priorities in different areas will have a different focus. I would probably say, to a point, it's not about us being able to cascade down our values approach we would want to take. Our approach is to be much more empowering and let the commanders focus on what might be a priority in the area. And that will massively vary. I think there's more we will need to do. I think the challenges around prison population and the throughput in the criminal justice system needs dramatic reform. We're only one part player in that system.

I think, and the Chief posted this at the forum last week, and the Chief quoted it in front of the Criminal Justice Committee, what does a diversionary programme maybe cost, a couple of thousand pounds versus somebody in prison for a year is £47,000, £48,000? So, I think there's a lot for us to do in Scotland around diversionary activities and other means than just trying to push people into a prison holding area. So, I think there's a balance to be done. But it is tricky in an organisation our size. But we don't aspire to have a single approach for 32 local authority areas, but allow commanders and local area partners to drive that in that space.

LA: Any further comments on that question?

CN: I'm going to touch on both of them actually. A diversion against prosecution was the first report I published when I came into this role. The investment at that time was 4,500 cases a year taken through diversionary routes across Scotland. I think we need to be nearer 20,000 cases a year taken through those routes rather than putting people on the path to prison. After prison, it's a one-way street; the amount coming back from that. I'd rather see people getting treatment, getting early intervention and finding ways to stop their behaviours. And the work you did in Sacro (TH) and the work we did with you when I was commander in Edinburgh about trying to disrupt that pattern of people getting a three-month sentence, then a nine-month

sentence, and then whatever else, because they were reliant on it, coming out stealing to get more drugs, and it was a never-ending pattern. Some of what we did, we were getting 50 per cent of people that we brought through and sort of catch them when they came out of prison with a soft landing type approach with a Sacro worker or a police constable from Edinburgh, to try and stop them from getting further into this pattern of behaviour. A 50 per cent success rate in the first two years. We thought it was brilliant. Small numbers, but if you can get into that sort of cycle you can start to see those things turn round rather than escalation every time.

Touching on EDI, I think it was brave of Iain Livingstone, who was Chief Constable, to say that the organisation was institutionally sexist and discriminatory and racist. I think recognising the problems is the first step to taking action to solve them. The question I often ask is, when do you know that you're not? I don't know that's been answered. What we've seen in the last three years is a significant effort to make sure policies are appropriate, to make sure that people are treated fairly, to move the organisation forward. Having an ACC running that whole portfolio I think is a strong step. I'd love to see the rest of the UK following suit and taking as positive action as Police Scotland have. But it's not solved yet, but I think it's good progress.

AS: Can I make a comment on the last bit of the question? I agree exactly with what Craig has said - we're frequently involved in a number of conferences across the UK and the work that we're doing to tackle culture and discrimination is way ahead of any other force in the UK. And there are many, many organisations in the UK could do with making a statement about discrimination and misogyny etcetera. So, we are doing a lot. I think we're committed in that space, again I keep pointing to Joanne because she's in that space as well, in the Policing Together space it's massively, massively important.

On a positive note, and when do we think we're getting there, well one of the things we're doing is asking our staff, so we now do an annual staff survey. On the two staff surveys that we've done, we've had over 21,000 responses in two surveys, so half the workforce are replying. And the one part of the survey which is better than any other section in the survey is culture. And I wouldn't say it's sitting glowing at 99 per cent, but it's improving. So, I think we are committed in that space.

I think the challenge for us is because that statement has been made is that the court of public opinion could be, this is a dreadful organisation, Scotland taken to task for it. I don't think that is the case; I think it's a bolder position. If you recognise some of the challenges you've got, you've got a better chance of tackling that.

But again, back to the staff survey, it's always good to ask people what they think. We've got a whole section on culture, on bullying, on harassment, on discrimination, taking their feedback, 22,000 responses of sort of qualitative

test responses, so gives us something to work on. To Craig's point who knows when we'll get there but we're committed in that space.

LA: Did you want to come in, Tom?

TH: So, a number of us in this room are directly involved with a general oversight group as well as others, and there's a huge amount of advancement made since this started and that statement was made. It's factually correct, if you actually went through what brought it about. But you could apply that criteria to most organisations and you would come back to the same position. It is just seen by some as too big a step to take for so many, it's about fear more than anything.

One of the biggest - you really can't shift the dial without the data. And that was a real deficit at the start of this. And we now have a cultural dashboard that is absolutely UK leading in terms of, you can cut the data every way you could ever think. We've got a recent new board member who's coming from policing in England and Wales, he saw it last week for the first time, and he was just blown away when he saw what was there in terms of the data and what's available to us.

But we're learning all the time. There was one case of misogyny, outrageous misogyny, and I spoke to the victim and I said, as a man it's really difficult for me to listen to this. So I was learning. She says to me, why are you finding it difficult? She said, one man did this to me and he was easy to deal with, six women then harmed me with how they responded on behalf of the organisation. So, this idea misogyny is just a male issue is... I'm telling you that to show how I've learned. If we're not willing to be open and honest about how we feel ourselves, we'll never shift that dial. And that's why I told you that story.

LA: Joanne has been patiently waiting and I'm sure has something to say on both of these topics, and then Amanda next.

JMc: I do. Joanne McEwan, Policing Together. And I've been listening with so much interest because I have drug harm prevention and also the Policing Together strategy as part of my portfolio. I just I guess wanted to start with the Sir Iain's statement. I agree, I think it was an enabler rather than a barrier because, first of all, it put us in a position of having some really challenging conversations internally and with our partners, and I think that's a really good starting point. It wasn't our starting point, the strategy had been in place before that, but it really gave effect to further conversation.

I was going to mention the culture dashboard, antiracism training, community advisors, community relationship specialists, and they have been so important as we enter into a really difficult political space. And the point that I wanted to make is when we've been talking about wellbeing today we have to talk about wellbeing for all our communities, and diverse communities. And I think that is why is so important. The IPAC I wanted to

mention as well, the Independent [Policing] Advisory Council. So, I think it's been an enabler in that regard.

On drug harm, Kirsten I think what you've mentioned there we've talked about it many times and the recent inspection pulled that out for us really clearly about what we understand public health to be at a strategic level versus that very front end. And we've listened to that in terms of setting out a policy position. And again, I think that is going to cause us to have, and the Dep. will look forward to this, some real conversations about what is our policy position, and making that clear. And that will flow through our implementation plan.

I did also want to touch on data. We've introduced an AI data belt that allows us to share information on drug related harms effectively, quickly with partners. The barrier I would say, and again we've discussed many times, is so what happens after that. And that's what comes up time and again for officers in local policing. So, where are the services that effectively respond to that? And that's a real challenge for us.

I just wanted to finish by saying something else that I think has been both a challenge and an enabler. The Dep. mentioned a rights-based approach, there's incorporation of rights, UNCRC, a human rights approach. And we see the Scottish Government looking at building on that with the social and cultural rights. Now, I think there is a challenge for us in there around scope, where we begin and where we end. But I do think that in giving greater effect to people's human rights we are naturally entering into a space of wellbeing. So it certainly does have some benefits as well.

AC: Amanda Coulthard, SPA. I guess I just wanted to add a bit of detail which I think is useful for anyone in the room who's interested in the discussion around institutional discrimination. So, I think you're absolutely right, Craig, we didn't necessarily know what the baseline was when the announcement was made, and we still don't fully understand what success would look like in terms of saying that is no longer the position in Scotland. We have tried really hard to understand that though. So, the responsive research fund work that we did on institutional discrimination was about saying what does it look like elsewhere, who's working on this, what can we learn from other areas. And I guess the single message from that was there's not much out there for us to learn from, so we are kind of leading the way in terms of what's happening in policing in Scotland.

And I'm delighted that Joanne mentioned the IPAC. I would just flag that even before IPAC we had NISAG, we had the National Independent Strategic Advisory Group, so way before there was an announcement about discrimination in policing in Scotland there was an approach to ensuring that experts across the EDI landscape were informing the practice of policing in Scotland. And I don't think we can forget how important that was.

- LA: [Temporary loss of sound] And can I ask about any initiatives in Police Scotland that are positively contributing to wellbeing? I'll go to you first, Alan.
- AS: I don't have that detail at my fingertips. But I think hopefully you've taken from the conversation this far that we are committed in this space, even despite a challenging fiscal position we will stay, we will stick with [...] local initiatives. That's what's at the heart what we're trying to encourage this from commanders and area commands to try and progress in their own areas that need meets the needs of their area.
- LA: Thanks. And there are some examples drawn out in the pre-read. It's really just to present any additional comments.
- TH: One area that I think we should shout out from the roof is Police Scotland playing its role as a global citizen. And the work that Police Scotland is doing supporting Malawi, Zambia and the Falkland Islands, in the Caribbean, violence against women and girls in Malawi in Africa and the support there is absolutely exemplary. They are the go-to organisation in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Naturally they would come to Scotland for that type of intervention. So, I don't think we call that out enough. And that's an area of activity to be commended.
- LA: Craig, have you got anything to add?
- CN: We can talk about these initiatives all day and I think the frustration I have is all the good work that's done by Police Scotland is not followed through by their partners. I think Amanda and I were talking about this last week, about mental health issues, how do we get the Scottish Government to start talking about before you ring 101, phone 111 when you have a mental health crisis. It's health, so why don't you ring a health number rather than a police number? It's things like that. Drug driving for example, where's the public health campaign about don't drive your car when you've taken cocaine? Police Scotland has now got a rolling out programme of enhanced drug testing by the side of the road. All of these things are really good but, as Alan knows, very expensive – choose my language carefully – very expensive. The rest of the estate of public service Scotland needs to step into that space and say, what's our part in this, where is the public health campaign. When we thought about this stuff two or three years ago, we went to the Netherlands, they have a really, really strong public health message about having a safe driver, it's called Be the BOB, Bob is the safe driver, Bob can be male or female. So, all of these things are being clever and innovative, but build on good enforcement activities, build on good public health activity across the public space.
- LA: Jimmy is there anything you'd like to add? I know you've mentioned some initiatives before, but is there anything you'd like to add about positive initiatives?

JP: Yes, just a couple of things. The first is, and I'm not just saying this because of the panel that I'm on with, and I've said this to friends in the room, other friends, I've been really delighted and enthused with the leadership within Police Scotland and how enabling every single senior leader is and wishes to be in terms of just getting the right things to happen. So, a shout out to the leadership because that creates the conditions.

But specifically, a good chance to focus on G Division [Police Scotland Greater Glasgow Division]. First of all, I should say before I do that, every division we've ever gone to and said, 'would you like to work together or can we partner on this or can we have an exploratory conversation?' Every division has been supportive, which I've always welcomed. And it's led to innovative work taking place or a deep dive on a certain issue happening. But Will Linden, who was speaking earlier about the past and the early days, 20 years ago and from then, the history, he's been instrumental in setting up street guardians in G Division, which is part of the Common Ground work, which is a collaborative with a bunch of charities, but us and Police Scotland at the heart of it as well. And G Division has been instrumental in enabling that and helping make sure it's connected to data and that we're in the right areas that we're using the street guardians' work. Which is based on capable guardianship, it's based on contextual safeguarding, it's having volunteers and paid workers on the four corners of Glasgow and in and around the St. Enoch Centre, making sure we're signposting to safety and keeping people safe at times where otherwise disorder would happen. I'm not sure how effective that would be if Police Scotland and the VRU didn't help to shape some of that; but the Common Ground group was so welcoming of us helping to be a part of that that it's been instrumental.

There's so much more I could say, but I think underpinning all of this, humble leadership, the willingness to share and be open, willingness to reflect on how well you are doing and where we could do things better. And again, that point about trust that has been picked up on by a couple of those in the audience. I think all of these things are really crucial underpinnings.

LA: Thank you very much. Andy?

AT: Andy Tatnell. I just wanted to flag up a really good example that Inga and others in the room were involved in a very brief evaluation of, and that was a project in Wallacetown in Ayrshire which the VRU were involved in. For me that was probably such a good example of the ambitions of Christie. And there was a lot of evidence there around cross-organisational working that was making a real impact to the safety and the wellbeing of people in that very deprived community. So, I'd just like to wave the flag for that one as well. I can see some others nodding who are aware of it.

LA: In the interests of time, I have two questions, but they're both about looking towards the future so I think I'll ask them together. The questions were looking ahead to 2030 and beyond what would be the key features of a

system that consistently delivers safety and prevention through a wellbeing lens?

The second question, which is connected, is about what shifts would be needed across the whole public service system to make a genuinely public health and preventative approach to community wellbeing? I'm asking them both at the same time in the interest of time, but also because they're connected. And I think it builds on some of the things we discussed earlier. I'll go to maybe Tom first?

TH: So, in terms of looking ahead there's a danger today that we started to say, Christie's gone, it's past, but the principles of Christie are still really, really important and we've got to hold on to that. That was a light bulb moment for me.

But going forwards, in terms of where do we need to go? And we've got a journey to go yet, is around reflective practice so that we understand and learn to become a learning organisation. We've got a journey to go on that. And the big shift for me is moving towards outcome-based measurement of performance. This is fundamental in matching delivery to need.

LA: Thank you very much. Jimmy, I'll come to you next?

JP: Yeah, couldn't echo that more. The other thing I would say is contextual safeguarding I think is something that Scotland is going to embrace in the coming years, the idea that we take a different approach to risk that acknowledges the risk of doing something, not just the risk of not doing something or intervening. And actually, where we can take really creative solutions with others that are involved as part of that. I mentioned the street guardians earlier; plenty of examples from care system reform where we're really thinking about safety and the holistic nature of it. So, that's the one thing that I would add.

LA: Thank you very much. Craig, I'll maybe come to you next on either of those questions or both?

CN: I suppose a couple of things running through my mind. One of them is designing your systems to get the outcome you want. I'll use a small example. Next Tuesday, a week tomorrow, we'll publish a report jointly with the prosecution inspectorate on citations. It's a very simple process you would think of getting someone to attend court when they have been a witness to a crime. There are so many different blockages in the system and there are so many different bits of the system that don't join up because they're on different IT platforms, they're owned by different organisations, and some of the organisations don't have any inspectorate body like this, so they don't really respond to criticism particularly well. A witness will very often not realise that they have to give evidence in court when they give a statement to a police officer. That's because the statement form is not designed to say in giving this statement you are A, telling the truth, and

you're going to sign here about it, and B, you are expected to be a witness at some point in the future.

So, going back to first principles, you design your system to get the outcome you want. And we'll make recommendations on that next week. That happens in England, that's one of the brilliant things, it's called an MG11, which is the statement form in England, every page you sign, every page says, I expect to be a witness at some point, so they're expecting it. Whereas in Scotland you've got people going, 'you want me to do what, go to court. Oh yeah, okay right, I'll attend court'. Then oh, it's cancelled today, it's cancelled the next time and the next time; and on average five and a half times the witness will attend court before they either give evidence or you get the conclusion of the trial. That is a wasted effort on the part of Scotland. So, design your systems to give the outcomes that you want. And I know that's really difficult. It's not just a policing system, it's a whole justice system. And we're saying that to governments, to Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service and Police Scotland, you need to do better at that. And it's simple things, they need to make it electronic, accept technology.

The final thing for me is about people within the service; I've had really close first-hand experience over the last six months, my daughter's boyfriend has joined the police and he's gone through Tulliallan, he's been spoken to by Alan, he's been spoken to by the Chief Constable and he's had a great experience. And capturing that enthusiasm and that energy and that ability and giving them the right training and the right skillset and the right tools is where I see there is a real opportunity for Police Scotland in the next five years to do that, to keep them enthused. It's not easy but focusing on the individuals and giving them what they need, whether that's training, kit or otherwise, will sustain the organisation going forwards.

LA: So I'd like to bring in the audience now at this point in terms of looking forward, what the key features of systems should be that delivers prevention, community wellbeing, public health? And what shifts might be needed across the whole public services system? I know earlier we talked about budgets, we talked about siloes, we talked about public service reform. Is there anything we haven't mentioned or any points people want to reiterate? I'm particularly looking at people who haven't had a chance to come in yet to contribute.

WL: Hi, Will Linden, Violence Reduction Unit. I suppose for me is, if we're looking forward the next five years, and listening to conversations both this morning and this afternoon, is what do we see the role of Police Scotland being in that over the next five years? Because we've obviously talked about the budget cuts that we're facing just now and the challenges that that's going to face, and that's not going to go away any time soon. We need to look at actually what our responsibilities are, what we do. So, we can talk about outcomes and what we're trying to achieve, and that's great, and we can have an outcome framework that's set about reducing x, y and z and improving the health of a nation and making sure we're all happy and

we're all economically viable and all of that. But actually, where does Police Scotland sit in this?

And if we can decide where we sit on this, because the legislation is pretty loose; as long as we're all agreed in terms of what it is we can actually decide for ourselves. Are we resourced to do that? Do we have the right workforce arrangements? And actually, do we have enough staff? Or if we're going to shrink a role and say we're only going to concentrate on x, y and z, do we have too many staff, do we have too many police officers? And where do we need to reinvest that money?

GR: Gethin Rees, totally inspired by that very powerful, passionate speech there. I just thought that the point that follows up and the point I was trying to get to earlier, is there are gaps. They're talking about creating systems that operate the way you want them to. The current systems are creating gaps and that's the issue that there are gaps that we can all point to that we've discussed throughout today. So, how, in that new imaginary of how we think about policing's role or the public sector's role, to understand where the gaps are that are being produced by current practice and think about and have those tough conversations about okay, whose responsibility is the person with a mental health crisis who's also substance abusing, who's also got this, that and the other on top. Because they are the people that are falling through these gaps that we've been pointing to. *[Brief loss of sound]*

AS: I agree with what Will said. But I think we're pretty clear, it's about less crime, it's about safer communities and it's about better supported victims. And in amongst all that something about the workforce for us, which is much more internally focused. So, we're really, really clear, the two challenges we've got is a lot of the activity we're involved in is distracting or taking us away from doing some of those things. And what we're going to have to guard hard against, particularly with, this is probably the first year where we've got a real hole in the budget and the prospect of the next few years is equally negative. So, Joanne spoke about we've got community relationship specialists, she spoke about youth workers, Jimmy spoke about campus officers. The real danger for us is they could, in the year ahead, be perceived as a nice to have, a nice to do. I think, I go back to being a commander and in Paisley and Renfrew at the time, I had a campus officer in every single school. I didn't have to fund it; I got funded for it, but it was a commitment we did. They don't exist anymore.

So, we will try and guard against undoing all of that stuff. But I think we need more in terms of better collaboration. Craig's point is relevant to this. The point of us giving excellent service to a victim of a crime when the next year they spend going in and out of the court system because the case is never heard. We've got so many people wanted on warrant that we just can't service that. And I'm not to be critical of people wanted on warrant, but people are living chaotic lives, what are we doing saying, 'by the way, be in court tomorrow.' How do we track people to get them in court? How

do we get part-heard cases where are putting the victim forward? It's a good example, because that, we can't do that.

KS: Fiona McHardy and I have been, on another project doing work with frontline services, homelessness services and services that support employability. So, it's just a reflection that in both those services people talked about how they felt like, they're the service of last resort. So, people are coming to them and they're not ready for employment, or there isn't housing available for them, but they've got so many different issues that they feel like they need to offer a service. I guess I also hear that that's what the police are saying in some way. So, it just feels like a bigger systemic problem that we've got people who have got multiple needs and yet our services are not set up to support people when they've got those multiple needs. It was just a bit of a reflection. I don't think it is an issue that's only impacting the police; we're hearing it across different services.

FMc: The other thing I was going to pick up on, there was a term in an Audit Scotland report that they did with the Royal Society Edinburgh, where they talked about there was a problem with accountability spaghetti. And when you go very much into the heart of working across different services, as Kat and I have been doing, you absolutely hear that. And one of the questions we've been asked in some of the work we've been doing is what do you think we should stop doing? And people literally freeze when you ask them that. So, with that in mind I'd like to ask you, is there a thing that you think we should stop doing to help us do the things that we need to be doing in terms of moving upstream and thinking about prevention differently? Because I think that is sometimes the elephant in the room question that people don't want to talk about.

TH: I throw it back slightly in the sense of individuals have a part to play in this as well. I use the example of the demand on police resources around distress – I don't want to say mental ill health because it's not all about mental ill health, it's distress that invariably presents – and you hear time and time again, police going in to accident and emergency, no can't take them just now, they've had a drink or whatever, and you have to sit there. You can go into the Royal Infirmary's reception any night and you'll find two or three cars there, that will be crewed up. That will be all across the UK, they've been checked into reception and the police will then sit with them. Well, this is risk, if you were to change that scenario that the police said, 'right you've got their details, they're in a place of safety now, cheerio.' Now, the vast majority of those people, nothing will ever happen, no further harm, they're sat there having a conversation; you'll occasionally get someone who will self-harm or something like that in that whole system. Now, those individuals quite frankly are likely to self-harm anyway. There's something about that, we need to be honest about, because while those three cars are in there, there's a poor woman in Maryhill getting battered up and down her house and there's no car to go. That's a potential, that's a reality. And I think as a public sector, we need to be honest to people and say to that individual in distress, you're in a place of safety, that individual there, you can go up there at any time, if you decide to leave here that's your decision now. And

now that's a huge shift. It might come across as lack of compassion and all the rest of it, but I have got loads of compassion for that woman up in Maryhill in that house, I've got loads of compassion for that person, but individuals have choices to make as well even in a health setting. And I don't think we're honest enough about that conversation.

AS: One of the first questions that's one our Chief Officer asked was what we know we can do and what are we going to do differently. And one of the things that we do need to do is shift the culture. Policing in Scotland is pretty risk averse, and our objective is, let's provide a platinum service. Some people will always think that would mean police events really, really efficiently and effectively and probably over resource it. I've talked about gold plated events. We did a couple of events in the weekend and we're a bit more risk focused and we reduced the number. The benefit of reducing the number is we'll need officers in communities that are there to serve. But we really will have to be bolder.

I agree with Tom around hospitals. And if it was only three cars, I'd be quite relieved. But I could take you at Queen Elizabeth's later and there'd be maybe 12 cars. But actually, the cops have got Section 32 at the heart of what they're doing; they want to ensure those individuals get the support and get the service. But we will have to shift the dial and there'll be less officers and less staff, there will be consequences in what we can and can't do.

TH: But even within that dynamic risk assessment there will be some people will say we can't leave, and we understand that, but we know there are so many that we're babysitting them just so they can feel better.

LA: I'm just going to bring Jimmy in because he's got his hand up, and then you Craig. And I think I missed Adam earlier, he wanted to speak.

JP: Thanks, Liz. A couple of things. I'm not doubting that people have individual responsibility, but I'm always taken by the scope of influence we have in terms of the services we can provide or the difference we can make, and I'm always struck by wanting that to be my driver. And at times, we've spoken about this great public sector strain, what can we not do, well what other things could we initiate that aren't us but that make a difference and the evidence suggests will work. One of the things that we had help set up was Violence Anonymous. So, it follows the same 12 steps as AA or NA. It was developed online in the US during COVID, but Scotland has two, nearly three cohorts up and running, the world's first in-person cohorts. And early feedback from some of the participants is hugely positive, that peer-to-peer support when you're going to struggle to get a mental health appointment in a couple of months or even within the next six months, if you like, with someone you can trust and have consistency. That peer-to-peer support, the evidence based behind the 12 steps and everything else. So, I'm always keen to focus on what we can do, where the evidence leads us that might also help to reduce strain on systems. Thank you.

LA: Adam? And the final thing will be anything that we've missed, anything to add?

AL: Adam Lloyd, Scottish Ambulance Service. I guess what I'm hearing and what I wrote down is just some insight I'm hearing today is probably hearing, really candidly, from the breadth of the police service around that feeling that Police Scotland is really stretched in who it's responsible for and where that responsibility is going. And it feels very analogous I'm sure to essentially in the public sector. So, ten years ago in the ambulance service, though I wasn't in the ambulance service ten years ago, is we used to just go to somebody's house and we think, if there's nothing wrong with you, stay at home, and if you're anything above that, we're going to take you to the hospital. And now we'd have loads of paramedics who work in GP practices. Now we have mental health cars that are going out, we have high intensity user teams, we have specialist teams who can deal with neonates. And I think it feels very mirrored, that it sounds very noble and very good, but in our big strategies we say, well we've just added one more word, wellbeing, Section 32. In our strategy we add in equivalent terms, preventative and wellbeing. And all of a sudden, when we add in these elements, we then stretch our workload even more.

And I guess I'm just thinking out loud, Craig, you said something about what could a future look like in terms of if we had a different type of emergency service where the police can do the policing and that's okay, the police don't have to be responsible for wellbeing. That's not breaking the social contract that the police has with everybody; it's saying the police are well-trained, excellent officers, and maybe that can be the boundaries of their care. And maybe the ambulance service we don't have to start to work in GP practices and become chronic disease specialists; maybe there is another type of public service delivery that we all generate together.

So, I'm probably just thinking out loud that whether we're pushed to it for financial reasons, or there's a new political power, or there's a new Chief Constable or chief execs, often we get these flashpoints of change, and it feels like maybe we're all feeling like, if we are brave enough, we can create the change within ourselves rather than it being forced on us.

LA: Good point. Craig, you wanted to come in?

CN: No, the moment has gone.

LA: Okay. I'll just open up to either the panel or the floor, audience participants, anything that we haven't covered that is important to our understanding of the intersection between policing and community wellbeing in Scotland? Anything final? I know there are some people who haven't spoken yet, if there's anyone who wants to come in and share any final reflections we have a couple more minutes. That either means everyone's desperate to go and catch their train or we've covered everything beautifully, so let's hope it's the latter.

I think at this point I would just ask you to thank both the team who's organised this, so Pam and Andy and Ruth who have helped myself and Kat with organising today. But also importantly to thank the panel this afternoon for their contribution. But also importantly all of you for being participants as well. Kat, any final follow-up points about the evaluation form or how we'll be in touch later?

KS: Yes. Three quick things I want to say. The QR code is up on the end and I will put it on the screen in a second as well. That's just if you have additional points that you didn't want to share in the room today or you didn't have time to come in on a certain point the QR code will take you to a form that asks you similar questions. That's the first thing.

The second thing is there's an evaluation form, a very short form in paper, hard copy form on your chairs and we would really appreciate if you could fill it out just so that we can take your feedback on board in planning any future events.

And then the final thing is just to recap what we're doing with the transcript. So, after today the audio recording of the discussions today will be professionally transcribed. It will then come back to us as a team and we will check it for accuracy. We'll then send it out to everybody whose voice was captured. At that point it's an in-confidence document just for the people whose voices are captured to check that you're happy with how what you've said has been captured on the document. And you'll have three weeks to check it. It is therefore really important that we have an email address that works for you. So, if you're either going to be away for three weeks from the end of March or you've given us an email address that you don't check that often or something like that please let us know so that we've got an easy way of contacting you. After that, after everybody has had a chance to check it, the final approved version will go up on the University of Strathclyde web pages to be used as the resource for other people.

So, thank you once again and safe home everyone.

LA: We have now conducted 18 interviews, so that was the amount we were hoping to get. But if there was anything you haven't had a chance to say today pop it on the form. Or if you or someone you would like to recommend who you think would be good for us to speak to and do an interview with, we can consider that and whether we can resource that. So, if you've got further suggestions of people we should really speak to then please let us know sooner rather than later.

[END OF WITNESS SEMINAR TRANSCRIPT]

## References

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