



<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Policing Performance Committee</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>6 December 2023</b>
<b>Location</b>	<b>Video Conference</b>
<b>Title of Paper</b>	<b>SVRU Vision and Direction</b>
<b>Presented By</b>	<b>ACC David Duncan</b>
<b>Recommendation to Members</b>	<b>For Discussion</b>
<b>Appendix Attached</b>	<b>Yes –</b> <b>Appendix A: Head of SVRU Blog: Vision for the SVRU</b>

**PURPOSE**

To share the emerging vision of the newly appointed Head of the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit (SVRU).

Members are invited to discuss the content of this paper.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Jimmy Paul (JP) was appointed Head of the SVRU in September 2023, following a ten-month gap between Directors.
- 1.2 He has a background in health and social care management roles, working in the looked after children sector at CELCIS and as a co-chair at the independent care review (which produced The Promise) and also as the director of a charity working in the new economy sector.
- 1.3 JP has been internationally recognised for his values-based leadership by the World Economic Forum and the British Council. He has voluntary experience working as a trustee of a number of children's charities. He is also open about his lived experience of state care and growing up in a community where violence was the norm.

## **2. Vision for the SVRU**

- 2.1 The SVRU is a key element in Police Scotland's a key element of violence prevention approach. It is an internationally recognised brand that has been at the forefront of violence reduction. This provides an excellent foundation to build upon but there is a need to refresh and refocus our activity. There is a continued need for violence reduction that is reflective of the evolving challenges we face today. This starts with improving our governance and rebuilding our relationships with external partners.
- 2.2 An early 'stocktake' undertaken by JP has identified that complex governance structures may have been a barrier to effective collaboration with external partners and there is scope to be more innovative and bolder in developing new approaches.
- 2.3 In the coming months the SVRU will prepare a revised business plan for the new financial year which will be underpinned by the Scottish Violence Prevention Framework.
- 2.4 JP is committed to ensuring that the SVRU is a highly functioning unit which is primed to deliver leading-edge projects, working across the primary, secondary and tertiary prevention spectrum. It will continue to use a public health approach and be led by data to ensure it is focussed on working on those areas with greatest need that will address demand on services and achieve better outcomes for individuals.

- 2.5 This revised focus includes how the SVRU operates internally; ensuring our governance is clear, being intentional with our commitments and working towards a shared vision, we are connecting our work across Police Scotland and we liaise proactively with SPA, Police Scotland and Scottish Government.
- 2.6 The SVRU will play its part wholeheartedly to realise The Promise; acknowledging that those in and on the edges of Scotland's 'care system' have often experienced harsh traumas and are sadly an over criminalised group. There is also an issue around restraint of those in state care - particularly in residential and secure care settings - and the impact of exclusions.
- 2.7 The SVRU will work to a national remit, acknowledging that violence occurs across Scotland and in different forms (gang violence, gender-based violence, self-violence, etc). The SVRU will:
- radically collaborate with partner organisations to ensure value for money and maximised impact, including the many charities that are working towards the same mission.
  - value lived experiences and will look to convene an advisory board of people with a range of lived experiences which guides our vision and delivery plan.
  - explore how to host conversations about positive masculinity across Scotland and undertake work (possibly with other VRUs) around the optimal framing of violence reduction.
- 2.8 The SVRU will work closely and proactively with Police Scotland and Scottish Government to ensure it can fulfil the above vision.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 There are no financial implications in this report.

### **4. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no personnel implications in this report.

### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications in this report.

### **6. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no reputational implications in this report.

**7. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no social implications in this report.

**8. COMMUNITY IMPACT**

8.1 There are no community implications in this report.

**9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no equality implications in this report.

**10. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are no environmental implications in this report.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are invited to discuss the content of this paper.

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**Headline - We all need to pull together as never before to make progress in reducing violence.**

**Subdeck - In September 2023, Jimmy Paul was appointed as the new [Head of the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit](#). In this blog, he sets out the challenges that lie ahead for the country and his priorities to help create a safer Scotland for all.**

**Author by Jimmy Paul**

As we continue to grapple with impact of the pandemic and the cost of living crisis on communities across Scotland, as a nation we are faced with the following questions: will levels of violence increase over the coming years? What impact will the pandemic and the cost of living crisis have on violence trends? Will rapidly developing technology effect how violence is perpetrated? These are just some of the questions it is now my job to seek answers to as the new Head of the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit (SVRU) as we set out to ensure that Scotland is the safest country to live in.

I'm joining a unit which is a world-leader in [public health](#) policing, a model now being followed across the UK and in countries around the globe. Scotland's success in dramatically reducing violence from its peak in 2005 has driven interest from police forces and governments across the world. But if you treat violence as a disease, as the public health model does, then you know it is constantly adapting – and there is simply no place for complacency in the work of violence reduction.

Like most other countries, Scotland faces significant challenges. While [youth offending has radically reduced](#) over the last twenty years, young people are dealing with new and serious issues. Due to the pandemic, a whole generation of children missed out on crucial years of education, socialisation and connection. The cost of living crisis came at a time when some [24% of Scotland's children](#) were already living in relative poverty. And while social media offers young people new opportunities, it also means even home isn't always a safe place with bullying and cybercrime.

Understanding the problem is crucial, but it's the SVRU's job to also come up with solutions. We start from a strong place, with a [strategy for the years ahead](#) and our objectives mapped out in the Scottish Government's [Violence Prevention Framework](#). I bring to that my own commitment to the objectives of [The Promise](#), 'to make sure that Scotland's children and young people will grow up loved, safe and respected', which the SVRU will wholeheartedly play its part to deliver as part of the scaffolding of support available to young people with care experience. In my previous role as a co-chair at the Independent Care Review, I found it distressing to see that, due to being over-criminalised for behaviour that is treated differently by authorities when growing up in a care setting, so many young care experienced people end up in the [justice system](#). This doesn't need to happen. This shouldn't happen. Through targeted initiatives, the SVRU will play its part to make The Promise a reality: namely setting out to reduce the percentage of the prison population with care experience over the next seven years. This means that more of our children and young people in Scotland will grow up to live healthy, happy lives - and thrive now and in the future

Core to achieving this goal, and indeed all the other objectives of the SVRU, is ensuring that we share power with those with lived experience of violence, so their voices are really listened to and acted on. Those with lived experience of violence hold unique insights, and therefore so many of the solutions to reducing it. So, the SVRU will set-up an Advisory Board of people who have lived

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experience of a range of issues to address the underlying risk factors of violence and to offer us high level support. The Advisory Board will work with us to challenge and guide every aspect of what we do.

I will also ensure we live up to our national remit and engage with communities across Scotland. Violence lives in every city and village across the country, so we must ensure our reach stretches to where it is needed most, and we will be sure include communities who are too often forgotten or neglected by services.

Previously, I worked on building a wellbeing economy for Scotland. The SVRU will advocate for big picture change in our economy that will make it much easier for people to live healthy, safe and happy lives. We know that more equal societies, where individuals and communities feel connected and have a sense of belonging, are less likely to experience the causes of violence.

None of this will be possible without radical collaboration. Amidst spending restrictions across the public sector, we have to pull together as never before to ensure Scotland continues to make progress in reducing violence. I invite you all to join me on this journey and play your part to make Scotland the safest place to live: a mission which can, and must, become a reality.

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