A NEW MODE OF PROTECTION

Redesigning policing and public safety for the 21st century

THE POLICE FOUNDATION

The UK's policing think tank

Chaired by Sir Michael Barber, commissioned and conducted by the Police Foundation

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A NEW MODE OF PROTECTION

REDESIGNING POLICING AND PUBLIC SAFETY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

THE FINAL REPORT OF THE
STRATEGIC REVIEW OF POLICING
IN ENGLAND AND WALES

MARCH 2022

**About the Strategic Review of Policing
in England and Wales**

Launched by the Police Foundation in September 2019, the Strategic Review of Policing in England and Wales set out to examine how crime, fear of crime and other threats to public safety are changing and assess the ability of the police to meet these challenges, as part of a wider strategic response. This far-reaching independent review, the first of its kind in many years, was chaired by Sir Michael Barber and guided by an Advisory Board of former senior police officers, politicians and leading academics. The overall aim of the Review was to set a long-term strategic vision for English and Welsh policing. This concluding report presents substantial recommendations for a modern police service capable of meeting the challenges of the 21st century.

More information about the Review can be found at:
https://www.policingreview.org.uk

About the Police Foundation

The Police Foundation is the only independent think tank focused exclusively on improving policing and developing knowledge and understanding of policing and crime reduction. Its mission is to generate evidence and develop ideas which deliver better policing and a safer society. It does this by producing trusted, impartial research and by working with the police and their partners to create change.

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FOREWORD

A CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE

"The time is come," Sir Robert Peel argued in the House of Commons in 1828, "when…we may fairly pronounce that the country has outgrown her police institutions…" After a vigorous debate, the House of Commons agreed with him, and the following year the Metropolitan Police was established, ushering in a new era of policing in this country.

That new era was characterised by the development of a distinctly British model of policing, one in which the work of the police depends not primarily on the use of power but on the trust, confidence and cooperation of the public. Sadly, almost two hundred years on, there is a crisis of public confidence in our police institutions.

Policing under pressure

This report finds that the percentage of people who think that the police do a good or excellent job has been falling steadily in recent years. People report that they are less likely than in the recent past to see police officers walking the beat. In London even fewer people say they trust the police and think that the police will treat them fairly. These signs of a deterioration in public confidence are, no doubt, linked in part to recent high-profile cases of police misconduct. However, this report reveals that there are also deeper, more long-standing reasons why our policing model no longer seems able to meet the expectations of the public.

The public aren't alone in losing confidence over recent years. Many police officers have themselves lost confidence. They work hard and desperately want to serve the public to a high standard, but too often feel unable to. This is what I came to understand from my frontline visits where I met dedicated, hardworking police officers who were frustrated at not always being able to match people's expectations.

The impact of austerity between 2010 and 2017 undoubtedly ate into the ability of the police to provide a decent service to the public. Unlike the NHS and schools, the police were not a protected service; over those years, police officer numbers fell from an all-time high of 143,000 to 123,000. One result of this sharp fall was the withdrawal of bobbies on the beat – community policing in the jargon – so that citizens increasingly complained that they rarely saw police officers and felt less safe, even abandoned, as a result. Compounding the problem and leading to deep public frustration is the fact that the police response to many crimes such as burglary had become perfunctory; too often a crime number is issued for insurance purposes but there is no investigation.

In addition, the world around policing is changing dramatically, such that our police institutions are no longer a match for the challenges they face. Globalisation and technology are currently transforming our economy and society as profoundly as the industrial revolution and urbanisation did in Peel's time. Over 40 per cent of all crime is now fraud, most of which is cyber-enabled. Yet we are tackling the crime and disorder of the digital age with an analogue policing approach.

Moreover, the police increasingly find themselves acting as a public service of last resort, picking up the pieces where other social services have failed. Mental health related cases have increased by a quarter in recent years. I accompanied two police officers to a call out related to a potentially violent youth; they knew the case and the youth, they even knew his name. They also knew they would solve the immediate issue but, most disturbingly, they knew the relevant social service would not resolve the underlying problem and that a new call out sooner or later was inevitable.

Similarly missing persons calls are a regular occurrence. Almost half of all young people in care go missing at least once and for some it is much more common. Of course, it is important to track down missing persons but it is striking that the police spend three million investigation hours per year on these cases. That is the equivalent of 1,562 full time officers, all day, every day; incredibly that is more police officer time than we currently allocate to police the whole of North Yorkshire.

The police picking up these cases often go far beyond the call of duty. For example, two officers told me that they returned a missing young man to his care home whereupon the home then asked them whether they could drop him off at his parents' place which was more than 100 miles away; they said the home didn't have the transport available. The police officers took the boy because they wanted to do the right thing by him; but is this really what people pay the police precept for?

Despite the hard work and dedication of police officers and staff, these changes are testing the ability of the police to deliver their core mission and public confidence has been impacted as a result. Having set

out the challenges facing policing, this report calls for root and branch reform to our police service so that it is able to meet the challenges of the future, provide a decent service and secure the confidence of the public.

A plan to improve public safety and modernise policing

We have consulted widely and analysed in depth the available data and research. We have engaged with a brilliant advisory group who brought well-informed and diverse perspectives to bear. Matthew Syed argues that "cognitive diversity" is vital to reaching good decisions – we have had cognitive diversity in spades; others will judge how well we made use of it.

We have examined trends beyond policing which may be relevant and sought to bring a fresh perspective to bear from outside the tramlines of the traditional debates.

Here I will highlight some of our most significant recommendations.

First, public safety depends by no means solely on the police and it would be much better, economically and socially, to prevent crime from happening in the first place than to deal with it after the event. Yet our system is designed to do the latter not the former.

To reverse this state of affairs, we need a radical shift to a more systemic preventative approach. To achieve this we propose a new Crime Prevention Agency, whose central task would be to ensure that crime was significantly reduced through preventive efforts. The law that established the Agency would make it a legal duty for large companies to take the prevention of crime into account in the design of their products and processes. The Agency would have strong regulatory powers to enforce this duty and to intervene in, or fine, companies that neglected it. Given the shocking extent of fraud (and how little of it is ever effectively tackled) the Agency should make a substantial reduction of fraud its central priority.

Second, we need to considerably enhance our capability to tackle cross border and serious and organised crime, so much of which is beyond the grasp of local police forces. Too often those committing fraud and cybercrime believe that they can act with impunity. This is why we propose a major strengthening of the National Crime Agency (NCA). Regional serious and organised crime capabilities should be placed under the control of the NCA, so that their funding is placed on a sound footing and efforts to tackle cross border crime are coordinated by a body with a single priority and focus.

Third, it is vital that we strengthen local policing. All the evidence shows this is the best way to improve the confidence of the public. We argue that police forces should deploy a significant number of their new officers to neighbourhood policing roles, focused on those areas where trust and confidence are least.

Fourth, we need to equip police officers and staff with the tools to do the job. We clearly need more police officers and the current uplift programme which is providing 20,000 more has not come a moment too soon. Implementation is on track; across the country police officers are being recruited and deployed and already making a difference.

But there are major skills gaps that the uplift programme is not currently addressing. There is, for example, a national shortage of almost 7,000 detectives; this is a significant contributory factor to the often, shocking delays in investigating serious crimes such as rape. Specialist skills are required too in relation to, for example, cyber and economic crime. To address these gaps we recommend a pay supplement for detectives, greater use of direct entry schemes and more consistent career pathways for allied police professionals, in areas like financial investigation, data science and digital forensics. Policing needs to attract high quality skilled professionals from other sectors and there should be no second-class treatment for those who want to contribute to policing but do not have a warrant card.

Our police officers and staff also need modern technology to be able to do their work effectively.

Yet police technology in general is woefully inadequate, as police officers and staff are well aware. The evidence is set out in our report; here let me point out just one devasting fact; the Police National Computer, on which we rely daily for critical information about criminal records, stolen vehicles and drivers' licences, is forty-eight years old.

Finally, we would significantly strengthen the strategic centre in our policing system. We propose a new Crime and Policing Strategy Unit within the Home Office that would seek to anticipate trends, identify patterns in crime and crime prevention and ensure that the Home Office was able to be proactive not just reactive.

The College of Policing should be given the task of revolutionising police education to ensure it is dramatically more effective than currently. It should also have powers to ensure that minimum professional standards are followed, that police IT systems are completely interoperable and data is properly shared and that forces are addressing the skills gaps we have identified.

Conclusion

Over recent years, as a result of a number of high-profile scandals, dramatic social, technological and economic changes and the effects of austerity up to 2017, public confidence in the police has declined. Now is the time to take the necessary steps to enable the police to tackle the challenges of the 21st century and to improve the confidence of the public. We can do that by building a public safety system designed to minimise crime (and the harm it does) in the first place and by equipping it to tackle crime successfully if, and when, it does occur.

As a society we should have the confidence to believe we can build a low-crime, low-harm society in which citizens of all backgrounds and perspectives can lead their lives and pursue their aspirations without fear of crime or becoming its victims. The root-and-branch reform agenda we have set out for policing in this report shows how that can be done. What Sir Robert Peel said in 1828 applies again now. If we want to restore public confidence and shift the odds in favour of the law-abiding citizen, we should not hesitate to usher in a new era in policing; **"The time is come…"**

Sir Michael Barber

Chair of the Strategic Review of Policing in England and Wales

8 March 2022

SUMMARY

"The time is come when, from the increase in its population, the enlargement of its resources, and the multiplying development of its energies, we may fairly pronounce that the country has outgrown her police institutions and that the cheapest and safest course will be found in the introduction of a new mode of protection."

Sir Robert Peel, 1828

1. INTRODUCTION

The world around policing is changing as radically as the world in which Sir Robert Peel founded the Metropolitan Police in 1829. It is in that context that the Police Foundation established the Strategic Review of Policing in England and Wales, chaired by Sir Michael Barber. It is the first independent review of policing for many years and is intended to be as influential as the last Royal Commission on the Police in 1962. This final report from the Review is our attempt to describe what kind of police service we will need to address the challenges of the 21st century.

PART I. THE CHALLENGE

2. PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY IN THE 2020s AND 2030s

Traditional crime (all crime except fraud and cybercrime) has fallen by 75 per cent since 1995. However, these traditional forms of crime (burglary, car theft, low level assaults and so on) have been replaced by new forms of crime and harm. These have in turn been generated by three transformations.

The technological revolution

The technological revolution has created, via the internet, a whole new space in which crime and harm take place. This has transformed the composition of crime. For example, in the year to June 2021 53 per cent of all crime affecting people in England and Wales was just fraud and cybercrime. Despite this we have a largely analogue police service in a digital world. Just 0.6 per cent of frauds that are recorded, and just 0.1 per cent of frauds that take place, result in a charge or summons.

Environmental crisis

Human activity is transforming the natural environment in a way that poses new risks to public safety. Global warming is leading to more frequent and more intense extreme weather events such as floods, droughts, storms, heat waves and heavy rainfall. By 2050 climate change will force more than 143 million people in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and Latin America from their homes, with significant consequences for international migration. In the UK climate change is also generating an increase in political protest and the police increasingly find themselves having to manage the public order implications.

Another form of environmental change is the growing risk of global pandemics. Population growth and agricultural intensification increase the risk of viruses transferring from animals to humans. Poverty, increased population density and the ease of global travel also mean that such viruses can spread very rapidly. The experience of the coronavirus pandemic has shown how highly disruptive such events can be, with significant implications for policing and public safety.

Social change

We are living through a period of significant social change, characterised in part by the emergence of more complex social needs. For example, there was a 28 per cent increase in mental health related incidents between 2014 and 2018 across 26 forces. To provide another example, police devote around three million 'investigation hours' per year to missing persons reports, which is the equivalent of 1,562 full time police officers per year or the same number of police officers required to police the whole of North Yorkshire.

In recent years we have also seen growing demands for previously marginalised forms of violence, abuse and exploitation to be taken seriously by the criminal justice system. In particular, there has been increased reporting of male violence and sexual abuse against women and girls. For example, between 2016 and 2021 there was a 50 per cent increase in reported domestic abuse crime. Between 2013 and 2021 there was a 240 per cent increase in the numbers of rapes reported to the police.

Finally, new forms of social division and tension have emerged creating demands on those charged with keeping the peace. The number of protest events has risen steadily over the last decade, going from 83

in 2007 to 280 in 2016 and the number of protests involving confrontational tactics increased from seven in 2000 to 126 in 2019. The number of hate crimes reported to the police in England and Wales rose by 194 per cent between 2012/13 and 2018/19. Terrorism remains a serious threat and one that is made more complex by the rise of so-called 'lone actors'.

Organised crime

Organised crime groups are profiting from each of these transformations, using more sophisticated technology to commit crimes and hide their gains, committing widespread environmental crime and exploiting vulnerable people with complex needs.

Public security

How people experience crime and safety is important. If people feel unsafe then this is likely to have a major impact on their wellbeing. Before the pandemic there was an increase in those who thought crime was one of the biggest issues facing the country.

Fear of becoming a victim of crime is lower than it was in the past but it is not experienced equally. Those on low incomes worry significantly more about crime than those on high incomes, reflecting real differences in their likelihood of becoming a victim. 13 per cent of women have high levels of worry about violent crime, compared to just 4 per cent of men. 22 per cent of Asian people and 21 per cent of Black people report high levels of worry about violent crime, compared to just 7 per cent of White people.

3. POLICE PERFORMANCE

How well is English and Welsh policing adapting to a world reshaped by technological, environmental, and social change? There are worrying signs of a deterioration in the performance of the police service.

Detection rates have almost halved in the last seven years: in the year to March 2021 only 9 per cent of all recorded police crime resulted in a charge or summons, compared to 17 per cent in 2014.

While there are multiple reasons for falling detection rates (for instance more stringent crime recording practices and the impact of austerity), it is worrying that more victims do not wish to proceed with cases, potentially reflecting frustration with lengthy investigations and court delays.

The proportion of crime victims (excluding fraud victims) who were 'very satisfied' with the police response declined from 42 per cent in 2014 to 32 per cent in 2020, while the proportion 'not satisfied' rose from 26 per cent to 34 per cent.

Between 2016 and 2020 the proportion of people who say they have confidence in their local police fell from 79 per cent to 74 per cent and the proportion saying they thought the police did a good or excellent job fell from 63 per cent to 55 per cent.

The time it takes the police to attend a 999 call has also been getting longer, rising by 32 per cent between 2010 and 2018 from nine minutes to 13 minutes on average.

Three challenges

This analysis of the future public safety challenges and recent police performance leads us to the following three conclusions that shape the rest of the report:

- The police face a **capacity challenge**: such is the range and complexity of public safety demand there is no way that the police on their own are able to tackle it.

- The police face a **capability challenge**: it is not just that the police lack sufficient resources to tackle these challenges, but also that the police service lacks many of the capabilities required to do so.

- The police face an **organisational challenge**: the police service needs a different organisational platform so it can deliver the capabilities required to meet the challenges we have described.

PART II. POLICING IN A SYSTEM

There is no feasible strategy that addresses the range, volume and complexity of the public safety challenges of the twenty first century through the work of the police alone. In this part of the report we propose a two-step solution to this challenge. First, we need to design a whole system response to public safety that goes way beyond the work of the police. Second, we need to be much clearer about the role of the police within that system.

4. THE PUBLIC SAFETY SYSTEM

The police should be seen as just one part of a wider societal response to crime and harm. What is required is a broad social response to crime and harm based upon a more explicit and institutionally anchored public safety system.

A **public safety system** is a system of actors and institutions whose aim is to promote safety and to **prevent** harm. Note its aim is different to that of the justice system, whose purpose is to secure the just treatment of offenders in the interests of society in general and victims in particular.

The case for prevention

The general case for prevention makes intuitive sense. It is better to stop a bad thing from happening in the first place than to deal with the deleterious effects afterwards.

There is also a strong evidence base showing that preventative measures can reduce harm in a way that is superior to later interventions and achieves wider economic and social benefits. There is now strong evidence that the drop in traditional crime described above was driven mainly by preventative security measures rather than by the actions of the police or the courts.

Despite this far too little is currently done to prevent crime and wider harm. Most of the state's direct interventions to make the public safe are reactive rather than preventative in nature.

The key reason why so many opportunities are currently missed to prevent crime and harm is that we lack a systemic approach to prevention. No one owns the prevention task.

To address this, we make the following recommendations.

Recommendations

1. The government should produce a cross-departmental Crime Prevention Strategy.

2. The government should establish a new Crime Prevention Agency, with responsibility for delivering the Crime Prevention Strategy, developing regulation and guidance, enforcing crime prevention duties, developing national and international partnerships and relationships in priority areas, communicating crime prevention advice to the public and horizon scanning to identify emerging threats.

3. There should a be new legal duty to prevent crime which would apply to all large private sector organisations, enforced by the Crime Prevention Agency.

4. The government should review local and regional government structures with the explicit aim of promoting increased public service collaboration to prevent complex social problems. Such a review should consider the benefits of a simplified local governance framework, place-based budgets, cross sector workforce development, integrated delivery models and how to improve data sharing locally.

5. The government should widen the remit of the Violence Reduction Units to cover a wide range of local crime types. These Crime Prevention Units should operate in every force area, led by a local Director of Crime Prevention appointed by the Police and Crime Commissioner. They should focus on crime types where prevention activity is best designed across a wider geographic area, such as modern slavery and county lines/serious violence. Community Safety Partnerships should go back to basics, focusing on volume crime and antisocial behaviour, and on those areas where the police and local authority relationship is critical.

5. THE ROLE OF THE POLICE

We now consider a further solution to the limits on police capacity: to clarify the police role so that they can focus on those tasks where their powers and competencies are most efficacious.

We are clear that the police are not just crime fighters: 83 per cent of calls to police Command and Control Centres do not result in a crime being recorded.

It is better to see the core role of the police as being to resolve conflict and maintain order. They perform this role because of their status as officers of the law with a monopoly on the legitimate use of force.

We therefore define the core role of the police as being **to promote public safety by maintaining order and upholding the law, which their unique powers enable them to do, and to carry out other activities which enable them to perform this core role legitimately, effectively and with minimum reliance on those powers.**

To perform this core role we see the police as having the following functions:

1. To respond to calls for help, repair harm and refer cases on to others who can provide support and prevent reoccurrence.

2. To safeguard vulnerable people who they come across in the course of their work.

3. To prevent crime and harm, either directly where their powers and skills are required or by referring cases, issues or problems on to others who can help.

4. To investigate crime, disrupt criminal activity and bring offenders to justice.

5. To provide victims of crime access to justice and support.

6. To offer community policing that is visible, responsive and works with the community and other public services to solve problems that are a concern for safety.

Recommendation

6. In order to clarify the police role within a changing and complex environment the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, the National Police Chiefs' Council and the Home Office should agree a new police service Statement of Mission and Values.

PART III. CAPABILITIES

The police service will require a number of systemic capabilities if it is to meet the challenges described above. We discuss each of these in turn.

6. LEGITIMACY

At the heart of the Peelian model of policing is the idea that the police can only successfully carry out their work with the support and cooperation of the public. While most people trust and have confidence in the police, there are reasons to be concerned about the health of police legitimacy:

- People from Black and Mixed ethnic groups, particularly those with Black Caribbean backgrounds, are much less likely than White people (and some other ethnic groups) to expect local police to treat them fairly, with respect, and to agree that police can be trusted.

- In recent years police actions have been contested to a degree that has particularly tested the strength of the relationship between the police and the public. Data from London shows a marked deterioration in Londoners' assessments of police

fairness and respectfulness, and their trust in police, from early 2020 onwards.

- When we look ahead to the environment in which police can reasonably expect to operate over coming decades, there are good reasons to believe that legitimacy will be both more challenging to sustain and more crucial to achieving public safety.

Recommendations

7. The Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, the National Police Chiefs' Council and the Home Office should make a first-principle commitment to policing with legitimacy. They should recognise that this is a crucial enabler of effective policing. This should be expressed as a central component of a revised Statement of Mission and Values. This commitment should be backed up by a national plan for improving police legitimacy. The other relevant recommendations set out in this report should form a part of that national plan.

8. Efforts to build and sustain police legitimacy need to be driven by better data and more sophisticated analytics. Better data should also be used to drive accountability and ensure legitimacy is prioritised when faced with competing imperatives. The Home Office should fund a substantial uplift in the Office for National Statistics' crime and policing public survey programme. As part of this a feasibility study should be carried out into the creation of a 'legitimacy index' (potentially combining inspection and survey-based inputs) to enable public scrutiny, performance monitoring and comparisons across time, area and between population groups.

9. The College of Policing should undertake a programme to improve the quality of police interactions with the public, drawing on the principles of procedural justice and the existing evidence-base about 'what works'. The programme should aim to both develop knowledge and have sufficient resources to deliver comprehensive officer and staff training and support widespread practice change. Training in interpersonal skills should be a minimum standard that all police forces are expected to meet.

10. As part of a commitment to inclusive public dialogue and opening the police up to regular and ongoing challenge, Police and Crime Commisioners and Mayors should invest in vehicles to promote public participation in decision-making, such as citizens juries and assemblies. Opinion surveys and elections every four years are not sufficient to promote the kind of ongoing dialogue that is required.

In order to understand the practical implications of prioritising legitimacy we looked at a number of areas of focus. Despite strong evidence that community policing is highly effective at improving public confidence in the police, neighbourhood policing has been cut back significantly since 2010. To address this we call for a strengthening of neighbourhood policing over the next decade.

Recommendation

11. The Home Office should ask police forces to deliver a substantial uplift in neighbourhood policing, designed around the need to build and sustain police legitimacy, public confidence, and community resilience. This should involve deploying a significant proportion of the additional officers recruited since 2019 into neighbourhood policing. This provision should be:

• Concentrated where legitimacy is most challenged.

• Assessed against the objectives of improving legitimacy, confidence and resilience.

• Implemented in ways conducive to long-term local knowledge and relationship building.

• Accompanied by sufficient 'organisational transformation' to align wider police decision making with local insight, knowledge, and perspective.

• Designed with an emphasis on promoting local dialogue, deliberation, and to encourage broad-based public involvement in local problem definition, prioritisation and solving.

We believe that the ability to stop and search with reasonable suspicion is an important power that should be available to the police. However, we believe that the current pattern of police stop and search use is not justified. It represents a significant barrier to building trust and confidence, particularly among Black people who are disproportionately likely to be stopped and searched. We are particularly concerned about the use of Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, which is used even more disproportionately against Black people and does not require an officer to have reasonable suspicion.

Recommendations

12. The government's Serious Violence Strategy should be amended to reflect a three-strand commitment to 1. a preventative public health approach, 2. targeted law enforcement activity ('precision policing') and 3. an explicit commitment to legitimacy and working with communities. The last is lacking from current strategies and emphasises a shift to problem solving, partnership and prevention from 'blunt' street level deterrence and enforcement.

13. The College of Policing should issue mandatory guidance in relation to stop and search training. This would be based on the Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme. This should emphasise the importance of procedural justice and the need for searches to have strong grounds, including through being intelligence-led, and to align with wider police priorities. Where a drugs search leading to a 'find' and a charge of possession would otherwise be made, individuals should be consistently diverted toward a social intervention and away from the criminal justice system.

14. The Section 60 legislation should be changed to make clear that this is a power to be used only in extraordinary circumstances, where the police have intelligence that a significant outbreak of serious violence is likely to occur. The authorisation should be made by a chief officer. The grounds for the decision should be clearly communicated to the public and the impact on police-community relations considered.

We are living in a digital age and we must consider the implications of this change for police legitimacy and public trust. It is unhelpful that public debate around police use of technology tends to be polarised between critics on the one side and the police acting as proponents on the other. It would be better for the police to subject proposed data and technology initiatives to independent scrutiny.

Nothing is more corrosive of public trust in the police than unethical, illegal and immoral conduct by police officers. To address this, we make a number of recommendations aimed at improving the misconduct system and promoting a wider culture of integrity in policing.

Finally, having a more diverse workforce and one that is more representative of society is a key building block of police legitimacy. At the current rate of progress it will take another 20 years for England and Wales to achieve a representative workforce in terms of gender. At current rates it will take another 58 years (until 2079) for policing to achieve a workforce that is representative of England and Wales in terms of ethnicity (using the projected Black and Minority Ethnic population in 2050).

7. SKILLS AND TECHNOLOGY

Police officers and staff need the skills and technological tools to enable them to perform their roles successfully in the face of radically changing demand.

Future skills

The future skills requirement can be broken down into three categories:

- **Relational skills** required to manage complexity, respond to vulnerability, de-escalate social tension, and build and sustain public trust and confidence.

- **Investigatory skills** required to investigate increasingly complex areas of crime;

- **Digital skills** to operate effectively in a digital environment.

Turning to relational skills first, while very many police officers have excellent people skills, current police training does not sufficiently emphasise communication and interpersonal skills.

Recommendation

21. The College of Policing should review the National Police Curriculum to increase focus on relational skills covering themes such as conflict management, co-production, cultural competency, victim care, mental health, trauma and neurodiversity awareness. Officers should refresh these relational skills annually alongside officer safety training. They should be made part of a mandatory professional minimum standard regulated by the College of Policing.

There is a national shortage of detectives. In 2021 there were 6,851 fewer PIP 2 accredited investigators in post than was required. These gaps are not being dealt with through the current Uplift Programme.

Recommendations

22. A pay supplement should be introduced to make detective roles a more attractive career choice for police officers.

23. All forces should introduce direct entry detective programmes.

There is a pressing need to improve digital skills and knowledge across the whole police workforce, both for generalist officers and for specialists.

Recommendations

24. Police forces, regional units and the National Crime Agency should develop standing arrangements with private sector companies so that they can call in staff with high level digital and financial expertise to work on investigations under police direction.

25. Digital intelligence and investigation training should be incorporated into minimum professional standards regulated by the College of Policing.

26. The College of Policing should strengthen career pathways for allied policing professions in areas such as data analysis/science, digital forensics and financial investigation.

27. A national police workforce planning unit should be established within the College of Policing to project future demand, monitor current and future skill gaps and coordinate a national response. The College should have the power to require local forces to address emerging capability gaps and to cooperate with national recruitment and learning and development initiatives.

Technology

Policing is an information business and yet too often police technology is outdated and cumbersome, causing frustration to the officers and staff who use it, and letting down the public who get a poorer service as a result. In 70 percent of forces less than half of officers are satisfied with their current IT provision. The Police National Computer is 48 years old and will soon be running on unsupportable technology. The National Digital Strategy and the Police Digital Service are steps in the right direction, but we need to build on the progress being made and go further.

Recommendations

28. The government should increase investment to enable a significant upgrade of police IT over the course of the next two spending reviews.

29. English and Welsh policing needs a common set of information and communications technology (ICT) standards' to be applied across the country. These should be developed nationally and then mandated for adoption by the College of Policing, which would be given powers to direct Chief Constables in relation to IT.

30. The Home Office must prioritise the modernisation of the Police National Computer and the Police National Database. The major national police databases should be housed within the College of Policing.

8. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Police officers and staff need to continually develop and refresh their skills and knowledge to serve the public effectively. However, between 2011/12 and 2017/18, 33 forces reduced their budgeted spending on training in real terms by a greater percentage than their overall reduction in spending. 40 per cent of police officers say they had not received necessary training to do their job well. The quality of the learning and development provided for officers and staff needs to be considerably improved. We also need to take steps to ensure a culture of professional development is inculcated.

Recommendations

31. The Home Office should establish a Learning and Development Fund that would be used by the College of Policing to fund police learning and development. In order to receive funding police forces would have to demonstrate that their training programmes meet standards set by the College.

32. There should be a minimum set of hours per year reserved for each officer's learning and development. This will be a national minimum standard that the College of Policing will require police forces to fulfil.

33. The Home Office should introduce a Licence to Practise for police officers, administered by the College of Policing. The Licence to Practise ought to be renewed every five years, subject to an officer demonstrating professional development through achieving relevant qualifications, passing an interview or presenting a portfolio of activities and achievements. Any police officer who fails this assessment could receive further support including mentoring. After successive failures they would have their licence removed and would no longer be able to practise as a police officer.

Policing should make greater use of research evidence, scientific methods, and systematically acquired knowledge to improve the effectiveness of its activities.

Recommendations

34. The police service should further promote evidence-based practice:
    - The College of Policing should make better use of mobile technology to make targeted evidence-based practice guidance available to frontline operational personnel.
    - More police forces should establish Evidence Based Policing Units to carry out research, spread knowledge and promote an evidence and knowledge based culture.
    - The College of Policing should expand and accelerate its programme for generating evidence-based practice guidelines.
    - The College of Policing should set mandatory national minimum standards in guideline areas that are high risk, where the public expect consistency and where the evidence base is strong.
    - Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) should introduce a grading for guideline compliance into the HMICFRS PEEL police force inspection regime.

9. WELLBEING

Having a healthy and motivated workforce should be seen as a strategic capability for policing. Between 2010/11 and 2015/16 the number of officers on long-term sick leave for physical and mental health reasons increased by 14 per cent and the number of those off sick for psychological illness alone increased by 35 per cent. 48 per cent of police officers say they have low personal morale, compared to 29 per cent of army soldiers. 64 per cent of officers and 55 per cent of staff had experienced post traumatic stress symptoms.

Recommendations

35. All police officers and staff should be provided with ongoing clinical support throughout their careers. In practical terms this means an annual (physical and mental) health check and appropriate ongoing occupational health support.

36. The College of Policing should develop national standards to address unresolved trauma. This should include the use of regular debriefing sessions. Training in mental resilience should become a core part of both initial police training and continuing professional development (CPD). In addition, frontline supervisors should be trained to recognise signs of trauma and support those who are struggling.

10. LEADERSHIP

Effective leadership at all levels is a critical condition for enabling policing to meet the public safety demands of the future. There are very many excellent leaders at all levels of the police service, but everyone in a leadership role, whatever their rank, deserves the support and development to be the best they can be.

Recommendations

37. The College of Policing should establish a Police Leadership Centre which would have the following responsibilities:

   • To promote the learning and development of police leaders at all levels, from Sergeants to Chief Constables.

   • To provide structured support to promote the wellbeing of police leaders.

   • To directly fund police leadership training and professional development throughout the system.

   • To ensure that the learning and development opportunities for police leaders meet national standards.

   • To focus in its first two years on a development programme for police Sergeants, considerably strengthening the support Sergeants receive and increasing the learning time available to them.

   • To build on the international reputation of British policing by offering courses for police leaders overseas. The fees from these courses would be reinvested to support the work of the Police Leadership Centre.

38. The College of Policing should review police leadership selection processes and should explore whether greater national regulation and oversight of these processes would improve fairness, transparency and competition.

39. The appointment process for Chief Constables should be reformed to increase competition for these vital posts. While the Police and Crime Commissioner should continue to make the appointment, they should do so from a short list of candidates drawn up by a national Senior Appointments Board constituted from among the relevant national bodies. That Board would have a responsibility, working with the College of Policing to actively identify suitable applicants.

PART IV. ORGANISATION

11. STRUCTURE

Appraising the current structure

The main benefit of the existing 43 force structure is that it provides a strong local dimension in our policing system. This is important for three reasons:

• Visible, engaged and responsive local policing is critical for improving public confidence in the police.

• We need local police leaders to have the autonomy to work much more collaboratively with other local public services to tackle complex public safety problems.

• A strong local dimension in policing structure also creates the space for innovation.

However, the existing structure has five significant faults which need to be addressed:

• The 43 force structure struggles to deal with the rising forms of crime that cross force and national borders.

• The model does not support the development of effective specialist capabilities, which have high fixed costs, do not always require a local presence and benefit from concentration of expertise. A more consistent approach to high-risk areas of policing would also contribute to improved public confidence.

- It is inefficient, because organising specialist and support functions at a higher level would generate economies of scale and reduced duplication. There are indications from the experience of Police Scotland that hundreds of millions of pounds could be saved.

- The existing approach of bottom-up voluntary collaborative arrangements has created a patchwork of ad hoc arrangements that lack a stable foundation.

- Policing lacks a strong strategic centre, which leads to a lack of a clear strategy to meet future challenges, weaknesses in addressing under performance and an inability to ensure policing has the people it needs to perform the tasks set for it. It also means that there is no national platform for delivering core capabilities, including for example forensics, about which we make a recommendation below.

Recommendation

40. The Home Office should establish a national forensic science service. This would not necessarily replace existing private providers but would incorporate most in-house provision currently provided by forces. This would put forensic science services on a stable and secure footing. The new service would:

   - Carry out national procurement of forensics services where these would benefit from being commissioned once on behalf of the whole service.

   - Ensure a consistent approach was taken to meeting international quality standards.

   - Carry out horizon scanning and research and development to ensure that forensics capability can keep pace with technological and scientific innovation.

   - Provide for a concentration of specialism at the centre, as well as ensuring that expertise and learning is shared more effectively.

   One option would be to house this service within the National Crime Agency, with a regional delivery structure.

A reallocation of functions

The analysis above strongly suggests a reallocation of capabilities and functions to different geographic levels would improve efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy. We propose that:

- The local level, currently organised into the 43 forces, should focus on the delivery of local police services: 24/7 response, local crime investigation, neighbourhood policing, safeguarding and offender management.

- A large number of other functions and capabilities would be organised at the regional level. These include serious and organised crime related capabilities and uniformed specialisms (dogs, horses, public order etc). They also include both operational support functions such as forensics and contact management, and business support functions such as procurement and HR.

- The national level would focus on serious and organised crime, counter-terrorism, system stewardship functions (strategy, performance management and human capital development) and the delivery of some high specialist capabilities such as air support and the national IT databases.

Note we do not set out here a defined number of regions, as this is an area where some flexibility and adaptation to local circumstances is required. We also acknowledge that local forces may need to retain a proactive investigation capability to deal with more locally contained serious and organised crime groups.

The reallocation of functions would largely not affect the Metropolitan Police Service as it already operates as a regional force.

Structural implications

In this report we review a number of options for reform in light of the reallocation of functions we propose. We conclude that the status quo (voluntary collaborations) will not achieve the pace and scale of change required. We think that the alternatives of a smaller number of regional police forces or a single national police force would endanger the local link described above.

For the reasons we conclude that there are two desirable structural solutions:

- The 43 forces remain to provide the local link but Regional Police Units are established by statute to deliver most specialist, operational support and business support functions. These would be accountable to regional boards of Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCS).

- The 43 forces remain and Regional Police Support Units are established to deliver specialist, operational support and business support functions, apart from the regional-level investigation of serious and organised

crime. These would be established by statute and would be accountable to regional boards of Chief Constables and PCCs. Serious and organised crime specialist capabilities would be brigaded into regional units of the National Crime Agency, creating a national serious and organised crime network comparable to that which exists for counter terrorism policing.

We conclude that the latter approach has the considerable advantages of providing clearer governance and a stronger national model for delivering serious and organised crime capabilities.

We do not rule out future amalgamations of local forces and we acknowledge that the current number of forces and their boundaries are somewhat arbitrary. However, we are more concerned with where capabilities should sit rather than the question of how many local forces there should be.

Recommendations

41. The National Crime Agency (NCA) should be given control of regional serious and organised crime assets. Regional NCA units would host serious and organised crime capability at the regional level, plus specialist economic crime teams including expanded regional fraud investigation teams. These units would be 100 per cent centrally funded through the NCA and would be accountable to the Director General of the NCA for delivery. As an existing regional force, the Metropolitan Police Service would continue to host its own serious and organised crime capabilities.

42. The government should legislate to mandate the creation of Regional Police Support Units. These would host most specialist capabilities outside of serious and organised crime, alongside operational and business support functions for forces. These units would be funded by pooling local force budgets and a significant proportion of the savings made would be reinvested in local policing. The units should be accountable to regional boards made up of the local Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners. Local police forces would focus on delivering local policing: neighbourhood policing, 24/7 response, local crime investigation, safeguarding and offender management.

The national landscape

The current national landscape is highly fragmented with a number of organisations performing these system stewardship and delivery roles. It is far from ideal to have such a cluttered landscape as this risks poor coordination, inefficient duplication, confused ownership and gaps emerging between institutions. If possible, we should seek to rationalise this landscape.

In order for the centre to perform an effective system stewardship role it requires a number of strategic capabilities some of which are currently lacking. These capabilities include: setting the overall strategic direction for policing; horizon scanning, national data analytics; and workforce planning.

National policing improvement functions are also fragmented among a number of existing organisations. There is a strong case for having a consolidated national home for police improvement, which would clarify strategic direction and could host the necessary powers to make things happen.

Recommendation

43. The national policing landscape should be rationalised in the following way:

   - The Home Secretary should set the national strategic direction for the service, working in partnership with the Association of Police and Crime Commissioenrs and the National Police Chiefs' Council through the National Policing Board.

   - This strategic role of ministers would be supported by a new Crime and Policing Strategy Unit within the Home Office which would develop the evidence base to inform the national strategy, monitor performance across the system and horizon scan to ensure the system is always thinking ahead.

   - There should be three main delivery organisations at the centre: the Crime Prevention Agency, the National Crime Agency and the College of Policing.

   - The National Crime Agency should remain focused on serious and organised crime, but should take on more of a role in tackling large scale online scams particularly where these are international in character. It would also be a possible home for other national crime related functions such as a new national forensic science service.

- The College of Policing should be expanded to become the single home for all national policing improvement functions including learning and development, professional standards, developing the evidence base, IT and national procurement. It would also host a national workforce planning function and a data analytics function. The College would have powers to direct Chief Constables in relation to national minimum professional standards, workforce planning and common standards in relation to IT.

12. GOVERNANCE

The fundamental building blocks of the police governance system remain sound. These are:

- The office of Constable: this provides the basis for a model of policing in which constables enforce the law impartially "without fear or favour" and in which they have the discretion to make judgments, subject to law, regulation and guidance.

- The operational independence of Chief Constables: chief officers should make operational decisions, free from political interference, but they should always be accountable for those decisions afterwards.

- The tripartite system: policy making power within policing is shared between the Home Secretary, Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners.

Police and Crime Commissioners

We believe that local police accountability and governance should continue to be performed by Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and directly elected Mayors. Since their introduction PCCs (and Mayors) have sharpened the accountability of Chief Constables and helped to anchor policing around the concerns of local people. The alternative of returning to a Police Authority arrangement holds little appeal. We also consider that in principle there is a case for PCCs playing more of a role in the wider criminal justice system, particularly in areas such as youth justice and probation.

However, we have concerns about the PCC's absolute power to dismiss the Chief Constable and below we set out a number of measures to improve the PCC (and mayoral) system of police governance.

Recommendations

44. The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) should retain the power to dismiss the Chief Constable, but this should be subject to a confirmatory vote of the Police and Crime Panel, requiring a majority of the total membership. The Panel may ask HMICFRS for a review of the PCC's decision prior to that confirmatory vote.

45. The Home Secretary should put legislation before parliament to introduce recall referenda for PCCs. The possibility of a recall referendum would be triggered where the Police and Crime Panel has voted by a two thirds majority to express no confidence in the PCC on the following grounds:

- Where the PCC has been sentenced to a custodial prison sentence.
- Where the PCC has been found following an investigation by the Independent Office for Police Conduct to have breached the Nolan Principles on Standards in Public Life.

Following such a vote by the panel there would then be a recall referendum where 10 per cent of the local electorate sign a petition to support one.

46. Where a police force area is coterminous with the jurisdiction of a directly elected Mayor, the Mayor should automatically become the Police and Crime Commissioner for that area. The government should also seek where possible to promote coterminosity between police force areas and the jurisdictional boundaries of city-regional or regional Mayors.

47. The government should consider extending the remit of Police and Crime Commissioners (and their mayoral equivalents) to include greater commissioning of wider criminal justice services, particularly youth custody and probation services.

The Home Secretary

The Home Secretary should play a leading role in strengthening the strategic centre in policing.

HMICFRS

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) plays a critical role in ensuring that police performance is measured and assessed transparently. The PEEL process is well structured and the clarity with which outcomes are presented on its website contribute significantly to the transparency of policing and its accountability to the public.

There are two areas where we think change ought to be considered. First, HMICFRS should be clearer as to how it is inspecting against standards set by the College of Policing. Second, there is a need for more systemic lesson learning from HMICFRS inspections with the other national stakeholders (see Recommendation 49).

The Independent Office for Police Conduct

We welcome the progress made by the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) in seeking to conclude investigations more speedily and this progress needs to continue. We also welcome its shift away from a 'blame' focus and to more of a 'learning focus'. We think that more could be done to ensure that the lessons learned from IOPC investigations are considered at a strategic level in the police service. In addition, the IOPC ought to work with the College of Policing to discuss how learning points from its investigations can get into the hands of police officers so to inform everyday practice.

The College of Policing

Above we set out an expanded role for the College of Policing as the single home for national policing improvement functions. To perform its function effectively the College should possess powers in three areas (see Recommendation 43).

First, the College's powers to issue 'codes of practice' should be strengthened so that it can (with the support of the Home Secretary) issue binding regulations, mandating compliance with a basket of national minimum professional standards.

Second, the College would be given new powers to require compliance with common IT standards across policing, so as to ensure interoperability and much more effective sharing of police data.

Third, the College should have powers to require police forces to cooperate with national recruitment, educational and learning and development programmes and to address emerging skills gaps.

The national system of police governance

One of the most significant problems with the existing system of police governance is that it lacks formal mechanisms for making collective decisions. The legal entities in the system are the 43 Chief Constables and the 43 Police and Crime Commissioners or Mayors. Each of these is a 'corporation sole' and cannot be bound by any collective decision of the others.

The result is a system which, for the purposes of making national decisions, moves at the speed of the slowest passenger. To address this we considered establishing a new legally binding decision-making system, but we concluded that this might not be necessary. Instead we recommend that the Home Secretary should be more proactive in using her powers to ensure decisions are made in the national interest.

13. FUNDING

Given the strong local and national interests in policing there is a good rationale for retaining a funding system that contains a blend of national and local funding streams.

However, there are a number of problems with the existing system:

- The current funding formula for the Police Grant is an inadequate reflection of the real relative needs of individual forces.

- The ad hoc nature of the Regional Organised Crime Units' (ROCUs) funding is a major barrier to ROCUs operating effectively.

- The current funding system is complex and short term providing a poor basis for longer term business planning at force level.

- There is a case for the government using the funding system more proactively to ensure national priorities are addressed.

- There is a case for exploring the feasibility of a government grant specifically directed at cross-agency work to prevent and reduce crime.

Recommendations

51. The funding of local police forces should continue to be a mixture of central and local contributions. Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and Mayors should have greater discretion to raise further revenues for policing via the precept.

52. The government should design and win support for a fairer and more intelligent system for allocating Police Grant between forces. Such a system would be based on up-to-date data, revised annually, and (consistent with this Review) with a focus on the social factors influencing policing demand as well as crime levels. It would take account of Inspectorate perceptions and findings bearing on the capabilities and financial resilience of individual forces (a source which has become markedly richer in recent years), and of government priorities. It would aim to secure acceptable minimum levels of service in all parts of the country, and be robust enough to avoid or at least mitigate the marked disparities in outcomes which the combination of a mechanistic formula and the exercise of local discretion produced during the period of austerity.

53. To avoid the kind of protracted negotiation over essentially voluntary arrangements which has bedevilled the Regional Organised Crime Units, the National Crime Agency regional units should be 100 per cent government funded.

54. In any redesign of the police grant formula, the government should have regard to the need to give PCCs and Chief Constables good notice of changes, to enable well-informed business planning.

55. A number of earmarked national funds should be established to ensure that the priorities identified in this report are protected. These funds would be:

- A Serious and Organised Crime Fund: all funding dedicated to tackling serious and organised crime, including the funding for the National Crime Agency and its regional units.

- A Counter Terrorism Fund: all funding dedicated to tackling terrorism.

- A Crime Prevention Fund: all funding dedicated to crime prevention activity, including the funding for the Crime Prevention Agency and the funding for local Crime Prevention Units.

- A Learning and Development Fund: most funding for police learning and development would be channelled through this fund and disseminated by the College of Policing, which would commission learning and development from police bodies.

- A Technology Fund: to ensure adequate funding for national technology programmes.

56. We would encourage the development of a more consistent and integrated approach to local government structures in England and Wales. Under such an approach, we would recommend a more detailed examination of the idea of a specific government grant to support cross-agency work to prevent and reduce crime.

The resource and public value implications of this Review

This Strategic Review has been charitably funded and carried out with the assistance of a small team of Police Foundation staff. Without the resources of a government department it has not been possible for us to fully cost all of our recommendations. But it is possible to outline, with a degree of confidence, their implications for the resources devoted to policing and public safety.

The timeframe within which we have cast our recommendations is intentionally long, and extends beyond a single expenditure planning period. Some recommendations, we believe, are urgent, and where that is the case we have said so. But elsewhere our purpose has been to set a long term direction and argue for a shift in focus over the next decade.

To deliver our recommendations additional resources would be required in the following areas:

- To create the new Crime Prevention Agency and a Crime Prevention Fund.

- To strengthen neighbourhood policing, although we see this as being delivered mainly through the existing additional 20,000 officers.

- To provide higher quality learning and development programmes, such as through the new Leadership Centre and minimum CPD hours for each officer and staff member.

- To deliver improved clinical and occupational health support for police officers.

- To create a larger budget for the National Crime Agency so that it is better able to build up national and regional capability to tackle serious and organised crime.

- To deliver much needed investment in police IT.

We have also set out areas where significant savings could be made. In particular, doing much more procurement nationally would deliver economies of scale in areas like uniform, vehicles and equipment. Most significantly, forming mandated Regional Police Support Units would reduce duplication across local forces in relation to specialist capabilities and support functions.

Overall, we consider that the recommendations in this report would generate public value in the following ways:

- They would clarify the overall goals of policing within a wider public safety system and align the work of the police more closely to an assessment of future challenges.

- They would deliver a more efficient use of police resources in particular through the reallocation of functions.

- They would achieve greater public involvement in policing through a revived neighbourhood policing model and greater use of participatory engagement methods by local police.

- They would strengthen the ability of the service to plan for the long term.

- They would prevent more crime, leading to less harm to victims and a safer society.

14. CONCLUSION

Policing is at a critical juncture. If it does not embrace reform it will likely be overwhelmed by the scale and complexity of the demands coming down the track. But if we take the necessary decisions now the prize will be great: to develop the conditions in which people can live freely and safely in the 21st century and to renew for our age the promise of the Peelian model, a form of policing that serves rather than oppresses the people and that can continue to be an example to the world of the art of reconciling order with liberty.

1. INTRODUCTION: A NEW MODE OF PROTECTION

"The time is come when, from the increase in its population, the enlargement of its resources, and the multiplying development of its energies, we may fairly pronounce that the country has outgrown her police institutions and that the cheapest and safest course will be found in the introduction of a new mode of protection."

Sir Robert Peel, 1828

The world is experiencing changes as radical as those wrought in this country during the Industrial Revolution, which gave birth to the first modern police service in 1829.

Technology is transforming the nature of crime, meaning that offenders living on the other side of the world are harming victims in this country on an industrial scale. The relationship between humanity and the natural environment is also changing profoundly and in ways that are causing enormous turbulence, leading to climate change, biodiversity loss and more frequent pandemic disease. These transformations not only put the environment and humankind at risk, but also throw up a whole range of new challenges for public safety.

Finally, society is changing too: social needs are becoming more complex requiring a response that goes beyond traditional professional silos; previously marginalised victims of crime are rightly demanding that they are taken seriously by the criminal justice system; and new patterns of social division are emerging that require sensitive management by those responsible for keeping the peace.

In the context of these transformations, and despite the hard work and best efforts of police officers and staff, the police service appears at times overwhelmed, seemingly lacking either the capacity or the capabilities to address these challenges. Internet crime remains largely beyond the reach of police institutions designed in the 19th century to control crime and maintain order in local towns and cities.

The police have struggled to respond to increased volumes of sexual offences being reported, never mind being able to proactively look for where the majority of unreported harm is occurring. With rising demand for more complex areas of investigation, the service often struggles to deliver its traditional level of local service, meaning that victims reporting a burglary or a stolen car may receive very little by way of a police response.

In addition to all this we may be reaching a critical juncture in terms of public confidence in the police. Many women's trust in the police has been undermined by the historic failure to tackle violence against women and girls, and by cases of male police officers themselves abusing women. The Black Lives Matter movement has highlighted once again how Black people remain disproportionately likely to be the subject of police powers, undoubtedly a cause of a deficit of trust and confidence in the police within Black communities.

It is in this context that the Police Foundation has been undertaking the Strategic Review of Policing in England and Wales, launched in 2019. This is the first independent review of policing for many years and is intended to be as influential as the last Royal Commission on the Police in 1962. Then, as now, social change and concerns about how well the police were adapting to it led to a major review that set the framework in which the police operated for decades. Although we do not have the resources of a review supported by the government, we aim to have the same level of impact.

This final report from the Review is our attempt to describe what kind of police service we will need to address the challenges of the 21st century. We started the work from the premise that the British Peelian model of policing remains in many ways an example to the world, but one that needs to be renewed and reformed if it is to keep pace with social change. Our conclusion at the end of the Review is that we live in a moment comparable to that in 1828 when Sir Robert Peel told parliament that the country had "*outgrown her police institutions*". To keep people free and safe in the transformed conditions of the 21st century will require "*a new mode of protection*".

1.1 THE AIMS OF THE REVIEW

The Review was intended to be strategic in two senses. First, we wanted to think about policing with a long-term perspective. Far too much policing policy is made in response to short term political calculation and immediate operational imperatives. Moreover, policing as a profession tends to have a blind spot when it comes to thinking about the future. As an emergency service policing's core competency is responding quickly and professionally to those at immediate risk of harm. It is also a service facing far more demand than it could ever meet. As a result, it tends to operate very much in the 'here and now'.

This Review represented an opportunity to lift our sights and consider what kind of police service we will need as we move through the 2020s and into the 2030s. We considered that a time horizon of 20 years was long enough to provide a consideration of the foreseeable future, while not being so far away as to result in speculation.

The second sense in which the Review was strategic was that it aimed to look at the 'whole system' rather than diving into particular aspects of operational policing. It aimed to fill a gap in public policy thinking about how the police service as a whole operates and whether it does so in a way that meets the long-term challenges we have identified. Indeed, we look way beyond policing itself and explore the place of the police within a wider system of public safety. This is based on the conviction that the police alone cannot tackle the public safety challenges of the 21st century.

The aims of the Review were therefore:

1. To assess the public safety and security challenges facing the country as we move through the 2020s and into the 2030s.

2. To consider what kind of response we need to make as a country to those challenges.

3. To consider, as part of that wider societal response, what kind of police service we will require, looking at police legitimacy, skills, technology, learning and career pathways, leadership, organisational structure, governance and funding.

1.2 HOW WE WORKED

The Review was chaired by Sir Michael Barber and hosted by the Police Foundation, which acted as the Review's secretariat. It took place over two phases: first, an assessment of current and future public safety and security challenges; and second, an analysis of

how society, and the police service in particular, ought to respond to those challenges. The Review's Terms of Reference are included as Appendix A.

1.2.1 Calls for Evidence

Each phase of the Review was informed by a public Call for Evidence. These sought views and information from stakeholders, practitioners, and other interested parties, in the form of written responses to a set of questions relevant to each phase's themes.

Both calls were made publicly available on the Police Foundation website and advertised and disseminated via policing networks and our social media feeds. In addition, responses were specifically invited from individuals and organisations with a stake in policing, including Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners, law enforcement agencies, charities, civil society and community groups and relevant private sector stakeholders.

The first Call for Evidence ran from October to December 2019 and received 65 responses. The second took place in February and March 2021 and received 43 responses. A full list of respondents is included as Appendix B. All responses were read and thematically organised using the qualitative data analysis programme NVivo. Unattributed quotations are included throughout the report, labelled as *CE1* and *CE2*, denoting Call for Evidence one and two respectively.

1.2.2 Stakeholder engagement

The Review engaged extensively with stakeholders, commentators, and subject matter experts, including academics, campaigners, politicians, police leaders and practitioners, and public, private and third sector representatives. This took the form of numerous one-to-one conversations and meetings held by the Chair, Vice-Chair, and project team members. In addition, a set of 16 Key Informant Interviews were conducted by the Police Foundation research team at the beginning of Phase One, to gain an informed and rounded perspective on current policing challenges. A list of Key Informants is provided in Appendix C. Unattributed quotations are labelled *KII*. Sir Michael Barber visited Gwent, South Wales, and Warwickshire Police to spend time observing and talking to police officers and staff.

In summer 2021 Police Foundation researchers conducted four focus group discussions (via video conferencing), convened for us by the Revolving Doors Agency, with participants who had lived experience of repeat contact with the criminal justice system,

including one group specifically with women and another with young adults. Their perspectives inform Chapter 6 of this report in particular, with quotations labelled RD.

1.2.3 Data analysis and secondary reading

During both phases of the Review and under each of its headings we conducted a comprehensive review of the academic and policy literature. We also analysed a number of publicly available data sets, including data on crime trends, incident data, police workforce, public opinion surveys, enforcement data and police outcomes data. We are grateful to the Evidence and Insight team at the London Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) for making available unpublished data from their Public Attitude Survey and to the National Police Chiefs' Workforce Coordinating Committee for sharing their November 2021 Strategic Assessment of Workforce.

1.2.4 The Advisory Board

The work of the Review was guided by an Advisory Board, chaired by Sir Michael Barber, and made up of serving and former police officers, politicians, and leading academics. The Advisory Board members used their expertise to contribute informed views surrounding all the issues covered in the course of our work, as well as providing expert commentary and feedback on the Review's published outputs and developing thinking. The Board met (in person or remotely) on eight occasions during the Review and as several sub-groups, to advise on specific subject areas.

The Advisory Board made a huge contribution to the work of the Review and has considerably influenced its thinking. They are not however responsible for the Review's conclusions which are those of the Review's Chair Sir Michael Barber, the Review's Vice Chair Sir Bill Jeffrey and the Police Foundation team led by Dr Rick Muir. The makeup of the Board is set out in Appendix D.

1.2.5 Interim publications

The Review published a report on Phase One of the work in July 2020. In addition, the Police Foundation authored or commissioned three Insight Papers, to inform the Review's deliberations. The first, by Police Foundation Research Director Andy Higgins, focused on the public's perceptions of, and priorities for, today's police service. The second paper, written by Professor

Ian Loader, explored the history of the policing mission and addressed questions about the purpose of the police in the 21st century. The third paper, written by the Police Foundation's Director Rick Muir argued for the establishment of a much more explicit crime and harm prevention system. Several further contributory blogs and articles were published on the Review's website.[1]

1.2.6 Events

A series of seminars and conferences were held during the Review and have informed our deliberations, these include:

- The launch event for the Phase One report, and expert panel discussion, on 29th July 2020.[2]

- The Police Foundation's 11th Annual Conference, between 23rd and 25th February 2021, themed around the future police workforce, including sessions on workforce wellbeing, learning and development, recruitment, skills and diversity.[3]

- An International Seminar on policing innovation held on 19th May 2021.[4]

- A Leadership Symposium, held on 8th June 2021 including contributions from senior police and military leaders, consultants, and academics.

- Two seminars with policing stakeholders in Scotland, held in late 2021 in partnership with the Scottish Institute for Policing Research and CGI Scotland.

- A seminar to discuss roads policing held in partnership with DriveTech, which will be followed by a report on the future of roads policing published in February 2022.

1.2.7 Geographic and historical perspective

In this Review we wanted to address three gaps in police policy discussion in this country. First, we wanted to break with the parochialism of English and Welsh policing debates. It is striking that countries all over the world are grappling with the same issues and yet little attention is generally paid to experience elsewhere. To address this, we commissioned a review of international experiences of police reform, which particularly informs the findings in Chapter 11 on organisational structures.

We were also aware how little policy discussion there is between the different policing jurisdictions within the

1. www.policingreview.org.uk.

2. See: https://www.policingreview.org.uk/events/launch-event/

3. See: https://www.police-foundation.org.uk/events-programme/annual-conference/

4. See: https://www.policingreview.org.uk/events/policing-innovation-international-seminar-19th-may-2021/.

United Kingdom. To address this, in partnership with the Scottish Institute for Policing Research (SIPR) and CGI, we organised two seminars in Scotland specifically focused on police reform north of the border. A planned trip to Northern Ireland was cancelled owing to the Covid-19 restrictions, but we studied the experience of police reform in Northern Ireland and make several references to it in the report.

Second, we wanted to look to at the long-term rather than just focusing on tactical responses to the 'here and now'. In doing so our work was particularly informed by the Ministry of Defence's (MoD) sixth Global Strategic Trends report *The Future Starts Today* published in 2018 (MoD, 2018). This substantial piece of work is one of a series published regularly by the MoD's Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre (DCDC) and is intended to provide a strategic context for long-term planning, not just for the MoD but across government. Given its pedigree, its focus on questions of security and its comprehensive scope it provides a natural starting point for thinking about the future of policing. Our work was also informed by the College of Policing's recent report on the Future Operating Environment 2040 (College of Policing, 2020).

Although our time horizon was 20 years ahead, throughout the report we describe some future scenarios, distinctly annotated, to highlight possibilities that lie at the outer limits of this time horizon and beyond. Because they are more speculative, these do not lead to hard recommendations, but illustrate a possible direction of travel.

Third, just as the police tend not to look to the future, so too are they reluctant to spend much time reflecting on the past. Police history has very little weight in discussions of policing policy, although it is striking how often the same issues and dilemmas emerge over the years. We are convinced that much could be learned if we took police history more seriously. In this report we try where possible to put contemporary debates in a historical context.

1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The report comes in four parts. In Part I we outline the challenge facing the country and the police service in terms of public safety and security. This part of the report identifies three sets of changes that are generating new forms of public safety demand: technological, environmental and social change. We then outline how successfully the police service is responding to these changes.

Our analysis in Part I results in three conclusions that shape the rest of the report:

- That the police service alone cannot successfully respond to the range and complexity of the challenges identified (we call this *the capacity challenge*).

- That the police service currently lacks the capabilities required to respond effectively to the threats, risks and harms of the future (we call this *the capability challenge*).

- That the way policing is organised as a system cannot deliver the capabilities required in a way that is effective or efficient (we call this *the organisational challenge*).

In Part II we respond to the capacity challenge in two ways. First, we argue that we need to take a whole system approach to crime and harm. This means we should stop thinking that the 'crime problem' is owned singularly by the police and the criminal justice system. Rather we need a more explicit and institutionally anchored public safety system focused on preventing crime and harm from occurring in the first place.

Second, we argue that in the context of the challenges we have described and of the wider public safety system we have called for, we need to bring greater clarity to the role of the police. This is so that the police are focused on those tasks within the wider public safety system to which their powers, knowledge and skills are best suited. At a general level the role for the police we describe remains consistent with the historic mission of the English and Welsh police, but we aim to provide a sharper focus for police work.

In Part III we respond to the capability challenge by describing five sets of capabilities that the police service will require to meet the challenges of the 2020s and 2030s. These are: legitimacy, skills and technology, learning and development, wellbeing and leadership. These are not operational capabilities as traditionally understood in policing, but systemic capabilities that will enable the system as a whole to achieve the outcomes we have set for it.

In Part IV we argue that the police service needs a new organisational platform upon which to deliver those capabilities. A police force structure that was created in 1964 is no longer capable of delivering policing in a way that is effective or that provides value for money. To address this we propose a set of reforms to the system of police organisation and to its governance framework.

1.4 NEXT STEPS

We do not see the publication of this report as the end of the process, but merely an important step on a longer journey. Following the launch of the report we will begin a programme of discussion and engagement throughout policing and beyond.

Over the course of the next twelve months we will:

- Begin a roadshow, visiting police forces in each English region and Wales, to discuss our findings.

- Hold events and seminars to discuss the themes identified in the report with a wide range of people, from the police service, government, business, academia and the third sector.

- Hold direct conversations with policymakers to identify practical options for taking forward our recommendations.

- At the end of that period assess the impact of the Review, reflect on how our thinking has evolved and identify further steps.

We would encourage anyone who has an interest in the themes addressed here to engage with us throughout this process.

PART I
THE CHALLENGE

2. PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY IN THE 2020s AND 2030s

Summary: In this chapter we describe how the public safety challenges facing England and Wales have been transformed. Traditional volume crime has fallen by 75 per cent since 1995. In its place the technological revolution has led to an explosion in internet crime. Environmental change is generating enormous turbulence, from extreme weather events to increased political protest. Social change is leading to more complex needs, heightened political tension and demands for previously marginalised forms of abuse to be taken seriously by the criminal justice system. Organised crime groups are exploiting these technological, environmental and social changes. Public concern about crime is growing, but concerns for safety are higher among women, Black and Minority Ethnic groups and those on low incomes.

In this chapter we describe how the public safety and security challenges facing the country have changed since the turn of the millennium and how they can be expected to evolve through the 2020s and into the 2030s.

We describe three transformations which are creating new kinds of crime, harm, fracture and tension. First, there is the technological revolution, which has created a new venue for crime and harm in the form of the internet. This is an arena which is to a significant extent beyond the grasp of local policing institutions that were born as a response to the challenges of the early 19th century.

Second, there is the environmental transformation. Humanity's over-exploitation of the natural world is creating enormous turbulence, posing a direct challenge to our safety, as well as to our survival as a species.

Third, social change is generating new forms of complex need, increased social tension and demands for previously neglected forms of violence and abuse to be taken seriously. All of this makes the task of creating public safety and security more complex today than it was 20 years ago.

Before describing these three transformations, however, we describe one of the most significant social changes in recent years: the decline of traditional volume crime.

2.1 THE TRADITIONAL CRIME DROP

Crime, as measured by the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW),[5] has fallen significantly since the mid-1990s (Figure 2.1) (ONS 2021a). In 1995, there were an estimated 19.8 million crimes committed, but this had fallen to just 4.9 million by 2021. These figures exclude fraud and computer misuse offences, which were only introduced into the survey in 2017 and which take the 2021 figure to 11.7 million offences.

That means, if we exclude fraud and computer misuse offences, 'traditional crime' has fallen by 75 per cent since the mid-1990s.

The addition of cybercrime and fraud offences to these figures shows that what initially looked like a sharp overall fall masked an increase in crime taking place on the internet. Nevertheless, the volume and prevalence of crime is still much lower today than it was in the mid-1990s. According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), eight out of 10 people in the CSEW did not experience *any* of the crimes asked about in the survey in the year to June 2021 (ONS, 2021a).

This 'crime drop' is driven largely by falls in what we call 'traditional volume crime', the sorts of offences that are less serious in terms of the harm caused but which tend to affect large numbers of people. Between 1995 and 2021 we can see that (ONS, 2021a):

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5. The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) ordinarily conducts face to face interviews and provides estimates for adults aged 16 years and over. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, these face to face interviews were paused in March 2020 and continued via telephone (Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TSCEW)) in July 2020. The TCSEW data only relate to adults aged 18 and over. Therefore, throughout this report, where were refer to long term trends we compare historic data to the year ending March 2020. Where we report crime figures in isolation we use data from the year ending June 2021.

- All CSEW Crime excluding fraud & computer misuse
- All CSEW Crime including fraud & computer misuse
- All RECORDED crime (including fraud & computer misuse)
- All WEIGHTED (by crime severity) RECORDED crime excluding fraud & computer misuse (right hand axis)
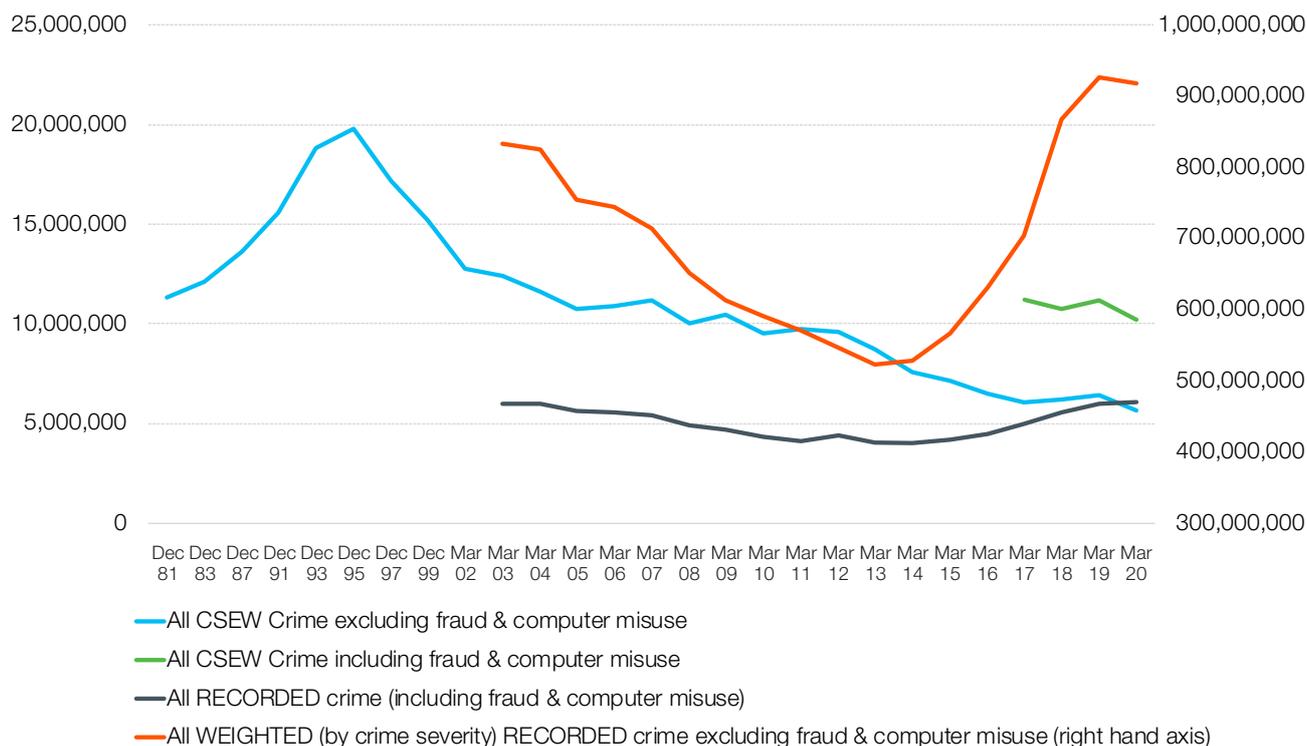
- Violent crime fell by 77 per cent.

- Theft fell by 75 per cent.

- Domestic burglary fell by 81 per cent.

- Vehicle related theft fell by 84 per cent.

- Other household theft fell by 55 per cent.

There are some qualifications that ought to be made in relation to this crime drop. First, the most harmful offences fell by a smaller degree than the least harmful offences. So, the Cambridge Harm Index (which weights offences by the harm they cause) fell by 21 per cent between 2002/03 and 2011/12, compared to a 37 per cent in the raw crime count (Sherman et al 2016).

Indeed, some of the most harmful forms of crime appear to have increased in recent years. According to the ONS (2021a), police recorded knife offences increased by 32 per cent between 2011 and 2021[6] and homicides increased by 18 per cent between 2014 and 2021.[7]

Second, the traditional crime drop is not unique to England and Wales but occurred across the developed world. According to the UNODC (no date), between 2003 and 2018 (or 2016 for France) burglary and car crime fell:

- By 46 per cent and 40 per cent (respectively) in the United States

- By 25 per cent and 54 per cent in Germany

- By six per cent and 44 per cent in France

These trends suggest that the causes of the crime drop are likely to be common across developed countries. Indeed, there is strong evidence that much of the fall in domestic burglary and vehicle crime was due to improvements in home and vehicle security during this period (Tseloni et al, 2017).

Another area of high-volume public safety demand that was prominent in the early 2000s was antisocial behaviour. Here too we see some significant change, at least at the level of reporting and public perceptions. As shown in Figure 2.2, the proportion of people reporting a high level of perceived antisocial behaviour has fallen from 21 per cent in 2003 to just 7 per cent in 2020. Similarly, the number of antisocial behaviour incidents recorded by the police has also been in steady decline, although we do not know if this reflects a decline in incidents, a decline in the willingness to report or indeed a shift in police focus away from this area of work (Strategic Review of Policing, 2020).

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6. A 47 per cent increase between 2011 and 2019, for a pre-Covid-19 pandemic comparison.

7. A 28 per cent increase in homicides between 2014 and 2019, for a pre-Covid-19 pandemic comparison.

Figure 2.2 Percentage of Crime Survey for England and Wales respondents reporting a high level of perceived antisocial behaviour (ONS, 2021a)
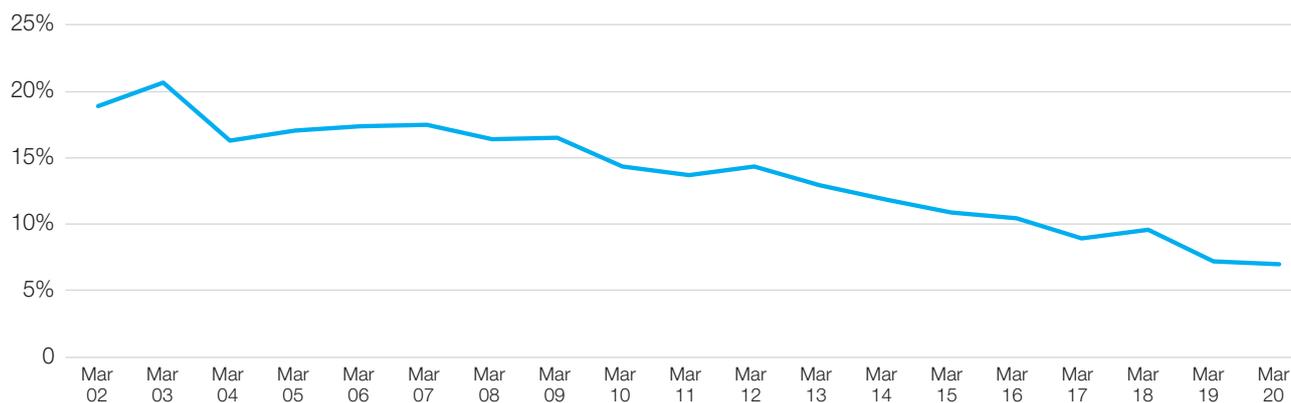
More recently there was an uptick in police recorded antisocial behaviour incidents during the coronavirus pandemic; despite falling by 63 per cent between 2008 and 2019, police recorded antisocial behaviour increased by 23 per cent in the two years to June 2021 (ONS, 2021a). This is almost certainly because people were confined to their homes, resulting in both more neighbourhood nuisance and more people being at home to report it. There may also have been occasions where police were called out to deal with breaches to the coronavirus regulations but ended up dealing with incidents through antisocial behaviour legislation.

2.2 TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

The creation of the internet and the spread of digital technology has transformed the nature of crime, creating an entirely new venue (cyberspace) in which crime and harm can take place. Moreover, it is a space that operates across national boundaries, meaning that offending is generally beyond the reach of local police forces or even national law enforcement agencies.

The scale of internet crime is obvious from the CSEW, which was amended from 2017 to include, for the first time, computer misuse and fraud offences (see Figure 2.1). Fraud and computer misuse offences made up 53 per cent of crime detected in the survey (Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW)) in the year to June 2021.

Computer misuse offences made up 14 per cent of crimes against households in 2021 (they also make up a large proportion of crimes against businesses). Computer misuse crime covers any unauthorised access to computer material. It includes offences such as spreading computer viruses, hacking and distributed denial of service (DDoS) attacks (the flooding of internet servers to take down network infrastructure or websites).

Fraud offences, many of which are cyber-enabled or cyber-dependent crimes, made up 40 per cent of crime in 2021, the most common type of crime. Fraud involves a person dishonestly and deliberately deceiving a victim for personal gain of property or money or causing loss or risk of loss to another. It has existed as a criminal offence for centuries, but while in the past it was seen as a largely 'white collar' crime affecting large businesses, it is now a volume crime affecting ordinary people, with 5 million offences occurring in the year to June 2021.

The reason for this explosion in fraud is the internet, which has enabled people to commit fraud on an industrial scale. According to a Police Foundation analysis, 69 per cent of fraud cases investigated by the police in 2016/17 included at least one element of cybercrime (Skidmore et al, 2018).

Far from being a victimless crime, fraud not only harms UK institutions but can have a devastating effect on victims, nearly half of whom feel their financial loss has affected their emotional wellbeing (Skidmore et al, 2018).

Compared with the scale of fraud perpetrated in England and Wales, the police response to it is extremely limited. In the year to March 2021 while there were 4.6 million frauds reported in the crime survey, just 806,637 were reported to Action Fraud, CIFAS or UK Finance. Of those reports just 3 per cent (24,805) were disseminated to police forces for investigation. In the same period just 4,853 fraud cases resulted in a charge or summons, which represents just 0.6 per cent of those recorded that year and just 0.1 per cent of those frauds that took place in that period (Home Office, 2021a, ONS, 2021a).

Another crime type that has been transformed by the internet is the **sexual abuse of children**. Whereas in the past the availability of child sexual abuse (CSA) imagery was limited to all but the most committed offenders, with the growth of online communications and social media, it is now relatively easy to access.

The volume of CSA imagery online is vast (some 8.3 million unique images were added to the Child Abuse Image Database in the four years to 2019) and this number is growing. The number of industry referrals regarding CSA imagery to the National Crime Agency (NCA) increased from 1,591 in 2009 to 113,948 in 2018. Since 2016, between 400 and 450 people are arrested every month in the UK in relation to online CSA (IICSA 2020).

Looking ahead, the degree to which public safety is shaped by the digital environment will only increase. In the years ahead we will see exponential growth in processing power, the volume and variety of data and the degree of connectivity between devices. Ever more information will flow across national boundaries, much of it generated by machine-to-machine communication. As more and more human activity takes place online we will become more exposed to internet crime. In particular, the rise of smart sensors, wearable tech and the Internet of Things will create new opportunities for cybercrime.

Whether and how to regulate this information space will be a central public policy question over the next 20 years. Within that broader debate policymakers will need to decide what the role of the police (and others such as the large technology companies) should be in enforcing rules and laws on the internet, and what skills and competencies those working within policing will require if they are to successfully perform such a role.

The police will need to invest in the digital tools required to operate effectively in this new environment. The police will also have to be mindful of their legitimacy as they operate in these new spaces, in particular in striking a balance between keeping people safe and respecting their privacy.

Finally, there is a growing risk that if formal and politically accountable forms of rule enforcement, such as public policing, cannot adequately provide protection on the internet then it seems likely that alternative non-state actors will emerge to fill the vacuum. This will be in the shape of private sector cybersecurity and investigatory bodies, but also potentially through new forms of cyber-vigilantism.

2.3 ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

We live in the geological epoch known as the Anthropocene, an era defined by the degree to which human activity is transforming the natural environment. This has led to a loss of biodiversity, an accelerated rate of species extinction, changes in the distribution of organisms around the world, deforestation and most significantly of course, climate change.

Few of these matters are traditionally thought to concern the police, but they will increasingly pose significant risks to public safety. We highlight two forms of environmental change that will pose an increased risk to human safety in the years ahead: climate change and pandemics.

2.3.1 Climate change

The global temperatures are rising as a result of human activity. Global warming is likely to lead to more frequent and more intense extreme weather events such as floods, droughts, storms, heat waves and heavy rainfall. Drought and heat stress will be disruptive for agriculture, causing problems with food supply.

Between 2005 and 2014 there was an average of 335 climate and weather-related disasters globally per year, which is an increase of 14 per cent compared to the period 1995-2004, and almost twice the level recorded during 1985/95 (CRED and UNISDR, 2015). For the UK specifically we will see changing rainfall patterns, rising sea levels and a greater likelihood of extreme flooding. The summer 2007 floods claimed 13 lives, led to 7,000 people being evacuated by emergency services and cost the UK economy £3.2bn, or droughts such as that in 2003 which led to 2,000 deaths (Cabinet Office, 2017).

The College of Policing states that this creates a "*potentially significant operational and financial risk for the service*" (College of Policing, 2015). For example, it is estimated that the 2015-2016 winter floods cost the emergency services £3m (Environment Agency, 2018).

In addition to extreme weather here, climate change will also make some parts of the world less habitable causing millions of people to move. Rising sea levels are already forcing coastal communities in countries such as the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Sierra Leone to relocate. The World Bank estimates that by 2050 climate change will force more than 143 million people in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and Latin America from their homes (Bharadwaj et al 2021).

Figure 2.3 Number of police flagged mental health incidents (36 forces) (Jones, 2019)
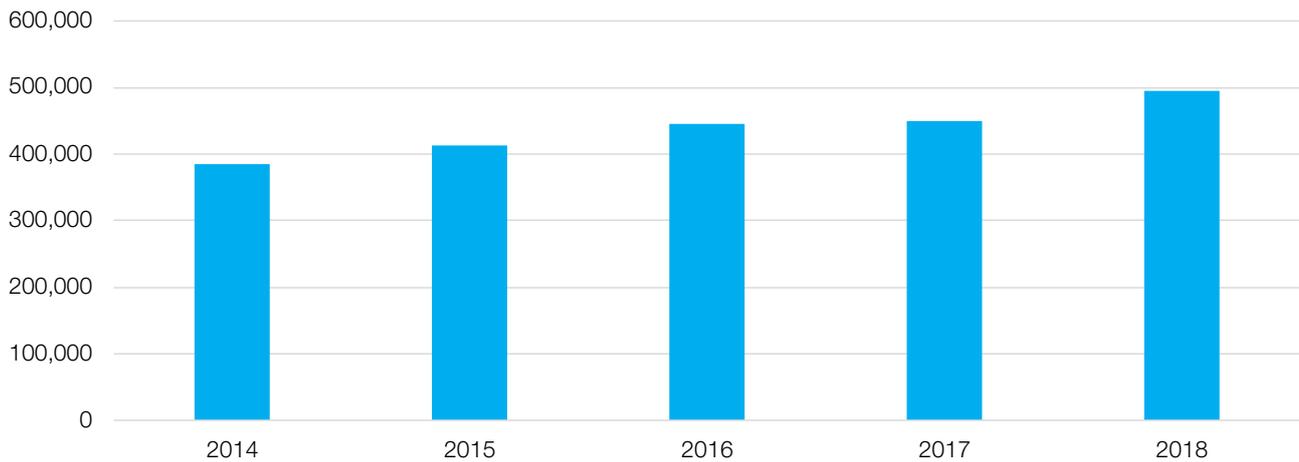
Climate change is also generating political protest and we should expect that to intensify as global temperatures rise and citizens become frustrated with the scale and pace of the political response. The Extinction Rebellion and Insulate Britain protests have shown that people are willing to engage in more militant forms of direct action to make their views known. The police will increasingly find themselves seeking to balance the right to peaceful protest with their responsibilities to uphold public order.

2.3.2 Pandemics

Research has found that that the risk of global pandemics is increasing (Penn 2021). This is thought to be the result of population growth and agricultural intensification which increase the risk of viruses transferring from animals to humans. Poverty, increased population density and the ease of global travel also mean that such viruses can spread more rapidly.

The experience of the coronavirus pandemic has shown how highly disruptive such events can be. The world economy has been shut down for prolonged periods. Governments have instructed their citizens to stay in their homes and have given the police extensive powers to enforce tight restrictions on liberty in the name of protecting public health. The way we live and work has been transformed, probably permanently.

If there are to be more frequent pandemics, consideration will need to be given to how we become more resilient in dealing with them. We will also need to learn the lessons from the response to Covid-19 (see Box 2.1).

2.4 SOCIAL CHANGE

We are living through a period of significant social change, characterised by the growing complexity of social need, a demand for previously marginalised forms of violence, abuse and exploitation to be taken more seriously by the criminal justice system and the development of new forms of social tension and political polarisation.

2.4.1 Complex needs

The College of Policing noted in 2015 that "*Non-crime incidents account for 84 per cent of all command and control calls.*[8] *Local police data suggests in some forces, 'public safety and concern for welfare' incidents now represent the largest category of recorded incidents. As with crimes that related to vulnerability, public protection and safeguarding, these incidents are likely to consume more resource effort as they can be more complex, many involving combined agency responses*" (College of Policing, 2015).

An increasing amount of police work involves responding to incidents linked to **mental health** problems. A survey of 36 police forces by the BBC shows a 28 per cent increase in incidents flagged as mental health related between 2014 and 2018 across 26 forces (Figure 2.3). Police use of their powers to detain a person under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983 increased by 33 per cent between 2017 and 2020.[9]

This increase in the number of police recorded mental health incidents has been attributed to a number of causes, including reductions in funding for mental

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[8] We should note that some of those incidents that did not result in a crime being recorded may nevertheless have been linked to crime.

[9] Excluding Lancashire, Warwickshire and West Mercia for comparability due to changed recording systems.

health services, leading to fewer beds and less out-of-hours support, greater reporting due to increased awareness among members of the public and better understanding and recording of mental health incidents by the police (HMICFRS, 2018).

Police devote upwards of three million 'investigation hours' per year to **missing persons** reports in England and Wales, which is the equivalent of 1,562 full-time police officers per year or 36 officers per force.[10] The average cost per investigation can range from £1,870 to £2,415, and the total annual cost of these investigations is estimated to be between £394m and £509m or between three and four per cent of the 2021/22 £13.7bn police budget (Babuta and Sidebottom, 2018).

According to the National Crime Agency (NCA) the number of missing incidents recorded by police increased by 65 per cent between 2013/14 and 2019/20 (Figure 2.4).

Increased missing persons incidents is partly linked to the pressure on mental health services, with eight in ten adults going missing because of diagnosed or undiagnosed mental health reasons (Home Affairs Committee, 2018; Holmes, 2017).

Another driver is the care system. Nearly half of all young people in care go missing at least once compared to one in 10 of the general population (Babuta and Sidebottom, 2018). One respondent to our Call for Evidence argued that under-investment in children's services has led to increased use of private, unregulated care homes in lower cost areas miles away from family networks. This leaves children in these homes vulnerable to exploitation. Indeed, a large proportion of missing child incidents originate from a small number of private care homes (Shalev Greene and Hayden, 2014).

Although self-reported **drug use** has declined in England and Wales over the last two decades (largely driven by reduced cannabis consumption) the proportion of people using Class A drugs has increased (Figure 2.5) (ONS, 2020a).

There is also evidence that use of some of the most addictive drugs has been rising. The estimated number of opiate and crack cocaine users in England rose 4.4 per cent between 2014/15 and 2016/17 (O'Connor, 2019). Recorded deaths linked to drug misuse rose 83 per cent between 2012 and 2020 (ONS, 2021c) and hospital admissions for drug-related mental and behavioural disorders in England have more than doubled in a decade (NHS Digital, 2019).

[10] This assumes each officer works 1920 hours per year (40 hours per week, 48 weeks of the year).

Figure 2.4 Missing related calls and missing incidents between 2013/14 and 2019/20 (NCA, 2019a; NCA, 2021)

Missing persons calls — Missing persons incidents
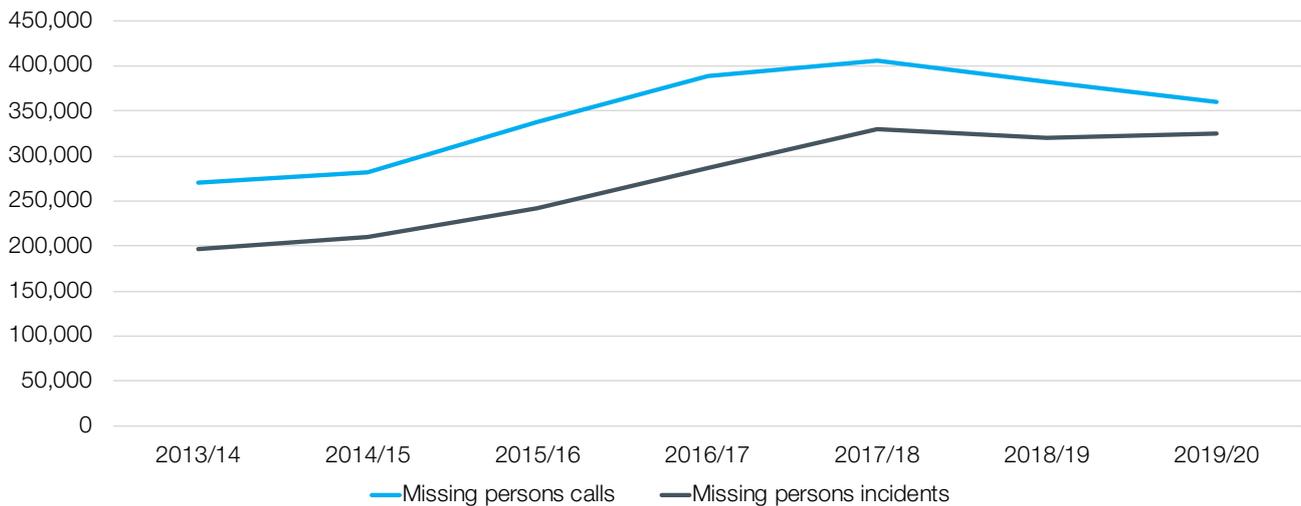
Figure 2.5 Proportion of 16 to 59-year-olds reporting use of drugs in the last year (percentage)

All drugs ·····(Trend)   Any cocaine ·····(Trend)
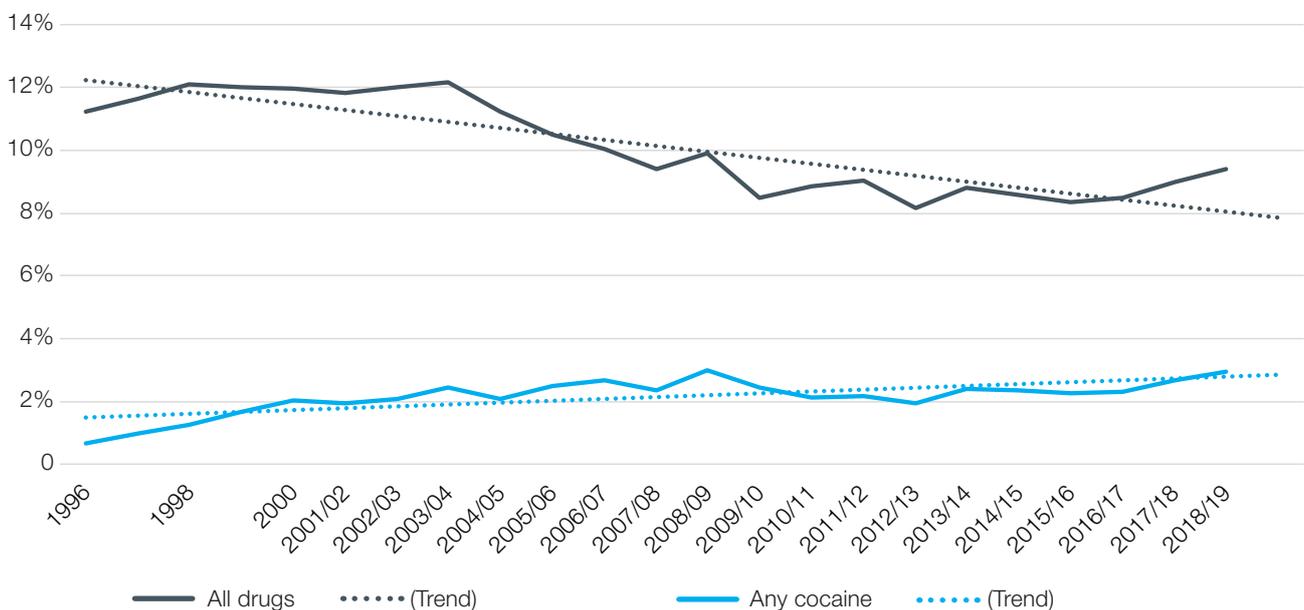
Looking ahead, many of the factors that have driven the rise in the number of people presenting with complex social needs look set to continue or intensify. Most long-term forecasts predict that income inequality and relative poverty will worsen in the years ahead unless action is taken by government to tackle it.

While the latest Spending Review increased the budgets of almost all government departments, there are reasons to think that in the long-term public spending may continue to be constrained. Even before the coronavirus pandemic the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) was forecasting a tight fiscal context as we move through the 2020s and 2030s (OBR 2018). This is a result of the need to spend much more on health, social care and pensions as the population becomes steadily older. The additional fiscal challenges that will result from the economic downturn and huge increase in state support

required during the coronavirus pandemic will only limit further the fiscal room for manoeuvre.

If these trends hold we can expect the police to continue to dedicate a large amount of time responding to the needs and problems of people who suffer from multiple and complex disadvantages. This will require the police to work in an increasingly collaborative and integrated way with other public services. We address how they might do this in Part II of this report.

2.4.2 Violence against women and girls

In recent years we have seen growing demands for previously marginalised forms of violence, abuse and exploitation to be taken seriously by the criminal justice system. In particular, there has been increased reporting of male violence and sexual abuse against women and girls.

Figure 2.6 Police recorded domestic abuse: violence, other crime and incidents (ONS, 2021e)

Legend: ■ All DA violence ■ All other DA crime ■ All DA incidents (not resulting in crime)
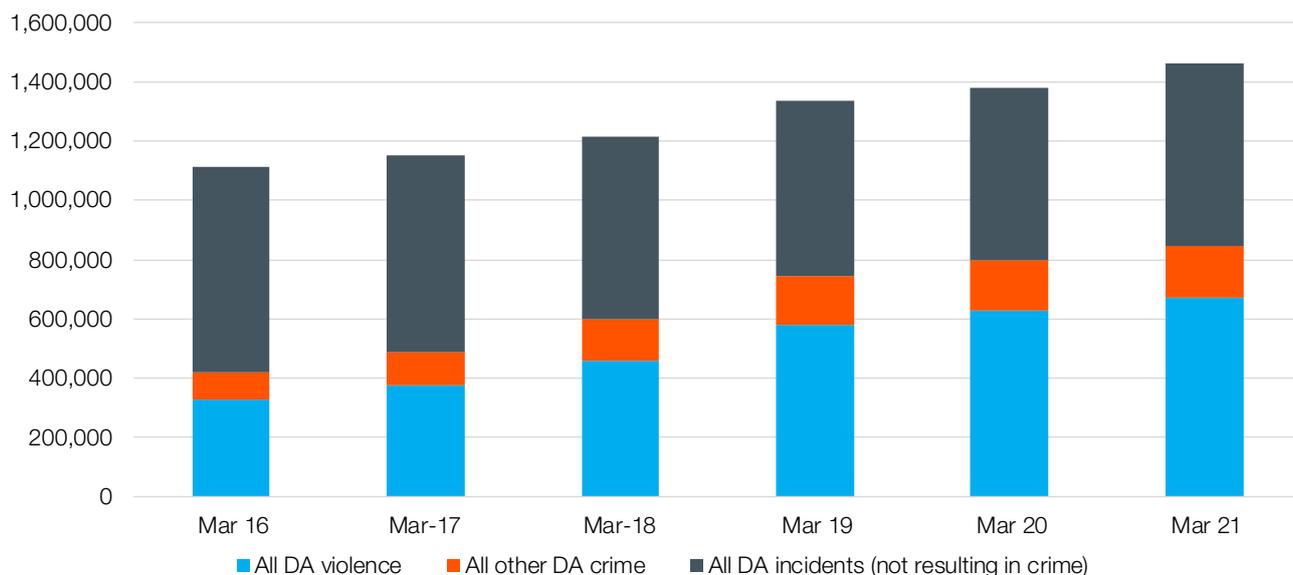
Most violence experienced by women is **domestic abuse** perpetrated by a current or former intimate partner or another family member. For female victims of violent crime, the offender was an intimate partner in 49 per cent of cases, compared with 22 per cent of cases for male victims (ONS, 2021d).

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) reports a gradual downward trend in the prevalence rates of domestic abuse against women aged 16 to 59 over the last 15 years from 1.7 million incidents in March 2005 to 1.3 million incidents in the year ending March 2020 survey (ONS, 2020b). However, at the same time, we have seen increased reporting of domestic abuse, which is thought to be linked to increased confidence among victims that the criminal justice system will take cases seriously (Holder, 2001; Keeling et al, 2015). As Figure 2.6 shows, there was a 50 per cent increase in reported domestic violence and other domestic abuse crime between 2016 and 2021.

23 per cent of women have experienced **sexual assault** in since the age of 16, compared to five per cent of men (ONS, 2021a). In the year to March 2020, 773,000 adults aged 16 to 74 were victims of sexual assault (including attempts), of whom 80 per cent were women (ONS, 2021f).

In recent years, there has been a major increase in the number of victims reporting sexual offences to the police. For rape, this figure increased from 16,374 to 55,709 between March 2013 and March 2021, a 240 per cent increase. For other sexual offences this figure increased from 37,225 to 92,174 in the same period, a 148 per cent increase (Figure 2.7) (ONS, 2021a). The launch of Operation Yewtree in 2012 and the birth of the #MeToo movement in 2017 are believed to have contributed to this huge rise in reporting (Bowcott, 2019).

Despite improved crime recording and increased reporting, conviction rates for the most serious offences remain low. Of the approximately 128,000 victims of rape a year, only 1.6 per cent resulted in someone being charged, down from 8.5 per cent in 2015 (HM Government, 2021; Home Office, 2021a).

2.4.3 The physical and sexual abuse of children

It is estimated that approximately 8.5 million adults (21 per cent of the population) experienced abuse before the age of 16 years and an estimated 3.1 million adults were victims of sexual abuse as children (ONS, 2020c).

NSPCC research shows that police recorded child sexual abuse (CSA) offences rose from 32,821 in England and Wales in 2014/15 to 59,793 in 2019/20, an 82 per cent increase (NSPCC, 2021).

Only 4 per cent of child abuse reports made to the police end in a charge or summons and this is thought to be due to the difficulty in collecting evidence especially in non-recent cases (ONS, 2020d).

A major challenge for the police in the years ahead is how to meet the demand for non-recent abuse to be investigated. With constrained resources and large volumes of unreported demand, difficult decisions will inevitably need to be made about the balance between investigating the crimes of the past and the need for immediate safeguarding.

2.4.4 Social tension

Since the foundation of the police service in the 19th century, the police have always played a role in ensuring public order and managing social tension. This

Figure 2.7 Crime Survey for England and Wales sexual assault and police recorded rape and sexual assault from March 2005 to March 2021 (ONS, 2021a; ONS, 2021g)

- Police recorded rape
- Police recorded other sexual offences
- CSEW: Any sexual assault (incidence) (right axis)
- CSEW: Any sexual assault (incidence - women 16-59) (right axis)
- CSEW: Any sexual assault (prevalence - men 16-59) (right axis)
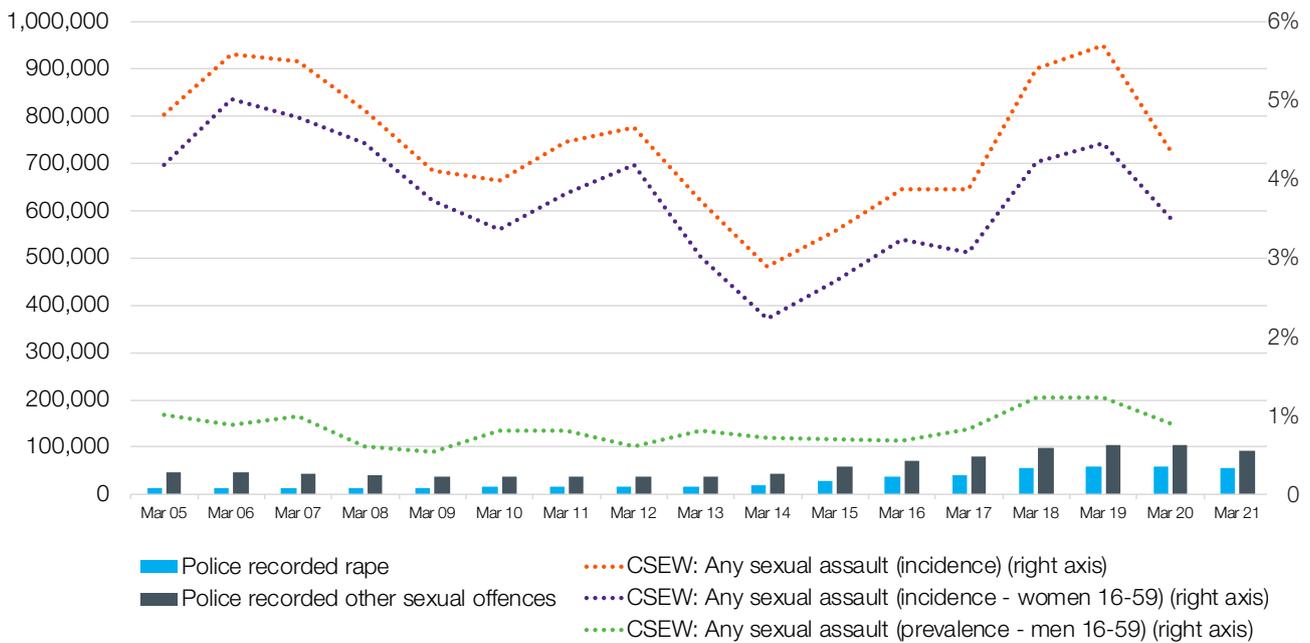
Figure 2.8 Frequency of types of protest action since 1985 (Bailey, 2020)

- Confrontational
- Informational
- Strike
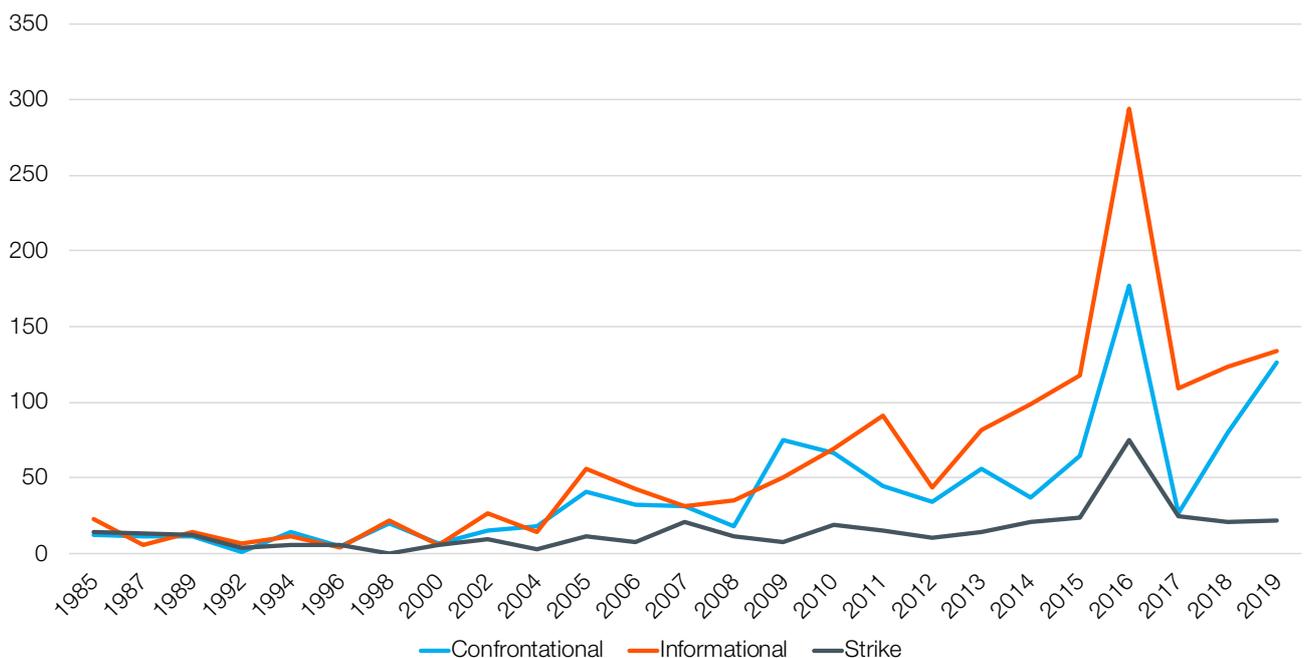
section explores how these tensions have manifested themselves in three areas in recent years: the policing of protest, hate crime and terrorism.

The number of **protest** events has risen steadily over the last decade, going from 83 in 2007 to 280 in 2016. While the vast majority of these protests have been peaceful, there has been a rise in more confrontational protest tactics. Figure 2.8 shows a dramatic spike in the number of confrontational protests, increasing from seven in 2000 to 126 in 2019. This is linked to the Extinction Rebellion protests in 2018 and 2019 which

actively promoted civil disobedience as a way of calling for stronger action on climate change. These forms of protest look set to intensify as the climate crisis accelerates.

The number of **hate crimes** reported to the police in England and Wales rose by 194 per cent between 2012/13 and 2018/19, when 114,958 hate crimes were recorded (Figure 2.9).

This increase is likely to reflect an increased willingness among victims to report, alongside a reduced tolerance for prejudice and discrimination. It also reflects an

Figure 2.9 Hate crimes recorded by the police, by monitored strand 2011/12 to 2020/21 (excluding Greater Manchester) (Home Office, 2021b)
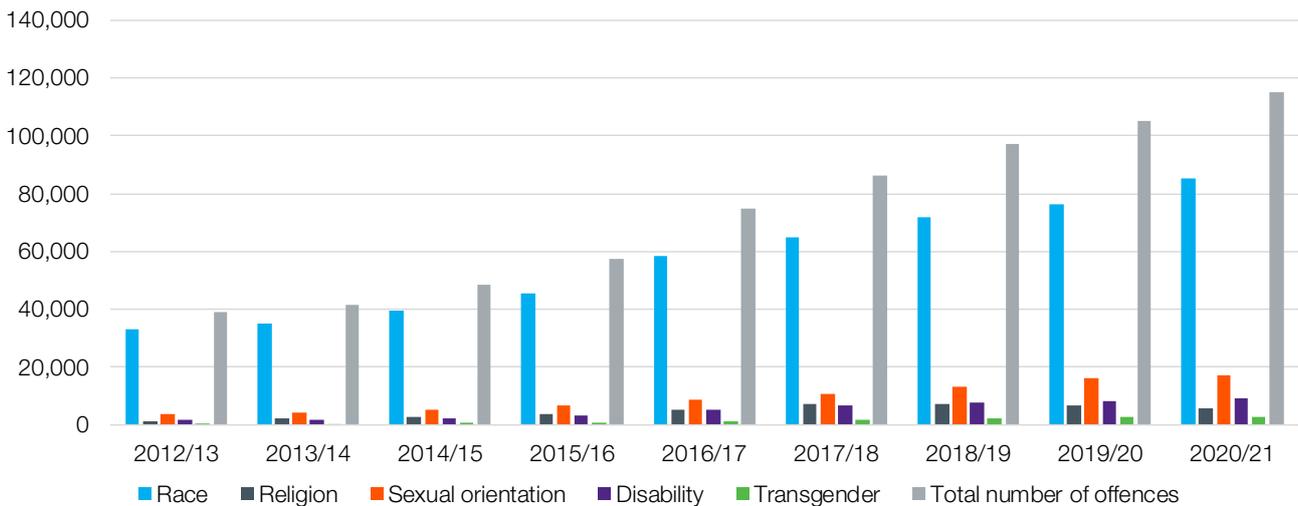
increase in incidents which take place via social media. Looking ahead, managing the growing numbers of hate incidents online will be a major challenge for social media companies, regulators and the police.

In total, 3,411 people have died as a result of **terrorism** since 1970 in the UK. Most deaths between 1970 and 1990 were a result of the conflict in Northern Ireland, but since the turn of millennium a large number have been the result of Islamist attacks. Al Qaida claimed responsibility for the deaths of 56 people, during the London bombings of 7th July 2005, while, in 2017, 42 people were killed in Islamist terror attacks in London and Manchester (Allen and Harding, 2021).

There is also a growing threat from far-right groups. Each year between 2018 and 2021, the proportion of White people arrested for terrorism-related activity exceeded the proportion of Asian people (Home Office, 2021c). The former head of MI5, Sir Andrew Parker, was quoted in the Financial Times as saying that half of the terror attacks foiled in 2019 involved those on the far-right (Barber, 2020).

It is predicted that the demand on the police generated by terrorism will continue to increase, even if the number of attacks does not. This is because the methodology and sophistication of terrorist plots are expected to continue to evolve and, according to police responses to our Call for Evidence, there will continue to be *"self-radicalising lone actor terrorists who can cause huge disruption with relatively small-scale attacks"*. CE1.29

2.5 ORGANISED CRIME GROUPS ARE EXPLOITING THESE CHANGES

So far, we have described three transformations that will shape the context for public safety in the 2020s and 2030s. One common thread that runs through all three is that they are each being exploited for profit by organised crime groups.[11]

Organised crime groups have been particularly adept at exploiting the potential of the **technological revolution**. They are using ever more sophisticated technology to trade criminal commodities via the dark web, launder profits through virtual currencies and conceal communications using encryption technology (NCA, 2019b, 2020).

They have also been exploiting **environmental change**. In many parts of the world organised crime groups are profiting from resource shortages and environmental crime. This includes cartels taking control of local water supplies in countries such as Pakistan and Kenya. Armed groups are also exploiting the boom in demand for rare earth and precious metals. Electric vehicle (EV) production is increasing demand for the lithium and cobalt used in EV batteries, which in turn is fuelling labour exploitation including child labour. Organised crime is also involved in fraudulently taking the recyclable waste from developed countries and disposing of it through dangerous processes in the Global South (Walker, 2021).

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11. We note that the definition of 'organised crime group' is contested. Here we use the definition in statute of three or more people working together for a criminal purpose (Section 45 of the Serious Crime Act 2015).

According to the National Crime Agency (NCA), organised crime groups also moved quickly to both adapt to and exploit the conditions of the **coronavirus pandemic**:[12]

- The pandemic made it harder to use conventional money transfer services such as Money Service Businesses (MSBs). Organised crime groups therefore turned to covert digital transfer methods such as crypto-assets or currencies to engage in **money laundering**.

- During the pandemic there was an increase in **cyber-enabled fraud**. This included a 'boom' in the sale of counterfeit healthcare and sanitary products, PPE and pharmaceuticals (Europol, 2020a). There were also attempts to exploit the UK's track and trace app, using vishing, phishing and bogus calls to obtain personal data from victims.

- The threat from **cyber-dependent crimes** increased, particularly criminal ransomware attacks targeting organisations. The rise in remote working and the use of unfamiliar online services (e.g. video conferencing applications) brought new opportunities to infiltrate networks.

- The fact that children and young people were spending more unsupervised time on the internet is considered likely to have increased opportunities for **child sexual offenders** to contact children via gaming sites, chat groups in apps, phishing attempts via email or approaches on social media. During the first lockdown referrals of child sexual abuse material from the technology industry to Europol rose sharply from under 200,000 in January 2020, to over one million in March 2020 (Europol, 2020b).

- Social distancing and other restrictions on movement reduced the ability to engage in street **drug dealing**. Drug users increasingly turned to open web and darknet markets, as well as to secure encrypted communication applications. This may have been a catalyst for longer term changes at the retail end of supply.

Finally, organised crime groups have been exploiting many of the **social changes** described above, particularly through the criminal exploitation of those who have complex needs.

Organised crime has been heavily involved in the exploitation and abuse of vulnerable women and children through modern slavery and human trafficking (MSHT). The police recorded 8,730 offences in the year to March 2020 with 10,613 potential victims referred to the National Referral Mechanism (Modern Slavery Unit, 2021). Although these figures represent an increase on previous years, this is believed to reflect growing awareness and law enforcement activity. The scale of offending is much greater than official figures suggest, with one estimate suggesting there are more than 100,000 victims in the UK (Centre for Social Justice, 2020).

Organised crime groups have also been exploiting vulnerable children in order to expand drug markets outside of the big cities. The **County Lines** distribution model involves the supply of drugs, principally crack cocaine and heroin, by city-based networks and organised crime groups, into smaller towns and rural areas, and the use of dedicated, branded mobile phone 'deal lines' to take orders and arrange delivery. More than 3,000 such lines were identified in 2019, with 800 to 1,100 believed active at any one time (NCA, 2020).

The County Lines model relies on the exploitation of children and young people to move consignments of drugs, make deliveries, collect payment and carry out other related criminal activities. They might threaten a young person or their family, or else offer rewards such as money, food, alcohol, clothes and jewellery, or improved status, but in such a way that the child feels in debt to their exploiter (Stone, 2018).

Vulnerable adults are also sometimes exploited, for example through the 'cuckooing' of accommodation for use in drugs activity (NCA, 2019c). Due to the increased availability and aggressive marketing tactics used in new territories, Class A consumption appears to have grown more rapidly away from urban markets (Hales et al, 2020). The rise of the County Lines model has also been linked to the increase in **knife crime** in the last few years (see Box 2.2).

2.6 PUBLIC SECURITY

In this section we turn to the subjective aspects of security. How people experience crime and safety is important. If people feel unsafe then this is likely to have a major impact on their wellbeing and is therefore a legitimate focus for public policy.

Here we focus on people's levels of concern about crime and how these have changed in recent years. In the next chapter we discuss how people view

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12. These were NCA sources interviewed by the Police Foundation as part of a joint project with Crest Advisory on how the police responded to the coronavirus pandemic. See Aitkenhead et al. (2022).

Box 2.2 Knife crime

In recent years we have seen an increase in serious and weapon enabled violence, (NCA, 2019b; NCA 2020; Hales et al, 2020), which has become one of the most pressing and high-profile policing and public safety challenges facing the country.

Overall, the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) shows that levels of violence have fallen significantly since the peak of crime in 1995, from an estimated 4.5 million incidents in 1995 to approximately one million in 2021.

However, police crime records and NHS data (ONS, 2021a), show a marked increase in levels of serious violence, particularly violence involving knives, since 2015 (Figure 2.10). Knife homicides, most notably of younger male victims (Figure 2.11), have also increased over the same period.

Figure 2.10 Trends in police recorded violence involving knives and NHS hospital admissions for assault with sharp objects (ONS, 2021a)

Police recorded assault with injury/assault with intent to cause serious harm
Police recorded robbery
Police recorded other violent and sexual offences (attempted murder, threats to kill, rape, sexual assualt)
Hospital admissions in NHS hospitals in England and Wales for assault with sharp objects – right axis
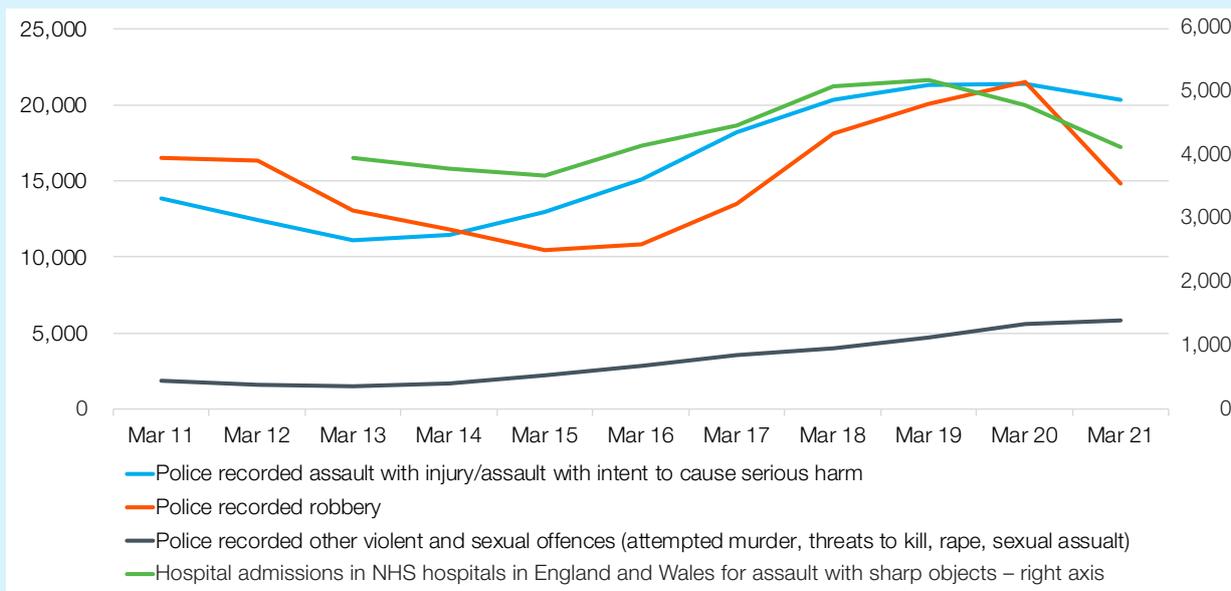
Figure 2.11 Homicides by sharp instruments by age and sex of victim (ONS, 2021h)

Male - under 18 — Male - 18-34 — Male - 35-54 — Male - 55 and over
Female - under 18 — Female - 18-34 — Female - 35-54 — Female - 55 and over
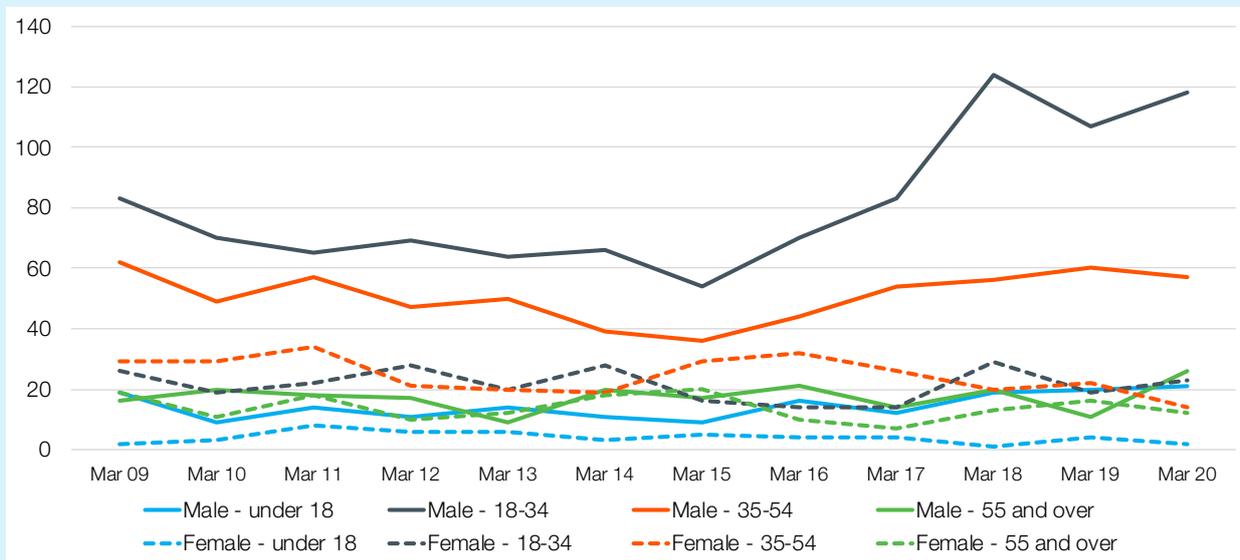
The most significant immediate driver behind this increase in serious violence is changes in the drug market. The link between drug market dynamics and spikes in serious violence is well-documented internationally (for a recent summary see Morgan et al, 2020).

The timing and locations of recent increases in England and Wales is consistent with the hypothesis that county lines activity is a significant driver of serious violence. For instance, although continuing to concentrate in urban areas, knife crime and robberies have increased fastest in more rural police force areas (Hales et al, 2020), and the number and proportion of homicides identified as being 'drug related' have also all increased (ONS, 2020e).

and experience policing, which is also an important contributor to people's sense of security.

Ipsos MORI regularly ask the public what they see as the most important issues facing the country. In January 2020, before the coronavirus pandemic, 20 per cent of the public cited 'crime, law and order and antisocial behaviour' as one of the top issues facing Britain today. Of greater concern were Brexit, healthcare, climate change and poverty and inequality. However, crime has been rising as a public concern since 2015 and in 2019 reached the same level of salience in the Ipsos MORI Issues Index as during the August 2011 riots (Figure 2.12).

This pre-pandemic increase in the public salience of crime is most likely linked to the fact that more people think that crime is going up. Figure 2.13 shows that there has been an increase since 2015 in the numbers of people who believe that crime is getting worse locally and nationally.

These figures are at odds with the findings from the CSEW which show that overall crime has continued to go down or stayed broadly flat in recent years. We should note that these perceptions also seem to be at odds with people's perceptions of the likelihood that they themselves will become a victim of violence, car theft and burglary. Perceived likelihood of victimisation of those common crime types has declined steadily since the mid-1990s.

One reason for the apparent tension between a perception of rising crime and a broadly flat overall crime rate may be the rise in serious violent crime in recent years (see Box 2.2), which has received substantial attention in the news media. Such serious incidents affect relatively small numbers of people directly but because of their seriousness receive substantial coverage in the media and permeate the public consciousness.

Fear of crime is not experienced equally. Those on low incomes worry significantly more about car theft, race attacks, robbery, being attacked, burglary, rape, online crime and identity theft than those on high incomes (Cuthbertson, 2018). Those who live in deprived areas are up to almost three times more likely to be fearful of violent crime (ONS, 2021a).

Indeed, if we look at victim data, they are right to be more fearful. In the latest Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (May 2020 to March 2021) 3.5 per cent of people living in the most deprived areas in England and 4.7 per cent of those living in the most deprived areas in Wales were victims of personal crime (excluding fraud and computer misuse). These figures were 2.9 per cent and 1.3 per cent for people in the least deprived areas, respectively (ONS, 2021a).

Fear of crime is also unequally felt among different ethnic groups. 22 per cent of Asian people, 21 per cent of Black people, 13 per cent of people of mixed

Figure 2.12 Ipsos MORI Issues Index: How the public see crime/law and order/antisocial behaviour as an issue facing the country (Ipsos MORI, 2021)
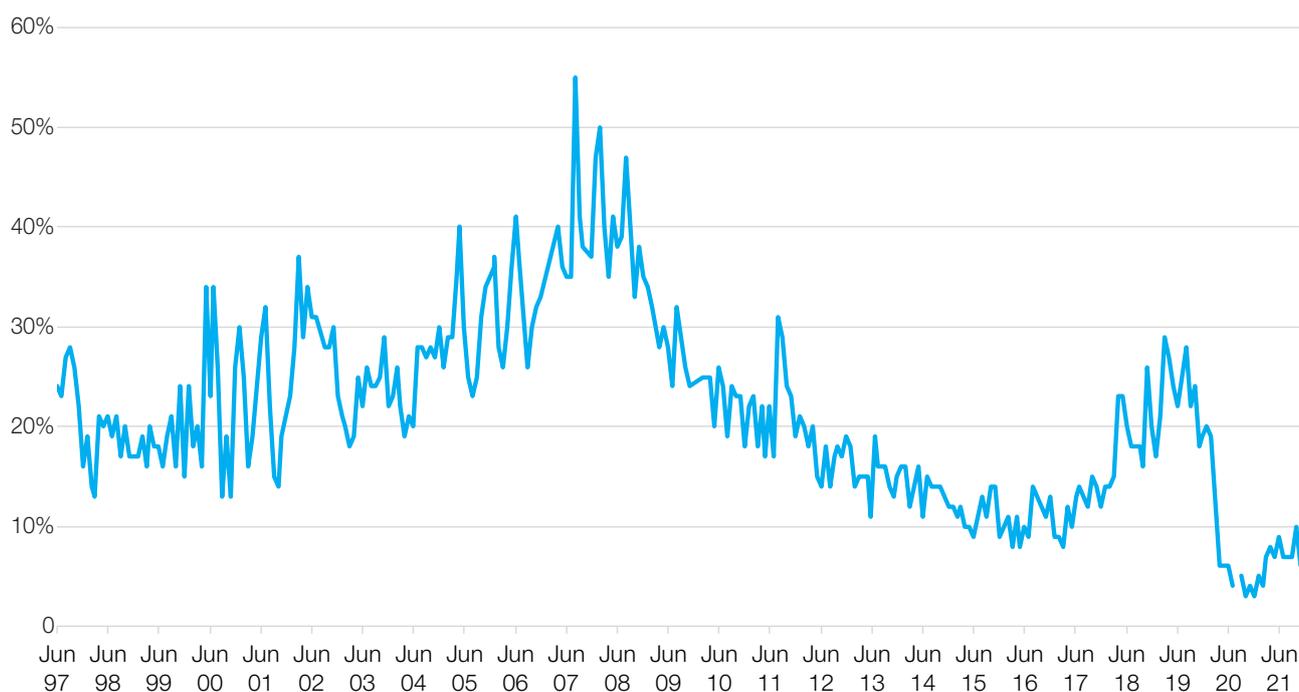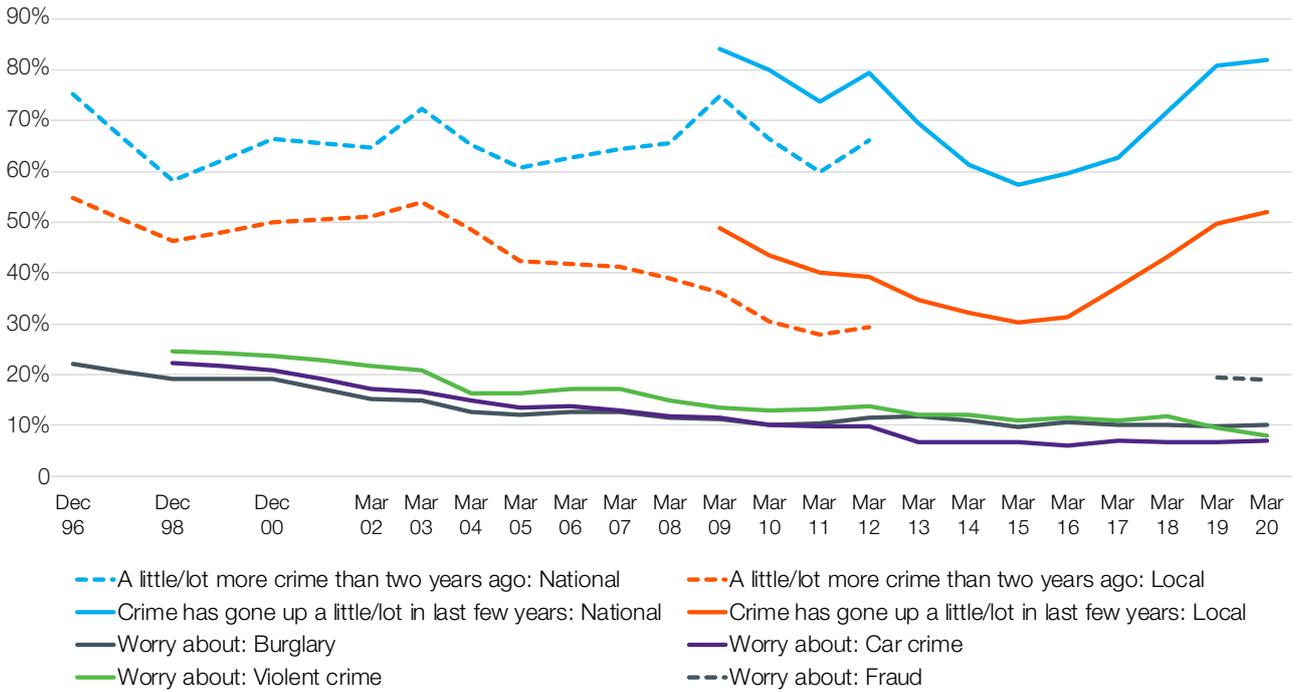
ethnicity and 4 per cent of people from 'other' ethnic groups (down from 22 per cent in the previous year) report high levels of worry about violent crime, compared to seven per cent of White people (ONS 2021a).

Similarly, for burglary, 22 per cent of Asian people, 16 per cent of Black people, 8 per cent of people of mixed ethnicity and 13 per cent of people from 'other ethnic groups have high levels of worry about burglary, compared to 8 per cent of White people (ONS 2021a).

There are also marked gender differences in the fear of crime. 13 per cent of women have high levels of worry about violent crime, compared to just four per cent of men. Women also report higher levels of worry about burglary and car crime than men (ONS, 2021a).

2.7 CONCLUSION

In this section we have described how three forms of change have transformed the nature of the public safety and security challenges we face. The technological revolution has led to an explosion in crime on the internet, making fraud and cybercrime now more than half of the offences experienced by people in England and Wales.

Environmental change is creating much greater turbulence, from more frequent extreme weather events to mass migration, from more frequent disease pandemics to more widespread civil disobedience.

We are also living through social changes that all have an impact on the work of the police and the safety and security of citizens. We have seen the rise of more complex social needs that tend to require a police response when they escalate into crisis. We have seen growing demands for previously neglected forms of crime and harm, particularly those committed by men against women and children, to be taken more seriously by the criminal justice system. And we have seen rising social tensions and increased political polarisation, which play themselves out in terms of levels of protest, hate crime and terrorism.

Organised crime groups are taking advantage of these changes, directly exploiting technology, environmental crisis and vulnerable people to make illicit profits.

We have also seen growing insecurity as the public has become more concerned about crime in recent years, alongside major inequalities in how people experience harm and insecurity, with those on low incomes, women and those from BME groups being much more likely to be a victim of crime and to feel insecure.

In the next chapter we examine how well the police service has been responding to these challenges.

3. POLICE PERFORMANCE

Summary: Despite the extensive efforts of dedicated police officers and staff across the country our policing model is failing to tackle the new public safety challenges we have described. Detection rates have halved in the last seven years, meaning the police now solve just 9 per cent of crimes reported. The detection rate for rape has fallen from 8.5 per cent to just 1.8 per cent in the last six years. The detection rate for fraud stands at just 0.6 per cent. Fewer victims are satisfied with the service they receive. Although most people trust and have confidence in the police, public confidence has declined in recent years.

How well is English and Welsh policing adapting to a world reshaped by technological, environmental, and social change? In this chapter we look at measures of recent police performance to assess the extent to which our current policing arrangements are coping with the dramatic shifts in the public safety and security context we have described.

We do this by looking at four measures of police performance:

- *Detection rates*: the proportion of crimes reported to the police that lead to a charge or summons.

- *Victim satisfaction*: how satisfied victims of crime are with the service they receive from the police.

- *Public confidence*: how well the public as a whole think the police are doing.

- *Response times:* how quickly the police are able to attend calls for assistance.

We also look at the results of HMICFRS inspections and note an important difference between the direction of travel identified by the inspectorate and what is happening to the four measures identified above.

We should clarify three points at the outset. First, nothing we say about the performance of the system as a whole should be seen as a criticism of police officers and staff, who work extremely hard, often in difficult and dangerous circumstances, to serve the public. As we shall see many of the problems we describe below are a result of our policing institutions not keeping up with social change, rather than the performance of individual officers and staff or even the performance of the organisations they work for. We explain this point more fully toward the end of the chapter.

Second, we do not use crime rates as a measure of police performance. Police presence and tactics can play a role at the local level in affecting crime, but the overall national crime rate is the product of many social and economic drivers. As we saw in Chapter 2 the overwhelming cause of the 75 per cent drop in

traditional crime since 1995 was improved home and vehicle security, not policing. So, we focus here on indicators that are at least to some extent within the control of the police.

Third, we should note that there are many reasons why some key measures of police performance have deteriorated in recent years. We particularly need to highlight one: austerity. Between 2010 and 2014 total funding for the police fell by approximately 14 per cent, and by a further 2 per cent by 2018 (Institute for Government, 2019). Spending has since increased to fund the Prime Minister's pledge to recruit an extra 20,000 police officers by 2023. Despite this we are undoubtedly still living with the consequences of a decade of significant cuts to police budgets and that needs to be taken into account as part of any assessment of police performance.

3.1 CRIME DETECTION

Detecting crime and bringing offenders to justice are core police functions. The available data shows a substantial deterioration in police performance at bringing offenders to justice over the recent period. Detection rates have almost halved in the last seven years: in the year to March 2021 only 9.3 per cent of all recorded police crime resulted in a charge or summons, compared to 17 per cent in 2014 (Figure 3.1).

- These reductions apply to all types of crime but are most striking for sexual crime, violent crime and robbery (Figure 3.2):

- Only 1.5 per cent of rapes reported to the police in the year to March 2021 resulted in a charge compared to 8.5 per cent in 2015.

- Just 7 per cent of violent offences resulted in a charge in 2021 compared to 22 per cent in 2015.

Just 8 per cent of robberies recorded resulted in a charge in 2021 compared to 17 per cent previously.

Figure 3.1: Percentage of offences recorded in year resulting in charges/summons, year ending March 2004 to March 2021 (Home Office, 2021)
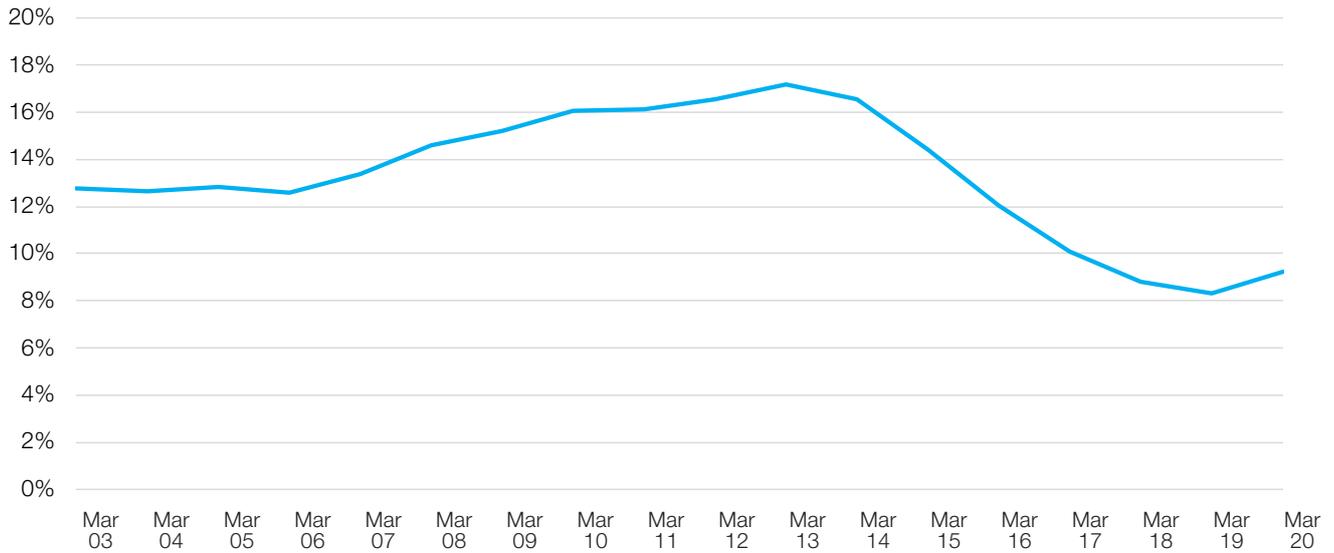
Figure 3.2: Percentage of offences recorded in year resulting in charges/summons and otherwise 'detected'[13] by crime group year ending March 2015 to March 2021 (Home Office, 2021)

■ Charged/summonsed ■ Other 'detected'
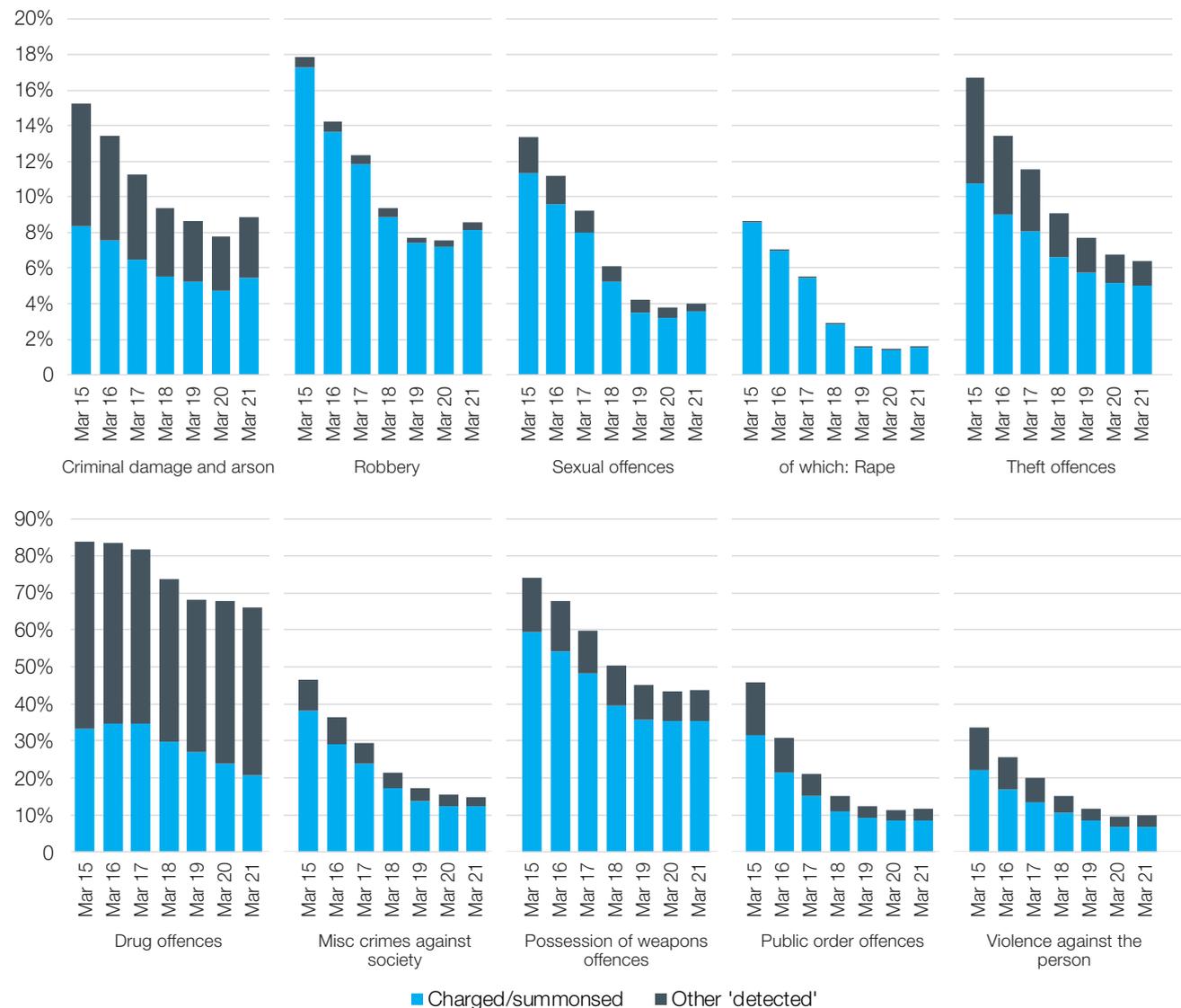
13. In addition to those resulting in a charge/summons some 'detected' crimes are dealt with by way of (formal or informal) out of court disposal or are Taken into Consideration.

For fraud, only one charge was brought for every 166 offences recorded by Action Fraud, CIFAS and UK Finance in the year to March 2021 (0.6 per cent), compared with one for every 69 (1.4 per cent) in 2015.

Detection rates must be interpreted carefully in the context of changing reporting behaviours and recording practices; however it is concerning that one of the main drivers for falling detection rates appears to be the withdrawal of victim support for further action. The proportion of total cases with an identified suspect, but where further action was not taken due to victims not wishing to continue, tripled between 2015 and 2021 (from 8.7 to 26.3 per cent of all cases). This increase applied across all crime types, with particularly notable jumps for rape (20 per cent to 42 per cent), robbery (8 per cent to 21.5 per cent), violence (24 per cent to 44 per cent) and criminal damage/arson (5 per cent to 17 per cent).

An important driver of victim disengagement is how long it takes to complete an investigation and to charge a suspect. The average length of time taken for the police to charge offences has increased from 10 days in 2015 to 23 days in 2019 (Institute for Government, 2019). Sexual offences (69 days) and rape (97 days) take the longest to be assigned a criminal justice outcome, although these have reduced by 30 and 14 per cent since 2016, respectively (Home Office, 2021).

Delays between a crime being reported and a suspect being charged negatively impacts the mental and physical health of victims, witnesses and the accused, who are often vulnerable (HMICFRS, 2021).

We should be clear that not all of the blame for these lengthening investigation times can be placed at the door of the police. The increased complexity of the caseload, combined with enormous capacity constraints in a service affected by austerity, play a significant role. In addition there are significant capacity issues within the rest of the criminal justice system, affecting the courts and the Crown Prosecution Service.

"It should be acknowledged that the criminal justice system reflects directly upon the police with the public often making the link between police actions and activity and convictions. The conviction rates for domestic abuse and rape being worryingly low and not inspiring confidence in police investigations is a good example where media attention tends to focus solely on the police. We have seen and continue to see significant court backlogs, extended and protracted court processes and an increase in demand on the whole system at a time when investment has been receding" (CE2.06).

We should note a further driver behind falling detection rates, which is more stringent crime recording standards. As HMICFRS has required forces to record crime much more accurately, this has almost certainly led to more offences being recorded, very many of them being minor offences where the victim would not wish to see the case progress.

Figure 3.3: Percentage of offences recorded in year assigned selected outcome codes (Home Office, 2021)
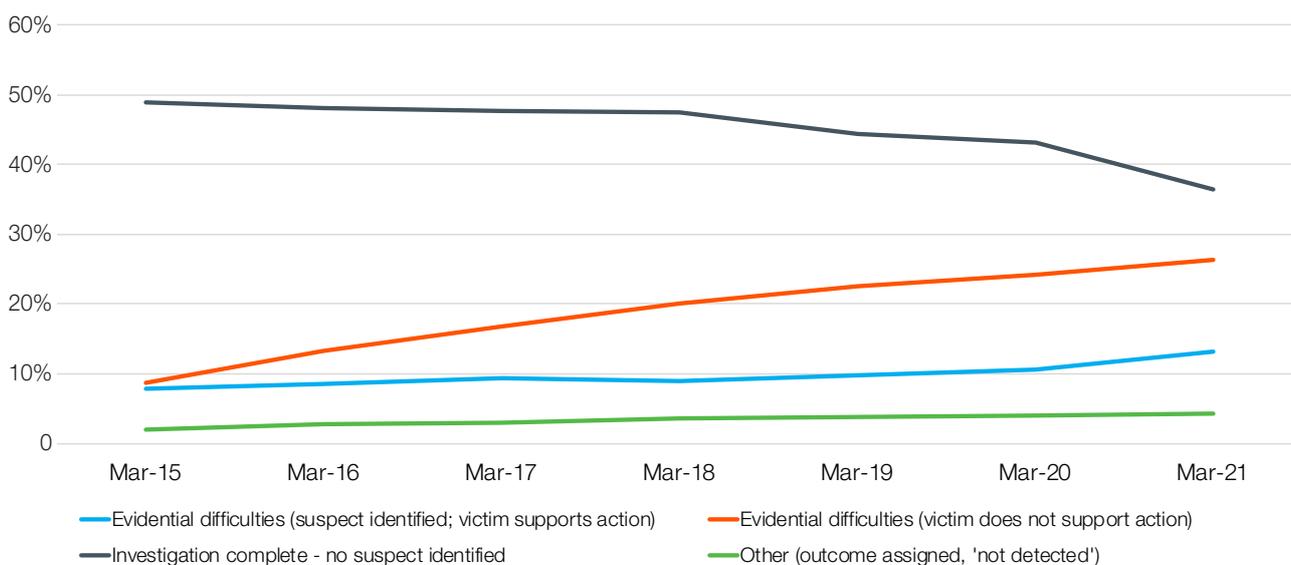
Box 3.1 Key relationship: policing and the Crown Prosecution Service

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) advises the police on the most serious and complex cases for possible prosecution, reviews cases submitted, determines charges, prepares cases, and presents them at court. Aside from central casework divisions that require specialist expertise, it is divided into 13 geographical areas in England and Wales each led by a Chief Crown Prosecutor (CCP) while CPS Direct provides charging support and out-of-hours decision making.

The police are responsible for detecting and investigating crime but then also play a pivotal role in the prosecution process. As a case passes through the sequential steps of the justice system the police have three key responsibilities: keeping victims informed about progress, collecting witness statements, and ensuring witnesses attend court. The police will also gather evidence for prosecutors working on a charge, who remain independent; a prosecutor must not interfere with an investigation or direct police operations, but providing advice to the police is a core function.

In short, the relationship between the police and the CPS involves informing, consulting and advising (CPS, 2018) and is fundamental to the effectiveness and efficiency of the criminal justice system. Doing this effectively saves time throughout the criminal justice process and improves outcomes and experiences for victims, witnesses and defendants.

Below we explore a number of challenges to the way the relationship currently works and make suggestions for improvement. First, capacity constraints can prevent cases from being progressed and cause considerable frustration to victims and witnesses.

Second, there are real pressures on the police around the disclosure process, particularly given large volumes of digital evidence and poor police technology. During the R v Allan investigation the police had no method for analysing the victim's mobile phone and no recording of the search. The mobile phone was not listed in the disclosure schedule and had previously been reported to the CPS as containing no relevant data. Such practice risks breaching privacy laws and undermining victim trust. A recommendation has been made to implement a nationally agreed joint CPS/police protocol and a process for the examination of digital media (CPS and MPS, 2018).

Third, legal practitioners can make unrealistic demands of the police and digital forensic examiners due to a lack of understanding of digital evidence. The CPS does not always understand police technical capabilities, whether that is due to resource constraints or outdated equipment. Improved training for prosecutors in digital forensics ought to help with this.

Fourth, there is a need for much greater joint working from an early stage during the course of a case. A joint file quality improvement plan has been made between each police force and the relevant CPS area (as well as the introduction of a National File Standard). Also, the CPS recently announced that police and prosecutors will work more collaboratively to increase the numbers of rape cases reaching court (CPS, 2021a) by making greater use of Early Advice to consult on investigative strategy, reasonable lines of enquiry and discuss the evidence needed to strengthen a case. This will save the police and CPS time and resources, increase rape referrals to the CPS and reduce the time taken for a charging decision to be reached.

Fifth, as the CPS (2021b) suggest, oversight and management of work volumes should be proactive (moving away from a culture of working to trial dates). Prosecution Team Performance Meetings should ensure local accountability for local outcomes regarding case progression.

3.2 VICTIM SATISFACTION

The police responsibility towards crime victims extends beyond bringing perpetrators to justice; victims also want to see a thorough investigation, to be treated fairly and with respect, to be given practical assistance and reassurance (Hibberd, 2021). According to the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), after improving markedly around 2008/09, the proportion of all crime victims (excluding fraud victims) who were 'very satisfied' with the police response declined from 42 per cent in 2014 to 32 per cent in 2020, while the proportion 'not satisfied' rose from 26 per cent to 34 per cent (Figure 3.4).

Victim satisfaction differs by crime type; 71 per cent of victims of violence were 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied, compared to 61 per cent of criminal damage victims. It also differs by ethnicity (67 per cent of White victims, compared to 59 and 57 per cent of Black and Asian victims, respectively were 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied with the police) and by area-level deprivation (77 per cent in the least deprived areas, compared to 56 per cent in the most deprived) (ONS, 2021).

Unsurprisingly investigative outcomes are associated with victim satisfaction: 71 per cent of victims were 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied where the police had found out who committed the crime against them, compared

Figure 3.4: Victim satisfaction with the police (ONS, 2021)

Legend: Very satisfied, Fairly satisfied, Not satisfied
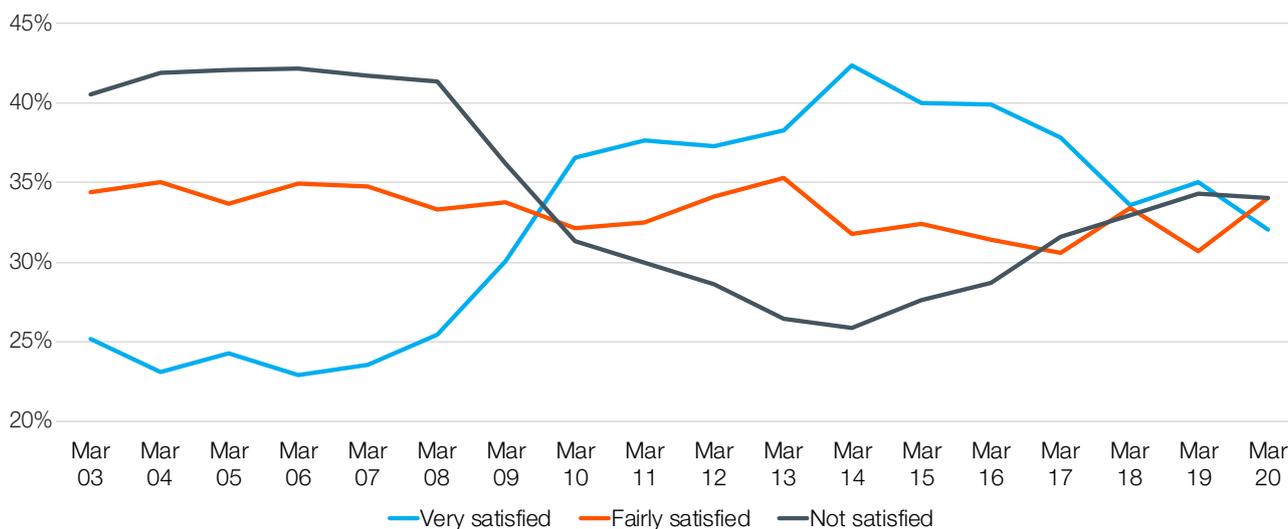
to 63 per cent where this was not the case, and where there was a charge, a caution, or court case, satisfaction was greater still (80 per cent or more). Irrespective of outcomes however, satisfaction was greater where victims felt well informed (91 per cent) compared to those who were 'not well' informed (31 per cent) (ONS, 2021).

One private citizen responding to the Call for Evidence reflected on the way some victims felt the service offered to 'volume' crime victims had been withdrawn to deal with priorities elsewhere.

"Whilst there is a general public acceptance that some minor crimes cannot be pursued in the lack of evidence, there is anger and dismay that reported crimes are assessed at point of contact or that investigations are closed without the victim ever having physical contact with police and despite victims providing additional evidence themselves by what they see as necessity in the lack of police interest. The general complaint is that Police show no interest, merely handing out Crime Numbers as a response … Police are currently losing public confidence in failing to deal effectively with the everyday crimes" (CE1.37).

3.3 PUBLIC CONFIDENCE AND PERCEPTIONS OF LOCAL POLICING

As a public service it is also important that the public as a whole feel that they are getting good value from policing. While public views and attitudes about the police are often complex, they can be summarised into a general confidence indicator, often operationalised in opinion surveys as a rating of overall local service quality (Jackson and Bradford, 2010; Bradford and Jackson 2010).

From a high-point of public approval in the mid-20th century – when Royal Commissioners (1962) found that four in five Britons expressed "great respect" for their police service – public confidence is widely thought to have deteriorated over subsequent decades, as the reputation of policing was hit by a succession of corruption scandals, miscarriages of justice and civil disruption (Reiner, 2000). Despite this, a bedrock of public support endured, with approximately half of British adults at the turn of the millennium, rating their local policing as at least 'good' (Loader and Mulcahy, 2003; Bradford and Jackson, 2010).

Since then we can identify two trends in the Crime Survey for England and Wales, set out in Figure 3.5 below. There was a rise in public confidence between 2006 and 2012, followed by stabilisation and then a decline after 2016.[14] These changes seem

14. The CSEW public perceptions module was suspended in early 2020 due to Covid-19 and no more recent national data is available. The London Public Attitude Survey (PAS), conducted by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), switched to a telephone methodology during Covid and shows that public confidence (as measured by agreement that 'police do a good job in the local area') has continued to fall in London during 2020 and 2021. During the 12 months to September 2021, 52 per cent of Londoners agreed that local police did a good job, compared with a high of 69 per cent in 2016/17 and 58 per cent in early 2020. See https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/mayors-office-policing-and-crime-mopac/data-and-statistics/public-voice-dashboard

Figure 3.5: Public confidence in local police, years ending March 2006 to March 2020. Crime Survey for England and Wales (ONS, 2020).

— % strongly/tend to agree that I have confidence in the police in this area

— % strongly/tend to agree that police are doing a good/excellent job in this area

— % strongly/tend to agree that police and local council are dealing with the crime and ASB issues that matter in this area
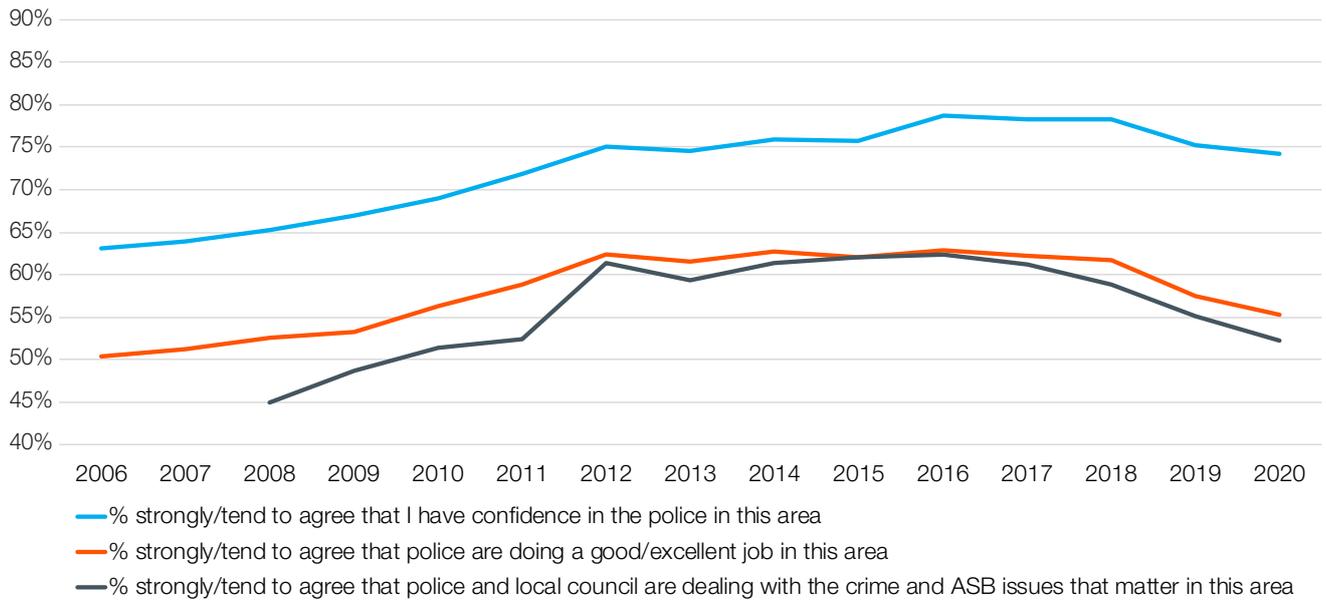
Figure 3.6: Perceptions of local police, years ending March 2006 to March 2020. Crime Survey for England and Wales (ONS, 2020) (percentage strongly/tend to agree)

Community connectedness measures

— Police understand local concerns

— Police can be relied upon when needed

— Police deal with local concerns

Personal treatment measures

— Police would treat you with respect

— Police would treat you fairly

- - Police in this area can be trusted
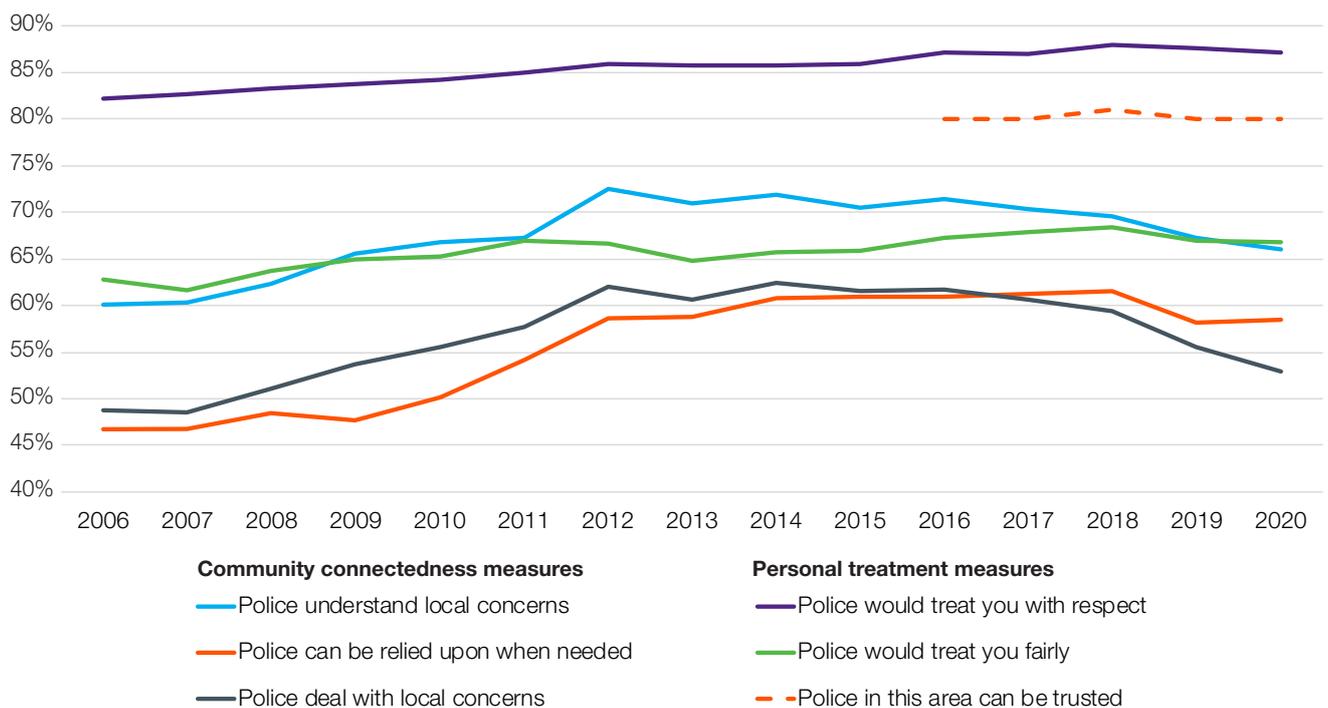
to be linked to a rise and then a fall in indicators of community connection (reliability, local understanding and dealing with local problems). They are less directly linked to perceptions of police treatment (fairness, respectfulness, and trust) which have remained more consistent.[15]

What is the best explanation for these trends? Figure 3.7 compares the rise and fall of these perception indicators with the rise and fall of the numbers of officers in neighbourhood policing roles. We can see that broadly speaking as the National Neighbourhood Policing Programme was rolled out after 2008 indicators of police visibility rose and so too did public confidence.

15. Although, as we describe in Chapter 6, London PAS data suggests these treatment indicators have been in decline since early 2020, raising concerns about police legitimacy.

Figure 3.7: Confidence in local police, police visibility (ONS, 2020) and police officers and PCSOs in 'Neighbourhood Policing' roles (years ending March 2008 to March 2020.[16]

Neighbourhood Policing strength: (police officers and PCSOs in 'Neighbourhood Policing' roles) - left axis

Confidence: (% Strongly/tend to agree that police/council dealing with the crime and ASB in area) - right axis

Visibility: (CSEW: % seeing police patrol on foot/cycle at least once a week) - right axis
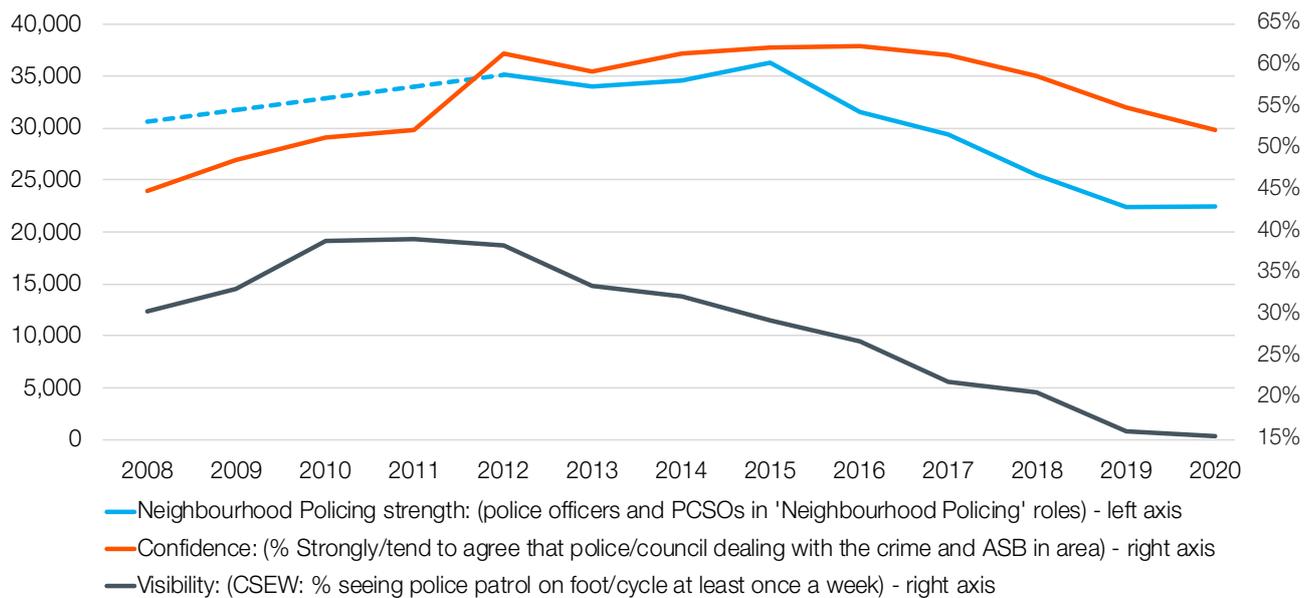
Once neighbourhood policing numbers started to decline we see a fall in visibility and public confidence.

This interpretation is consistent with research showing links between public confidence and police visibility, and with overall police officer numbers (Sindall and Sturgis, 2013), with both relationships mediated by the quality and quantity of local police engagement. It is also consistent with our analysis of variations in public confidence across police forces, where we found a positive correlation between changes in the numbers of neighbourhood officers and PCSOs in a force and public confidence.[17]

We conclude that if the police systematically seek to engage, listen and respond to local concerns, this tends to improve public confidence in the police. When, as over the last decade, the police do less of that, public confidence tends to decline. We return to the implications of this insight in Chapter 6.

3.4 RESPONDING TO CALLS FOR ASSISTANCE

Arguably above all other functions, responding to calls for urgent public assistance, defines the police role (see Chapter 5). The available data indicates that between 2016 and 2019 the volume of 999 calls increased by 14 per cent, while the number of non-emergency calls to 101 fell by 13 per cent.[18] This meant that the combined volume of calls reduced by around 5 per cent in this timeframe. HMICFRS (2020) has suggested that the public is losing confidence in 101 due to poor responses and are therefore calling 999 instead. Volumes of online reporting are far lower.

The publicly available data indicates that between 2016/17 and 2018/19 13 per cent of 999 calls and 24 per cent of 101 calls were not answered within the waiting time target (within 10 seconds for all but two forces).[19] On average, 0.8 per cent of 999 calls and 12 per cent of 101 calls were not answered at all or dropped (CoPaCC, 2020).

16. Home Office workforce data is used for years ending March 2012 to 2020, see: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-workforce-england-and-wales. The 2008 figure is derived from a set of HMIC inspections of Neighbourhood Policing and Developing Citizen Focus Policing conducted in that year, for full methodology see Higgins (2017).

17. Comparing 2015/16 with 2019/20, a weak positive correlation (0.42) was found between force-level changes in ('single' measure) public confidence and workforce numbers allocated to 'neighbourhood policing' (for police officers only, the correlation was 0.40). No relationship was found with overall police officer numbers, or total workforce, or with the numbers allocated to 'local policing' (neighbourhood and response functions combined).

18. These figures are based on data from 35 police forces.

19. These figures are based on data from 30 police forces.

Figure 3.8 Average response times for immediate 999 calls
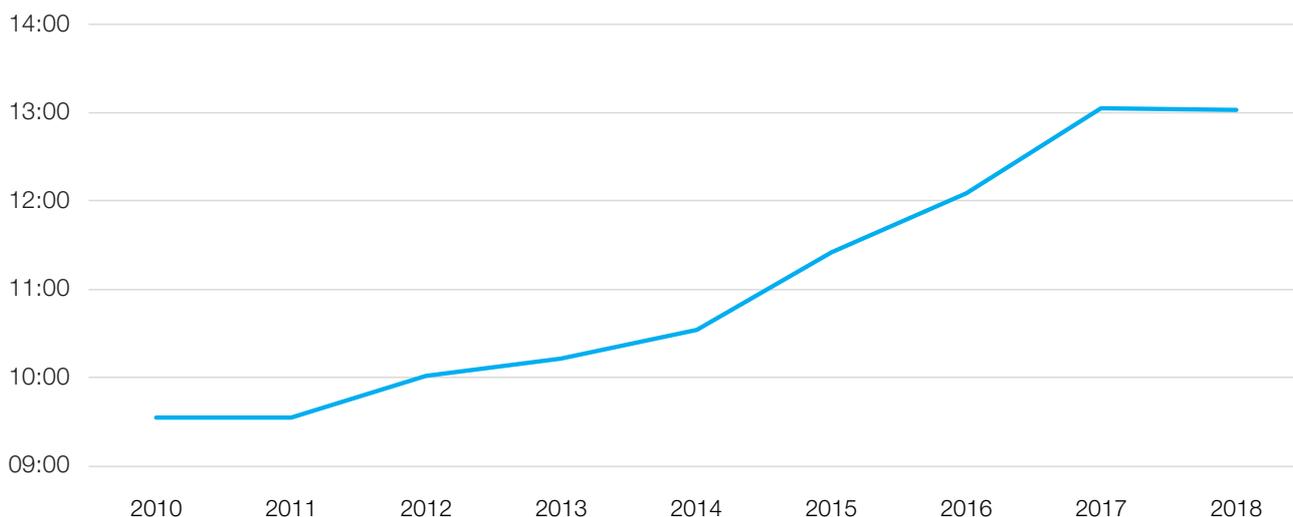
Source: see References (page 175) which shows the data sources for the response times analysis.

Turning from call handling to attendance, Figure 3.8 indicates that the speed of police response to the most urgent 999 calls has slowed. Between 2010 and 2018 response times increased by 32 per cent.[20]

3.5 POLICING UNDER PRESSURE

This chapter has found strong indications that police performance is going backwards: decreasingly able to secure justice for crime victims, very rarely being able to do so for victims of rape, cybercrime and fraud, less often meeting victims' expectations, decreasingly visible within communities, losing public confidence and responding less quickly to public calls for urgent assistance. Whatever the cause it is noteworthy that all of these traditional indicators of police performance are going backwards.

However, we also note that HMICFRS judge that police forces are more consistently achieving 'good' standards of effectiveness (see Figure 3.9). Despite the pressures they are under, the inspectorate finds that most forces continue to use the resources they have efficiently and in responsible ways. It appears then that police forces are doing better with what they have, under the circumstances they find themselves in – but the *results* of that performance are increasingly poor.

This indicates that the problem is not principally with how police forces are managed but rather that they are struggling because of the circumstances in which they find themselves. For one thing, the police (and the other public services they depend upon) have been subject to a period of unprecedented austerity which has eaten into their ability to provide a service to the public. This has now started to be reversed, but the consequences

Figure 3.9 HMICFRS PEEL police force ratings 2015 to 2018/19 (HMICFRS, no date)

20. This is based on a collation of existing FOI data. Data was found for 14 forces, with some missing values.

of such significant cuts to police and other public service budgets will be with us for some time.

But perhaps more significantly still the police are operating in a world that is changing radically, generating more complex cases and a wider range of demands. It is likely that declining police performance is less of a management problem and more of a sociological one. The world has changed and our traditional model of policing has not kept pace.

3.6 CONCLUSION

There are three main implications from our analysis so far and responding to these provides the structure for the rest of this report.

First, there is a **capacity challenge**: such is the range and complexity of public safety demand there is no way that the police on their own are able to tackle it. We can already see this with the response to surging levels of internet crime. Very few of the fraud offences reported to the police result in a person being charged. If one of the most basic expectations of the police is that they catch criminals and bring them before the courts, when it comes to the largest category of crime affecting the people of England and Wales the police are simply not able to perform that function.

We can also see this capacity challenge in relation to the way the police have had to shift to focusing more on high harm cases and less on volume crime. With increased focus on sexual and domestic abuse offences, generally requiring complex and lengthy investigation, the police response to victims of traditional volume crime is often minimal.

Part II of this report focuses on addressing this capacity challenge, first, by looking at the role wider society should play in public safety and, second, by bringing greater clarity to the role of the police.

Second, there is a **capability challenge.** It is not just that the police lack sufficient resources to tackle these challenges, but also that the police service lacks many of the capabilities required to do so. In Part III of this report we show how these capability gaps are impacting on the ability of the police to protect the public.

Finally, there is an **organisational challenge**. The police service needs an organisational platform that can deliver the capabilities required to meet the challenges we have described. Part IV of the report focuses on addressing this organisational challenge.

PART II
POLICING IN A SYSTEM

4. THE PUBLIC SAFETY SYSTEM

Summary: The police cannot tackle the range and volume of the public safety challenges we face on their own. We need to do much more to prevent crime and harm from happening in the first place. We need a public safety system as well as a criminal justice system. A public safety system must be anchored around a new Crime Prevention Agency, backed up by a new duty on business to prevent crime.

There is no feasible strategy that addresses the range, volume and complexity of the public safety challenges of the 21st century through the work of the police and the criminal justice system alone.

The technological revolution is a transformative event which means that the single largest categories of crime affecting people in England and Wales (fraud and cybercrime) are very largely beyond the reach of the police and the courts. If the public's traditional expectation is that we deal with crime by catching and punishing the perpetrators, this is simply not happening in relation to internet crime.

Added to this is the need to address vast swathes of unreported harm, particularly violence against women and girls and child sexual abuse. Currently police forces are simply unable to proactively focus on the most harmful offenders and the most vulnerable victims, many of whom will not report to the police. Instead, the police struggle to cope with the minority of cases that are reported to them.

Then there is the need to provide a more effective response to the traditional volume crimes such as burglary and car theft which the public expect the police to attend and investigate. Many of these incidents are simply being 'screened out' at the point of reporting, given the lack of resources to pursue them.

So, there is a **capacity challenge** in terms of public safety. But this should not however be a counsel of despair. In this part of the report we propose a two-step solution to this challenge.[21] First, we need to design a whole system response to public safety that goes way beyond the work of the police. Second, we need to be much clearer about the role of the police within that system.

In this chapter we make the case for seeing the police as just one part of a wider societal response to crime and harm. The police role is vital and important, but it is just one element in a wider strategy for promoting public safety. What is required is a broad social response to crime and harm based upon a more explicit and institutionally anchored public safety system.

In what follows we do four things: first, we define what we mean by a public safety system; second, we make the case for a systemic focus on crime and harm prevention; third, we describe how other sectors have successfully adopted harm prevention approaches; and finally we outline what the public safety system should look like, making a number of recommendations whose aim is to shift the focus of our response to crime and harm away from simply reacting to it and towards preventing it from happening in the first place.

4.1 WHAT IS A PUBLIC SAFETY SYSTEM?

Public safety can be defined as the protection of the public from various forms of harm, including crime, fire, medical emergencies, natural disasters and antisocial behaviour. In this chapter we exclude the work of the fire and ambulance services from our focus, although we note that these could in principle be incorporated into a 'public safety system'. Our focus here is on preventing those problems from occurring that would otherwise require a response from the police.

A **public safety system** is a system of actors and institutions whose aim is to promote safety and to prevent harm. Note its aim is different to that of the justice system, whose purpose is to secure the just treatment of offenders in the interests of society and victims in particular. In some ways it is comparable to other safety-oriented systems, such as the health and safety system which seeks to prevent workplace accidents and the road safety system which seeks to prevent road traffic collisions.

[21.] Note we address another aspect of capacity – the funding for the police service – in Chapter 13.

When we claim that the state is not investing sufficiently in preventing crime and wider harms we are talking about direct as opposed to indirect prevention.

Direct prevention refers to activities whose primary purpose is to prevent crime and wider harms. This would include for example the work of initiatives such as Secured By Design, a police service programme run by Police Crime Prevention Initiatives that works to improve the security of buildings and their immediate surroundings (SBD, 2021). It would also include the work of the Violence Reduction Units, whose role is explicitly to tackle the causes of violent crime.

Our argument is that the state spends too little on that kind of direct, strategically organised preventative work. It does spend money by contrast on activities that may indirectly prevent crime and harm. There are two main ways in which it does this.

First, the operation of the criminal justice system may have the effect of preventing crime, such as by deterring potential offenders or taking convicted offenders off the streets by putting them in prison. However, these preventative effects of the criminal justice system are indirect by-products of activities undertaken for other reasons, most importantly the need to bring an offender to justice for their crimes.

The second way in which the state might be understood to invest in prevention is that many welfare state provisions and public services may have a preventative impact on crime and wider harms. One might argue, for example, that social security expenditure or spending on schools and nurseries all prevent crime because they ameliorate some of the social conditions in which crime would otherwise flourish. One might argue on that basis that the state does in fact spend a lot of money on preventing crime. However, these preventative effects are indirect by-products of activities undertaken for other reasons.

Our claim is not that the state does nothing to prevent crime and wider harm, but rather that it engages in far too little **direct** preventative work in the arena of public safety. This means that very many opportunities are being missed to prevent crime and to keep people safe.

We identify a number of different ways of thinking about **prevention** which we discuss in an Insight Paper published as part of this Review (Muir, 2021). Our preferred typology is that used within the public health field which breaks prevention down into:

- **Primary prevention:** efforts to prevent problems occurring in the first place.

- **Secondary prevention**: intervening early when a problem starts to emerge, to prevent it becoming established.

- **Tertiary prevention**: making sure ongoing problems are well managed to avoid crises and reduce harmful consequences.

We favour this typology because it contains broad categories that can be applied in changing circumstances. It is also a typology with which police practitioners are increasingly familiar, given the growing intersection of their work with that of public health professionals.

A public safety system should be designed to ensure that work to prevent crime and harm is undertaken at all three stages. Actors within the public safety system would not necessarily deliver this work themselves.

Much of the activity will take place in other sectors (education, health, local government etc) and most of that activity will not be undertaken with the primary aim of preventing crime. Crime and harm prevention will often be an indirect by-product of social policies and programmes which are important in their own right (see Box 4.1).

However, institutions within the public safety system will have responsibility for thinking strategically about what needs to be in place to prevent crime and harm. They will identify gaps and either work with others to fill them or commission or deliver direct prevention work themselves.

4.2 THE CASE FOR A SYSTEMIC APPROACH TO PREVENTION

In this section we make the case for a public safety system, looking first at the evidence base on the efficacy of prevention, second, at why prevention is not currently prioritised and, finally, at why we need a systemic approach.

4.2.1 Prevention is better than cure: the evidence

The general case for prevention makes intuitive sense. It is better to stop a bad thing from happening in the first place than to deal with the deleterious effects afterwards. Not only does this make intuitive sense, but there is also a strong evidence base showing that preventative measures can reduce harm in a way that is superior to later interventions and achieves wider economic and social benefits.

For example, there is strong evidence that action in the **early years** of a child's life helps to avoid harms later. Research has shown that a child's healthy physical development can be promoted by providing breast feeding support or smoking cessation assistance to mothers during pregnancy. Good quality early years provision, offered alongside parental support, can help close cognitive development gaps between richer and poorer children, with lasting benefits (Early Intervention Foundation, 2018).

Not only do these forms of early intervention have intrinsic benefits (improving children's health, wellbeing and educational attainment), they generate wider economic gains. Moreover, they reduce the costs to the public purse that are incurred when things go wrong (Early Intervention Foundation, 2018).

Another policy area where there is a strong evidence base for the value of preventative work is **public health**. Long-term health conditions lead to hundreds of thousands of premature deaths every year. And yet such diseases are largely preventable through lifestyle changes, such as stopping smoking, doing more exercise, eating healthier food and drinking less alcohol (Owen et al, 2011). Research has repeatedly demonstrated the cost effectiveness of often very simple public health interventions, compared with the costs of treating and managing disease (Owen et al, 2011, WHO, 2014).

The case for doing more to prevent **crime** is equally powerful. The evidence is now unequivocal that the biggest factor in explaining the traditional crime drop discussed in Chapter 2 was not activity by the police or tougher prison sentences but upstream preventative action, in particular in reducing the opportunities to offend.

Crime fell across all industrialised nations over roughly the same period, despite these nations having very different approaches to policing and criminal justice. Between 1995 and 2021 the number of **burglaries** in England and Wales fell by 81 per cent (ONS, 2021).

Similarly, in the US the National Crime Victimisation Survey (NCVS) found that recorded burglary victimisation rates fell from 11 per cent of households in 1973 to under 3 per cent in 2003. There were similar falls in domestic burglary across all industrialised countries (Ross, 2013).

Tseloni et al (2017) show that the cause of this drop was improved home security. There were rapid increases in the prevalence of security measures over this period (improved locks, burglar alarms, lighting, cameras etc). Homes without security were much more likely to be burgled and the decline in burglary was in forced rather than unforced entry (Tseloni et al, 2017). The increase in the number of attempted but failed entries alongside the drop in burglaries is also supportive of this 'security hypothesis' (Ross, 2013).

There is a similar story with the fall in **car crime**. Vehicle related theft in England and Wales fell by 84 per cent between 1995 and 2021, according to the Crime Survey for England and Wales (ONS, 2021). In the US, car theft in 2011 had fallen to its lowest level since 1967 (Ross, 2013). Between 2003 and 2016 car theft in France fell by 43.5 per cent and between 2003 and 2018 car theft in Germany fell by 54 per cent (Strategic Review of Policing, 2020).

The cause of this decline in vehicle theft across industrialised countries was again not tougher sentences or changes in policing tactics, but rather the introduction of improved security measures by the car manufacturers, including immobilisers, intruder alarms, central locking, better keys and tougher doors, windows and boots. The trend in 'twocking' that drove car theft in the 1980s and 90s went into sharp reverse as vehicles that were relatively easy to steal became much harder to penetrate (Ross, 2013).

Indeed, the reverse of this argument is also true: simple technical changes to products very often cause crime waves. For example, the recent increase in car theft has been concentrated in high value vehicles that have keyless entry and can be penetrated using remote technology (Harding, 2020). Such crime waves could be avoided if more was done earlier on to anticipate the criminogenic effects of new products.

4.2.2. Why so little focus on prevention?

So, the case for prioritising crime and harm prevention is compelling. Despite this far too little is currently done to prevent crime and wider harm. Most of the state's direct interventions to make the public safe are reactive rather than preventative in nature. We spend £24.5bn a year on policing and criminal justice, most of which is spent on

responding to calls for assistance, investigating crimes, apprehending suspects, bringing suspects before the courts and then managing those convicted in prison or in the community.[22] While some of that reactive work can have a preventative effect, only a small proportion of that money is spent on direct preventative work (see Box 4.1 for what we mean by this).

Why, then, is there so little focus on crime and harm prevention? There are various interconnected reasons for this.

First, in a democracy with regular **election cycles** there is a natural tendency towards political short termism. In order to show voters tangible results, political leaders are incentivised to focus on addressing acute problems of high public concern. This crowds out the space and funding available for preventative measures whose costs are paid upfront and whose benefits may only be realised long after the current class of politicians has moved on.

Second, **policy making is fragmented** into different government departments and this creates barriers to preventative action. Specifically, it means that the benefits from adopting a preventative policy often do not accrue to those who invest in it. So, for example, there is evidence that investment in early years education can reduce the likelihood of a child getting involved in crime in adolescence. In this case the costs of the preventative measures fall to the education department, while the benefits in terms of reduced costs accrue to the home and justice departments.

Third, although preventative action can lead to reductions in costs on public services, it **may not necessarily lead to 'cashable savings'** (immediate reductions in what local providers, commissioners or central government need to spend on providing services). For example, because the police service faces such large volumes of unmet demand, if one source of demand is reduced the organisation would be expected to use the opportunity to deal with the other sources of demand that were not previously prioritised.

Fourth, **the evidence base for interventions may not be strong** and research in areas such as early childhood intervention can take a long time to bear fruit. These gaps in the evidence base can make it hard to convince policymakers that funding will be worthwhile.

Fifth, taking preventative action can involve **costs** for social and economic actors that they would rather avoid. For example, this is particularly the case with

increased regulation, which may be required to ensure that businesses take steps to prevent crime or other harms.

Finally, specifically in relation to crime, our traditional attachment to **ideas about human agency and responsibility** also plays a role in the state's under investment in prevention. There is a powerful human instinct to hold an individual who has committed a crime responsible for it. It is that instinct that has arguably led us to locate the state's response to crime within the criminal justice system, whose role is to hold people to account for the crimes they have committed.

A commitment to crime prevention is certainly not incompatible with the punishment of individual offenders but there are tensions between the pursuit of justice and the demands of prevention. So, for example, it is now widely accepted that for lower-level criminal offences, certainly first-time offences by children and young people, it is better to divert the offender to a social intervention than to see them charged with an offence which may suck them into a lifetime of interactions with the criminal justice system. The focus in such cases is on preventing re-occurrence rather than on holding the individual to account.

However, public support for such approaches tends to fall away the older the offender, the greater the impact on the victim and the more responsible for their actions we deem the offender to be.

Nevertheless, there is no reason why this has to be an 'either/or' choice between pursuing justice and preventing future harm. As we shall see, it is perfectly possible to do a lot more to prevent future crimes, while also doing more to secure justice for victims.

4.2.3 Why we need a systemic approach

Public policy aimed at tackling crime tends to focus on the response of the police and the criminal justice system. But by the time the police, the Crown Prosecution Service and the courts get involved the harm has already been caused and we are left bearing the costs of late interventions to tackle entrenched problems. Because of this focus on responding when things go wrong, we are missing a whole range of earlier opportunities to prevent harm. In an Insight Paper written to inform this review Muir highlighted a whole range of missed preventive opportunities found through in-depth case studies of pension scams, online child sexual abuse and serious violence (see Muir, 2021).

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[22]. The £24.5 billion figure includes the combined budget for the police (£15.2 billion) and the Ministry of Justice (£9.3 billion) in 2020/21 (Home Office, 2020: HM Treasury 2021).

Why are these opportunities being missed? The reason is that no one is responsible for crime and harm prevention. We have clear roles and responsibilities for reacting to crime and harm once it has occurred, in relation to responding to emergencies, investigating crimes, safeguarding those in acute need, bringing suspects before the courts and so on. But no one owns the task of prevention. What is required if we are to move prevention to the heart of our public safety efforts is a much more systemic approach.

We have a criminal justice system, but we lack an explicit and institutionally anchored public safety system, whose focus is on promoting safety and preventing harm. We now turn to other sectors where clearer ownership of safety and harm prevention has shown real benefits.

4.3 SAFETY SYSTEMS IN OTHER SECTORS

In this section we describe two areas of public policy where safety systems have long been established, with a strong track record of harm prevention. These are aviation safety and health and safety at work.

4.3.1 Aviation safety

As a society our approach to crime contrasts markedly with our approach to aviation safety. Whereas with crime the main focus of our activities is on holding offenders to account after a crime has occurred, through the efforts of the police and the wider criminal justice system, with aviation safety the approach is the reverse. No one wants to see any planes crash resulting at a stroke in the deaths of hundreds of passengers. As a result the focus of air safety efforts is not on accountability after an accident has occurred but is rather on preventing flight failures through regulation, technical improvement and education.

In the UK, air safety is promoted by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) which was established in 1972 as an independent regulator of the aviation industry. The CAA is not funded from the public purse but derives its income from charges to those it provides services to and regulates. The CAA's functions are to promote the highest possible safety standards in the airline industry, protect the interests of consumers (such as by running ATOL, the customer protection scheme), manage the impact of flying on the environment and ensure security risks are properly managed.

The investigation of air accidents sits separately with the Air Accidents Investigations Branch (AAIB). Their investigators use data from the aircraft and air traffic control and interviews with those involved to come to a conclusion as to the cause of any accident. These results are published and the AAIB can make recommendations to the CAA, aircraft manufacturers or other organisations to look into issues in more detail or make changes. It is noteworthy that the AAIB tends to take a 'no blame' approach to its investigations in order to promote honesty and openness about what went wrong so that adjustments can be made to prevent re-occurrence (The Police Foundation, 2018).

The results of this regulatory system overall are impressive. Air travel is extremely safe. There is an average of one fatality for every 287 million passengers carried by UK airlines. This can be compared with a one in 19 million chance of being struck and killed by lightning in the UK or a one in 17,000 chance of being killed in a road accident (CAA, 2021).

4.3.2 Health and safety at work

At around the same time as the Civil Aviation Authority was established so too was the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), founded by the 1974 Safety at Work etc Act. The HSE's mission is to prevent work related death, injury and ill health. To achieve this, it provides advice and guidance to business and workers, investigates possible breaches of the law, promotes research and training and proposes health and safety regulations to the government.

Health and safety regulation and enforcement is split between the HSE which leads on national policy and local authorities who are generally responsible for inspection and enforcement in retail, wholesale distribution and warehousing, hotel and catering premises, offices, and the consumer/ leisure industries. The HSE has a Local Authority Unit (LAU) which provides support to councils in the performance of their health and safety functions, promoting consistency and providing guidance.

The HSE focuses its work on those sectors where the risks to health and safety are high, for example where work is intrinsically hazardous or where a sector's health and safety record is poor. For example, it has in recent years focused on reducing occupational asthma by targeting the vehicle repair industry. Exposure to chemicals in the paints used in car repair is a common cause of asthma. The HSE has worked with the industry to train workers in how to safely spray paint and to monitor risk, leading to a reduction in exposure (HSE, 2016).

It is worth emphasising that the HSE largely focuses its work at the point where there is most leverage, with the employers who hold most of the power to effect change. The HSE also has a horizon scanning function to look out for and anticipate future risks so that preventative steps can be taken. For example, over the past decade the HSE has been working with industry and academia to set standards for the safe introduction of hydrogen-powered, fuel-cell electric vehicles and the development of a safe refuelling infrastructure (HSE, 2016).

The HSE has a very successful record. Since 1981 the rate of fatal injury has fallen in the UK from 2.1 per 100,000 workers to 0.34 per 100,000. In 2017 there were just 0.52 fatal injuries at work per 100,000 employees in the UK, compared to 0.93 in Italy, 1.7 in Spain and three in France (HSE, 2020). In 2017 the UK was ranked fifth out of 29 European countries for the lowest number of fatal injuries in the workplace. The percentage of workers reporting an accident at work resulting in sick leave in the last twelve months was just 1.35 per cent in the UK, compared to 1.8 per cent in Spain and 3 per cent in France.

4.3.3 Lessons

The UK's experience in aviation and workplace safety shows the value of having a system focused on the prevention of harm. Such a system means that there is a set of organisations and relationships that provide an institutional anchor around which goals can be set, priorities decided upon, regulations developed and action instigated.

Moreover, it is clear who owns the problem of air and workplace accidents and is accountable for outcomes. So, if the number of air accidents or workplace fatalities increased, we would want to know what the CAA or the HSE were going to do make air travel and work safer.

When we turn to crime and other public safety threats there is no such system nor any real ownership of the prevention task. Instead, most of the resource and the accountability in relation to crime is vested downstream with the police and the criminal justice system. We know that the police are accountable for responding to calls for assistance, investigating crimes and catching criminals and that the justice system is responsible for holding individuals to account for crimes they have committed. It is not clear who is responsible for preventing crimes from happening in the first place.

We now turn to what a public safety system should look like in practice.

4.4 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY SYSTEM

The core challenge in making a shift to a more preventative approach to public safety is to make sure that there is clear ownership of the problem at all levels.

4.4.1 A national crime prevention strategy

Tackling crime and wider harms requires a truly cross-government approach. There is therefore a need for a cross-departmental strategy for crime prevention that mobilises work across the whole of government. There is currently a Modern Crime Prevention Strategy, owned by the Home Office, but it is largely aspirational and as one national police leader told us "it isn't a strategy" because it contains no delivery plan.

Instead, a strategy is required that focuses the government's work on priority areas, sets outcomes, articulates how those outcomes will be achieved and by whom. This strategy ought to make explicit what roles and responsibilities different actors are expected to play. Rather than the strategy being the responsibility of a single minister in a particular department it would make sense for this to be a cross government effort, led by the Cabinet Office in collaboration with the Home Office and with the authority of the Prime Minister behind it.

4.4.2 A Crime Prevention Agency

The evidence from other sectors shows that it is important to have a flagship agency that owns the problem and is responsible for coordinating activity to ensure that strategic aims are delivered.

There are two options here:

- We could establish a new non-departmental public body, akin to the HSE or the CAA, which would have ownership of crime and harm prevention nationally; Or

- We could vest these responsibilities within an existing body, presumably within the policing family of institutions.

We support the creation of a new agency. The advantages of a dedicated agency are that it would prioritise this work and bring about a focus that is likely to be lacking if these tasks were added to the portfolio of an existing organisation. There are also advantages to this not being a policing institution. Part of the point of such a body is that all sectors of society should play their part in crime prevention and that crime control should not be seen as a 'police problem'.

A new Crime Prevention Agency (CPA) would perform the following functions:

- In an annual report to parliament, it would provide an independent assessment of the state of crime and related harms and the preventative measures required to tackle them.

- It would provide strategic advice to the government on the policies required to improve public safety. In particular, it would develop guidance and regulations for priority sectors.

- It would have an enforcement function in relation to a duty to prevent crime, with power to enforce such a duty (see below).

- It would establish national level partnerships in those industries and sectors where concerns are highest, and ensure these partnerships are sustained and effective, with their own preventative strategies. In particular, a core focus on the agency in its early years should be on bringing down the volumes of fraud and cybercrime where it is hard to catch cross border offenders and where prevention rather than prosecution is key.

- The agency would lead on developing and maintaining key international relationships, such as with the US based tech companies, to ensure ongoing dialogue, data sharing and joint work.

- It would oversee strategic communications around crime prevention so that the public receive consistent messages in areas where behaviour change is required.

- Working alongside a new Home Office unit which will provide a horizon scanning function (see Chapter 11) it would look to the future to understand for example what new products and technologies are in development and what their criminogenic impact might be. This should lead to something analogous to an 'early warning system' and prompt earlier intervention to ensure crime is designed out at source.

- The agency would provide a research function that would work with universities and practitioner groups to support primary research, systematic reviews, evaluations and practice guidance. This would develop the evidence base around effective interventions and share findings in a way that is useful to practitioners.

- It would provide leadership, advice and support from the centre to the other actors in the system.

4.4.3 A duty to prevent crime

In order to catalyse preventative action throughout society the government should legislate to create a statutory duty on commercial organisations to prevent crime. Under the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act a number of public bodies including local authorities and the police already have a duty to do all they reasonably can to prevent crime. We suggest that a general 'duty to prevent crime' should be applied to large firms across the private sector.[23] This would reflect the 'polluter pays' principle: those whose products and services are currently creating opportunities for crime would be asked to invest upfront in designing it out at source.

This was successfully achieved with the car manufacturers in the 1980s and 90s, who were persuaded to invest in improved security measures. Rather than this constituting a major cost to business, in many ways this effort spurred greater innovation as companies competed to demonstrate the security of their vehicles.

Companies will of course be concerned about potential liabilities and whether a broader duty to prevent crime would be proportionate. However, it is worth pointing to the example of the 2010 Bribery Act which introduced a duty on commercial organisations to prevent bribery. Companies have a defence under the act if they have implemented adequate policies and processes to prevent bribery.

Despite initial criticism from business groups, the House of Lords Select Committee on the Bribery Act 2010 recently concluded that the legislation is operating very effectively (House of Lords Select Committee on the Bribery Act 2010, 2019). Importantly rather than taking firms straight to court, prosecutors have used Deferred Prosecution Agreements (DPAs) which mean that prosecutions can be suspended and ultimately avoided if companies implement policies agreed with the Serious Fraud Office. Rather than leading to an avalanche of prosecutions the Act, combined with DPAs, has created an important tool to ensure that anti-bribery procedures are implemented (Given and Kerr, 2018).

While the CPA would have enforcement powers in relation to the new crime prevention duty our hope

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23. We do not specify the size of the organisations here as this is something that will need to be considered at length by the government. We are clear that we should seek to avoid imposing excessive requirements on small businesses.

would be that the mere possibility of their use will be sufficient to promote change.

The general duty to prevent crime would build on existing duties in particular sectors. For example, it would build on the 'duty of care' being introduced for social media companies under the Online Harms Bill. It would also build on existing requirements for financial services institutions, such as the requirement to report suspicious activity. In introducing a general duty, the government would need to consider if the general duty would supplant these existing responsibilities.

4.4.4 Greater local collaboration to prevent harm

Preventing social problems from escalating into crisis and ending up requiring an emergency response necessitates much greater collaboration between local public services.

We illustrate some of the challenges in Boxes 4.2 and 4.3 which focus on the relationship between policing, health and local government respectively and how

these relationships could be improved to promote a more preventative approach.

We identify the following barriers to public service collaboration:

- A reluctance to share data often due to risk aversion in relation to data protection laws.

- A cluttered patchwork of partnership structures that requires rationalisation.

- Mismatched governance, with multiple layers of local government and public services often operating on different boundaries, serving different political masters and pursuing different outcomes.

- Silo-based funding from Whitehall which inhibits joint working.

- Long-standing differences in professional mind sets and cultures.

To develop a plan to tackle all of these barriers would require a major review in itself. Therefore, we suggest six propositions, which if followed could help to unlock

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Box 4.2 Key relationship: policing and local mental health services

One of the most critical relationships in terms of harm prevention is that between the police and the local NHS, particularly focusing on mental health problems that so often result in a call for service from the police. Almost a third of those taken into police custody are identified as having a current mental health problem (Adebolawe, 2013). In addition, police detain around 33,600 people a year who are in a public place and in need of 'immediate care or control' under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1988. They also have powers under Section 135 of the Mental Health Act to aid medical professionals in removing someone with a mental health disorder to a place of safety for assessment so their needs can be met.

A number of reports over the last ten years have highlighted failings in the way the police have responded to mental health incidents (see Bradley, 2009, Adebowale, 2013). These include:

- The fact that the police receive too little specific training in mental health awareness despite high levels of contact with those with mental health problems.

- Disproportionate use of force.

- Discriminatory attitudes.

- A disconnect between police policy and frontline practice.

- A failure to share information, made worse by incompatible information systems and unclear or non-existent protocols for joint working

- A lack of priority for mental health issues within the Ambulance Service, leaving the police often inappropriately as the only means of providing transport for a patient.

Since these reports the Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat was agreed, setting set out how public services – including health, police and social care – should work together to respond to people with mental health problems. A 2021 inspection detailed the measures that police had put in place with partners to build trust and ensure collaborative decision making; it found, for example, that:

- Most forces had accessible mental health leads.

- Mental health professionals work alongside police to consider cases coming in and advise officers on the ground, either in person via street triage vehicles or remotely through control room triage.

- In all forces, there is a mental health expert carrying out liaison and diversion to ensure those coming into custody are assessed and receive appropriate help and support.

- Improvement in the availability of 'place of safety beds', so police facilities are now only being used as a place of safety (for adults) in exceptional circumstances.

- Police officers understand minor crimes, linked to mental health needs, could be discontinued in favour of a health care approach.

- There is an extensive suite of diversion opportunities and critical pathways in every force.

- Police custody staff take screening and managing detainee risk very seriously and this featured heavily in custody staff training and in custody management systems.

- Most forces have extensive healthcare coverage in all sites (Singh, 2021).

However, while much has improved, people with mental health needs are still being failed, and demand still exceeds police capacity to meet it. As Michael Brown writes, the problem is not with the police "but the extent to which we over-rely upon the police as a *de facto* mental health and crisis care provider" (Brown, 2020).

Remaining challenges include:

- High thresholds for mental health assessments meaning that police still have to deal with a huge amount of mental health demand, either because an individual's needs are not deemed to be acute enough for mental health specialists or the fact they are under of the influence of drink or drugs means they cannot be assessed (Singh, 2021).

- The fact that other mental health services are not available 24/7. A 2018 inspection by HMICFRS found that, at the end of each working day partner organisations shifted responsibilities for mental health onto policing, resulting in worse care out of hours (HMICFRS, 2018).

- Where someone has been arrested for a criminal offence but then assessed as having mental health needs, shortages of beds in mental health units means they can wait days in a police cell before there is a space for them to be admitted.

- The police are routinely called out when someone has 'absconded' from a mental health setting, when there have not been enough medical staff to either prevent someone from leaving or to locate them (Brown, 2020).

The solutions to these issues lie way beyond improved training for the police, but rather with enhanced capacity within the NHS to prevent mental health crises developing in the first place. The latest National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) strategy calls for minimising "those occasions where police officers provide responses purely because of capacity issues or other difficulties in health care agencies", since even the most compassionate and understanding police officers are not a substitute for professional mental health care (NPCC, 2020).

The NPCC strategy argues that partnership is best done, not when each organisation seeks to bridge the gaps left by the other, but when they work collectively to properly understand the demand they face and what they can each do, according to their expertise, to reduce it by intervening early (NPCC, 2020).

This can be done by jointly reviewing the reasons why individuals repeatedly present to the police or the emergency system as a whole, and seek to prevent this using targeted interventions by healthcare organisations or the criminal justice system (NPCC, 2020).

collaboration and enable preventative activity at the local level. None of these are specific to preventing crime and other public safety incidents, simply because in order to tackle those problems a wider prevention effort cutting across all public service sectors, orientated to a range of different outcomes, is required.

First, the government should find ways of simplifying local governance. Ideally most local public services should sit under a single governance framework. This is starting to happen in many towns, cities and city regions that have directly elected Mayors. In Greater Manchester for example the Mayor has responsibility for economic development, transport, skills, policing and health, working alongside local government through a Combined Authority.

As we shall discuss in Chapter 11 below, the mayoral model has the great advantage of providing a single form of political authority across a range of services which are all often dealing with the same complex problems.

Second, whatever the governance arrangements, local public services should work to a common vision for the future of their area and there should be a common outcomes and accountability framework with an emphasis on harm prevention.[24] This should be accompanied by a set of operating principles describing how the different partners will work together.

Third, the government should continue to explore ways of creating place-based budgets covering multiple

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24. We are grateful to members of the Board of Liveable Exeter who discussed with us how their partnership for the city operates. They emphasised that having a motivating and unifying vision for a place is critical.

Box 4.3: Key relationship: policing and local government

There are multiple points of contact and overlap between the police and local government services:

- The police regularly make referrals to local authority social services relating to vulnerable children and adults. Almost 200,000 police referrals to children's social care were made in England during 2021 (Gov.uk, 2021),

- Police frequently deal with reports of children missing from local authority care. There were almost 66,500 incidents relating to children missing from care in 2019/20, these made up about 80 per cent of all missing children incidents (NCA, 2020),

- Both police and local authorities have regular interactions with people who are homeless and sleeping rough, and can work together to improve outcomes (NPCC and Crisis, 2021),

- Local authorities play a key role in managing the night-time economy and improving safety in public spaces through licensing, CCTV, street lighting and environmental design.

- Local councils also play an important role in responding to antisocial behaviour, dealing with environmental health issues, and trading standards issues.

With the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act the then Labour government put local partnership working on a statutory footing, creating 376 Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) through which police and local authorities discharged their joint duty to work together (and with others) to deliver against locally formulated plans.

CDRPs – or Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) as they were rebadged in 2010 – have been credited with improving joint working and local information sharing, and contributing to reductions in crime, antisocial behaviour and reoffending during the early part of the 21st century (LGA, 2018).

However, CDRPs/CSPs have also been criticised for not living up to their promise, with the following problems highlighted (Crawford and Cunningham, 2015):

- They were overly focused on volume crime and antisocial behaviour.

- They were preoccupied with situational/enforcement activity (particularly the proliferation of CCTV).

- They were too dominated by the police.

- Some partners failed to engage and share information.

- Budgets were limited and then cut significantly after 2010.

- There was an over-reliance on transitory, informal relationships (Crawford and Cunningham, 2015).

While there is some evidence that, from 2010 onwards, the focus of many CSPs began to shift with the emergence of the 'vulnerability agenda' (Menichelli, 2018), this coincided with a significant reduction in CSP's resources and relevance. Much of their funding was rolled into the Police Main Grant and handed over to Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to deliver their Police and Crime Plans over larger, police force-level geographies.

Today, although diminished in prominence, CSPs remain part of the local partnership landscape and retain a set of statutory responsibilities. However, despite the mutual duty on PCCs and CSPs (in England) to cooperate and 'have regard' to each other's priorities, funding insecurity and cuts (of up to 60 per cent since 2010), staffing reductions in community safety teams and the shift in strategic emphasis to the police force level, have left a mixed and fragmented national picture. While some CSPs have found new roles and established strong working relationships with PCC's offices, others have little contact and have been left 'looking for statutory minimum'. It has been suggested that some CSPs feel compelled to align themselves with PCC priorities in order to secure funding (LGA, 2018).

There is clearly an important role for a partnership between the police, councils and other relevant bodies at the local authority level. The critical thing is to provide it with a clear focus, which is distinct from the other local partnership arrangements (see Recommendation 5).

services across a single area. The ability to move resources between and across service boundaries is critical for enabling preventative work.

Fourth, there should be a shared workforce development programme for a place which will seek to develop the right skills to address local needs. This could enable the development of new or hybrid roles in

areas of complex need where traditional professional silos may prevent a holistic response.

Fifth, local public services should develop integrated delivery models across policing, social services, housing and mental health services for example. These joint teams will focus on intervening early to prevent problems from escalating and could involve the use of

key workers who develop strong relationships with and holistic solutions for those with complex needs.

Finally, there should be data sharing protocols agreed across all partners and, beyond that, a central hub for interrogating data and understanding where the priority problems are.[25]

There are examples of each of these propositions in practice in towns and cities across the country, but we believe that the government should provide a framework for local public service delivery that would galvanise collaboration and prevention activity across the country.

4.4.5 Reinvigorating local crime prevention work

We believe that place-based public service delivery in general is required to galvanise preventative work that would, either directly or indirectly, prevent crime and other public safety incidents. However, we also think that within that wider framework of collaboration there is a role for some dedicated crime prevention partnerships and activity.

There is currently a cluttered landscape of local crime prevention activity that is not always well coordinated. There are Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), first set up following the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act. Overlaid on top of these we have seen the establishment of 18 Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) across England and Wales. Some of these VRUs clearly see their role as expanding way beyond the problem of serious violence and are advocating for a 'public health approach' to be taken to a wider range of issues, including for example domestic violence. It seems clear that the push within policing for a more proactive approach to tackling crime has found a home in the nascent VRU landscape. However, it is not clear how these new arrangements at force level ought best to relate to the CSP landscape at local authority level. Nor do VRUs cover all force areas.

We propose the following steps to bring about greater clarity to this landscape:

- The remit of VRUs should be widened to include a wider range of crime types. They should be renamed

Crime Prevention Units (CPUs) and should operate in each of the 43 police force areas, accountable to the Police and Crime Commissioner or Mayor. The CPUs would develop a local crime prevention strategy, that would concord with the place-based outcomes framework described in 4.4.4. The Police and Crime Commissioner or Mayor should appoint a Director of Crime Prevention who would head up the Crime Prevention Unit and who would operate as an independent senior advocate for this agenda throughout their area. They would work in collaboration with other local public services as described in 4.4.4 above. They would also work as part of a wider network of crime prevention professionals facilitated by the Crime Prevention Agency.

- The CPUs would focus their efforts on crime types that require prevention work at a higher level of geography, such as for example modern slavery and county lines/serious violence. They would also own the strategic relationship with partners who operate across larger geographies, such as local health bodies.

- CSPs should re-focus by going back to basics. They should prioritise their traditional agenda of volume crime, antisocial behaviour and problems in the night-time economy, and on those areas where the local authority/police relationship has most purchase.

4.5 CONCLUSION

To tackle the range and complexity of the public safety challenges we face we cannot depend on the police alone. We need a full spectrum response and one that is focused on preventing crime from happening in the first place. To achieve this we need a much more explicit public safety system, led by a dedicated national agency that will be accountable for driving down crime, in particular those forms of crime such as fraud and cybercrime to which the criminal justice system offers little answer. To enable this radical shift in focus, we make five recommendations.

[25]. These propositions are based on the 'nine building blocks of collaborative local infrastructure' set out in Randle and Anderson (2017).

Recommendations

1. The government should produce a cross-departmental Crime Prevention Strategy.

2. The government should establish a new Crime Prevention Agency, with responsibility for delivering the Crime Prevention Strategy, developing regulation and guidance, enforcing crime prevention duties, developing national and international partnerships and relationships in priority areas, communicating crime prevention advice to the public and horizon scanning to identify emerging threats.

3. There should a be new legal duty to prevent crime which would apply to all large private sector organisations, enforced by the Crime Prevention Agency.

4. The government should review local and regional government structures with the explicit aim of promoting increased public service collaboration to prevent complex social problems. Such a review should consider the benefits of a simplified local governance framework, place-based budgets, cross sector workforce development, integrated delivery models and how to improve data sharing locally.

5. The government should widen the remit of the Violence Reduction Units to cover a wide range of local crime types. These Crime Prevention Units should operate in every force area, led by a local Director of Crime Prevention appointed by the Police and Crime Commissioner. They should focus on crime types where prevention activity is best designed across a wider geographic area, such as modern slavery and county lines/serious violence. Community Safety Partnerships should go back to basics, focusing on volume crime and antisocial behaviour, and on those areas where the police and local authority relationship is critical.

5. THE ROLE OF THE POLICE

Summary: The police are not just crime fighters. Their core role is to maintain order and uphold the law, based on their possession of unique powers. Their role is not limited to just those situations in which the possible use of power is necessary, but also extends to activities that enable them to perform this core role effectively and legitimately. Being clear about this core police role enables us to better understand which functions the police should perform within the wider public safety and criminal justice systems. To provide a clearer focus for its work in an increasingly complex environment the police service needs a new Statement of Mission and Values.

We have argued that the public safety challenges of the 2020s and 2030s are too great to be dealt with singularly or even mainly by the police service. In Chapter 4 we concluded that in order to deal with this capacity challenge, we need to mobilise a broad societal response to promoting public safety. In this chapter we consider a further solution to the limits on police capacity: to clarify the police role so that officers can focus on those tasks where their powers and competencies are most efficacious.

In this chapter we do three things: first, we describe the core role of the police; second, we appraise the current main functions of the police and discuss whether these ought to change; and third, we set out a new Statement of Mission and Values for the police service. Box 5.1 puts all of this in context by outlining a brief history of English and Welsh policing since 1829.

5.1 THE CORE ROLE OF THE POLICE

There are four standard approaches to the question of the role of the police.[26] First, one common response to the question "what are the police for?" is simply to list all of the things that the police currently do. Indeed, that was the approach taken by the 1962 Royal Commission on the Police, which set out the functions of the police as being:

1. The maintenance of law and order and protection of persons and property.

2. The prevention of crime.

3. The detection of criminals.

4. Controlling of road traffic and advising local authorities on traffic questions.

5. Carrying out certain duties on behalf of government departments.

6. Befriending anyone who needs help and being available at any time to cope with minor or major emergencies.

The problem with this approach is that it wrongly turns an 'is' into an 'ought'. It does not ask whether this is what the police *should* be doing. In failing to do that it cannot help with the challenge of prioritisation. The strategic and operational reality is that the police are always making choices about which activities are more important than others. It would be better from an accountability point of view to be explicit rather than implicit about those choices and the reasons for making them.

A second tendency is to refer back to the Peelian Principles. The standard list of these principles found on the Home Office website is set out in Box 5.2. While many of these principles do have an animating value in shaping the ethos of British policing, particularly the importance of policing by consent, they are not on their own an adequate description of the police mission. For one thing they tend to focus on *how* policing should be done, rather than *what* its objectives are. For another thing their timeless appeal is a result of their generality which again does not help with placing boundaries around what the police should and should not be doing or what they should or should not be prioritising.

The final two positions take a different approach, seeking to define a core role for the police, which can help us with the question of focus and prioritisation in the face of ever widening and more complex demand.

The third perspective is that the police should be seen principally as crime fighters. This position has an enduring popular appeal. Politicians from across the spectrum have routinely stated that they want the

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26. This section is heavily informed by an Insight Paper commissioned for this Review by Professor Ian Loader, see Loader (2020).

Box 5.1 A brief history of policing in England and Wales since 1829

1829   The Metropolitan Police is established, made up of divisions containing Constables, Sergeants, Inspectors and a Superintendent.

1835   Boroughs required to introduce police forces.

1856   All rural areas made to establish police forces, the first Inspectors of Constabulary are appointed and local Police Authorities required to submit crime statistics to the Home Office.

1859   The Inspectorate notes that one or two detective officers have been established in most police forces.

1871   Scotland Yard establishes a Criminal Records Office.

1878   The Metropolitan Criminal Investigation Department established. In the late 19th century a Special Branch is also created in response to the rise of Irish nationalism, but its remit later expanded to gather intelligence on wider threats to national security.

1888   Police forces serving fewer than 10,000 people abolished and the number of forces falls from 231 to 183 and joint committees of councillors and magistrates created to oversee forces.

1890s   The first motor cars appear and, as laws around motoring expand, so too do police responsibilities for enforcement.

1919   Following a wave of police strikes the Desborough Committee placed the pay and conditions of officers under the regulatory control of the Home Secretary and led to the establishment of the Police Federation, accompanied by a ban on strike action by police officers. It also led to the establishment of the Central Conference of Chief Constables.

1933   A Home Office appointed committee leads to improvements in detective work, including specialist training for detectives, the consolidation of forensic laboratories and a system for sharing information about criminals between forces.

1934   The first Metropolitan Police College established at Hendon.

1948   The first National Police College opens at Ryton-on-Dunmore, mainly to prepare officers for promotion to the more senior ranks. This followed the creation eight regional training centres for new recruits.

1940s   A shortage of police officers led to the expansion of civilian staff and the employment of more women police
-50s   officers.

1955   The Metropolitan Police established a Traffic Squad and more widely traditional foot patrols were being replaced by mechanised beats.

1960   The National Police College moves to Bramshill, where it remains until its closure in 2015.

1961   The Special Patrol Group is founded by the Met as a mobile reserve of officers specialising in public order and protest.

1962   The Royal Commission on the Police reports, leading to the establishment of modern police authorities and a reduction in the number of forces to 49 in 1966 and then later to 43 in 1972.

1965   Nine regional crime squads established comprising 600 detectives with a focus on serious and organised criminals and supported by regional intelligence bureaux.

1966   Unit beat policing introduced overriding the traditional foot patrol, blending a Constable responsible for an area with motor car patrols.

1973   The Police National Computer goes live, containing licence plate and fingerprint information.

1975   The Balcombe Street Siege marks the first deployment by the Met of a specialist firearms unit D11.

1970s   Sir Robert Mark as Commissioner of the Met introduces A10 a specialist anti-corruption unit in response to growing concerns about police corruption. For similar reasons he places the Met CID under local uniform control.

1981   The arrest of the Yorkshire Ripper Peter Sutcliffe leads to debate as to why he was not apprehended sooner. This leads to greater standardisation in incident rooms and the introduction of the Home Office Large Major Enquiry System (HOLMES).

1981   The Brixton Riots lead to the Scarman Report which recommended improving workforce diversity, a greater focus on 'policing by consent' in police training and new consultative arrangements with local communities.

1983   The Metropolitan Police begins the practice of 'screening out' some crimes that will not be investigated.

1984   The Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) is introduced to clarify and regulate police powers.

1986   The Crown Prosecution Service is introduced, taking the decision to prosecute off police forces.

1988   The Public Order Act creates new statutory offences of affray, riot, violent disorder and unlawful assembly. It gives the police new powers to regulate protest.

        The Serious Fraud Office is formed to investigate complex fraud.

1990s   New longer batons, stab proof vests and pepper spray introduced.

        Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) policies and guidelines start replacing Home Office Circulars as a way of setting national standards.

1993   The Sheehy Report recommends, among other things, performance related pay, local pay setting and fixed term appointments.

1994   The Posen Review increased the push for greater civilianisation and specialisation within the workforce.

1998   The DNA Database established, the first such national database in the world.

        The National Crime Squad founded.

1999   The Macpherson Report published into the murder of Stephen Lawrence, concluding that the Metropolitan Police Service was institutionally racist. It leads to targets for BME recruitment, more systematic recording of stop and search incidents and the launch of the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC)

2000   The National Intelligence Model formally adopted by ACPO.

2002   Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) introduced.

2004   The Children Act leads to much greater multi-agency working to safeguard children. The Bichard Report leads to the introduction of the Police National Database to create a national police intelligence system.

2005   Airwave radio rolled out, creating encrypted personal radio coverage across the whole country.

2006   The Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) is formed.

2007   The government drops plans to merge police forces into larger regional organisations.

2008   Neighbourhood policing teams mandated across the whole country.

2011   Police and Crime Commissioners introduced to replace Police Authorities.

        The Winsor Review leads to major reforms to police pay and in its second phase makes recommendations on direct entry and graduate entry.

2012   The College of Policing launched.

2013   The National Crime Agency replaces SOCA.

2015   The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) replaces (ACPO).

2016   Police Now is launched as a scheme to encourage university graduates to join the police.

        The Policing Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF) creates new entry routes into policing, which means that all officers will either enter with a degree or will obtain one through the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA).

police to focus on their core function of fighting crime. For example, in 2011 the then Home Secretary Theresa May urged the police to pursue "just one objective – to cut crime" (May, 2011). We should note that in focus groups undertaken by the Police Foundation this position resonates with members of the public (Higgins, 2020).

It is of course a core function of the police to tackle crime, by enforcing the law, investigating crimes, apprehending suspects and, with the agreement of the Crown Prosecution Service, bringing them before the courts. The most harmful matters the police deal with (homicide, rape, terrorism etc) are all crimes, precisely because they are so serious.

Nevertheless, the College of Policing reported in 2015 that 83 per cent of calls to police Command and Control Centres did not result in a crime being recorded (College of Policing, 2015). While there will still be many crime *related* incidents within that 83 per cent (reports of 'suspicious activity' for example), this makes clear just how much demand on policing is not about crime but about wider disorder, harm and calls for help. A recent piece of qualitative research with new police

recruits found that while officers initially believed that their work would be crime focused, they discovered over their first few years in post that most of their work does not involve responding to crime but rather to a whole array of other incidents (Charman, 2018).

The problem with the crime fighting view is that it simply does not reflect the reality of police work nor the reality of public demand on policing. The police are, and always have been, about more than just crime.

The final position in the debate about the role of the police is that rather than being crime fighters the core role of the police is to resolve conflict and maintain order. They perform this role because of their status as officers of the law with a monopoly on the legitimate use of force. The very presence of police power, even when that power is not actually used, is enough in many cases to diffuse tension and impose social stability.

The sociologist Egon Bittner famously encapsulated this view of the police as order maintainers by saying that the reason people call the police is to deal with *"something-that-ought-not-to-be-happening-and-about-which-someone-had-better-do-something-now!"*

Once called to an incident the police role is then to impose a 'provisional solution' through their possession of lawful coercive powers.

This view of policing is supported by the empirical reality of police work referred to above (College of Policing, 2015). The police respond routinely to all sorts of incidents (mental health crisis, missing persons, antisocial behaviour and so on) that are not crimes or related to crime. What unites most of the incidents to which the police are called is that they might benefit from the presence of an officer of the law with the backstop powers to impose a solution.

We believe that this view offers the best starting point for thinking about the role of the police simply because it captures the empirical reality of policing.

However, this position needs some qualification. First, this understanding of the core role should not mean that policing is limited to enforcement activity. We know that if the only time people ever see the police is when they arrive to make an arrest or impose order, this can lead to a fracturing of police-community relations. If people do not trust the police they may not cooperate with them and the police cannot carry out their core role effectively. If the police do not understand the communities in which they work they will not be able to carry out their core role effectively or use their powers proportionately. If the police lack legitimacy in the eyes of the public their work becomes ever more difficult. Therefore, while 'order maintenance through potential use of power' provides the best starting point for thinking about the role of the police, one quickly has to build out from that to take in other activities, such as community policing for example, that are essential for supporting that core role.

Another problem with the order maintenance view is that it is so broad that it is susceptible to mission creep. Although Bittner was describing a largely reactive order maintenance role, many advocates of this position see policing as having a much more proactive mission, to help contribute broadly to public safety, to solve local problems, to prevent crime before it occurs and even to contribute to wider social wellbeing. As Ian Loader comments: "*This extended role for the police in order upkeep and public protection may bring benefits for vulnerable individuals and communities. But the attendant risks lie in the difficulties of specifying the nature and limits of police involvement in such collaborations and the colonisation of tasks that are more suited to being undertaken by, say, social work, education, or public health*." (Loader 2020)

So, there remains a challenge of defining where the limits of this broad order maintenance role lie.

To conclude this section, we define the core role of the police as being **to promote public safety by maintaining order and upholding the law, which their unique powers enable them to do, and to carry out other activities which enable them to perform this core role legitimately, effectively and with minimum reliance on those powers.**

5.2 THE CORE FUNCTIONS OF THE POLICE

Having established that the police are best seen as order maintainers by virtue of their powers, we now go on to review four of the main current functions of the police and discuss whether the police should continue to carry out these activities. We do this based on two criteria: first, are these justified as police functions given the definition of the core role of the police already described, and, second, how might their performance of these functions have to change to meet the changing public safety context?

5.2.1 Emergency response

In most societies the police provide a general emergency response function. In England and Wales this started to take on its present form once police officers were equipped with cars and radios from the 1960s onwards.

Why do the police provide this function? Why not develop a range of specialist response services to deal with specific types of demand? Such an alternative has been suggested by some within the movement to 'defund the police' in the United States, for example.

There are three reasons why it makes good sense for the police to perform this role. First, a *generalist* response function is required because of the geographic and temporal unpredictability of demand. There is a need for some agency with the capacity to cover a wide area and to be available 24/7.

Second, it is not easy at the point a call comes in to diagnose the nature of the problem. What is required is for generalist first responders to attend, diagnose the problem and potentially then refer the case on to others with more specialist skills.

Finally, many emergency incidents involve danger and we therefore require our generalist first responders to have the backstop powers that only the police possess. Their very presence can help to de-escalate a situation

that would otherwise get out of hand. This 24/7 response function is the natural outgrowth of the core order maintenance and conflict resolution role we have described.

But are there any limits to this general response role? There are three main ones. First, there are other specialist emergency response agencies who deal with matters the police are not best equipped to. This includes the fire and ambulance services of course, but also other types of emergency service are typically provided by private or charitable actors (for example, mountain and offshore rescue, alarm monitoring, vehicle breakdown etc).

Second, the police cannot respond to every call and therefore require a basis for prioritising between them. In recent times incoming police demand has been subject to increasingly formal prioritisation and triage based on assessments of threat, harm, risk and vulnerability. The implicit basis for this is that, given police resource is finite and insufficient to meet all demand, immediate safety risks and potential high harm should take precedence.

Third, in order to deal with the problem of rising demand and reduced resources, some have suggested that the police simply stop responding to certain categories of call, such as missing person incidents that are taking up the work of around 1,500 full time officers per year. We consider this to be a mistake. If the police do not respond to these cases someone would have to. Moreover, generalist first responders are required in such cases because it is not obvious when a call comes in what type or degree of harm may have occurred.

We think it is preferable for the police to retain a generalist response role, but to also encourage a wider societal focus on reducing demand through precisely the sort of preventative public safety system we described in Chapter 4. So, for example, in relation to missing persons this would mean a concerted effort to deal with the crisis in the children's care sector and particularly the placement of vulnerable children in unsuitable locations.

5.2.2 Crime investigation

Though the 'New Police' founded in 1829 initially had a principally preventative role (mainly in terms of the deterrent effect of their presence on the street), during the second half of the 19th century crime investigation became a core police function. Although there was initially some resistance to the notion of 'detectives' in English and Welsh policing, because of concerns for privacy and civil liberties, in the end this function has

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Future scenario 5.1

The way the police perform their emergency response function will need to adapt to the changing demands we articulated earlier in this report.

In particular, the growth in the number of incidents involving people with complex needs requires a local public service system that is much more collaborative and integrated. We highlight two implications of this for the response function:

- It may be that **multi-agency response teams** might be brought together to deal with certain categories of incident or be focused around certain locations. These would involve police officers but also other professionals whose skills may be required to address complex needs. We have already seen this with the development of mental health street triage teams, involving both police officers and qualified mental health professionals. Potentially we could also see response teams at certain times or in certain locations involving professionals with expertise in addiction issues, street homelessness or environmental health issues.

- It may be that we could see the development of **hybrid response roles**, which combine police powers with competencies in other relevant areas, such as social work, housing, youth work, drug and alcohol addiction issues and so on. As we argued in Chapter 4 it should be the responsibility of local public service partnerships to develop workforce strategies that think across professional boundaries to design roles that best meet future demands.

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become as synonymous with the police as the so-called 'bobby on the beat'.

Today the police play a pivotal role as the gate keeper into the criminal justice system: they respond to reports of crime, manage crime scenes, pursue investigations, liaise with victims, apprehend suspects, hold those suspects in custody if required and prepare evidence for submission to the Crown Prosecution Service.

Why should the police continue to own the crime investigation function? First, many of the incidents the police will be called to under their response function will involve law breaking and the police as first responders are in the best position to gather evidence from the outset and then pursue the matter through the criminal law.

Second, for police powers (or their possible use) to help in maintaining order, they need to be attached to criminal justice sanctions, which will entail a criminal investigation that the police again are best positioned to carry out.

Third, crime investigations generally require at various points the use of police power, whether that be to arrest a suspect, to hold a suspect in custody, to execute a warrant to search a property and so forth. In theory those powers could be given to others, but keeping them in one place provides a level of regulatory control that should act as safeguard against their improper use.

So, crime investigation should remain a core police function, but we make the following qualifications. First, while it is normally important for the police to manage the investigation, this does not mean that all police investigations must be carried out by warranted officers. Indeed, in an area like financial crime for example, where the use of power may be less frequent and where specialist expertise is required, increasingly civilian investigators are being deployed to do much of the investigative work.

In the future we may also see greater use of mixed teams as part of investigations in areas where the police themselves lack the technical skills required (see Future Scenario 5.2).

Future scenario 5.2

Policing is struggling to recruit people with the specialist skills required to investigate new and complex area of crime, such as cybercrime, fraud and money laundering.

One model for the future might be **mixed investigation teams**, led by a Senior Investigative Officer (SIO) but involving experts from other sectors. These could include for example security experts from the financial sector and technical experts from the technology sector who can help investigate crime in a digital environment. Police organisations could have ongoing agreements with firms that would allow them to 'call in' expertise on an ongoing basis as required.

This offers one solution to the problem of police organisations being unable to compete with the salaries offered in other sectors.

Second, the internet is enabling more non-state actors to take on investigations themselves. For example, increasingly Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) is being used to investigate crimes, often by private or third sector operators. The most famous example is the open source investigations organisation Bellingcat which helped identify suspects in the downing of plane MH17 in 2014, among other cases.

Another example is the so-called 'paedophile hunters'. The internet has created an opportunity for digital vigilantism in the form of groups who target sex offenders on social media platforms by pretending to

be children. The police have a difficult relationship with these groups: they have sometimes compromised evidence and in some cases have themselves committed crimes. Nonetheless they also produce evidence that is used to prosecute offenders in court (see Future Scenario 5.3).

Future scenario 5.3

It seems likely that we will see more and more digital entrepreneurs breaking into crime investigation, particularly in areas like online child sexual abuse where the police themselves are unable to undertake proactive work because of the levels of reactive demand they have to deal with. It is impossible to stop people doing this kind of work and it can produce evidence that is used in court.

In the future it may be that the police and the Crown Prosecution Service create a regulatory framework to try to bring some basic standards to bear on this 'wild west' area of 'Do It Yourself' crime investigation.

So, while the police must lead the crime investigation function, they do not have a total monopoly over it and, given the limitations on police resource, we can expect more non-state actors to emerge to fill the gaps in the years ahead.

Our third qualification to police ownership of the crime investigation function is that in the growing area of cross-border crime the traditional police role (investigate, arrest, charge) is increasingly untenable. The detection rate for fraud for example is just 0.6 per cent. It is simply impossible for local police forces in England and Wales to have the kind of resources and global reach necessary to catch the vast majority of internationally mobile offenders, many of whom operate in states with whom the UK lacks any policing and criminal justice cooperation.

It is for this reason that in the serious and organised crime space we are likely to see a growing emphasis on **disruption** rather than on criminal investigation. This involves gathering of intelligence to understand more about criminal behaviour and then tackling the enablers of criminality such as by freezing bank accounts and taking down servers. This is an under researched and little scrutinised area of police work but one that is becoming increasingly important.

5.2.3 Neighbourhood policing

A familiar, locally knowledgeable policing presence has always been a feature of the British policing model, evoked in the notion of the 'bobby on the beat'. It reached its contemporary high point in the 2000s

when a national neighbourhood policing programme was rolled out. Delivered by a patchwork of small teams of police and police community support officers (PCSOs), it had three main functions: to provide a visible presence, to engage with communities and to tackle their concerns through 'problem solving'. It was universal, centrally designed and funded, and resource intensive. Since 2010 neighbourhood policing has been eroded and we discuss its future role in detail in Chapter 6.

One reading of the core police role we have described would seem to rule out this kind of work. Much of the activity undertaken under the rubric of neighbourhood policing (community engagement and problem-solving work etc) does not require even the potential use of police power. So, why should police officers do it?

We would highlight two reasons. First, neighbourhood policing can provide the police with an understanding of the context in which they may have to use their powers. Having such an understanding is crucial so that those powers can be used in a way that is proportionate, precisely targeted, and ultimately more effective.

Second, neighbourhood policing can cultivate a context in which there is community consent for the police use of power when required. As we shall discuss in Chapter 6 having police officers who are embedded in and close to local communities is vital for police legitimacy.

5.2.4 Crime prevention

The police have always had a role in crime prevention. Indeed, in the early days the regular patrolling of a beat by uniformed officers was intended principally to prevent crime through deterrence (Critchley, 1978).

Since then, however, most police work has been dominated by reactive rather than preventative tasks. One might argue that this is no bad thing: crime and wider harm should largely be prevented by other actors in society (businesses, regulators, parents, schools etc) as described in Chapter 4. The police should focus on dealing with immediate harm, where their unique powers are likely to be required, otherwise they will end up straying into areas of work that are beyond their core competencies. They are already overwhelmed with demand, so dropping any role in crime prevention might allow the police to refocus on their core responsibilities.

However, while we agree that policing is principally and inevitably a reactive business, we think there is a role for the police in prevention. The first way in which the police can play a valuable role in prevention is through their use of power. Sometimes this is an indirect by-product of work undertaken for other reasons,

such as to bring offenders to justice. For example, by investigating crimes and making arrests the police physically remove offenders from the street. The use of police criminal justice powers can also have a deterrent effect: potential offenders may decide that the risk of apprehension and/or the severity of sanction is too great and refrain from criminal or harmful activities.

However, the police can also use their powers directly and proactively to prevent crime. For example, in the arena of public protection the police are involved in managing offenders and safeguarding victims in the community, generally in partnership with social services, the voluntary sector and other bodies. This should be seen as an important form of tertiary prevention: managing entrenched problems to ameliorate their harmful effects.

Another example would be the way the police use intelligence on criminals and their activities to disrupt offending. Disruption activity is not undertaken as part of a reactive crime investigation, but rather to make offending more difficult and therefore prevent future harm.

We might be tempted at this point to assert that the police should only engage in prevention work where it involves the use of their core powers – otherwise it is a job for someone else. However, there is also a valuable preventative dimension to neighbourhood policing, which involves understanding local problems and working with partners and communities to develop solutions ('problem solving').

This kind of preventive activity does not rest on the use of police power, but there are good reasons why the police specifically should be doing it. For one thing the public will come to the police about public safety problems and it makes practical sense for them to then lead or at least initiate and coordinate the response. For another thing it is crucial for wider public confidence in the police that when the public raise these matters the police take action. The police as 'public helpers, fixers and sorters' is arguably a key building block for police legitimacy.

So, if the use of power does not provide a limitation on the police role in prevention, what does? In our view the best way to demarcate the police role in prevention is to locate it downstream at the tertiary and secondary ends of the public health prevention framework (see Chapter 4). This position can be summarised as follows:

- The police should often *lead on tertiary prevention*, which is concerned with minimising the impact of problems that have become entrenched. This will

generally be where the use of police powers will have a preventative effect. Examples would include managing prolific offenders and disrupting organised crime.

- The police should *work in partnership with others when it comes to secondary prevention* which focuses on nipping problems in the bud before they get much worse. Examples would include much of the problem-solving work undertaken by neighbourhood teams.

- The police should *not take the lead and should rarely directly deliver primary prevention* (preventing problems from occurring in the first place). However, through the data they collect and the witness their bear the police can play a role in highlighting the range of social problems that the rest of the system ought to be addressing. In addition, they can play an important role in supporting or facilitating primary interventions, such as by triaging cases and making appropriate referrals.

International case study: New Zealand

In 2010 New Zealand launched its Policing Excellence change programme which aimed to reduce demand by bringing about improved services, leadership and value for money. There were also specific targets to reduce the crime rate by 15 per cent and the reoffending rate by 25 per cent (den Heyer, 2018). As part of this change programme a Prevention First strategy was implemented. The police identified the main drivers of crime and partnered with agencies who could help them address underlying social issues. A National Tactical Plan recognised demographic variation across the country and used tactics tailored to the needs of different communities. Neighbourhood policing teams were brought into high-demand areas to work with the community to resolve specified issues. Alternative methods of disposal were introduced and a victim-centred approach adopted.

By the end of June 2014 there had been a 20 per cent reduction in recorded crime and a rise in public trust and confidence to 78 per cent, which has remained high since. There was also a substantial financial saving (den Heyer, 2021). However, the Prevention First model has its critics who argue that the core functions of the police are being neglected and there are some jobs that could be best suited to other agencies rather than the police (den Heyer, 2021).

5.3 A NEW STATEMENT OF MISSION AND VALUES

The existing mission statement for the police in England and Wales was written by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) in 2011 and remains adopted by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) in the Policing Vision 2025. It reads:

"*The mission of the police is to make communities safer by upholding the law fairly and firmly; preventing crime and antisocial behaviour; keeping the peace; protecting and reassuring communities; investigating crime and bringing offenders to justice.*"

There are two problems with this statement. First, there are some important aspects of the modern police role that are missing. These include crime disruption and safeguarding, for example. Second, a general statement of role needs to be accompanied by a more detailed statement of the specific functions that will be performed in order to fulfil that role, as well as an articulation of how the police will go about their duties.

We propose a redefined Statement of Mission and Values that seeks to deal with these problems. This contains the thinking we have set out so far in this chapter on what the core role is and how this plays out in different functional areas. This is set out in Box 5.3.

Recommendation

6. In order to clarify the police role within a changing and complex environment the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, the National Police Chiefs' Council and the Home Office should agree a new police service Statement of Mission and Values.

Box 5.3 A new Statement of Mission and Values for policing

The role of the police is to maintain order and uphold the law so that the public can go about their lives safely and securely, and to do this in a way that balances the need for order with the protection of liberty.

In order to perform this role the police will:

- Respond to calls for help, repair harm and refer cases on to others who can provide support and prevent reoccurrence.

- Safeguard vulnerable people who they come across in the course of their work.

- Prevent crime and harm, either directly where their powers and skills are required or by referring cases, issues or problems on to others who can help.

- Investigate crime, disrupt criminal activity and bring offenders to justice.

- Provide victims of crime access to justice and support.

- Offer community policing that is visible, responsive and works with the community and other public services to solve problems that are a concern for safety.

In carrying out this work the police will:

- Always work in ways that improve the legitimacy of the police in the eyes of the public.

- Promote the willing cooperation of the public in upholding the law and use lawful force only as a last resort to keep themselves and the public safe.

- Prioritise assistance towards those who face the greatest risk of harm.

- Treat all people fairly and actively oppose racism, misogyny, homophobia and other forms of prejudice.

- Be accountable for their actions and decisions, explain why they do what they do and actively encourage public participation in discussing how they work.

- Focus their work on those areas where the use or potential use of police knowledge, skills and powers are necessary for the promotion of public safety.

- Work in collaboration with other public agencies, businesses, groups and communities, as part of a wider system of public safety.

- Focus their preventative work on preventing problems getting worse and minimising their impact, while supporting others to address the underlying causes.

- Continually generate knowledge as to how public safety and security can be improved and actively share and apply this evidence base throughout their work.

PART III
CAPABILITIES

6. LEGITIMACY

Summary: There are worrying signs that police legitimacy and public confidence in the police have deteriorated in recent years. Addressing this needs to be made a strategic priority for the police service. This means investing in neighbourhood policing, which has been in decline over the last decade. It means having a much better understanding of where legitimacy is weak and delivering focused work to rebuild it. It means the police must constantly explain and justify why they do what they do. Specifically, we conclude that it means reducing the use of the stop and search power, exposing new technology to independent ethical scrutiny, addressing negative internal cultures and improving workforce diversity.

In this chapter we describe the first capability policing will require to meet the challenges of the 21st century: legitimacy. First, we describe what we mean by police legitimacy and explain why it is increasingly important given the changing nature of the world we live in. Second, we describe the main drivers behind police legitimacy, identifying those things the police need to put in place if they are to police with the trust and support of the public. Third, we make the case for seeing legitimacy as a strategic capability. Finally, we explore the implications of this thinking in five critical areas of police policy and practice: community policing, policing in a digital environment, stop and search, police conduct and workforce diversity.

6.1 POLICING WITH THE PUBLIC

At the heart of the Peelian model of policing is the idea that the police can only successfully carry out their work with the support and cooperation of the public. In this section we describe what we mean by legitimacy, why it is so important in thinking about the relationship between the police and the public and explain why we may have reached a defining moment in that relationship.

6.1.1. Legitimacy

Legitimacy can be defined as the recognition of the right to hold power by those subject to it (Beetham, 1991; Mawby, 2002; Bottoms and Tankebe, 2012; Hough, 2020).

As well as being ethically preferable there are a number of well-evidenced 'pragmatic' benefits from policing with legitimacy. These include:

- Encouraging public cooperation (Jackson et al, 2012a).
- Promoting acceptance of police decisions (Tyler and Huo, 2002).
- Rejecting violence as a way to change society (Jackson et al, 2012b).
- Fostering compliance with the law (Sunshine and Tyler, 2003; Tyler, 2006, Jackson et al, 2012c).

Many of these ideas were summed up by a chief police officer interviewed for this Review, in the first quotation below. The second, from a woman with lived experience of the criminal justice system, illustrates the disengagement and antipathy that can follow when legitimacy is lost.

> *"Trust and confidence in policing is quite simple for me. How do you police 70 million people, with 120,000 people who haven't got guns? If you… think about all the current things I do …which are incredibly hard edge and intrusive. The only way you get … the public to tolerate that is if they trust that you are doing it for the right reasons." (KII.12)*

> *"I try not to have any dealings with them [police] as much as I possibly can…because they're untrustworthy. First and foremost, I'm a Black woman. I'm in black skin. So, I have to be sure that I have no other options before I even think about calling 999. I've seen the way that they treat the Black men who I know and love." (RD: Women)*

The importance of policing with legitimacy has been recognised since the inception of modern policing and is woven into the service's founding Peelian principles, which emphasise willing public cooperation, crime prevention as an alternative to repression, and minimal use of force (Home Office, 2012). These values continue to be evoked as part of the 'British model of policing', characterised in 2009 by the then Chief Inspector of Constabulary as *"approachable, impartial, accountable…based on minimal force and anchored in public consent"* and as *"plac*[ing] *a high value on tolerance"* (HMCIC, 2009).

At its core this Peelian model of policing is committed to the idea that people generally obey laws and behave in socially responsible ways because they believe it is *the right thing to do,* rather than because of the fear of law enforcement or punishment. According to this model criminal justice mechanisms are best viewed as a 'hard backstop' for when informal social controls

(rooted in families, education, religion, and workplaces etc) fail or are insufficient (Hough, 2020). On this model a core police role should be to buttress those informal social processes, so that the need for force and formal sanction is minimised.

This understanding of British policing can sometimes take a backseat particularly in the face of demands for the police to 'get tough' on crime (Jacobson and Hough, 2018). Nevertheless, it remains the case that this Peelian conception remains a core part of the identity of policing in this country. Moreover, the ideas associated with it have continued to find expression in initiatives to promote community policing, restorative justice and procedural justice.

They also surfaced prominently during the Covid-19 pandemic, when British police forces adopted a policy, of *engaging, explaining,* and *encouraging* public compliance, before only finally *enforcing* public health laws (NPCC, 2020). This experience reaffirms the continuing value of *discretion*, *dialogue*, and attention to the *manner* of police interactions, within the British approach. This contrasted markedly to the experience of policing in some other European countries (Aitkenhead et al, 2022).

6.1.2 A defining moment

It is clear from the data discussed in Chapter 3 that ratings of public confidence and of measures associated with legitimacy (such as trust and a sense of fair treatment) are relatively high in England and Wales. Most members of the public trust and are satisfied with the police.

Nevertheless, there are some reasons for thinking that the police need to do much more to improve their legitimacy.

First, while overall most people express approval for police performance and feel they can trust the police, there are major deficits for some groups within the population.

As Figure 6.1 illustrates, people from Black and Mixed ethnic groups, particularly those with Black Caribbean backgrounds, are much less likely to expect local police to treat them fairly, with respect, and to agree that police can be trusted, than the White British majority (and some other ethnic groups).[27] These differences are less apparent for other 'service' ratings (such as whether police are reliable or do a 'good job') and speak to specific deficits of trust and legitimacy, rather than views on 'service quality'. These deficits in trust and expectations of fair treatment are long-standing,

Figure 6.1: Trust in local police and expectations of fair and respectful treatment: lower-level ethnic groups compared to White British majority, year ending March 2020 (ONS, 2020) (chart shows percentage point difference from White British majority)

Legend: Police in this area can be trusted — Police would treat you fairly — Police would treat you with respect
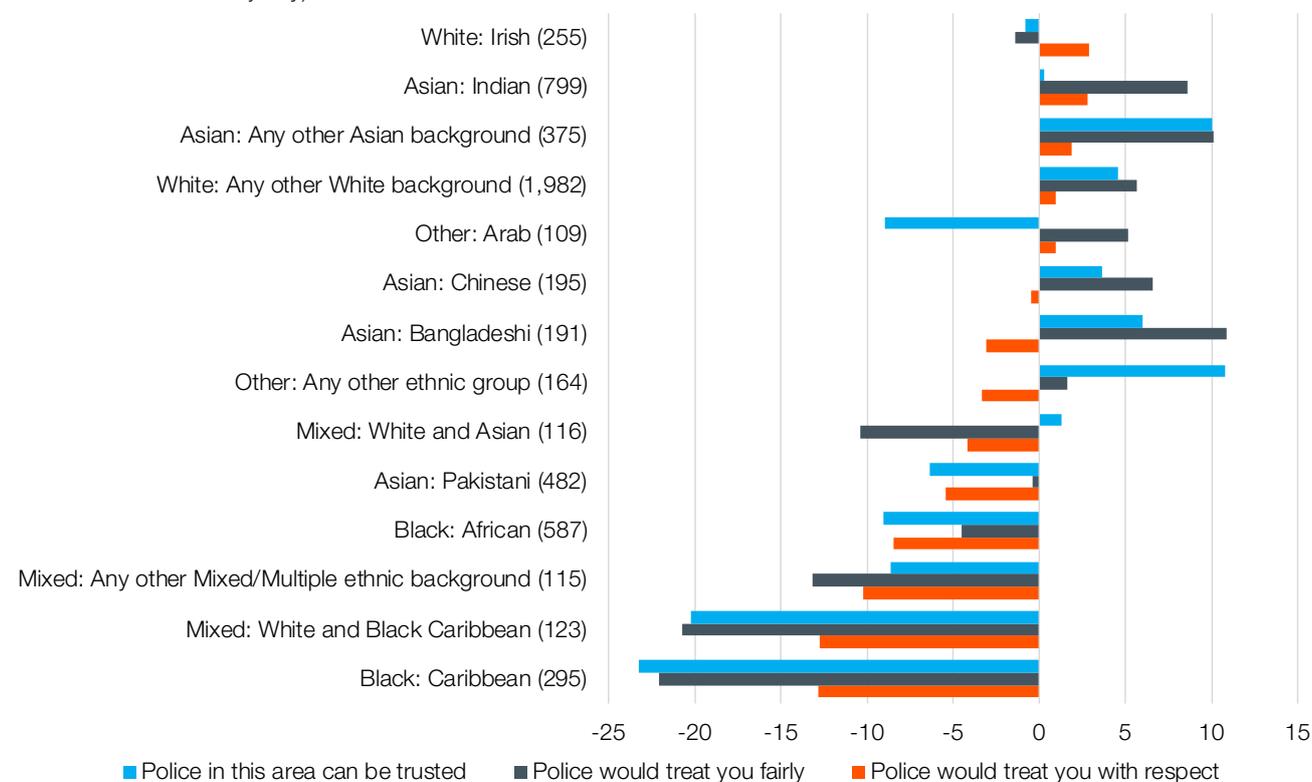
27. The CSEW data in Figure 6.1 reflects surveys conducted in the year to March 2020, although bases for some sub-groups are small, the main findings are consistent across multiple years. It is also of note that MOPAC's Public Attitude Survey shows that Black and Mixed Ethnicity Londoners' perceptions of police fairness, respectfulness and trustworthiness fell more, and from a lower starting point, than other ethnic groups during the more recent period (year ending March 2021).

deeply problematic and demand strategic attention by the police service.

Second, while policing is always controversial, in recent years police actions have been contested to a degree that has particularly tested the strength of the relationship between the police and the public.

Since this Review was launched in late 2019 the police service has been asked to enforce unprecedented public health regulations in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and called upon to take meaningful action on racial inequality following the police-killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, USA. The Metropolitan Police were strongly criticised (but then largely exonerated by HMICFRS) for their handling of a vigil on Clapham Common for murder victim Sarah Everard. The police have had to manage protests against the government's Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill; the Metropolitan Police have faced accusations of ongoing 'institutional corruption' for the way they engaged with the Inquiry into the murder of Daniel Morgan (O'Loan, 2021) and finally, the police service (and the country) was shaken to its core by the

kidnap, rape and murder of Sarah Everard by Metropolitan Police Constable Wayne Couzens. Sentencing judge Lord Justice Fulford described Couzens' crimes as jeopardising the *"critical trust that we repose in the constabulary, that they will act lawfully and in the best interests of society… one of the enduring safeguards of law and order in this country"* (Fulford, 2021).

It is unfortunate that we do not have national survey data to assess the impact of these events, individually or cumulatively, on public support. The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) perceptions module was suspended in early 2020 due to the pandemic and more generally there is a paucity of useful data on public sentiment, highlighted by some of our Call for Evidence respondents.

"It is not possible to accurately or reliably report on the state of public trust and confidence in the police. Broad surveys conducted infrequently and across vast areas do not provide the nuanced or actionable data that police leaders need to ensure that their community feels safe and supported." (CE2.25)

Figure 6.2: Crime Survey for England and Wales and London Public Attitude Survey perceptions of local police (fairness, respect, trust)[29]
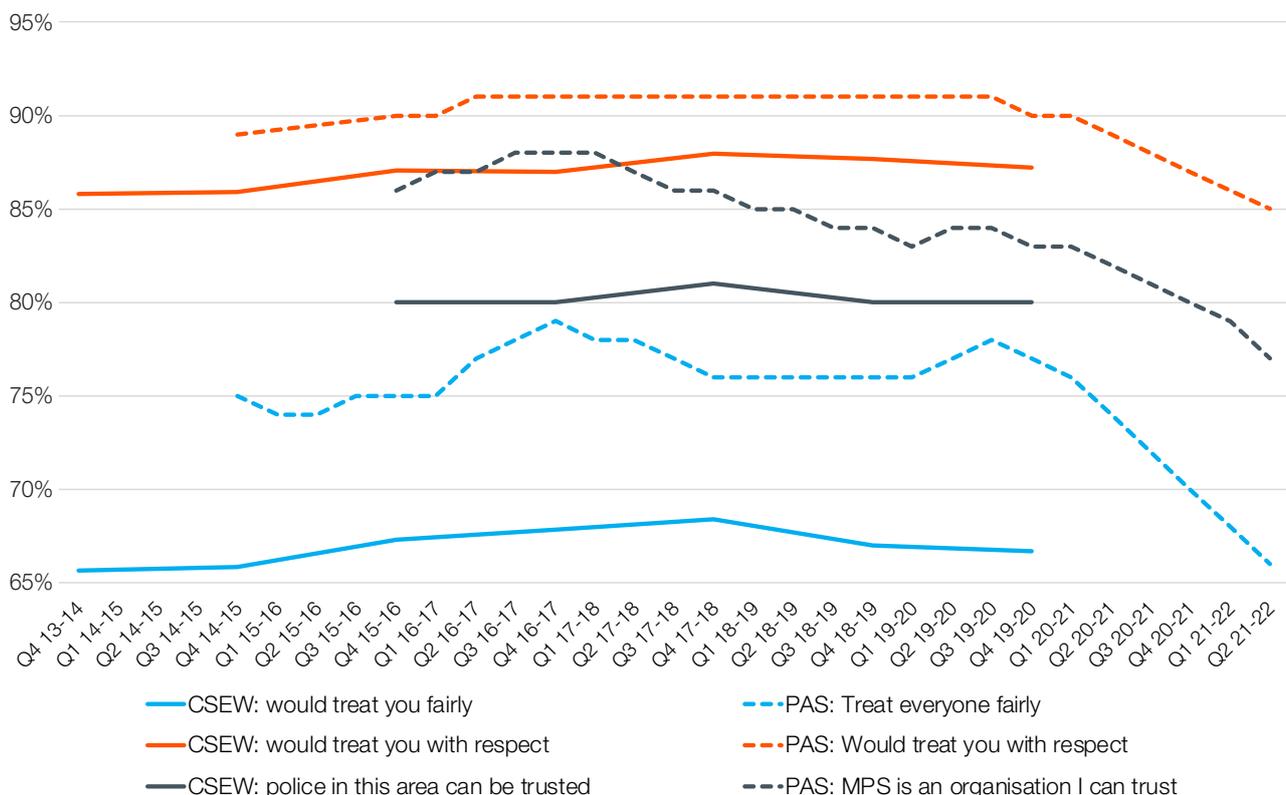
28. We are grateful to the London Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) Evidence and Insight team for providing data from their Public Attitude Survey (PAS), much of which can be accessed via their Public Voice Dashboard. See: https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/mayors-office-policing-and-crime-mopac/data-and-statistics/public-voice-dashboard. PAS data is presented quarterly based on rolling 12 months of interviewing and a representative annual sample size of approximately 12,800 Londoners. The survey methodology moved from face to face to telephone interviewing during the Covid pandemic and an effect on comparability cannot be ruled out. CSEW data is based on an annual sample of approximately 33,000 English and Welsh adults. Note the CSEW and PAS questions shown are not directly comparable.

"For a more accurate assessment of confidence in policing, a larger survey of the population in England and Wales would need to be conducted. In the United States for example, the Bureau of Justice Statistics conduct a 'Police-Public Contact Survey'…of approximately 260,000 [respondents]. A survey of this size…may provide the data necessary to draw more accurate conclusions relating to public attitudes towards the police". (CE2.28)

Recent survey data for London is however available and strongly indicates that recent events have impacted legitimacy-associated public perceptions in unprecedented ways. Figure 6.2 shows a marked deterioration in Londoners' assessments of police fairness and respectfulness, and their trust in police, from early 2020 onwards (when national data became unavailable).

Third, when we look ahead to the environment in which police can reasonably expect to operate over coming decades, there are good reasons to believe that legitimacy will be both more challenging to sustain and more crucial to achieving public safety.

Sustaining legitimacy will be more challenging for a number of reasons. The College of Policing's recent horizon scan (2020) highlights the impact of the shifting digital landscape on public trust in police and other institutions. We add to this growing public dissatisfaction with the ability of the police to respond to crimes of abuse, power violation, intolerance, and hatred. There is also a growing dissonance between the 'helping' persona required by police in the context of expanding 'crisis demand' and the confrontational methods the police often rely upon to address local manifestations of organised crime. All these are likely to further challenge trust and legitimacy in the coming period.

But legitimacy will also be more important in meeting the challenges of the future. We expect this to be a world in which public safety emergencies (linked to extreme weather events, pandemic disease, global conflict, etc) will arise with increasing frequency. It will be increasingly vital to have in place strong, cooperative working relationships between citizens, communities and the police, as a critical enabler of state efforts to manage and control public behaviour, in the interests of public safety. A reservoir of public trust and willing preparedness to cooperate when crisis strikes, cannot, and should not, be taken for granted. It must instead be understood as an essential part of national and community resilience, requiring up-front investment, strategic preparation, and energetic delivery.

Recommendations

7. The Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, the National Police Chiefs' Council and the Home Office should make a first-principle commitment to policing with legitimacy. They should recognise that this is a crucial enabler of effective policing. This should be expressed as a central component of a revised Statement of Mission and Values. This commitment should be backed up by a national plan for improving police legitimacy. The other relevant recommendations set out in this report should form a part of that national plan.

8. Efforts to build and sustain police legitimacy need to be driven by better data and more sophisticated analytics. Better data should also be used to drive accountability and ensure legitimacy is prioritised when faced with competing imperatives. The Home Office should fund a substantial uplift in the Office for National Statistics' crime and policing public survey programme. As part of this a feasibility study should be carried out into the creation of a 'legitimacy index' (potentially combining inspection and survey-based inputs) to enable public scrutiny, performance monitoring and comparisons across time, area and between population groups.

6.2 THE DRIVERS OF POLICE LEGITIMACY

In this section we describe the key drivers underlying police legitimacy.

6.2.1 Fair and respectful treatment

Research has shown that treating people with fairness and respect can enhance police legitimacy and promote compliance with the law.

In his seminal study of *Why People Obey the Law* (2006) Tom Tyler found that citizens were more likely to comply with rules if they viewed the legal institutions like the police and the courts as legitimate. In turn whether they viewed those institutions as legitimate was determined more by perceptions of *fair process* (specifically the quality of decision-making and decency of treatment), rather than by the favourability of the outcomes.

In an important British replication, Jackson et al (2012c) showed that public trust in procedurally fair policing predicts self-reported legal compliance, and that this is strongly mediated through a sense of *moral alignment* with the police (of *'being on the same side'*).

These connections between being treated fairly and the formation of attitudes towards the police are captured in this quote from one of our focus group participants with lived experience of the criminal justice system:

> *"Police judge a book by its cover. They see me as a scumbag drug user; therefore, I will be treated like a scumbag. I do the same when I see the police uniform, I think scumbag police". (RD: South)*

These and similar studies provide a clear message for police agencies: legitimacy matters, not just in ethical terms, but as a component of an evidence-based crime control strategy. If police agencies can routinely demonstrate fair process and respectful treatment, through their officers' dealings with the public, they are more likely to meet with a law abiding and cooperative population. Myhill and Quinton (2011) make the case to English and Welsh police forces in the context of austerity:

> *"When [police] forces decide how best to reduce crime with fewer resources, they should consider whether their proposed approach would enhance or undermine police legitimacy in the eyes of the public. While a narrow focus on enforcing the law might appeal to traditional 'cop culture', it was not found [in Jackson's et al (2012c) study] to have the strongest effect on cooperation and compliance and might even be counter-productive in the longer-term if it is perceived to be unfair."*

We should note that some of the evidence around procedural justice remains contested. Some studies question whether behaviours that the police might see as procedurally just are read the same way by the people on the receiving end (Worden and McLean, 2017; Waddington *et al*, 2015). On reviewing the evidence, Nagin and Telep (2020) conclude: *"perceptions of procedurally just treatment and of legitimacy are the product of a lifetime accumulation of historical, cultural, community and familial influences, not just one or more interactions with the police".* In other words, the long history of people's personal and vicarious interaction and associations with the police also matters. There is more to building legitimacy than simply training officers in better ways to interact with the public.

While noting these challenges we view procedural justice as a necessary, although not sufficient, basis for improving police legitimacy. As things stand currently, public complaints data and multiple inspection reports (e.g. HMICFRS, 2020) suggest that the police service is very far from having embedded procedural justice techniques into culture and practice. In 2020/21 more than 18,000 official complaints were logged about the 'Individual Behaviours' of police personnel (actions perceived as disrespectful, impolite, unfair, overbearing etc) – 17 per cent of all complaints received (IOPC, 2021).

Recommendation

9. The College of Policing should undertake a programme to improve the quality of police interactions with the public, drawing on the principles of procedural justice and the existing evidence base about 'what works'. The programme should aim to both develop knowledge and have sufficient resources to deliver comprehensive officer and staff training and support widespread practice change. Training in interpersonal skills should be a minimum standard that all police forces are expected to meet.

6.2.2 Beyond procedural justice: the other key drivers

As noted above, however, securing legitimacy must go wider than simply improving one-off interactions between the police and members of the public. As Trinkner et *al* (2018, p3) comment: *"one could read the procedural justice literature and come to the conclusion that anything the police do is appropriate and legitimate, so long as it is done respectfully and impartially"* – but as any citizen subject to multiple 'procedurally just' stop and searches can attest, this is clearly not the case, and we must also look to the *'lifetime accumulation'* of other factors, to understand how legitimacy is formed.

While procedural factors are consistently shown to be important we highlight these additional key drivers from the evidence base:

- Lawfulness: whether the police are acting in accordance with the law.

- Effectiveness: whether the police are effective at achieving the goals society has set for them, with the powers provided to them.

- Distributive fairness: whether some people bear more of the costs and/or feel fewer benefits of policing than others (Bottoms and Tankebe, 2012; Tankebe, 2013)

- Boundaries: whether police are perceived to respect the appropriate (and not just legal) limits of their powers (Huq et al, 2016; Trinkner et al, 2018).

One police Call for Evidence respondent raised these latter 'boundary concerns' in the context of recent Covid regulations.

> *"Legitimacy in policing is also as much about what you don't do…In a free, democratic, rights-based society such as ours, restraining people's freedom of movement and association with others… is almost anathema… Covid-19 and the police role in the pandemic has taken the police to the very outer edges of legitimacy in the eyes of the public." (CE2.40)*

Underpinning all of these drivers is a need for the police to be involved in a continual dialogue with the public about how they work and in particular why they do what they do. This involves being committed to having hard and difficult conversations about the rationale behind police policies, priorities, actions, and decisions.

A recognition of the need for improved, inclusive public dialogue permeated Call for Evidence returns.

> *"We [police] need to be better at listening and responding to the needs of our local communities. This means listening to people, not just when they are a victim or witness to a crime, but as part of getting to know what matters, [and] what is of concern… It's about understanding our diverse communities and increasing our efforts to listen to those who don't always have a voice, and not viewing our local communities as one homogenous group." (CE2.02)*

> *"It is important for legitimacy that there is discourse between the public and policing around how resources are used and what police priorities should be…This can only be achieved through good relations and communications with all social groups" (CE1.21)*

> *"Everyone must be given a chance to have their say. Even when their views are not fully accepted, being offered the opportunity to be heard is important. This engagement with the community must be authentic and adhere to principles of procedural justice." (CE2:25)*

It was also expressed by those with lived experience of police contact.

> *"Instead of putting more people [officers] on street, and making things heightened, they should have interventions in the community … to let people know you're still there and are not against them. Police should ask if there any problems in the area…and tell police what's going on in the area. You have to build up better relations with the local community…they're not talking to the whole community… to all aspects of society. This would help people feel more safe and secure." (RD: Male, young adult).*

To demonstrate this commitment, the police service needs to be better designed to facilitate public listening and more committed to explaining the reasons behind its actions, decisions, and priorities. It needs to be open to, and actively seek out, new perspectives, information, evidence, and challenge, and use these to inform its decisions.

Recommendation

10. As part of a commitment to inclusive public dialogue and opening the police up to regular and ongoing challenge, Police and Crime Commissioners and Mayors should invest in vehicles to promote public participation in decision-making, such as citizens juries and assemblies. Opinion surveys and elections every four years are not sufficient to promote the kind of ongoing dialogue that is required.

So far we have argued that police legitimacy and public confidence need to be seen as strategic capabilities for policing. The following sections explore the implications of taking this commitment seriously in five areas.

6.3 COMMUNITY POLICING: BUILDING TRUST AND CONNECTION LOCALLY

"Policing by Safer Neighbourhood Teams and Local Policing Units remains the "cornerstone of British policing" and officers' discretion …can aid community relations". (CE2:10)

The description offered above, of a police service better geared for public dialogue and cooperation, aligned with public priorities and values, and capable of applying more deeply informed discretion – resonates with the key tenets of community policing. This emerged as a policing philosophy in the late 20th century, in response to concerns about public disconnect.

As recognised by the Call for Evidence contributions below, the community policing approach has strong affinities with the 'Peelian' tradition and manifested most notably in England and Wales during the neighbourhood policing programme rolled out in the 2000s, but since 2010 eroded under the pressures of austerity (HMIC, 2017; Higgins, 2018, see Figure 6.3).[30]

"[The public] believe it is important to have police officers or PCSOs on foot in the local area. This expectation is rooted in the founding principles of the service – that it is a civilian service that depends on the consent and cooperation of the people it serves. The type of policing that gives fullest expression to that expectation is neighbourhood policing." (CE1.21)

Despite substantial practice variation, sufficient international evidence has amassed to confirm that community policing approaches (more precisely, those that involve consultation or collaboration between police and local citizens, to define, prioritise or solve problems) *"have positive effects on citizen satisfaction, perceptions of disorder, and police legitimacy"* (Gill et al, 2014).

This accords with broader evidence about the value of public engagement (purposeful, positive dialogue between police and public, conducted away from fraught enforcement or victimisation contexts) on public confidence and legitimacy (Myhill, 2012), particularly when it is 'infused with' procedural justice (Mazerolle, 2013). One recent American randomised control trial concluded that a *"single instance of positive contact with a uniformed police officer can substantially improve public attitudes toward police, including legitimacy and willingness to cooperate",* and furthermore, that *"the largest attitudinal improvements…occurred among racial minorities and those who held the most negative views toward police at baseline."* (Peyton et al, 2019).

There is good reason, therefore, to believe that a renewed focus on community policing and positive,

Figure 6.3: Police officers and PCSOs in 'Neighbourhood Policing' roles[30] and foot patrol visibility (Crime Survey for England and Wales)

"Neighbourhood" Police officers (left axis)
PCSOs (left axis)
Visibility of foot patrol (CSEW: % seeing police patrol at least once a week - right axis)
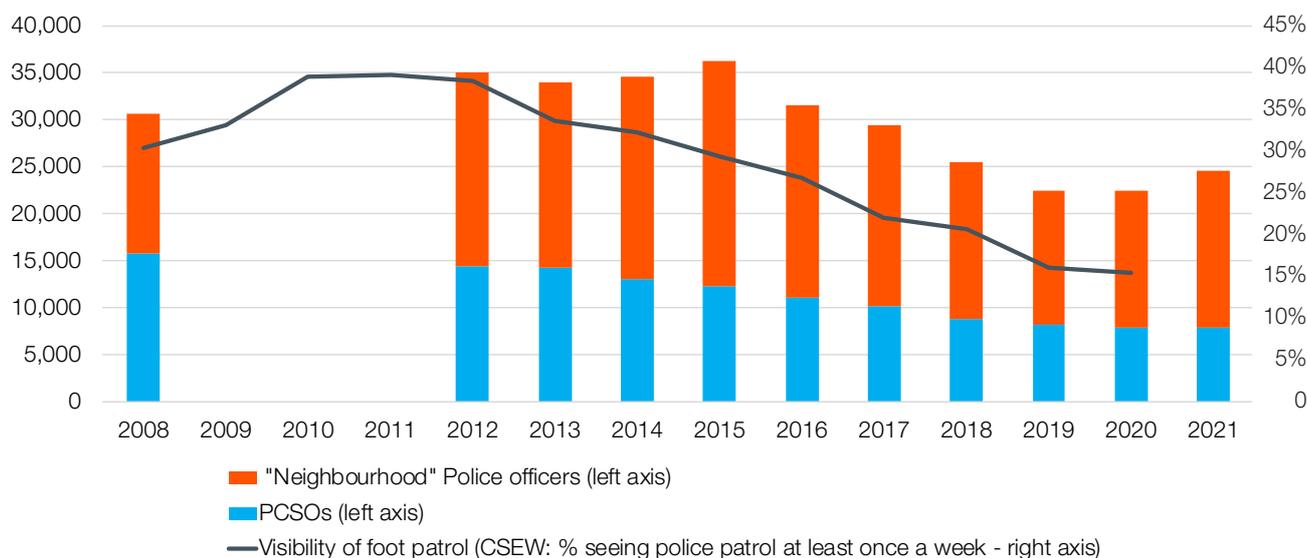
29. The disintegration of Neighbourhood Policing was checked, to some extent, by the publication of a set of College of Policing Guidelines in 2019. Of the 12,100 officers added to the total police workforce under Operation Uplift, 2,400 (20 per cent) have found their way into neighbourhood roles, almost all during the year to March 2021. The national PCSO cohort has reduced by nearly 1,500 over the same period (Home Office, 2021b). The total Neighbourhood 'headcount' remains 20 percent below that at the end of the national roll-out and 32 per cent below the putative high-water mark in 2015.

30. Home Office workforce data is used for years ending March 2012 to 2020, see: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-workforce-england-and-wales. The figure for 2008 is derived from a set of HMIC inspections of Neighbourhood Policing and Developing Citizen Focus Policing conducted in that year, for full methodology see Higgins, (2017).

discretionary public contact, would be effective at strengthening police legitimacy, including in the places and population groups where it is most challenged. We advocate this as a central component of a strategic plan for bolstering police legitimacy. This should involve both police officers and PCSOs.

While we welcome the recent College of Policing guidelines,[31] which set out the 'essential elements' of Neighbourhood Policing, we note that these seek to embed a version of neighbourhood/community policing predominantly oriented towards crime, disorder, and demand reduction/prevention (in line with the tone set by the Policing Vision 2025 (APCC and NPCC, 2016) and the HMIC recommendation that prompted their creation (HMIC, 2017)). Our concern here, however, is to advocate an approach which is, in addition to those aims, also explicitly premised on nurturing local trust, legitimacy, and cooperation. This is a fundamental reorientation of neighbourhood policing with implications for how the function should be geographically targeted, staffed and connected to other policing functions, and for the set of activities undertaken.

> ### Recommendation
>
> 11. The Home Office should ask police forces to deliver a substantial uplift in neighbourhood policing, designed around the need to build and sustain police legitimacy, public confidence, and community resilience. This should involve deploying a significant proportion of the additional officers recruited since 2019 into neighbourhood policing. This provision should be:
>   - Concentrated where legitimacy is most challenged,
>   - Assessed against the objectives of improving legitimacy, confidence and resilience,
>   - Implemented in ways conducive to long-term local knowledge and relationship building,
>   - Accompanied by sufficient 'organisational transformation' to align wider police decision making with local insight, knowledge, and perspective,
>   - Designed with an emphasis on promoting local dialogue, deliberation, and to encourage broad-based public involvement in local problem definition, prioritisation and solving.

[31]. See: https://www.college.police.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-policing

6.4 REDUCING RELIANCE ON STOP AND SEARCH

We believe that the current pattern of police stop and search use is not justified and represents a significant barrier to building trust and confidence, particularly among Black people who are disproportionately likely to be stopped and searched by police.

6.4.1 The police power to stop and search

The police have two powers to stop and search. Under Section 1 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) (and associated legislation), police can stop and search someone if they have 'reasonable grounds for suspicion' that they are carrying an unlawful item. Between April 2020 and March 2021, these accounted for approximately 99 per cent (695,009) of all stop and searches.

The police have a second power under Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. This allows a police officer to stop and search someone without the need for reasonable suspicion. A senior police officer (Inspector or above) can authorise the use of these exceptional stop and search powers in a defined locality for up to 24 hours, where they believe that incidents involving serious violence may take place, and that it is expedient to give such authorisation to prevent their occurrence, or that such an incident has already taken place and the use of the powers would help to find the weapon. The authorisation can be extended by up to a further 24 hours by an officer of Superintendent rank or above.

Between April 2020 and March 2021, 1.3 per cent of all stop and searches were conducted under Section 60, equating to 9,230 searches.

6.4.2 How stop and search is used

Figure 6.4 shows that the numbers of stops and searches (under PACE) have fluctuated considerably over time, with a big fall after the then Home Secretary Theresa May tightened the guidelines around the use of the power, followed by a significant rise following the recent increase in knife crime. Approximately 23 per cent of all searches carried out in 2020/21 resulted in a criminal justice outcome, including 11 per cent that resulted in an arrest. Figure 6.4 shows that as the number of searches increases, a lower proportion of them result in an arrest.

69 per cent of searches under PACE were for drugs (Figure 6.5), a proportion that has been increasing

Figure 6.4 Number of stops and searches under Section 1 of PACE and the proportion resulting in an arrest (Home Office, 2021a)
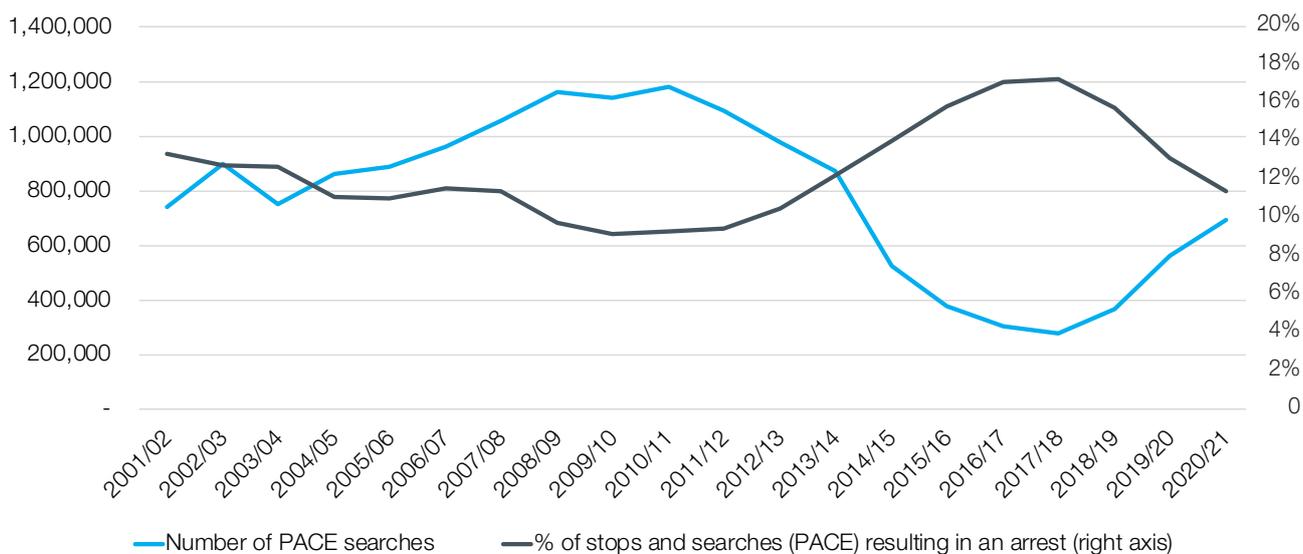
Figure 6.5 Reason for searches under Section 1 of PACE (Home Office, 2021a)
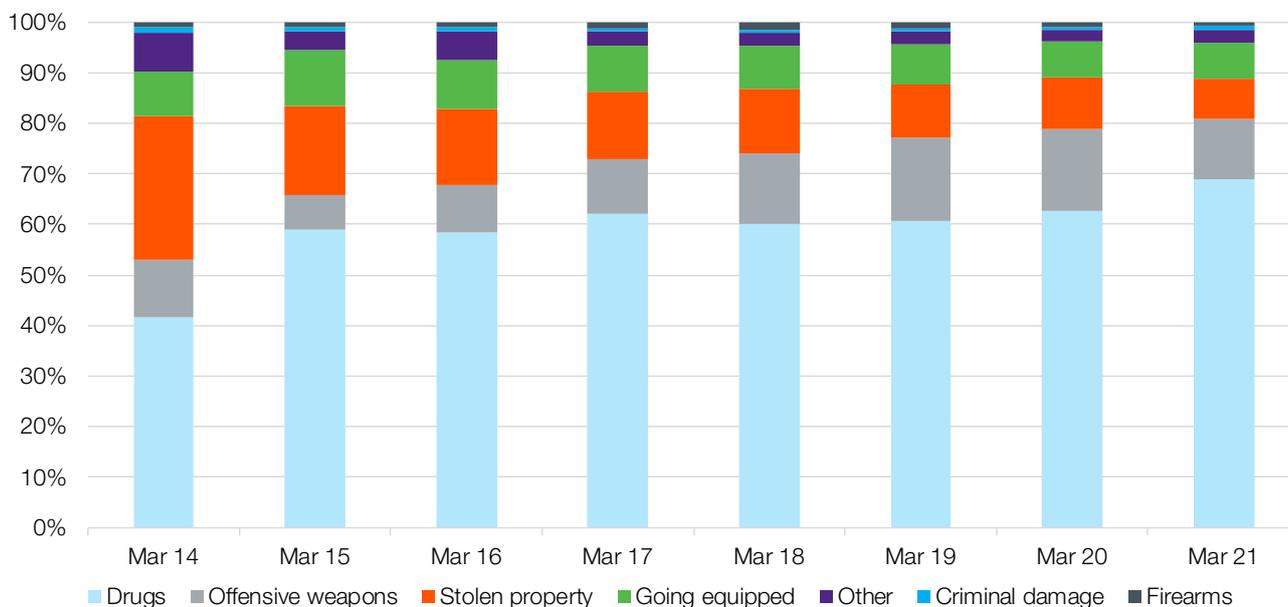
over time. In all but one force, most drug searches are for possession, rather than the supply offences most associated with serious violence (HMICFRS, 2021).

To reiterate PACE searches require 'reasonable suspicion' by the officer that someone is carrying an unlawful item. HMICFRS has found that searches conducted on 'stronger grounds' are more likely to be effective (i.e. result in a 'find') (Table 6.1). Furthermore,

grounds are more likely to be strong when searches are intelligence-led rather than 'self-generated' (based on the suspicion of the individual officer) (Table 6.2) (HMICFRS, 2021). Strong grounds and good intelligence are, therefore, vital to both the legitimacy and efficacy of stop and search (College of Policing APP, 2017).

Table 6.1 Recorded grounds for stop and search, and subsequent find rates (HMICFRS, 2021)

Recorded grounds	% of PACE stop and searches	Find rate
'Strong'	21%	40%
'Moderate'	42%	22%
'Weak'	22%	17%
'Not reasonable'	14%	14%

Table 6.2 Type of search and proportion of those with 'weak' recorded grounds (HMICFRS, 2021)

Search type	% PACE searches	% 'weak' recorded grounds
Self-generated	55% (70% in MPS)	54%
Third-party information	37%	34%
Intelligence led	9%	11%

Turning to the separate Section 60 power, which does not require reasonable suspicion, we can see from Figure 6.6 that use has also fluctuated considerably over time. Use of the power fell dramatically following the Theresa May reforms, but the numbers have again picked up more recently following concerns about the rise in serious violence. As with the PACE power, the more it is used, the lower the find rate. The find rate last year, looking specifically at the possession of offensive weapons (the stated aim of the Section 60 power) was just 0.8 per cent, the lowest proportion since 2011/12 (Home Office, 2021a) (Figure 6.6).

We draw the following conclusions from this summary of the stop and search data:

- The use of the power varies hugely over time with big fluctuations which would seem to depend at

least as much on the political context at the time as any objective reading of conditions on the ground.

- The more it is used the less effective the power becomes. Both the PACE and Section 60 powers have a higher find rate when they are used in lower volumes.

- There is a lot we cannot know from this data. For example, we do not know whether, as some claim, the possession of the power has a deterrent effect on potential knife carriers. We also cannot tell from these data what the impact of these searches is on police legitimacy and public trust in the police. However we can understand more about this latter point by looking at the data on racial disproportionality in the use of the power.

Figure 6.6 Number of Section 60 stops and searches and the proportion of those where a weapon is found (Home Office, 2020)
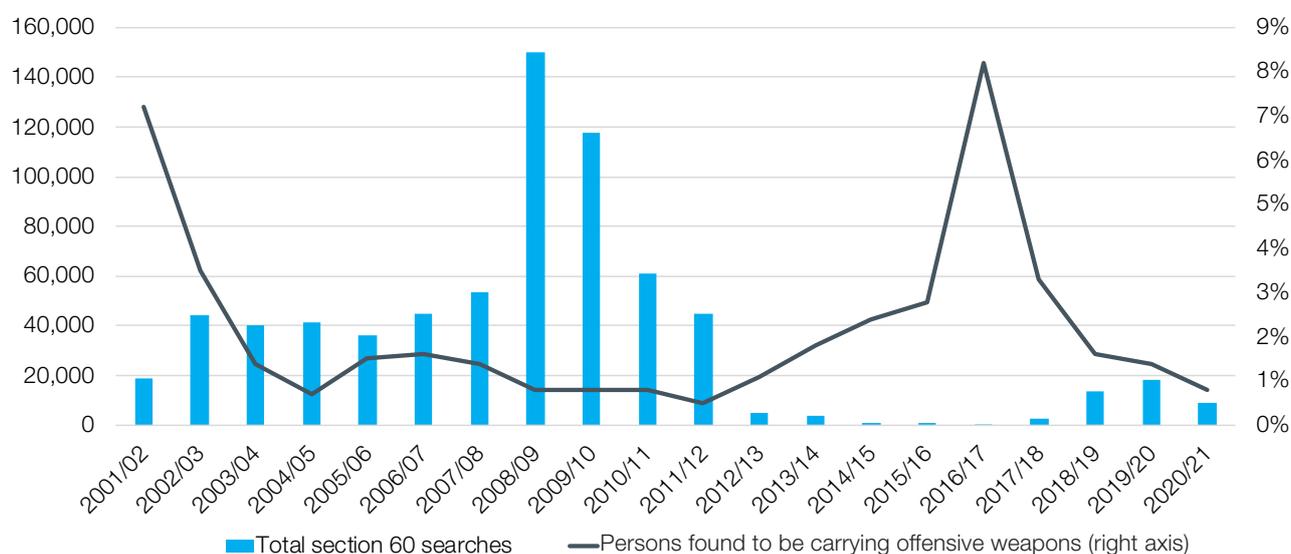
Figure 6.7 Stop and search rate per 1,000 people, both PACE and Section 60 powers (Home Office, 2021a)
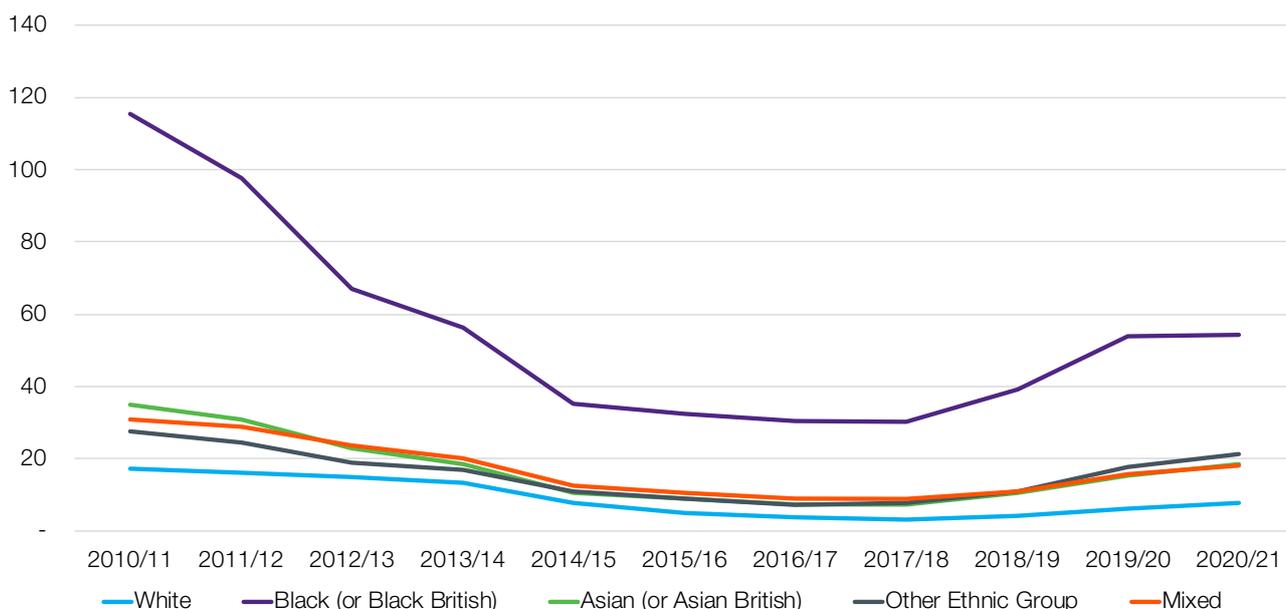
6.4.3 Racial disproportionality

Black people are seven times more likely to be stopped than White people; people of 'Other' ethnicities 2.7 times more likely and those of Mixed ethnicity and Asian people 2.4 times more likely (Home Office, 2021a) (Figure 6.7). These disparities have been increasing over time but narrowed in 2020/21.

Racial and ethnic disproportionality is even greater for the use of the Section 60 power. Between April 2019 and March 2020, ethnic minority groups were seven times more likely to be stopped under Section 60 than their White counterparts, and Black people 18 times more likely (Home Office, 2020). People from Black, and Minority Ethnic (BME) background were subject to 54 per cent of all Section 60 searches last year (Home Office, 2021a).

6.4.4 Impact

> "I've been stopped eight times in one day… I was nine when I first started being stopped… you can't be Black in a tracksuit" (Young adult)

> "It's trivial [Section 60] because taking one knife off the streets doesn't save lives, it makes no difference as people have so many more weapons. I am 100 per cent against Section 60… being searched without suspicion is against my rights as a citizen of my country" (Professional working with young adults with lived experienced of the criminal justice system)

The experience of stop and search can be "embarrassing, intrusive and frightening" (HMICFRS, 2021 p.9). And there is emerging evidence that it can result in longer term individual harm (Del Toro et al, 2019a; Del Toro et al, 2019b). Repeated and disproportionate use leads people to develop concerns about racial profiling. Adversarial encounters with the police can have long lasting effects (Bradford, 2015). 85 per cent of Black people are not confident that the police would treat them the same as a White person (JCHR, 2020) and 74 per cent of people from an ethnic minority background aged 16 to 30 think BME people are unfairly targeted by stop and search (Keeling, 2017). All of this is likely to reduce public trust in the police and cooperation with them.

The police tend to justify use of stop and search as being an effective tool to tackle violent crime, but there is limited evidence to suggest a significant relationship. The College of Policing APP (2017) states that any contribution that stop and search makes to crime reduction, by detecting and deterring criminals, is likely to be "small, highly localised and short-lived" (see also Quinton et al, 2017; Tiratelli et al, 2018; McCandless et al, 2016).

In the US, consistent and statistically significant short-term crime reduction effects have been identified when stop, question and frisk (SQF) is targeted in places with high levels of violence (and serious gun crime) and focused on high-risk repeat offenders. However there is an absence of evidence of its long-term impact (Weisburd and Majmundar, 2018), and the mechanisms driving any crime reduction are unclear (whether, for instance it is the result of greater police visibility rather than the search itself (Quinton et al, 2017)).

6.4.5 Conclusion and recommendations

"The recent rise of serious violence, against the backdrop of falls in other crime types, has reopened the conversation about how the police effectively build trust with communities most affected by these crimes and implement strategies that protect the public with due regard to their long-term effects. While there has been much debate about the need for a 'public health approach' to address serious violence, and some positive developments at regional levels, [we are] concerned that the approach's potential success is being undermined by heavy-handed tactics and changes in policy that will inflict further damage on the relationship between the police and the community. In particular, the return of Section 60 stop and search is a shift that is un-evidenced in terms of need or the likelihood of positive outcomes". (CE1.03)

The first thing to say is that in principle the police should have a power to stop and search a person where they have reasonable grounds to suspect someone is carrying an unlawful item.

However, focusing for the moment on the PACE power, there are some issues that need to be addressed. First, the fact that the 'find rate' is higher the less the power is used indicates that high volumes of stop and search bring with them diminishing returns and moreover are likely to generate a significant cost in terms of reduced trust and confidence in the police and ultimately reduced cooperation between the police and local communities. The police should have the power but they should use it proportionately, with discretion, and only when they have strong grounds for suspicion and be mindful of its impact on community confidence and harm to the individual.

Second, taking this thinking one step further, there is a case for greater intelligence-led targeting of the use of the PACE power. We urge police leaders to look at the concept of 'precision policing' developed in the United States. This approach calls for a shift in policing from the 'three Rs' (rapid response, random patrol and reactive investigation) to three Ps (problem solving, partnership and prevention). It is *"a framework, an organising principle, to ensure that police work with the community in ways that add up to police legitimacy because the methods are integrated into the heart of patrol work and not segregated as an ancillary function. It ensures that police use connectivity more than enforcement; but when enforcement is necessary, it is accurately and narrowly directed"* (Bratton and Murad, 2018: 32).

'Precision policing' provides a possible framework for moving to a model of street-level crime control less reliant on 'blunt' tactics like stop and search and focuses on developing better local intelligence through community policing and greater legitimacy (Bratton and Murad, 2018).

Third, how the power is used is important and there is plenty of evidence from the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) that the power is very often used in ways that do not conform to the theory and practice of procedural justice outlined earlier (IOPC, 2020).

Fourth, the levels of racial and ethnic disproportionality in its use are a cause of a deep sense of unfairness and contribute to less trust and confidence in the police among Black people (Naseem, 2021).

Fifth, there is an over concentration of the use of the power on minor drugs possession offences, which is striking given that the general justification for its use is that it is a tactical option to deal with serious violence.

These points suggest the importance of a much stronger framework of policy, tactics and training around the use of the PACE power. Training must emphasise the importance of procedurally just encounters, the causes and impact of disproportionality and how the use of stop and search needs to align with overall priorities. We make a recommendation below which aims to create a more consistent standard of training and practice in the use of the power.

Finally, we turn to Section 60. In principle we consider a power that enables the police to search a person without any reasonable grounds for suspicion that they are carrying an unlawful item is problematic from a civil liberties perspective. It should not be used frequently and only in extraordinary circumstances. We note that the power tends to be used in a way that is highly disproportionate on racial and ethnic lines and that it generates considerable community concern. We also note that the 'find rate' from Section 60 searches is extremely low.

We also heard representations that this is a useful tactical option when the police are concerned about an outbreak in serious violence. It has been suggested that there may be a deterrent effect from its use, which is a counter factual that, if it were true, would be hard to evidence.

Our view is that the Section 60 power has been misused in the past and applied too often in conditions where it should not have been. However, we can conceive of emergency conditions under which a temporary power of this kind is justified. This would be where the police have intelligence that a *significant* outbreak of serious violence *is likely to* occur. At the very least the government's recent relaxation of the

rules around Section 60 ought to be reversed. Section 60 powers ought only to be used when a senior officer considers that such serious violence 'is likely to' (rather than 'may') occur and the authorisation ought to be made by a chief officer, rather than an Inspector. The guidance must also make clear that the impact on community relations must be considered prior to authorisation and the grounds for the authorisation must be properly communicated to the public.

Recommendations

12. The government's Serious Violence Strategy should be amended to reflect a three-strand commitment to 1. a preventative public health approach, 2. targeted law enforcement activity ('precision policing') and 3. an explicit commitment to legitimacy and working with communities. The last is lacking from current strategies and emphasises a shift to problem solving, partnership and prevention from 'blunt' street level deterrence and enforcement.

13. The College of Policing should issue mandatory guidance in relation to stop and search training. This would be based on the Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme. This should emphasise the importance of procedural justice and the need for searches to have strong grounds, including through being intelligence-led, and to align with wider police priorities. Where a drugs search leads to a 'find' and a charge of possession would otherwise be made, individuals should be consistently diverted towards a social intervention and away from the criminal justice system.

14. The Section 60 legislation should be changed to make clear that this is a power to be used only in extraordinary circumstances, where the police have intelligence that a significant outbreak of serious violence is likely to occur. The authorisation should be made by a chief officer. The grounds for the decision should be clearly communicated to the public and the impact on police-community relations considered.

6.5 TRUST AND LEGITIMACY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

So far in this chapter our concerns have been analogue ones. But we are living in a digital age and we must consider the implications of this change for police legitimacy and public trust.

The core challenge here is how the police can harness the power of new technologies – such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Live Facial Recognition (LFR) – while avoiding disproportionate intrusion, unethical practice and the breaching of public trust.[32]

These challenges were highlighted by Metropolitan Police Commissioner Cressida Dick in a pair of lectures to the Police Foundation in 2019 and the Royal United Services Institute the following year. She said that digital technologies can help to predict, prevent, and detect significant volumes of crime, but that policing also needed to embrace *"well-governed and well-explained proportionate use of tech"*. She offered an articulation of a British policing model for the digital age, in which technology would always be used to augment, not replace, accountable human decision making, and where deployments would be subject to principles of minimal intrusion (analogous to those underpinning use of physical force), backed by the capability for agile escalation and de-escalation as circumstances change. We consider that this provides a useful starting point for developing a framework for police use of intrusive technologies.

There are three specific challenges that need to be addressed, relating to governance, bias, and privacy (Rowe and Muir, 2021).

First, the governance problems relate to the challenge of achieving satisfactory oversight of predictive 'big data' algorithms, given their inherent complexity and the additional layers of opacity added when these are 'self-learning', developed with the private sector or by networks that cross jurisdictional borders.

Second, there is a challenge of bias, linked to the way algorithmic processing can exaggerate or 'ratchet up' (Harcourt, 2007) unintentional coding biases or partiality/disproportionality in input data, leading to over or under-policing of problems, neighbourhoods, or marginalised groups (Lum and Isaac, 2016).

Both of these challenges give rise to questions about how 'human' police officers, can be held accountable

32. We note that the House of Lords Justice and Home Affairs Committee is currently conducting an inquiry into new technologies and the application of the law, which will no doubt tackle these questions. We look forward to its findings https://committees.parliament.uk/work/1272/new-technologies-and-the-application-of-the-law/

for algorithmically informed decisions (and/or where else accountability should lie). Empirically, too little is known about how police personnel interact with algorithmic outputs, but there are clearly risks of police officers relying excessively on the judgements of machines when reaching decisions for which they are ultimately accountable (Kearns and Muir, 2019).

Third, the problem of privacy cuts across multiple areas of police work in the information age, from investigative use of communications data to biometrics, to network analysis and data-mining. The primary challenge currently is to ensure that police intrusions into citizens' privacy, are necessary, proportionate and compliant with the complex patchwork of relevant legislation. Recent investigations and court cases identifying problems with police use of mobile phone extraction (ICO, 2020), their trial use of Live Facial Recognition (R (Bridges) v CC South Wales, 2020), and controversy over the 'consent' required of victims for digital examination of electronic devices, demonstrate the need for continued vigilance to ensure that police assurances around digital ethics are carried through into practice.

It is unhelpful that public debate about these questions tends to be dominated by critical campaigning voices on one side, with the police often obliged to take up the position of proponents on the other. Given what we have said about the importance of the police committing to inclusive dialogue, and the role they play as societal arbiters, this position of advocacy for greater power, feels undesirable. Much more conducive to public trust, we suggest, is the way some police forces have voluntarily subjected their proposed data and technology initiatives to the scrutiny of independent ethics panels and responded to their recommendations and advice (Oswald, 2021).

We believe a commitment to this kind of rigorous external, expert scrutiny and challenge by non-partisan bodies, representing the public interest, can go some way to establishing police trustworthiness in this fast-developing field.

Policing would do well to put such arrangements on a firmer footing than exists at present. Noting the risk of inconsistencies emerging, and the limited pool of available expertise, there appears to be a strong argument for moving from the current set of fragmented local arrangements to a single national ethics and oversight panel.

6.6 CONDUCT

As recent events have demonstrated, nothing is more corrosive of public trust in the police than unethical, illegal and immoral conduct by police officers. A healthy, functioning relationship between the public and the police requires the former to trust that the latter will act professionally, competently, lawfully, and based on sound motives.

Just as with members of the public, good conduct for police officers requires both 1. sanctions for bad behaviour and 2. a supportive cultural and social context. Here we discuss first the effectiveness of the police conduct system and second the need for a culture that promotes the right norms and values.

First, it must be said that there have been significant changes to the police conduct system and it is very early to judge their impact. In 2020 the Home Office introduced a number of reforms to police disciplinary procedures to try to place less emphasis on punishment, particularly for errors, sub-optimal practice etc and more on organisational learning (Home Office,

2018). Under new arrangements less serious breaches of professional standards are dealt with outside of the misconduct system, through line management action, Reflective Practice Review Processes and Unsatisfactory Performance Procedures.

The direction of these reforms, toward more of a learning culture and a focus on preventing mistakes from re-occurring is positive. We do however have concerns about one specific change: the introduction of independent 'legally qualified persons' to chair police misconduct hearings. While this change seems well motivated there is a widespread view among chief officers that, for whatever reason, these chairs seem less likely than Chief Constables to dismiss officers found guilty of serious misconduct (Hamilton, 2021; Hewitt 2021a). This has led to the bizarre situation of police forces taking their own misconduct panels to court to try to secure an officer's dismissal.

> ### Recommendation
>
> 16. The Home Office should review the use of independent chairs of police misconduct hearings. Such a review should identify whether the recent reforms have made it harder to secure the dismissal of officers found guilty of misconduct.

Second, it is clear that having a robust misconduct system is not sufficient to promote good conduct. This requires a wider culture of integrity. There are good reasons to be concerned about the current state of police occupational culture, or at least some of the sub-cultures within it. Following the murder of Sarah Everard, there has been widespread condemnation of persistent and problematic 'canteen' cultures, that allow misogynistic, racist, homophobic, and otherwise discriminatory attitudes and behaviours to persist unchecked (Hewitt, 2021b; Saner, 2021; Marsh, 2021; Apter, 2021).

Given the persistence of these issues it is questionable whether the obligation in the police Code of Ethics to question and report, challenge or take action against unprofessional behaviour has really been embedded culturally within the police service (College of Policing, 2014).

Currently there are two inquiries underway which will explore many of these issues, one led by Dame Elish Angiolini for the Home Office and another by Dame Louise Casey for the Metropolitan Police. Clearly any reforms aimed at improving police conduct and organisational culture should follow the conclusions of these two important inquiries.

We also note the existence of well-documented strategies for promoting police integrity (e.g., Newburn, 2015), which include lessons around vetting, resourcing of professional standards departments, and close monitoring of 'closed' or specialist units, demonstrably more vulnerable to corruption (Punch, 2000). We leave it for other, better placed reviews to assess where current practice in these areas requires improvement.

However, here we make three recommendations which are within our strategic remit. First, the College of Policing should initiate a programme of work to ensure that the Code of Ethics becomes fully embedded into police culture and practice. This should include placing the Code of Ethics at the heart of the new leadership development programmes we call for in Chapter 10 of this report. Sergeants, Inspectors, Superintendents and chief officers need to be role models for good conduct and the highest professional standards. That is the key to achieving a culture of integrity.

Second, we note research evidence that links the way police officers behave vis-à-vis members of the public, to the way they are treated within their organisations. Across a range of workplace contexts, studies found that how employees are treated within their organisations has an impact on their performance, including organisational commitment, 'going the extra mile', and job satisfaction (Colquitt, 2008; Tyler and Blader, 2000).

In the policing context, Bradford et al (2013), have shown that police officers who perceive their organisation as distributivity fair, and their supervisors and leaders as procedurally just, are more likely to identify with the organisation, demonstrate discretionary effort, value the public and feel empowered in their work.[33] In this context the finding that only 36 per cent of frontline officers believe that they are 'treated fairly' (the same proportion who explicitly disagree, (Chandler, 2020)) should be of particular concern, and the drivers of these perceptions need to be understood and addressed.

In light of this evidence the College of Policing should ensure that the principles for promoting 'organisational justice' are embedded into police leadership development programmes.

Third, the way in which police organisations often fail to respond transparently and empathetically following cases of internal misconduct, whether current or in the past, can act to further undermine public trust. As has been recognised within the service (Dodd, 2016), learning from failure is too often impaired by an

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[33]. The perceived risk of sanctions (i.e., disciplinary or performance measures), on the other hand, did not impact on these outcomes, but did predict self-reported rule following and 'blind obedience' (as did supervisory procedural justice).

institutional tendency towards defensiveness. In the wake of Inquiries into the Hillsborough Stadium disaster (HIP, 2012; Jones 2017) and, more recently, the murder of Daniel Morgan (O'Loan, 2021), calls have been made for a statutory 'Duty of Candour' to be applied to police and other public authorities, to ensure that those seeking truth following tragedy, are not obstructed.

We believe that an organisational duty of candour on police forces would help to promote openness and reduce defensiveness. This would be a duty on police bodies to, at all times, act within 'the public interest, to be transparent candid and frank', as well as a duty 'to assist court proceedings, inquiries, and official investigations and to cooperate with public inquiries'. Certainly, within the NHS there are signs that a comparable duty of candour has led to an increased reporting of serious incidents (Gardiner et al, 2021). However we also note that an organisational duty of candour is unlikely to work unless also underpinned by active efforts to embed a culture of integrity as described above (Gardiner et al, 2021).

Recommendations

17. The College of Policing should instigate a programme of work to ensure that the Code of Ethics is deeply embedded into police training, decision-making and professional practice. This should include:

    • Ensuring that the principles set out in the Code of Ethics are core components of all leadership development programmes in policing.

    • Ensuring that 'ethical health checks' are a standard part of police officer professional development.

    • Ensuring that reflective practice is used systematically to promote discussion of the implications of the Code of Ethics for police decision-making.

18. The College of Policing should ensure that police leadership development programmes are informed by the principles of organisational justice. These programmes should promote a model of police leadership that understands and seeks to address the causes of perceived unfairness within the workforce.

19. The Home Office should bring forward legislation to introduce an organisational duty of candour for police forces.

6.7 WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

In this section we examine the diversity of the police workforce as a key building block for police legitimacy. First, we set out why a more diverse workforce is important. Second, we examine the data on the representation of different groups within the workforce, focusing on those characteristics for which we have data (gender and race and ethnicity). Third, we explore why the police service remains so unrepresentative of the populations it serves. Fourth, we make a series of recommendations that amount to a call for a 'diversity uplift' in policing.

6.7.1 The importance of a diverse workforce

We identify a number of reasons why having a more representative workforce should benefit both the police and society:

• A more representative organisation should strengthen police legitimacy, particularly with those groups hitherto under-represented (Gade and Wilkins, 2013; Theobald and Haider-Markel, 2009).

• A more representative workforce may be less likely to discriminate against minority communities and will be more likely to consider the interests and perspectives of those communities (Meier, 1993).

• Having a diversity of perspectives within an organisation can help to tackle outdated thinking, prevent 'group think' and promote innovation (Syed, 2021).

6.7.2 Diversity within the police workforce

In this section we break down the police workforce by gender and race/ethnicity and seek to understand how representative it is of the population of England and Wales, and of local police force areas. Note that figures on other protected characteristics such as disability, religion and sexual orientation are not available.

Gender

There has been a steady increase in the proportion of female police officers in the workforce as illustrated in Figure 6.8. This has risen by 6.6 percentage points between 2010 and 2021 to 32.3 per cent of the workforce but is still significantly less than the proportion of women in the general population of England and Wales (over 50 per cent).

Figure 6.9 shows female representation is highest at the Constable rank (34.3 per cent). It is lowest at the Sergeant rank (24.6 per cent). When looking more broadly at roles within the workforce, there is strong

Figure 6.8 Female police officers as a proportion of all police officers (Home Office, 2021b)
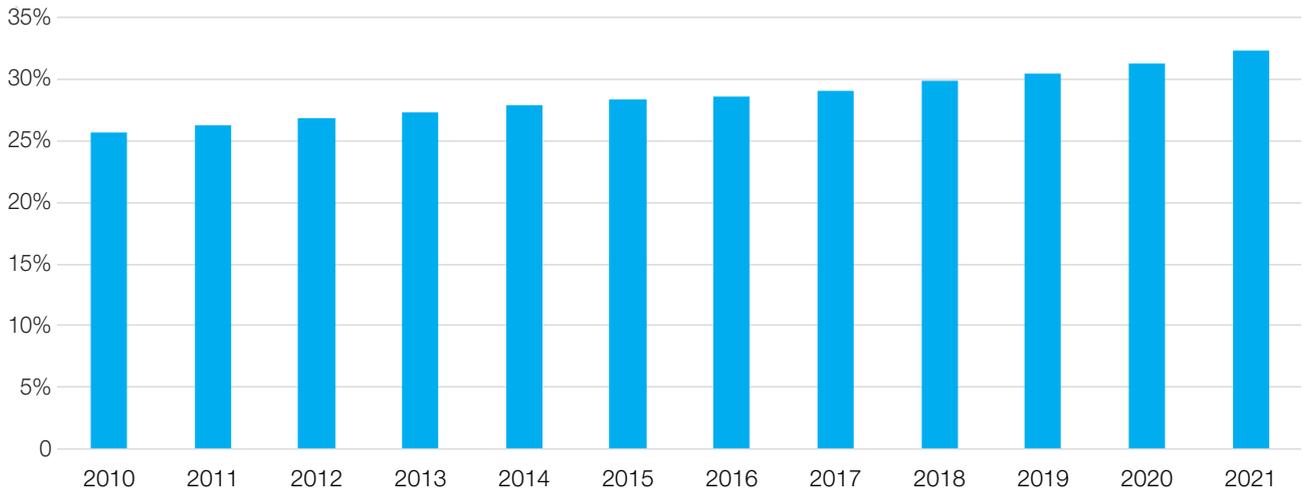
Figure 6.9. Proportion of all police officers who are female by rank 2021 (Home Office, 2021b)
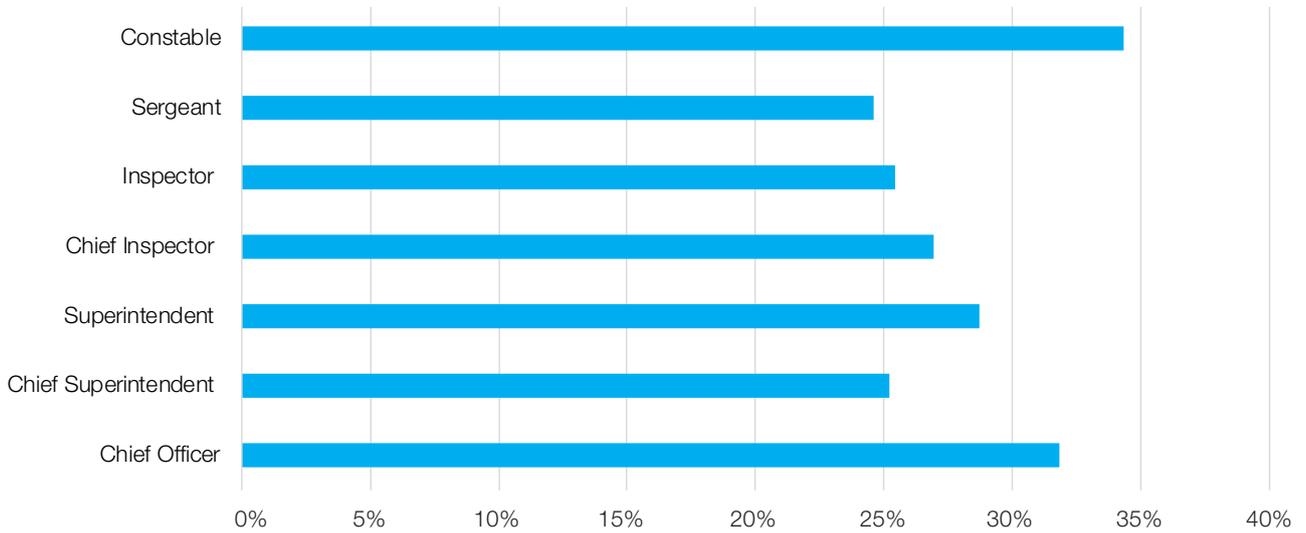
Figure 6.10. Gender balance within the police workforce 2021 (Home Office, 2021c)
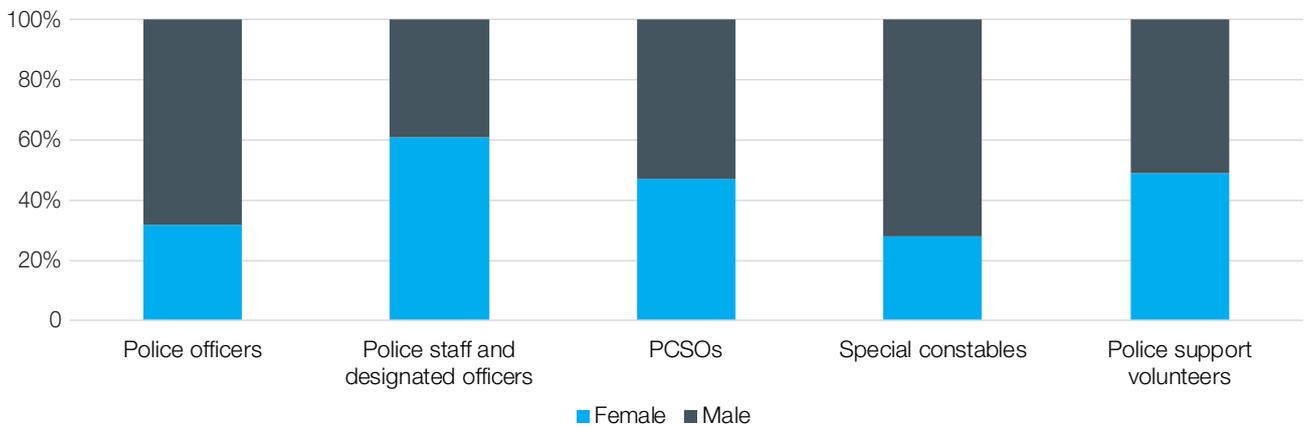
Figure 6.11 Average proportion of women police officers in Europe and USA 2016-2018 (Eurostat, 2020)
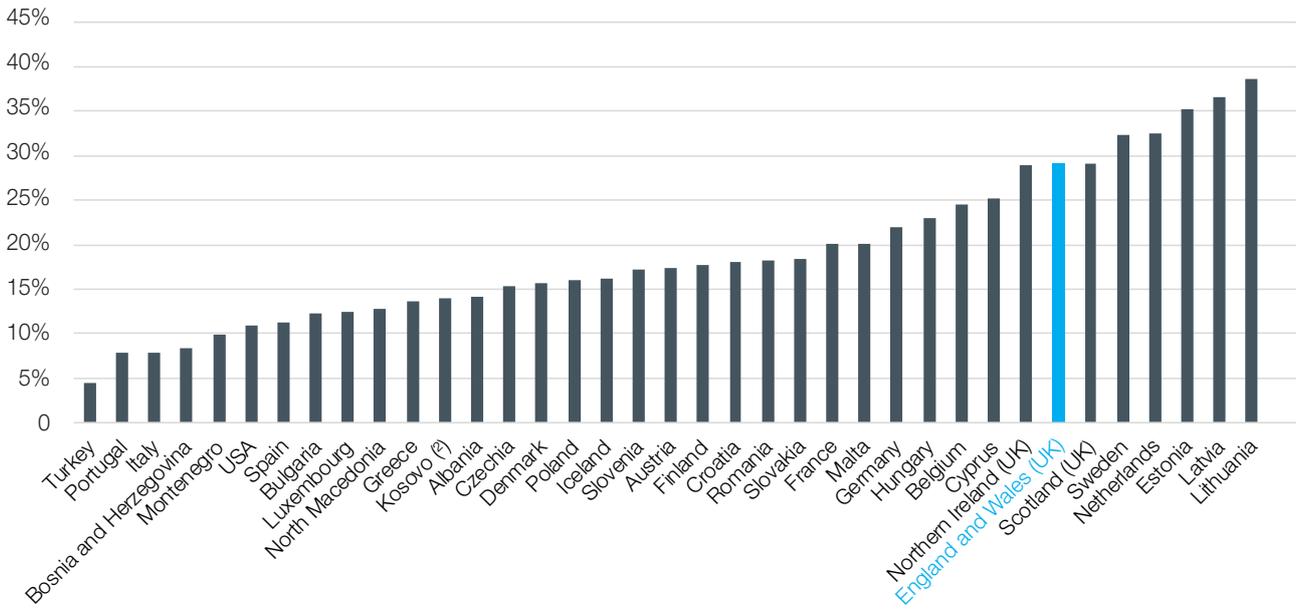
female representation within police staff and designated officers (61 per cent), Police Support Volunteers (49 per cent) and PCSOs (47 per cent) (Figure 6.10).

By comparison with other European countries and the United States, England and Wales have one of the highest proportions of women police officers, coming seventh out of 37 countries (Figure 6.11). While in England and Wales 29 per cent of police officers were women in 2016 to 2018, the figure was just 4 per cent in Turkey, 8 per cent in Portugal, 8 per cent in Italy and 11 per cent in the USA. The Baltic states have by contrast the highest proportions of women police officers: 39 per cent in Lithuania, 37 per cent Latvia and 35 per cent in Estonia.

Nevertheless, at the current rate of progress it will take another 20 years for England and Wales to achieve a representative workforce in terms of gender.

Race and ethnicity

Since 2000, the percentage of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) police officers has increased steadily from 2.2 per cent to 7.6 per cent (excluding not stated) (Figure 6.12). However, this is still some way off being representative of the population of England and Wales (17.6 per cent in 2021) (Wohland et al, 2021)

Figure 6.13 illustrates that Asian and mixed ethnicity police officer representation is the highest and their representation is increasing at the fastest rate. The

Figure 6.12 Proportion of all police officers who are BME 2000-2021 (Home Office, 2021c)

proportion of Asian and mixed ethnicity officers more than doubled between 2007 and 2020. By contrast Black police officers only increased from 1 to 1.3 per cent as a proportion of the workforce in the 14 years to 2021. This is a major concern given that Black Caribbean communities have the lowest levels of trust and confidence in the police.

Table 6.3 shows that although the ethnic diversity of officers has increased in recent years, in 2021, all ethnic minorities remain under-represented in policing compared to their proportion of the English and Welsh population.

If we look at progress made in the last ten years, there is a wide variation in performance. Greater Manchester Police (GMP) saw a 97.5 per cent increase in BME officers between 2015 and 2021. In comparison, West Midlands Police (WMP) saw a 44 per cent increase and the Metropolitan Police (MPS) a 37.8 per cent increase. Improvements in each of the three biggest forces in England and Wales has been driven predominantly by the recruitment of Asian officers. There has also been some success in the recruitment of people of mixed

ethnicity. The proportion of Black police officers in the MPS has increased by just 0.9 percentage points in the past 10 years. In GMP this figure is 0.3 percentage points and WMP has in fact seen a reduction in the proportion of Black officers.

What about the impact of Operation Uplift? As of September 2021, 7.9 per cent of all officers were BME, an increase of 0.6 percentage points since March 2020. Of new officers recruited between April 2020 and September 2021, 11.4 per cent identified as BME. This is only a 1.1 percentage point increase on the percentage of new recruits that were BME in the year to March 2020 (10.3 per cent) (Home Office, 2021d). These figures suggest that Operation Uplift is having a negligible impact on workforce diversity.

We can also make future projections, based on current trends. Using Wohland's (2021) projections, the BME population of England and Wales will increase to 27.1 per cent by 2050. If the number of BME officers continues to increase by only 0.34 percentage points annually (the average over the last five years) it will take 58.2 years for

Table 6.3 The representation gap by ethnic group 2021 (Home Office, 2021b; Wohland et al, 2021)[34]

Ethnicity	Proportion of all BME officers (%)	Proportion of all police officers (%)	Proportion of population in England and Wales
Asian/Asian British	44.9	3.4	9.8
Black/Black British	16.9	1.3	3.8
Other	7.9	0.6	1.2
Mixed	30.3	2.3	2.8

34. Officers who identify as Chinese in 2021 were counted under the Asian ethnic group instead of under the Chinese and Other ethnic group.

the police service to be representative of a population that is 27.1 per cent BME, taking us to the year 2079. By then, of course, the BME population of England and Wales will have again increased significantly.

Looking at the three largest metropolitan forces, we estimate that it will take the Metropolitan Police 59 years to be representative of London's Asian population and 91 years to be representative of London's Black population (as at 2050). For Greater Manchester it will take 24 and 40 years respectively. At the current rate of change in the number of its Black officers (falling) West Midlands Police will never become representative of its Black population.

6.7.3 The causes of low minority representation in the police workforce

We identify the following reasons why members of ethnic minority groups are less likely to consider policing as a career:

- There is the feeling of being unwelcome, considering the fraught history of race relations in this country and the long history of racism and discrimination in policing, evidenced in numerous public inquiries over the years, such as Scarman (1981) and Macpherson (1998).

- A lack of minority ethnic role models in the police.

- BME candidates are more likely to receive a hostile reaction from their families due to their perceptions of the police.

- BME graduates in particular may see policing as lacking the status of other professions such as medicine and the law (Waters et al, 2007).

- Vetting can exclude candidates if a criminal record is associated with their social or familial networks and candidates from more disadvantaged backgrounds may be more likely to be excluded on that basis.

- BME candidates are more likely than White candidates to fail assessment centres, suggesting much more needs to be done to create a level playing field in the recruitment process.

- BME officers are less likely to stay in the police and less likely to get promoted. Police officers with a BME background are more likely to voluntarily resign than White officers, with 27 voluntary resignations per 1,000 officers in the year ending March 2021 compared to 15.1 for White officers. During 2020/21, just 4.5 per cent of all police officers promoted were BME (excluding the MPS) (Home Office, 2021c). The dismissal rate for BME officers is 2.9 per 1,000 compared to 1.2 for White officers (Home Office, 2021c)

However, none of these factors should become a cause for fatalism. As we shall see there are good examples of police organisations bringing in talent from more diverse backgrounds.

6.7.4 Improving diversity

There are several examples of success in recruiting a more diverse police workforce. For example, the Police Now graduate recruitment programme has done well in recruiting new female officers: 54 per cent of New Graduate Leadership Programme (NGLP) recruits and 66 per cent of New Detective Programme (NDP) offer holders starting in 2020/21 were women (compared to 37 per cent of joiners nationally). Of those starting in 2020/21, 17 per cent of NGLP and 26 per cent NDP recruits were BME, compared to 10 per cent of joiners nationally in 2019/20. 45 per cent of these were female. Additionally, the number of Black people on the NGLP increased from eight in 2019 to 29 in 2020.

The significant increase in Police Now applications since 2015 is a clear indication that policing can attract diverse and motivated graduates. Some of the reasons for their success are attributable to much better targeting of marketing at BME audiences, using diverse role models and framing policing as being about social change and public service rather than traditional crime fighting.

What the experience of Police Now shows is that women and people from BME groups do want to join the police when there is a real focus on reaching out and making it an attractive career choice.

However, both the Scarman and Macpherson Reports argued for improving minority representation in the police workforce and far too little has been achieved since those landmark reports. Macpherson set targets for police force representation by 2009, none of which were met. The Home Affairs Select Committee noted in 2013 that progress since the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry was *'disappointing'* and that there being (at that time) no Black or Asian Chief Constables was *'shameful'*. It also said that progress had not been sufficient and that there was a need to address the issue with greater urgency.

It is time to take further steps to improve the representativeness of policing. We note the success of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) in recruiting more Catholic officers following the Good Friday Agreement (see Box 6.1). In that case the PSNI was allowed for a time limited period to use positive discrimination, essentially a 50/50 recruitment process. We note that the success in Northern Ireland was not

Box 6.1 The experience of the Police Service of Northern Ireland

The 1999 Patten Report on policing was a significant step towards peace in Northern Ireland. Following the recommendations of the enquiry, the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), which drew its officers overwhelmingly from the Protestant community, was replaced by the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). Alongside the latter was a reformed recruitment policy, where 50 per cent of new officers would be Catholics. Where six or more similar vacancies were to be filled, all candidates of a specified standard of merit were pooled from which an equal number of Protestants and Catholics were appointed.

The first step to make this change was to create vacancies by offering severance schemes. The result was increased Catholic representation in the police workforce, from 8 per cent in 2001 to 30 per cent when the initiative was stopped in 2011. In this period the application rate of Catholics also increased from 23 per cent to 37 per cent (Home Affairs Committee, 2016) as did confidence in the police among Catholic communities. The uplift in Catholic representation has stalled since; in 2020 32 per cent of PSNI officers are Catholic (PSNI, 2020). The 2011 census showed that 45 per cent of the population of Northern Ireland were Catholic (48 per cent Protestant), but a Catholic majority is predicted for the near future (Gordan, 2018).

simply about positive discrimination, but also about re-founding the police service as a new organisation and that this helped to change how those in the nationalist community saw the police. We are clear that any use of recruitment targets and positive discrimination in England and Wales needs to be backed up by a wider programme of work to build trust in policing particularly among Black communities.

Recommendation

20. The government should develop a plan to improve workforce diversity, setting targets for female and ethnic minority recruitment for each police force. In order to facilitate this the government should legislate to allow police forces to introduce time limited positive discrimination policies until such time as these targets are achieved.

6.8 CONCLUSION

There are worrying signs of a deterioration in public confidence in the police and in particular there are signs of a decline in police legitimacy in the nation's capital. There are longstanding legitimacy deficits in the Black community and, in a more disrupted and unpredictable future operating environment, the ability of the police to work cooperatively with the public will become more important. Legitimacy must be seen as a core strategic capability for the police service, without which it is impossible for our policing model to function effectively.

The police service should develop a long-term plan to build and promote police legitimacy. That plan should be backed up by better data on where trust and confidence are weakest and efforts to promote legitimacy should be focused on those communities. A restored neighbourhood policing model should be at the centre of efforts to improve trust and confidence, with a significant proportion of the new Operation Uplift recruits dedicated to neighbourhood policing roles.

Part of that plan must also include new guidance and mandatory training around the use of the stop and search power, a clearer national framework around the ethics of using new technologies in policing, work to tackle negative internal cultures and clear targets to improve workforce diversity.

7. SKILLS AND TECHNOLOGY

Summary: The police need the right skills and technology to be able to perform their role in a changing world. The police service currently suffers from gaps in relational, investigative and digital skills. Strong interpersonal and communication skills are crucial to improving police legitimacy and must be a mandatory minimum standard across all forces. There should be greater use of direct entry schemes and improved pay to deal with the chronic shortage of detectives. Policing should collaborate much more closely with the private sector to fill gaps in specialist digital skills.

To fill crucial skills gaps policing needs to become a more plural workforce, for example by strengthening career pathways in allied policing professions, such as data analytics, financial investigation and digital forensics. There should be strategic workforce planning at a national level to ensure the service can properly meet the demands of the future.

Police information technology also requires substantial improvement. It is alarming that the Police National Computer, a critical part of police infrastructure, is 48 years old and will soon be running on the basis of unsupported technology. There needs to be significant investment in police IT over the next decade. The College of Policing, as a single home for police improvement, should have powers to mandate common IT standards across the whole system to improve data sharing and interoperability.

Police officers and staff need the skills and technological assets to enable them to perform their roles successfully in the face of radically changing demand. In this chapter we identify a number of core skills gaps within the police workforce and describe what should be done to fill them. We also review the state of police IT and call for a 'technology uplift' over the next decade.

7.1 SKILLS

The future skills requirement can be broken down into three categories:

- **Relational skills** required to manage complexity, respond to vulnerability, de-escalate social tension, and build and sustain public trust and confidence.

- **Investigatory skills** required to investigate increasingly complex areas of crime.

- **Digital skills** to operate effectively in a digital environment.

Figure 7.1 summarises our assessment of the future skills needs of the police service.

7.1.1 Relational skills

Policing is fundamentally a relational business: the outcomes the police achieve for society depend on the quality of their internal and external relationships. Future trends will render these relational skills even more important.

Communication and interpersonal skills

The projected increase of social tensions and civil emergencies and the need to respond to increasingly complex needs, put a premium on officers' communication skills. As we have discussed, police also need good interpersonal skills to police with legitimacy.

Tens of thousands of police officers of course have excellent people skills. However, current police training does not sufficiently emphasise communication and interpersonal skills. Surveys of people who have encountered police officers suggest officers often do not properly attempt verbal de-escalation before using force. Many officers say they manage conflict through communication, but just half have been trained to do this (Clark-Darby and Quinton, 2020). HMICFRS' 2018/19 PEEL inspection found none of the 19 forces inspected provided structured communication training (HMICFRS, 2021).

While conflict management now features in officer safety training,[35] HMICFRS (2021) has found officers are not taught associated skills like active listening, showing empathy, building rapport, using positive language and de-escalation techniques. Providing proper training and assessment for verbal and non-verbal communication skills could prevent confrontation, reduce demand for conflict management and bolster legitimacy (HMICFRS, 2020).

[35.] The College of Policing has now designed a conflict management training package but many officers rely on CPD and supervisor debriefing to acquire these skills.

Figure 7.1. Future skills assessment for policing

Future trends	Skills requirement	Implications for workforce organisation
More crime on the internet Investment in digital tools to keep pace with internet crime	Digital skills Investigatory skills	Increased specialisation in complex areas of investigatory and operational support work, alongside wider awareness among the general workforce More specialist entry points Locating specialisms within centres of expertise. Upgrading technology and ending reliance on legacy systems
Greater need to work within an ethical framework online	Understanding of ethical issues	Needed for all roles, with specialist input
More frequent high impact disruptive events	Communication and interpersonal skills	Needed across all public facing roles Large number of generalist police officers needed to tackle large scale disruption
Policing of social tension and public order more challenging	Communication and interpersonal skills Cultural competency Local knowledge Conflict management	Needed across all public facing roles, particularly neighbourhood, response and public order roles Need for reinvestment in neighbourhood policing and specialist public order capacity
More complex social demands	Communication and interpersonal skills Conflict management Trauma Informed Practice Problem solving Co-production Collaboration across sectors Specialist investigatory skills to tackle complex crime patterns	Needed across all public facing roles, particularly in neighbourhood and response. Need for sufficient numbers of officers with specialist skills to tackle increasingly complex crime
Fiscal constraint/resource pressure	Resource management Change management Commercial awareness Leadership	Attracting people from other sectors with these skills, particularly into non-warranted roles Strengthening learning and development for police leaders
Organised crime groups exploiting opportunities	Digital skills Collaboration skills	Important for serious and organised crime and investigatory roles
Competition from other 'policing' actors	Collaboration skills Appreciation of ethical issues	Strategic and operational leaders need to manage risks and rewards
Increased public scrutiny and accountability	Communication and interpersonal skills, ability to operate in a political environment, reflective practice skills	Needed for all public facing roles. Greater political awareness for everyone. Reflective practice to be underpinned by supporting a culture of continuous professional development (CPD)

Co-production skills

Public servants increasingly need to share power with citizen experts to achieve results (Needham and Mangan, 2014; Dzur, 2021). New technologies have altered citizens' expectations of the state while deference to professional judgement has declined. Neighbourhood policing especially should be strongly co-productive.

However, the police do not prioritise the skills required to work co-productively.

Victim care

Officers need interpersonal skills to support victims. The Victims' Commissioner (2020) has found that victims are losing confidence in the police and we noted a recent decline in victim satisfaction in Chapter 3. Although victims are often initially positive, many grow dissatisfied with police because of poor communication, lack of action, rudeness and disrespectful attitudes (Wedlock, 2020). To address this the Victims' Commissioner has called for greater police training in trauma-informed practice and victim support (Victims' Commissioner, 2021).

Trauma-informed practice

"Training in trauma exposure management and resilience practices should be incorporated in basic training with options for specialist training for high-risk roles (CE2.08)".

Police officers are increasingly aware of the impact of trauma, particularly that resulting from Adverse Childhood Experiences, on brain development and behaviour later in life. Knowing more about the possible causes of someone's behaviour can enable better decision making, such as whether a suspect should be charged or receive a diversionary resolution. Since many in the criminal justice system experience trauma, it should be central to initial and ongoing training.[36]

Mental health awareness

According to the Home Affairs Committee (2018), police forces view mental health training as 'nice-to-have' rather than an essential skill. The committee argues it is 'ludicrous' to have a three-week police driving course but just a few hours of mental health training.

Some forces rely on external input to manage mental health demand. HMICFRS (2018) found 21 forces have approved mental health professional, psychiatric nurses or Mind representatives working alongside call handlers. Many use street triage teams, whereby a mental health practitioner accompanies police officers on shift. But, given the scale of demand, forces should make such training a core part of police officers' learning and development. For example, North Yorkshire Police has collaborated with York University to train officers in mental health issues. Evaluation shows those trained had greater knowledge and confidence, better equipping them to tackle mental health-related incidents (Scantlebury et al 2017).

Neurodiversity

Young people in custody are more likely to have neurodevelopmental conditions like autism and ADHD. Police officers should be familiar with these conditions to reduce the likelihood of police encounters resulting in unnecessary stress, anxiety and conflict. There is a need to better identify neuro-diverse conditions and for greater support to be put in place, particularly in custody settings.

Recommendation

21. The College of Policing should review the National Police Curriculum to increase focus on relational skills covering themes such as conflict management, co-production, cultural competency, victim care, mental health, trauma and neurodiversity awareness. Officers should refresh these relational skills annually alongside officer safety training. They should be made part of a mandatory professional minimum standard regulated by the College of Policing.

7.1.2 Investigatory skills

There is a national shortage of detectives. In 2021 there were 6,851 fewer Professionalising Investigation Programme Level 2 (PIP2) accredited investigators in post than was required, up from a shortfall of 4,974 in 2020 (NPCC, 2021).

These shortages have led to unmanageable workloads, long waits for victims and fewer offenders being brought to justice (HMICFRS, 2020; 2018). They also mean that high volume crimes such as burglary, assault and theft have been de-prioritised, that there is inadequate

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[36]. We will revisit mandatory training and standards in Chapter 12.

supervision of less experienced investigators, and that generalist investigators are often carrying out work without the specialist training required (HMICFRS, 2020).

During visits to police forces undertaken as part of the Review, detectives highlighted a number of reasons for the detective shortage:

- Changes to terms and conditions that have made detective roles less financially attractive. The Winsor pay reforms led to forces introducing a supplement for officers working antisocial hours (affecting uniformed officers) but did not lead to the adoption of pay supplements for those working on complex investigations. A National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) analysis suggests that this means a loss in earnings of £1,200 a year if one were to move from a response role to an investigative role for example (NPCC, 2021).

- High workloads.

- Managing high risk and emotionally challenging investigations.

As well as a general shortage of detectives there are also gaps in specialist areas. For example, 52 per cent of senior child sexual abuse leads surveyed by the Police Foundation told us their specialist investigation teams lacked resources (Skidmore et al, forthcoming).

In another example, despite there being over five million frauds a year, just 0.7 per cent of the police workforce are in specialist economic crime teams. These teams can take on very few cases. A member of a fraud team covering a whole English region told the Police Foundation just two investigations could put his team at capacity (Skidmore et al, 2018). The sheer scale of fraud and the limited specialist resource available means that, in 22 out of 32 police forces surveyed, generalist investigators tackle almost all fraud investigations despite them and their supervisors lacking adequate knowledge (Skidmore et al, 2018).

The NPCC (2021) reports problems within the National Crime Agency (NCA) in retaining cyber specialists who are often attracted to better salaries in the private sector. There is a relatively high (28 per cent) turnover of staff in this area within the NCA. The Agency has started to deal with this through graduate and intern programmes, recognising they are unlikely to be able to keep people for life (NPCC, 2021).

To address the shortage of detectives the gap in pay between those in uniform roles and detectives needs to be addressed. Given the chronic shortage of detectives

there is a strong case for improving the incentive for officers to go into investigative roles.

While in time some of the officers recruited through Operation Uplift will move into investigatory roles, we cannot wait to solve the shortage through internal training alone. For that reason we believe there is a strong case for all forces to open up direct entry detective programmes, which are currently limited to 15 forces with a further nine planning to introduce such schemes (NPCC, 2021).

Finally, there needs to be shift away from the default assumption that these investigatory gaps need to be filled by warranted officers. There is an urgent need for the College of Policing to strengthen career pathways in areas like financial investigation which do not require a warrant card (see Recommendation 24).

Recommendations

22. A pay supplement should be introduced to make detective roles a more attractive career choice for police officers.

23. All forces should introduce direct entry detective programmes.

7.1.3 Digital skills

There is widespread recognition of the need to improve digital skills and knowledge across the whole police workforce (NPCC, 2021). Increasingly most crime scenes will have a digital element and even fairly routine investigations may require the gathering of digital evidence, from phones, computers or social media accounts.

However, there are reasons for thinking that digital skills among the generalist police workforce are not sufficiently developed. For example, when we asked child sexual abuse (CSA) leads in police forces if they thought generalist officers were trained to respond to online CSA, only 33 per cent considered them to be trained in online investigation and only 40 per cent in collecting and managing digital evidence. The main barrier was said to be the absence of core digital skills training programmes for officers in non-specialist roles, leading to lengthy investigations, inconsistent practice and missed investigative and safeguarding opportunities.

Similarly, when we spoke to digital forensics specialists they told us of the need for much better training and awareness of digital forensic techniques among the general workforce, so that officers can be much more

intelligent users of specialist services (Muir and Walcott, 2021).

There are also specialist digital skills gaps that need to be addressed.

Digital forensics

Digital forensics demand is growing: most investigations now involve digital evidence and expanding volumes of potentially relevant data. Yet forces lack enough people and technology to process it. This is partly because forensic budgets have halved over the last decade (House of Lords, 2019).

Experts interviewed by the Police Foundation said they could wait between a few weeks and six months for data to be extracted and examined from devices, or even a year for some specialist services (Muir and Walcott, 2021).

To meet current demand, one practitioner told us, staff numbers would have to increase by a third to a half. The so-called "brain drain" of digital expertise has exacerbated the problem, as digital forensics examiners leave the police for the private sector where salaries are higher.

Data analysists/scientists

The NPCC Strategic Workforce Assessment (2021) highlights the lack of a more coherent career pathway for data specialists within policing. The lack of reward through the pay system means data specialists are frequently lost to the private sector. This means that the wealth of the data the police hold is not being sufficiently exploited to generate an operational impact.

To address these gaps in mission critical areas the police service needs to make a strategic shift towards embracing a more plural workforce. The service will always need a strong cadre of generalist Police Constables to provide 24/7 response, apprehend suspects, manage public order, respond to civil emergencies, provide a visible presence and so on. However, to meet both these digital gaps (and the specialist investigatory gaps identified above) the service needs to have a much stronger offer for allied police professions, to attract and retain talent from the wider labour market.

To achieve this the College of Policing should develop consistent career pathways and parity of esteem for allied police professionals in areas such as digital forensics, data analysis and data science, and financial investigation. These specialists do not need a warrant card. They do need to know that if they join policing

they can have a long and rewarding career that, taken in the round, compares favourably with the private sector or other parts of the public sector.

Police forces should also develop closer partnerships with the private sector, including ongoing contracts that enable them to bring in private sector expertise in areas like data science or financial crime on a systematic basis.

The emergence of these skills shortages across policing also highlights the lack of strategic workforce planning across the police service. The College of Policing is the body best placed to host a workforce planning function on behalf of policing. This function would undertake horizon scanning to map out future demand, analyse workforce data from forces, highlight current and future gaps and be able to require local forces to address emerging gaps and cooperate with national initiatives (such as direct entry detective schemes for example).

Recommendations

24. Police forces, regional units and the National Crime Agency should develop standing arrangements with private sector companies so that they can call in staff with high level digital and financial expertise to work on investigations under police direction.

25. Digital intelligence and investigation training should be incorporated into minimum professional standards regulated by the College of Policing.

26. The College of Policing should strengthen career pathways for allied policing professions in areas such as data analysis/science, digital forensics and financial investigation.

27. A national police workforce planning unit should be established within the College of Policing to project future demand, monitor current and future skill gaps and coordinate a national response. The College should have the power to require local forces to address emerging capability gaps and to cooperate with national recruitment and learning and development initiatives.

7.2 TECHNOLOGY

Policing is an information business and yet too often police technology is outdated and cumbersome, causing frustration to the officers and staff who use it, and letting down the public who get a poorer service as a result. Critical parts of the national policing IT infrastructure are decades old, based on obsolescent technology and are on the brink of becoming unserviceable. A lack of basic data sharing between different police organisations contributed to the Soham murders in 2004 and it is not clear that a similar failing could not happen again. While there is plenty of technological innovation in the police service, it is too often isolated with no route to widespread adoption. Too often risk aversion dominates in procurement decisions around IT rather than a desire to innovate and improve. Despite widespread agreement that policing requires more of a service-wide approach to its information systems, there is still no major policing body with the resources and power to drive change. The National Digital Strategy and the Police Digital Service are steps in the right direction, but we need to build on the progress being made and go further.

7.2.1 The current state of police information technology

We identify a number of problems with police information technology that require urgent attention from the Home Office and the national policing partners. First, police IT is outdated. As one submission to our Call for Evidence said:

> "Numerous governance and delivery models have been attempted, spending has increased to unprecedented levels and despite this, policing is still reliant on old and legacy solutions to share information and manage significant operations (CE2.20)".

Surveys of police IT have labelled hardware and software as "archaic", "unreliable", "unfit for purpose", "not user friendly" and "painfully slow" (CoPaCC, 2019). According to CoPaCC's 2018 IT survey, in 70 per cent of forces less than half of officers were satisfied with their current IT provision.

In that same survey, officers and staff raised concerns about forces' IT investment strategies, highlighting inadequate technologies and delayed or failed projects, such as tablets that were already obsolete when given to officers (CoPaCC, 2018). Years of financial austerity mean police IT budgets are mainly spent supporting existing legacy systems, leaving little room for investment in new technology (CoPaCC, 2018).

Second, the major national police databases are in urgent need of renewal and the most heavily used database is at real risk of failure, which could have catastrophic operational consequences. The Police National Computer (PNC) is the main police criminal records database and is used 133 million times a year by officers and staff all over the country. The PNC is however 48 years old and, according to the National Audit Office (NAO), "*while generally reliable, the PNC is based on obsolescent technology that makes it expensive to operate and difficult to update, with a shortage of staff with the necessary skills*" (NAO, 2021). The Home Office has told the NAO that it is willing to accept the risk of running the PNC after its technology becomes unsupportable while it tries to put in place a replacement.

The Police National Database (PND) was introduced in 2011 after the Bichard Report into the Soham murders. The aim of the PND was to ensure that police intelligence data can be shared across the 43 police forces and other relevant bodies. However, the PND is also now considered technologically outdated and in need of replacement (NAO, 2021). It has long been criticised for being difficult to use, which has limited its impact and raises questions as to whether an intelligence sharing failure as serious as that in Soham could happen again.

The Home Office runs the two databases on behalf of policing, but its performance in seeking a replacement for both through the National Law Enforcement Data Service (NLEDS) programme has been severely criticised by the NAO, which reports a 68 per cent overspend, poor programme management and substantial delays (NAO, 2021).

Third, there remains a major challenge of a lack of inter-operability between police IT systems. Each operationally independent police force procures its own IT systems, which mean they cannot easily speak to systems in other forces. This makes sharing data difficult and in complex business an inability to share basic data is hugely problematic. The lack of integration between systems even within forces causes frustration for officers, who have to waste time memorising many passwords and manually double keying information (CoPaCC, 2019; HMICFRS, 2020a).

> "Police technology, systems and infrastructure is a patchwork quilt across the country. There are many excellent examples of successful IT programmes, but many more examples of unsuccessful ones[…] technological systems need integrating across the whole system if we are to bring about improved effectiveness and efficiency (CE2.06)".

Fourth, while there is innovation in police IT, it is often small in scale and there are limited pathways to more widespread adoption. The approach of 'letting a thousand flowers bloom' can generate innovation. For example, Avon and Somerset Constabulary has created a Data Science and Innovation Centre, using a cloud-based analytic platform to collaborate with key partners. West Midlands Police operates a data-driven insights programme and has created a new core data hub for better service delivery. South Yorkshire Police worked with Sheffield Hallam University to develop an artificial intelligence-based algorithm which helps identify at risk children (Flood, 2021).

However, there is no real pathway for successful local innovation to spread to the rest of the system or to be adopted at scale. In this course of the Review we were told that there is a cultural resistance in local force IT departments to try new ideas, because their primary concern was to avoid the risk of anything disrupting their major day to day systems. The risk of failure is concentrated in the hands of a small number of named people, while the benefits that would flow from testing new ideas and technologies is diffuse and has few powerful allies in the system. This is not a challenge that is unique to policing, but it is an important barrier to progress.

7.2.2 Solutions

In the last two years the police service has experienced a workforce uplift, but it now requires a technology uplift. We identify three ways of achieving this.

First, police IT requires substantial investment over the next decade. The politics of policing means that there is an inevitable focus on officer numbers, often at the expense of the more hidden but equally important assets policing requires. The government should increase investment in police IT over the course of the next two spending reviews.

Second, we need to address the problem of inter-operability. There is currently no organisation within policing that can require police forces to abide by common IT standards, including for example data entry codes and data access protocols. Without this there remain substantial barriers to data sharing across policing, which makes it harder to identify risk, prevent harm, solve crimes and protect victims.

In Chapter 10 we go on to set out the case for the College of Policing becoming a single home for police national improvement functions. As part of this expanded role the College should be given the power to set common IT standards across the service.

It is important to note that inter-operability does not require shifting the whole of policing onto a single IT platform. Rather than 'knit' legacy systems together, policing should pursue data sharing and interoperability through the use of cloud-based technologies, which enable "secure transmission of data between connected applications and technologies" (Police Digital Service, 2020).

Finally, the Home Office must prioritise the replacement of the Police National Computer. The NAO notes that the NLEDS programme has received less priority in terms of investment than other Home Office IT programmes such as Airwave. We cannot stress how important it is that this system is modernised. The consequences of a major failure would be catastrophic for operational policing. We endorse the recommendations made by the NAO in its August 2021 report. The Home Office should also put in place plans to modernise the Police National Database, with a focus on producing a system that is more useable by police officers and staff.

We also believe that ultimately the major national databases should be housed within policing rather than in the Home Office. The police are the users of the systems and they are best placed to design systems that meet their needs. A key priority for the next phase of the development of these databases is to ensure that they are more useable to the end-user and we think that is most likely to be ensured if the systems are housed within a police institution. As the single home for police improvement functions these databases should therefore be transferred to the College of Policing.

Recommendations

28. The government should increase investment to enable a significant upgrade of police IT over the course of the next two spending reviews.

29. English and Welsh policing needs a common set of information and communications technology (ICT) standards to be applied across the country. These should be developed nationally and then mandated for adoption by the College of Policing, which would be given powers to direct Chief Constables in relation to IT.

30. The Home Office must prioritise the modernisation of the Police National Computer and the Police National Database. The major national police databases should be housed within the College of Policing.

8. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Summary: Policing needs a learning culture, so that police officers have better opportunities to develop professionally, so that professional standards are raised and so that the police can use the best evidence to achieve better outcomes for the public. Continuous professional development is not sufficiently prioritised within policing. The quality of the learning offered to police officers and staff needs to be significantly improved and it needs to be planned around their professional development needs rather than simply the organisational needs of police forces. Police officers should have a dedicated minimum number of learning hours per year. There should be a Licence to Practise for all police officers who will need to demonstrate they have kept up to date and progressed with their professional development. Funding for learning and development should be channelled to forces via the College of Policing, contingent on high quality provision being delivered.

Over the last decade policing in England and Wales has explicitly sought to emulate medicine, law and engineering by seeking to become a learning profession. This is intended to raise professional standards, to promote practice that is based on evidence rather than intuition or habit and to enable policing to improve itself through continual learning, rather than being subject to regular external interventions from the government.

In this chapter we examine the quality of police learning and development. We do this, first, by assessing the recent reforms to initial police training, second, by examining the state of continuous professional development in policing and, third, by looking at progress in embedding evidence-based practice.

8.1 INITIAL POLICE TRAINING

Developed by the College of Policing from 2016, the Police Education Qualification Framework (PEQF) seeks to provide *"a modern curriculum of dynamic operational training, underpinned by sound theoretical knowledge"* (College of Policing, 2020). It has initially focused on professional training for new Constables, recognising the need for consistency across police forces and for accredited, role-specific skills and knowledge.

The PEQF has introduced three new training pathways, which culminate in full operational competency alongside an academic qualification at degree-level. They are:

- **Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA)***: A minimum three-year paid apprenticeship, spent serving as a Constable within a police force, while undertaking at least 20 per cent 'off the job' learning.

- **Degree-holder entry programme***: Recruits can study, 'on the job', for a graduate diploma in professional policing, and can specialise in neighbourhood policing or investigation.

- **Degree in professional policing:** A self-funded degree course taken prior to joining the police which does not guarantee a job in policing.

There is in addition the Police Now scheme which provides a programme tailored to graduates wanting to join the police (see Box 8.1).

With the PEQF, the College of Policing (2016) seeks to improve the 'standing and status' of the police while equipping them with the knowledge they require to exercise their discretion effectively (College of Policing, 2020).

It is too soon to come to conclusions as to the impact of the new entry routes and we do not have the space in this report to undertake such an evaluation. However, we support the principle that police officers should have access to higher learning. Applicants should not need a degree to join the police, as this would exclude many excellent candidates. However, police professionals will benefit from higher learning, whether undertaken before they join or undertaken 'on the job' because:

- It will accredit their existing skills and provide them with a formal qualification, recognition and status. Police officers are operating at this higher level of learning but until these reforms this was not recognised or accredited.

- It will help to impart the kind of problem solving and cognitive skills that are becoming more important for police officers using their discretion in a more complex operating environment.

Clearly the success of the new entry routes should be assessed over time. In the course of our Review, however, we heard much greater concern about the state of police learning and development after initial training, and it is to this that we now turn.

8.2 CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Police officers and staff need to continually develop and refresh their skills and knowledge to serve the public effectively (College of Policing 2020a; Huey et al, 2019). Indeed, many of the skills officers need, such as emergency life support or self-defence, are perishable and so must be regularly used and refreshed (Honess, 2020).

However, the recent Home Office Front Line Review concluded "police officers lack the time, opportunity and support to properly develop their skills and knowledge" (Betts and Farmer, 2019).

8.2.1 The approach to continuous professional development within the police service

There has tended to be a culture within policing of seeing continuous professional development (CPD) as an "abstraction from policing duties" (Honess, 2018). As the College of Policing said in response to our Call for Evidence:

"There needs to be a wider cultural shift with the support of senior leaders in the service, to see learning and development, not as an inconvenient abstraction, but as an essential investment in the workforce which can help in tackling current and future challenges and provide greater benefit to the public" (CE2.28).

A recent study found that learning practices in police training Martin et al, 2019b are "transactional" and "reactive" directed towards solving immediate problems, such as new legislation and changes in authorised professional practice, rather than changing what officers do or helping them raise their skill set (Martin et al, 2019b). According to a submission to our Call for Evidence, learning is "delivered for a given period" and once a particular crisis has died down, "is not repeated" (CE2.02).

Cordner adds that police CPD is focused mainly on teaching officers to handle their work "incident by incident", without much reference to either criminological theory or evidence-based practices such as problem oriented policing (Cordner, 2021).

8.2.2 Resources

Police CPD is under-resourced. Between 2011/12 and 2017/18, 33 forces reduced their budgeted spending on training in real terms by a greater percentage than their overall reduction in spending. Despite recent funding boosts, increased demand means that gap is predicted to remain (Martin et al, 2019a; Martin et al, 2019b).

8.2.3. What officers think

The 2020 Police Federation Pay and Morale survey indicates that more officers are dissatisfied than satisfied with the training they receive:

• More than a third of respondents were dissatisfied with the training they have received.

• 41 per cent of respondents said that they had not been supported to learn new skills.

• 40 per cent of officers said they had not received necessary training to do their job well (Chandler, 2020).

Officers interviewed as part of the Home Office initiated Front Line Review expressed concern that police learning leans too heavily on traditional training courses rather than encouraging independent learning. Some specialist courses were seen as essential to career development but accessing them depended on having a line manager's support (Betts and Farmer, 2019).

For many, training consists of sitting in a room being "talked at" and is seen as neither interesting nor relevant (Honess, 2018; Martin et al, 2019b). Until recently online training was carried out through the Managed Learning Environment (MLE) run by The National Centre for Applied Learning Technologies (NCALT).[37] E-learning packages are aimed at filling specific knowledge gaps or quickly sharing new legislation with many people. These are often designed so that users can "click as quick as possible". Therefore, learners need discipline to engage deeply and retain information (Martin et al, 2019b; Honess, 2018; HMICFRS, 2014; Honess, 2020).

8.2.4 The PDR process

The PDR process (performance and development review) is intended to review professional development, identify areas of improvement and determine strategies to enhance skills and learning (College of Policing, 2020b; HMICFRS, 2017).

However, in many forces the PDR process is seen as a "bureaucratic exercise" and is not used effectively (Betts and Farmer, 2019; Martin et al, 2019b). Both HMICFRS and the Police Federation found "considerable gaps" in compliance across forces even though Police Regulations (2003) require a PDR for all officers (HMICFRS, 2017; PFEW, 2021). Some supervisors did not review PDR submissions, with officers reporting either submitting blank PDRs or copying and pasting

the same entries for multiple years without anyone noticing (Betts and Farmer, 2019).

In some forces officers and supervisors are on different shifts and in different stations, making it difficult for them to meet to complete them (HMICFRS, 2017). Officers see the PDR process as inflexible and only beneficial to those seeking promotion, training or lateral moves (Betts and Farmer, 2019). As with accessing training opportunities, the PDR process is contingent on the attitude of supervisors. Some reportedly carry out PDRs by shouting across the office. Others lack time so PDRs are "rushed" and therefore lack value (Betts and Farmer, 2019).

8.2.5 Strengthening continuous professional development

To strengthen the culture of CPD in policing we need high quality learning opportunities to be provided and for policing professionals to be actively and continually engaged in their learning. Instead of being seen as an abstraction, learning needs to be woven into the flow of work. Supervisors will have to take on more responsibility to develop and mentor their teams to supplement formal learning programmes (CE2.27).

We believe that the best way to achieve this is for the College of Policing to create an expectation that all police officers must continually develop their learning throughout their careers. We identify three mechanisms for achieving this.

First, there must be a considerable improvement in the quality of the learning provided by police forces. Training has tended to be seen as a convenient budget to cut during financially difficult times. To address this the government should earmark a learning and development fund from within the overall police budget and provide this budget to the College of Policing. The College should use this fund both to develop its own suite of national training packages but also to commission training in individual police forces so that it meets required standards.

Second, there should be a minimum set of hours per year reserved for each officer's learning and development, as exists for the medical professions. This will be a national minimum standard that the College of Policing will require police forces to fulfil.

Third, the government should legislate to introduce a Licence to Practise for all police officers, provided through the College of Policing. To retain their licence

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[37.] We note the College of Policing has now introduced a new platform called College Learn but it is too soon to come to any conclusions as to its success.

to practise every police officer will have to undergo revalidation every five years.

Renewing their licence would involve officers demonstrating improved learning and professional development through achieving relevant qualifications, passing an interview or presenting a portfolio of activities and achievements. Any police officer who fails this assessment would receive further support and mentoring. After successive failures they would be removed from the register.

The licence to practise is intended to raise professional standards, encourage career long learning and promote a culture in which professionals engage in and take responsibility for their professional development.

Recommendations

31. The Home Office should establish a Learning and Development Fund that would be used by the College of Policing to fund police learning and development. In order to receive funding police forces would have to demonstrate that their training programmes meet standards set by the College.

32. There should be a minimum set of hours per year reserved for each officer's learning and development. This will be a national minimum standard that the College of Policing will require police forces to fulfil.

33. The Home Office should introduce a Licence to Practise for police officers, administered by the College of Policing. The Licence to Practise ought to be renewed every five years, subject to an officer demonstrating professional development through achieving relevant qualifications, passing an interview or presenting a portfolio of activities and achievements. Any police officer who fails this assessment could receive further support including mentoring. After successive failures they would have their licence removed and would no longer be able to practise as a police officer.

8.3 EMBEDDING EVIDENCE AND KNOWLEDGE-BASED PRACTICE

Policing should make good use of research evidence, scientific methods, and systematically acquired knowledge to improve the effectiveness of its activities.

Writing in 1998, Lawrence Sherman made the seminal case for Evidence-Based Policing that would drive improvement by using "*the best available research evidence on the outcomes of police work to implement guidelines and evaluate agencies, units and officers*" (Sherman, 1998, p.3). Drawing on a medical paradigm, he argued that a set of mechanisms needed to be put in place to ensure that the learning gained through rigorous academic research and evaluation was fed back into practice.

Fifteen years later Sherman (2013) described a "three Ts" approach to evidence-based policing and assessed progress in its implementation. He argued that more police agencies were now *targeting* resources toward predictable concentrations of harm (through 'hot spots' initiatives for example). However, he argued there had been less progress in embedding into police practice the evidence that has emerged from *testing* (through techniques such as randomised control trials) nor in *tracking* implementation of evidence-based practice.[38]

In order to better embed evidence-based policing Sherman argued for a greater focus on evidence-based principles within police education, promotion processes and professional development, as well as for the College of Policing to play a world-leading role in producing evidence-informed practice guidelines. We return to these ideas below.

It is important to note that the evidence-based policing paradigm has been challenged, and that alternative accounts of the appropriate relationship between police practice and scientific enquiry should also be considered. As Malcolm Sparrow (2016) points out, it is important to acknowledge that experimental trials and evaluations represent only one branch of rigorous scientific enquiry. Sparrow argues that other methods have much to offer policing. These include the systematic observation and hypothesis testing characteristic of the natural sciences, for instance.

Whereas evidence-based policing seeks to establish generalised knowledge about *'what works'* and make

38. A verdict largely unchanged when Sherman gave 'two cheers' for evidence-based policing in his 2018 Police Foundation conference address see: https://www.police-foundation.org.uk/past-event/2018-annual-conference-innovation-and-learning-in-policing/

it available so that it can inform police decision making in specific instances, the Problem-Oriented model championed by Sparrow uses empirical research to build knowledge about *'what's going on'*, as the basis for bespoke interventions.

Both paradigms have much to offer and both can, and should, co-exist within a strategy for producing reliable and useful knowledge that can improve police effectiveness.

So, what more can be done to embed an evidence and knowledge-based culture in policing? The College of Policing has made progress in trying to incorporate evidence-based policing in initial police training and it should continue to embed it through learning and development programmes at every level. We highlight below a number of additional reforms that would seek to embed evidence and knowledge-based practice.

Better use of mobile technology

The College of Policing should invest in making information on evidence and knowledge-based practice available to frontline officers, in a format that is easy to digest while on the job. It should be looking to develop apps that can put information directly into the hands of police officers, without requiring them to study complex guidance on the College website. We understand that the College is looking to develop its offer in this direction and we strongly encourage it to do so.

Evidence-based policing units

More police forces could establish evidence-based policing units which would be responsible for undertaking research, conducting experimental trials and more generally promoting an evidence and knowledge-based culture throughout the organisation. In order for evidence and knowledge-based practice to become part of mainstream policing it requires strong institutional champions, headed by a senior officer.

Evidence-based practice guidelines

The College of Policing has instigated a process for producing evidence-based operational guidelines.[39] So far four sets of guidelines are already in existence and others are in development. Using a process model borrowed from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE),[40] the College's guidelines are developed by committees of specialist practitioners, academics, and subject matter experts, drawing on compilations of 'best available evidence'.

The resulting products have become important resources for policing and there is therefore a strong case for developing evidence-based practice guidelines across other areas of police work. There remains, however, some ambiguity about the status of these guidelines, and associated questions about how their implementation into practice should be monitored and incentivised.

College of Policing guidelines form part of Approved Professional Practice (APP) and it is expected, therefore, that police practitioners (including Chief Constables and others responsible for the design, not just delivery, of services and policies) should *'have regard'* to them when discharging their duties.[41] We believe that this expectation needs to be strengthened if evidence-based practice is to gain the necessary strategic traction in policing; if guidelines are viewed by police forces and personnel as little more that 'advisory' resources for optional reference, implementation is unlikely to receive sufficient impetus.

As we argue in Chapter 11 there is a strong case for the College of Policing defining a set of national minimum standards in relations to those parts of APP that are high risk, where the public expects consistency across the country and where the evidence base is strong. Compliance with these minimum standards and with College guidance more generally also needs to be given much more explicit emphasis within HMICFRS's inspection regime. For example, each police force could receive a grading for how well it adheres to (and can appropriately account for departures from) College of Policing guidelines.

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39. See: https://www.college.police.uk/guidance

40. https://www.nice.org.uk/about/what-we-do/our-programmes/nice-guidance/nice-guidelines/how-we-develop-nice-guidelines

41. https://www.app.college.police.uk/about-app/

Recommendations

34. The police service should further promote evidence-based practice:

    • The College of Policing should make better use of mobile technology to make targeted evidence-based practice guidance available to frontline operational personnel.

    • More police forces should establish Evidence Based Policing Units to carry out research, spread knowledge and promote an evidence and knowledge based culture.

    • The College of Policing should expand and accelerate its programme for generating evidence-based practice guidelines.

    • The College of Policing should set mandatory national minimum standards in guideline areas that are high risk, where the public expect consistency and where the evidence base is strong.

    • Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) should introduce a grading for guideline compliance into the HMICFRS PEEL police force inspection regime.

8.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter we have called for the promotion of a learning culture in policing to raise professional standards, to spread evidence-based practice and to allow the police profession to continually self-improve. We have called for a much stronger emphasis on continuous professional development, with an investment in learning and development that should be shaped around the development needs of police officers and staff rather than simply meeting the short-term needs of police forces. The quality of the learning offered must significantly improve. Police officers should be given guaranteed learning hours every year. There should also be a Licence to Practise for police officers to raise standards and promote engagement with professional development. Evidence-based policing should be embedded much more systematically into the everyday practice. More forces should establish Evidence Based Policing Units and the College of Policing should use mobile technology to get the best evidence into the hands of frontline officers. There should be a core set of national minimum standards in terms of professional practice, mandated by the College, in areas that are high risk, where the public expect consistency and where the evidence base is strong.

9. WELLBEING

Summary: Workforce wellbeing is a core strategic capability for policing: a stressed, anxious and traumatised workforce is not one that can deliver a good service to the public. There have been significant increases in levels of sickness absence among police officers related to mental health problems. Morale in the police service is much lower than in comparable sectors, such as the armed forces for example. Poor wellbeing is driven by exposure to trauma, difficult working conditions, hierarchical decision-making and poor management and supervision. Police officers and staff should have access to ongoing clinical support at work, including an annual physical and mental health check. They should also be provided with the necessary time and space to process traumatic incidents.

Having a healthy and motivated workforce should be seen as a strategic capability for policing. Workforce wellbeing is a good thing in and of itself, of course, benefiting individual officers and staff, but it also leads to wider organisational benefits (Robertson and Cooper, 2011). Employees with high levels of wellbeing show increased discretionary effort and take less sick leave (Hesketh, Cooper and Ivy, 2016). Organisations that fail to support their employees' wellbeing can face serious financial consequences (Vitality, 2019).

There is unquestionably a challenge here within policing. Police officers report poorer wellbeing than the general population (Hesketh and Tehrani, 2020). They have greater risk of contracting heart disease, diabetes, cancer and of dying early (Violanti et al, 2013). Anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), chronic fatigue and chronic severe stress can exacerbate these physical conditions (McEwen, 1998).

In this chapter we assess the state of police workforce wellbeing, examine possible reasons why it is so poor and set out recommendations to address the problem.

9.1 UNDERSTANDING POLICE WORKFORCE WELLBEING

9.1.1 Sickness absence

Home Office data reveals there were 1,965 officers on long-term sick leave in the year ending March 2021 (see Figure 9.1). Long-term sickness includes any recognised medical condition, physical or psychological, which has lasted longer than 28 days. Sickness rates are consistently higher among women than men (Home Office, 2021).

Historically officers took long-term sickness for physical issues like musculoskeletal injuries. However, over the past decade increasing numbers are absent because of psychological illnesses. Figures obtained by the BBC reveal that between 2010/11 and 2015/16 the number of officers on long-term sick leave for physical and mental health reasons increased by 14 per cent from 19,825 in 2010 to 2011 to 22,547 in 2014 to 2015 and the number of those off sick for psychological illness alone increased by 35 per cent (BBC, 2016).

Figure 9.1. Levels of long-term sickness in the police (Home Office, 2021)
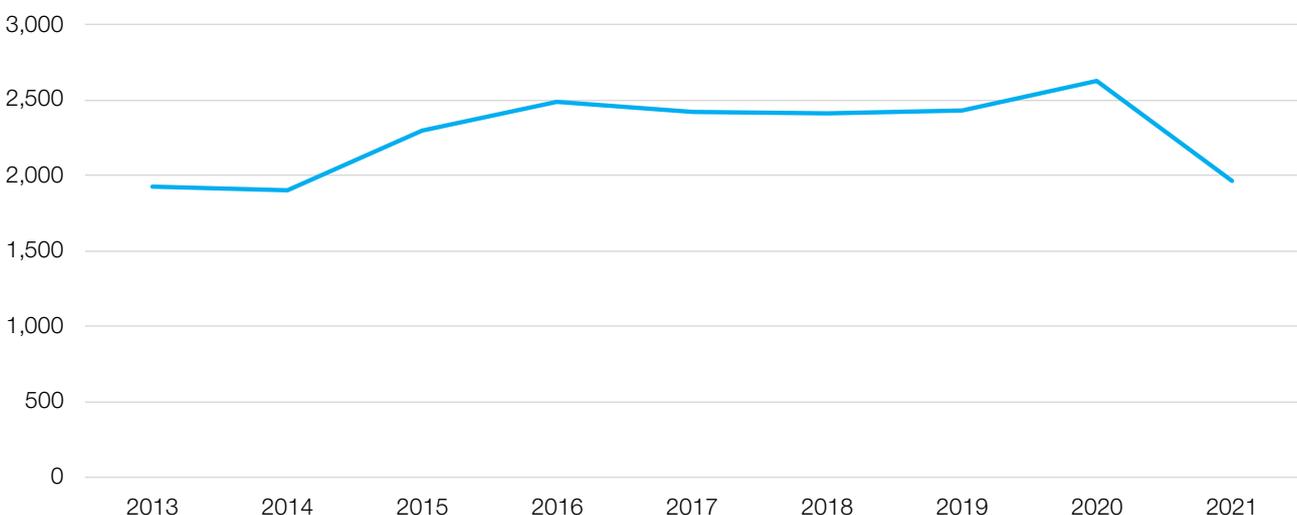
Figure 9.2 Presenteeism in the police (Source Houdmot and Elliott-Davies, 2016; Elliott-Davies 2021)
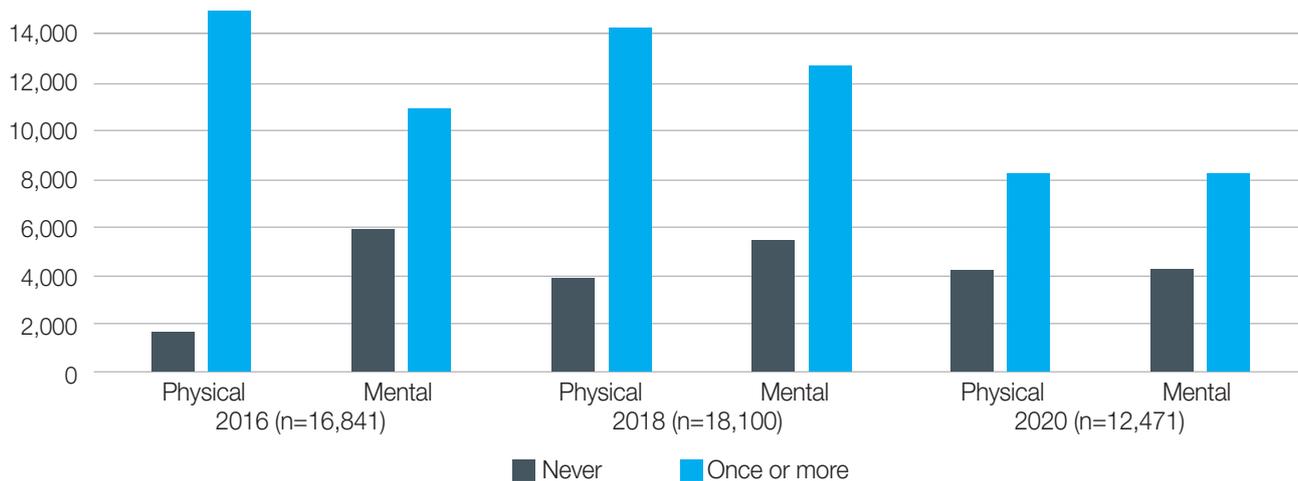
9.1.2 Presenteeism and leaveism

As with sickness levels, presenteeism and leaveism (taking annual leave instead of sickness absence and working in one's own time) are also indicators of workforce wellbeing (Hesketh and Cooper, 2014). Both can lead to burnout and sickness as employees exhaust themselves physically and mentally by continually working near maximum capacity (Hampson and Jacob, 2020; Hansen, 2009).

Presenteeism is common when employees are stressed, have low control over their work and low support from colleagues and supervisors (Leineweber, 2011; Gerich, 2015). Police officers may practise it out of professional pride, unwillingness to burden colleagues and fear of being negatively perceived for taking sick leave (Police Care, 2019).

The Police Federation's Demand, Capacity and Welfare Survey first revealed in 2016 the scale of presenteeism in the police service (see Fig 9.2). In the past four years

the number of officers reporting presenteeism has reduced but still stands at 66 per cent for both mental and physical causes (Houdmont and Elliott-Davies, 2016; Elliott-Davies, 2021).

Leaveism is motivated by fear of having personnel records blighted by periods of sickness or seeming overwhelmed with workloads (Hesketh and Cooper, 2014). Although not as prevalent as presenteeism, leaveism is still common, with around 40 per cent of officers admitting to practising it (Elliott-Davies, 2018).

9.1.3 Morale

Morale, defined as "the fitness of the mind for the task at hand" (Gocke, 1945) is "a thermometer" for the health of a workforce and is linked to coping with "day-to-day demands, the ups and downs of the job" (Johnson, 2019).

The Police Federation's annual Pay and Morale Survey shows far more officers report low morale than high

Figure 9.3 Percentage of police officers reporting low morale in England and Wales (Source, Police Federation Pay and Morale Survey 2014 to 2020)
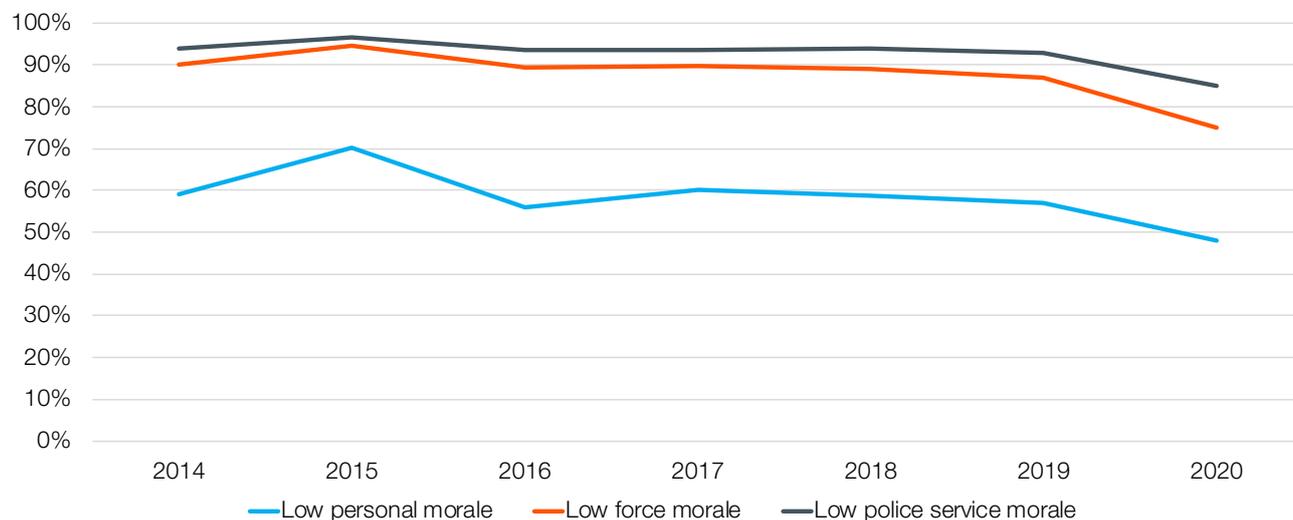
morale. 85 per cent of police officers think police service morale is low, 75 per cent think force morale is low and 48 per cent have low personal morale (Chandler, 2020).

Morale is much lower in the police than the army, another hierarchical uniformed service with a strong public service ethos. In the latest armed forces continuous attitude survey, 53 per cent rated the service's morale as low, 42 per cent rated their unit's morale as low and 29 per cent rated their own as low (Ministry of Defence, 2020).

9.2 THE CAUSES OF POOR WELLBEING IN THE POLICE WORKFORCE

There are number of causes of low levels of wellbeing within the police workforce and here we discuss these in turn.

9.2.1 Exposure to trauma

The evidence base suggests:

- The majority of police officers experience traumatic events in their careers (Miller, 2019).

- Police officers are at greater risk of mental health conditions like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) than the rest of the population (Violanti & Gehrke, 2004). 64 per cent of officers and 55 per cent of staff had experienced post-traumatic stress symptoms including re-experiencing trauma and avoidance of thoughts or acts related to traumatic event(s) (Graham, 2021; Breslau, 1998). Few are formally diagnosed (Miller, 2019).

- Repeated exposure can trigger "chronic, cumulative and complex trauma" called complex PTSD (CPTSD) (Andersen, 2015). This is associated with feelings of worthlessness and difficulties with relationships and emotions (Maercker, 2021).

- Trauma negatively affects officers' ability to work. Traumatised emergency service workers estimated their capability to perform was reduced by 37 per cent (Tehrani, 2020).

- Being longer in service, of low rank and suffering humiliation or sexual harassment are linked to developing symptoms (Brewin et al, 2020).

9.2.2 Working conditions

Many officers who have escaped developing PTSD or other serious conditions, nevertheless report anxiety, depression, poor sleep and other ailments linked to poor wellbeing (Miller, 2019).

The annual National Wellbeing Survey asks officers and staff about various indicators of mental and physical health and job satisfaction (Graham, 2021). Results show police officers and staff report moderately high levels of mental and general fatigue, anxiety and depression. They also report poor sleep and relatively low emotional energy. Officers work hard and feel valued by their co-workers, but not necessarily by the public or their force. The survey found measures of wellbeing worsen with length of service, until officers reach 20 years when it improves (Graham, 2019).

The drivers of low emotional energy and high anxiety within policing include:

- Shift work, though necessary for a 24-hour service, leads to below average levels of emotional energy, poor sleep, and a higher intention to quit. Other research suggests effects are worsened by irregular working patterns, regular overtime and insufficient rest days (Peterson, 2019).

- Poor sleep can lead to fatigue, reduced emotional energy, lower physical wellbeing and poorer job and life satisfaction (Graham, 2021).

- Cancelled rest days, extended shifts and overtime can make officers feel depressed, less valued by their force and more likely to quit (Graham, 2021; Elliott-Davies, 2021).

- The main reasons given for cancelled rest days and overtime was too few people on shift and unrealistic expectations (Elliott-Davies, 2021).

9.2.3 Hierarchy

Officers of chief inspector rank and over report higher job satisfaction, more emotional energy and fewer symptoms of anxiety, depression and PTSD (Graham, 2021). They also report better physical wellbeing, even though they may put in more discretionary effort (Hesketh, Cooper and Ivy, 2016).

These findings demonstrate a link between authority, autonomy and wellbeing. Those at the top can act and make choices that reflect their values and thus have better wellbeing (Graham, 2021). Those in more reactive roles, such as response, local investigations and safeguarding, where officers have little control over daily activities and are more likely to be exposed to trauma, report the lowest wellbeing (Graham, 2021; College of Policing, 20190; Briône, 2019; Brewin, 2000).

9.2.4 Leadership

Good leadership at all levels is crucial in promoting wellbeing. Having "uncaring and unkind" supervisors, who overwork employees can reduce their motivation, increase stress and worsen health (Van Der Velden et al 2013; Hayday et al, 2007; Bernstrøm, 2012).

Officers with supervisors trained in showing empathy and promoting resilience are more likely to bounce back after a traumatic incident (Hesketh, 2015; Jury, 2018). However, only 22 per cent of line managers report being trained on supporting individuals to improve wellbeing (Elliott-Davies, 2021).

There is a widely evidenced link between leadership styles, change management models and workforce wellbeing. Organisational change has a negative impact on employee wellbeing if it is imposed from the top down and does not involve the workforce in decision-making (Lewis et al, 2019). Often hierarchies hinder organisations from effectively communicating future aspirations and reasons for change to lower ranks, leaving them feeling they are victims of "change for change's sake" (Briône, 2019; Graham, 2019; Hesketh and Cooper, 2016; Police Care, 2019).

9.2.5 Occupational culture

Deschênes et al (2018) report that police culture has more influence in determining an officer's mental wellbeing than their actual work. Police culture is often characterised as "antithetical to promoting wellbeing and resilience" as officers crave "excitement", celebrate "masculine exploits" and are cynical and pessimistic (Loftus, 2010; Hesketh, 2015). Police culture also discourages help-seeking (Edwards and Kotera, 2020; Johnson, 2016). A 2020 qualitative study of mental health amongst police officers suggested the culture is still one of "masculinity, self-reliance and emotional control" which discourages help-seeking (Edwards and Kotera, 2020; Johnson, 2016). Many with mental health issues fear being labelled as "time wasters", so seek help outside policing (Edwards and Kotera, 2020; Miller, 2019).

9.2.6 Covid-19

Over the last two years the police service has had to deliver "business as usual" while ensuring the public obey the coronavirus restrictions. Consequently, police officers report working harder, doing longer shifts and not taking annual leave (Aitkenhead et al, 2022; Elliott-Davies, 2021). Of officers who tested positive for Covid-19, nearly half say they were exposed to the virus at work, whereas 18 per cent said exposure came from other sources (Elliott-Davies, 2021).

Around a third of officers reported a member of the public, believed to be carrying Covid-19, had purposely threatened to breathe or cough on them over the past six months, while almost a quarter reported experiencing actual attempts at doing so (Elliott-Davies, 2021). More than half of officers reported being physically attacked in the past year, which resulted in 16 per cent requiring medical attention (Elliott-Davies, 2021).

9.3. IMPROVING WORKFORCE WELLBEING

9.3.1 Existing policies

Traditionally forces addressed high sickness/absence rates by setting targets and imposing disciplinary measures rather than addressing the root causes (Bourn, 1997). This still lingers in recent attendance management policies, in which unreliable attendance bars officers from promotion, overtime, and other opportunities (West Yorkshire Police, 2021; Metropolitan Police, 2014; Durham Police, 2014).

These policies are aimed at those who "play the system", yet also penalise officers who are genuinely unwell and can encourage both presenteeism and leaveism (Hales, 2018).

Conversely, many forces seek to reduce sickness through having clear and consistent policies and procedures that help create a "positive working environment" (Lincolnshire Police, 2021).

Creating that positive working environment is the aim of the National Police Wellbeing Service, hosted by the College of Policing. The initiative was launched in 2017 to provide access to evidence-based research, share learning and encourage conversations so that "every member of the police service [is] confident that their wellbeing is taken seriously and that they are properly supported by their organisation" (Oscar Kilo, 2021).

The Blue Light Wellbeing Framework was launched in 2017 to provide a standard for emergency services employers and help them understand and invest in prevention, early detection and rehabilitation (Oscar Kilo, 2021). The framework is relatively new so there are inconsistencies and gaps in its application across forces (Coleman, 2018).

Humberside Police has been particularly successful in the area of wellbeing. It aims to create an organisational culture which prioritises "increased self-awareness, prevention, early intervention and appropriate reactive

support" through initiatives including psychological screening, wellbeing training for managers, promoting reflective practice and a therapy dog (Oscar Kilo, 2021). These strategies have been credited with reducing the force's sickness absence rates. Humberside Police topped the Federation's 2019 Pay and Morale survey, with 35 per cent of officers complaining of low morale compared to 84.5 per cent five years previously (Young, 2019). Despite the pandemic, morale in 2020 was higher than the national average (Chandler, 2020).

9.3.2 What more should be done

Given the scale of health problems and low morale in the police service, we believe that further steps are necessary to better support police officers and staff. This is not just in the interests of police professionals, but it is also in the public interest. There is little point in recruiting tens of thousands of new officers if very quickly they burn out and become undeployable. This is also an important argument against the claim that providing officers and staff with more time for de-briefing or training means these officers are abstracted and unavailable for duty. The service needs the people it has on duty to be fit, well and happy at work.

First, given the high levels of trauma within the workforce, all police officers and staff should have access to on-going clinical support tailored to their specific needs. This will not just reduce long-term sickness but will reduce the incidence of presenteeism. Accurate data should be collected on incidence and more must be done to identify those at risk of trauma, not just those in specialist roles.

Second, police officers need more dedicated time to process traumatic experiences. This may be partially addressed by the introduction of protected learning time, but it should also be supported by regular debriefing. The role of frontline supervisors in supporting this is critical.

Finally, it is worth reflecting on the drivers of poor morale. Many of these are linked to outdated technology, poor management practices and a sense that the police are struggling against the odds, with a fraught relationship with society. The best way to improve morale would be to deal with these underlying issues, to ensure that policing has the capabilities to

do what is being asked of it and is organised effectively to do so. In that sense the whole of this report can be seen as an answer to the challenge of improving the wellbeing of the police workforce.

Recommendations

35. All police officers and staff should be provided with ongoing clinical support throughout their careers. In practical terms this means an annual (physical and mental) health check and appropriate ongoing occupational health support.

36. The College of Policing should develop national standards to address unresolved trauma. This should include the use of regular debriefing sessions. Training in mental resilience should become a core part of both initial police training and continuing professional development. In addition, frontline supervisors should be trained to recognise signs of trauma and support those who are struggling.

9.4. CONCLUSION

A healthy, happy and motivated workforce is a strategic capability for policing. Our police officers and staff deserve nothing less. A stressed, anxious and traumatised workforce is not just bad for those individuals, but also means the police service is operating at only a portion of its full strength. Having large numbers of officers who cannot be deployed or who are deployed while seriously unwell is not in the interests of policing or the wider community. There is a real and long-standing problem with the levels of sickness and poor morale within policing. The National Police Wellbeing Service is a step in the right direction, but we must go further. Police officers and staff should be provided with ongoing clinical support, including an annual physical and mental health check. The levels of PTSD in the police workforce are shocking and police officers should also be given the space and support to process exposure to trauma. Facilitating all of this will require effective leadership, and it is to this final capability that we now turn.

10. LEADERSHIP

Summary: Effective leadership is a critical condition for enabling policing to meet the public safety demands of the future. This chapter describes three problems in relation to modern police leadership: a weak leadership development infrastructure, challenges with the selection of police leaders and evidence of poor wellbeing among senior leaders. To address these problems a new Police Leadership Centre should be established within the College of Policing, with an early focus on improving the professional development of frontline supervisors.

Effective leadership at all levels is a critical condition for enabling policing to meet the public safety demands of the future. There are very many excellent leaders at all levels of the police service, but everyone in a leadership role, whatever their rank, deserves the support and development to be the best they can be.

In this chapter we discuss the nature of police leadership and describe its evolution in recent years. Then we identify three challenges with contemporary police leadership: a lack of development opportunities, problems with the selection and promotion process and finally a lack of support for the wellbeing of senior police leaders. We conclude by making a set of recommendations to strengthen police leadership at all levels.

10.1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF POLICE LEADERSHIP

The traditional mode of police leadership was always one of command. Many of the first Chief Constables were military men. The hierarchical rank structure they developed remains in place almost 200 years later.

Police leaders are in the difficult position of being responsible and accountable for police constables who possess considerable discretionary power (Hough et al, 2016). The traditional "command and control" model of leadership in the police evolved to maintain control despite that constable discretion, to ensure rapid mobilisation in crisis situations and to enhance legitimacy and accountability by making it clear who was to blame if something went wrong (Campbell and Kodz, 2011).

In times of crisis, where rapid responses are critical, police organisations were designed to defer to the highest-ranking leader with the "explicit expectation that the person at the top will be the 'expert', will have the answer, and will know what to do" (Herrington and Colvin, 2016, p.10).

The adoption of private sector management techniques into policing from the 1980s onwards to some extent reinforced that top-down leadership model. It emphasised the need to measure performance and to set targets from the top which those lower down the hierarchy were expected to follow (Reiner,1998; Boyne, 2002). However, speaking at a Police Foundation round table, senior police leaders said too much focus on "delivering performance" hindered reflective and progressive leadership styles and placed too much emphasis on tactical, short-term decision-making over the bigger strategic picture (Hales, 2015).

The College of Policing's 2015 *Leadership Review* stated that while there was space for "command and control" in policing, such as in public order situations, its "overuse" was "the greatest obstacle to the culture of candour and challenge" it sought to promote (College of Policing, 2015).

In place of 'transactional leadership' styles (in which followers obey so not to be sanctioned or to be rewarded) some have advocated for so-called 'transformational' styles of police leadership (Mastrofski, 2004). Former New York City Police Commissioner Bill Bratton sums up this stance: "Bureaucrats change processes, leaders change culture. I think of myself as a transformational leader who changes cultures'" (Dodd and Stratton, 2011).

In policing, transformational leadership is said to improve communication, establish stronger relationships and encourage a more motivated workforce (Cockroft, 2014). A 2004 UK Home Office survey found police officers whose leaders exercised transformational styles felt empowered to exceed expectations (Campbell and Kodz, 2011).

However, as Davis and Silvestri (2020) argue, transformational leadership has a darker side too. It can make conformity desirable and whistle-blowers or other challengers can be labelled as "whingers or troublemakers" (Alvesson and Spicer, 2012; Collinson 2012; Davis and Silvestri, 2020).

Police leadership styles have moved on somewhat from these top-down models in recent years. Former National Police Chiefs' Council Chair Dame Sara Thornton suggests the adage "think manager think male" is changing, and leaders of both sexes are demonstrating a "collaborative approach" focusing on encouraging others and building "alliances and consensus" (Thornton, 2019).

10.2 PROBLEMS IN POLICE LEADERSHIP

10.2.1 Promotion and selection

The HMICFRS *Leading Lights* report found widespread dissatisfaction with promotion processes in policing. In particular, it found women and ethnic minorities were less likely to seek promotion, especially at higher ranks, than White men (HMICFRS, 2019). Many senior officers are reluctant to seek promotion outside their force because of a perception of opacity and unfairness. In 2018, 62 per cent of Chief Constables had been deputies in their own forces, suggesting the process favours internal applicants. External candidates who failed the process said their own forces saw them as "already out the building" (NPCC, 2018).

Linked to this there is a chronic lack of competition for Chief Constable positions. In 2015, over half of Chief Constable posts only had one candidate for the job, with two being the national average (Thornton, 2019). Reasons given for this lack of competition were:

- Inadequate preparation for talented officers.

- Perceived financial disincentives.

- Worries about fairness and transparency.

- Concerns about what happens if a Chief Constable's relationship with their Police and Crime Commissioner breaks down.

- Unwillingness to relocate themselves and their families (NPCC, 2018).

Direct Entry schemes have been launched for the superintendent and inspector ranks to bring in high calibre external candidates, with proven leadership skills, to senior roles (Silvestri, 2018; College of Policing, 2020). However, these have not operated without difficulty, as candidates have sometimes been viewed with open hostility by officers who believed their existence devalued their own knowledge gained over years on 'the Job' (Williams, et al, 2021).

42. See more at https://www.policenow.org.uk/frontline-leadership-programme/

10.2.2 Developing leaders

The lack of a culture of professional development in policing also translates into a paucity of formalised leadership development. This is particularly the case for frontline supervisors. A 2016 virtual forum on police Sergeants concluded leaders are promoted based on their competence at their current rank, rather than their ability to excel at the next, and are not helped to acquire those skills after promotion (WeCops, 2016). This echoes comments from the *Leadership Review,* which described the Sergeant role as a 'development-free zone' (College of Policing, 2015). Police Now is attempting to change this by launching the Frontline Leadership Programme to help develop the potential of Constables who wish to become Sergeants.[42]

The lack of leadership training and formal development is as true for Superintendents as it is for Sergeants. In a Police Foundation roundtable, a senior police leader commented "existing Superintendents have considerable operational experience but have never been trained to be senior leaders" (Hales, 2015).

A lack of ongoing leadership development even extends to some of those preparing for the highest ranks. In some forces, those tipped for high office are coached extensively to pass the Senior Police National Assessment Centre, yet others receive very little support, which HMICFRS called highly unfair. The Inspectorate concluded that while the College of Policing provided guidance to forces on the criteria candidates should meet, they did not stipulate how they should be selected. While some forces had rigorous internal application processes, in others the Chief Constable's favoured candidate was put forward (HMICFRS, 2015).

10.2.3 The wellbeing of police leaders

The dominant idea of the macho, heroic leader can mean police leaders are subject to unrealistic expectations and unsuitable pressures (Mastrofski, 2002). Complex social problems are framed as leadership problems and thus police leaders are burdened by unrealistic expectations that they will "get results" (Davis, 2020).

Police forces are beginning to recognise the risks of poor wellbeing for lower ranking officers and provide help. But this rarely extends to chief officers (HMICFRS, 2019). Bullock and Garland (2018) argue the emphasis placed on 'resilience' within police rhetoric leads to a conception of the chief officer as a "stalwart figure able to cope in face of adversity" and therefore inhibits

them from asking for help or showing emotion. In consequence, chief officers can feel isolated and pressured by unsustainable workloads – with ten per cent registering critical anxiety scores (HMICFRS, 2019).

This pressure on Chief Constables has contributed to a shortening of their average tenure, which has decreased steadily since the 1980s, to an average of 3.65 years. Between 2021 and 2016 female chiefs had a turnover 20 percentage points higher than male colleagues (HMICFRS, 2019). During the 1980s there were 18 chiefs outside the MPS with over a decade's service in that rank. In the 2010s there were five (NPCC, 2018). Although some shortening of tenure can prevent 'staleness', this level of "churn" is unsettling for police forces and risks Chief Constables leaving just as they have got on top of doing the job.

10.3 STRENGTHENING POLICE LEADERSHIP

We draw two main conclusions from this review of the challenges facing police leadership. First, while there are very many outstanding leaders in policing, the police service has generally under-invested in the development of its leaders over many years. This is true at almost all levels, but it is particularly true of frontline supervisors. We cannot emphasise enough how vital Sergeants and Inspectors are in promoting effective policing. The relationship between a frontline officer and their supervisor is critical for wellbeing, for promoting a learning culture and for tackling poor norms and unethical conduct. Radically strengthening the leadership development programmes available for frontline supervisors is the key to unlocking many of the problems surveyed in this Review. Senior leaders should also be supported by more programmatic professional development programmes.

The College of Policing is now exploring the idea of a Police Leadership Centre which would have responsibility for developing the police leaders of the future. We support the establishment of such a centre. We think that this Centre should be outward looking, establishing links across sectors and with business and universities around the world. We think it should partly finance itself by offering courses to police leaders internationally, building on the world class reputation of British policing. It should focus in particular on the development of frontline leaders, Sergeants and Inspectors, who in many ways possess the real 'social power' in the police service and who are the key to

improving professional development, wellbeing and conduct.

> **Recommendation**
>
> 37. The College of Policing should establish a Police Leadership Centre which would have the following responsibilities:
>
> - To promote the learning and development of police leaders at all levels, from Sergeants to Chief Constables.
> - To provide structured support to promote the wellbeing of police leaders.
> - To directly fund police leadership training and professional development throughout the system.
> - To ensure that the learning and development opportunities for police leaders meet national standards.
> - To focus in its first two years on a development programme for police sergeants, considerably strengthening the support Sergeants receive and increasing the learning time available to them.
> - To build on the international reputation of British policing by offering courses for police leaders overseas. The fees from these courses would be reinvested to support the work of the Police Leadership Centre.

Second, promotion and selection processes ought to be reviewed to ensure fairness and transparency. There is a widely perceived opacity as to promotion processes and these would benefit from greater regulation by the College of Policing.

We are particularly concerned about the lack of competition for chief officer posts. The College of Policing ought to review the reasons for this, looking at pension issues, relocation costs and whether potential applicants receive sufficient support. There is also a concern that this problem has got worse since the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), with a widespread perception taking root that PCCs tend to favour appointing local deputies which puts off external applicants.

Recommendations

38. The College of Policing should review police leadership selection processes and should explore whether greater national regulation and oversight of these processes would improve fairness, transparency and competition.

39. The appointment process for Chief Constables should be reformed to increase competition for these vital posts. While the Police and Crime Commissioner should continue to make the appointment, they should do so from a short list of candidates drawn up by a national Senior Appointments Board constituted from among the relevant national bodies. That Board would have a responsibility, working with the College of Policing, to actively identify suitable applicants.

PART IV
ORGANISATION

11. STRUCTURE

Summary: The organisational structure of the police service needs radical reform: it does not provide a sound basis for tackling cross-border crime, delivering specialist capabilities or providing value for money. In particular the regional tier of policing should be considerably strengthened such that specialist capabilities and back-office functions are provided at that level. The money saved should be reinvested in policing. There should be a stronger strategic centre, in which the Home Office plays a stronger role in setting the strategic direction for the service. The national public safety landscape should be rationalised such that there are three main national delivery organisations: the National Crime Agency, an expanded College of Policing and the new Crime Prevention Agency.

So far in this report we have argued that we need to generate greater social capacity and new police capabilities to deal with the volume, complexity and diversity of the public safety risks we face. We now turn to how the police service ought to be organised to deliver those capabilities.

The chapter comes in seven parts:

1. We describe how we got to where we are now, offering a brief history of the evolution of police organisation since 1829.

2. We describe the main characteristics of the current system.

3. We make the case for a strong local dimension to policing, with robust mechanisms of local accountability.

4. We argue that the current structure is not able to provide the police capabilities we need effectively or efficiently.

5. We describe six options for change.

6. We call for a stronger strategic centre in policing and describe what that might look like.

7. We conclude with recommendations for reform to the way policing is organised in England and Wales.

11.1 HOW WE GOT HERE

Looking back at the history of police organisation in England and Wales we can identify six trends. First, we have seen a gradual decrease in the number of police forces, which fell from 231 in 1888 to 43 in 1974. Since then, the existing structure has remained, although there was an attempt to move to a smaller number of regional forces in 2005. This was ultimately dropped following political opposition and concerns about the equalisation of council taxpayer contributions.

Second, we have seen the gradual formation of what we now call a national police service. Over time the local force structure has been supplemented by a range of national functions: a national police inspectorate was formed in 1856; after the first world war the landmark Desborough Committee saw the establishment of a national pay structure, the Police Federation and a central conference of Chief Constables, alongside an increase in the contribution of national government funding relative to local taxpayer contributions; after the second world war a National Police College was established; and in the 1980s we saw the rise of the Association of Chief Police Officers as a nascent national police headquarters, prior to its abolition in 2015.

Third, as public concern about crime grew over the course of the 20th century the Home Secretary took on an increasingly powerful role in police matters. After the first world war the Home Secretary was given powers to set police pay. From the 1960s onwards operational policy was increasingly shaped by a succession of Home Office circulars.

In the 1990s Michael Howard took the power to set national objectives, targets and codes of practice and to initiate the dismissal of Chief Constables. In the 2000s David Blunkett took powers to suspend Chief Constables, set targets and issue compulsory guidance. After 2010 under Theresa May the Home Office stepped back, expecting the new Police and Crime Commissioners to shape policing policy locally. However, since 2019 the Conservative government has taken a more interventionist stance, including the reintroduction of some national performance metrics with a clear expectation that the government expects forces to focus on these.

Fourth, local police governance has been democratised. During the 19th century there was a major debate as to whether the new police forces should be controlled by the county councils, representing the new democratic power, or by the magistrates, representing the old

feudal system which had controlled policing prior to 1829. The solution found was to create joint standing committees of both. The 1962 Royal Commission led to the introduction of police authorities made up of two thirds councillors and one third magistrates, later replaced with a model of councillors plus independent members. In 2000 the Greater London Authority was created and for the first time the Metropolitan Police Service was made formally accountable to the people of London. In 2012 directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners were introduced with the aim of sharpening the accountability of the police to the public.

Fifth, in the post war period we saw various flirtations with regional organisation within policing. Regional training centres were established, police forces increasingly collaborated to police the motorway network and in the 1960s Regional Crime Squads were introduced to focus on serious and organised crime. Although these were later subsumed into the National Crime Squad they re-emerged in 2009 in the form of Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCUs).

Finally, the police service has responded to the diversification and increased complexity of police work by establishing a growing number of specialist units, often on a national basis, sometimes led by lead forces and sometimes based in national agencies. These include the Counter Terrorism Network, the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau and CEOP, now part of the National Crime Agency.

Looking back, it is hard to disagree with TA Critchley's remark in his landmark history of the English and Welsh police that '*No grand design emerges and there is no evidence of adherence to lofty constitutional principles. The system has never been a tidy or logical one.*' (Critchley,1978, p.xiv).

11.2 THE CURRENT STRUCTURE

The way in which policing is currently organised in England and Wales has the following characteristics:

- Most policing functions are delivered through 43 **general purpose** territorial police forces. This contrasts with more segmented or disaggregated systems as exist for example in France, where there is a national police organisation, a *gendarmerie* of military provenance and various municipally funded local police units, or in the United States where there are different police organisations with varying responsibilities at the county, state and federal levels.

- It is a **localist** system in which 92 per cent of police funding is allocated through the local Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) or their equivalents (NAO, 2018). The Home Secretary has backstop powers to intervene as described in the next chapter, but these have rarely been used in practice. The Strategic Policing Requirement sets out some national expectations of PCCs but these lack detail and PCCs are only required to 'have regard' to them. There is no apparent penalty for failing to do this.

- It is a system in which ultimate legal authority rests with two **corporations sole**: the Chief Constable who has direction and control of their officers, and the PCC who holds the budget, appoints and dismisses the Chief Constable and sets a Police and Crime Plan the Chief Constable must follow.

- The system is governed by a **tri-partite system** in which authority is shared between the Chief Constables, the PCCs and the Home Secretary. Accountability and responsibility can be somewhat diffuse in this system, but it is to some extent *diffuse by design*, so to avoid any one set of actors having excessive control over a public service with intrusive powers.

- Specialist and cross border functions have been increasingly brigaded into **an ad hoc patch work of regional and other collaborations** between forces.

- There are **multiple lines of accountability** within the system: Chief Constables are accountable to their PCCs and to some extent to the Home Secretary who represents the national interest; HMICFRS inspects forces on grounds of effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy; the Independent Office for Police Conduct exists to independently investigate complaints against police officers and PCCs; the Home Secretary is accountable to parliament.

11.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF A STRONG LOCAL DIMENSION IN POLICING

The main benefit of the existing 43 force structure is that it provides a strong local dimension in our policing system. This is important for three reasons. First, visible, engaged and responsive local policing is critical for improving public confidence in the police. There are strong indications that that it was the roll out of

neighbourhood policing in the 2000s that was a key driver for improving public confidence in the following years. It is also no coincidence that public confidence levels have fallen as people have noticed that the police have been less visible (see Chapter 6). If we are to tackle the recent fall in public confidence, we need to make sure policing is anchored in and responsive to local communities. This goes beyond neighbourhood policing and means that more widely police force priorities are reflective of the concerns of local people.

The 43 forces vary considerably in size of course and in some of the larger forces decision-making may be more remote from local communities than in the smaller county forces. Particularly in larger forces there is a strong case for more autonomy for Commanders at what used to be uniformly called the Basic Command Unit level, normally covering a town, city or district. Nevertheless, a system in which 92 per cent of the money flows through a locally elected PCC means policing has to have regard to the views of the local population. We return to the position of PCCs in the next chapter on police governance.

> "the 43 force model … create[s] the necessary flexibility to enable each to deliver services bespoke to the needs of their communities. This recognises that the public we serve is not one homogenous group for which a 'one size fits all' approach will do. The culture in the Merseyside population is markedly different from the culture of say Cumbria or London". CE 2.02

The second reason why a strong local dimension is important is the need for policing to increasingly collaborate with other local public services in order to tackle complex public safety problems. There is no solution to problems such as mental health crises and vulnerable children going missing that does not involve improved collaboration between the police, the NHS and local government. To enable such improved collaboration local chief officers or superintendents need the autonomy to make decisions about budgets, deployment of staff and police policies in ways that work in conjunction with the plans of other local partners. Any structure that reduces that local autonomy would make it harder to deal effectively with the complex problems we now face.

Finally, a strong local dimension in policing structure also means there is space for innovation. Chief Constables and PCCs do not need permission to test a new programme or project. They can simply decide to do it. There are plenty of examples of police forces running with an idea and achieving real results, whether

that be in terms of new technological solutions or trialling evidence-based ways of reducing crime.

The current system is less good at capturing learning from local innovation, with information often remaining trapped within local forces. There is also the negative flip side to local variation, which is a lack of consistency. This is important in areas where society expects common standards. We return to how to ensure greater consistency, particularly in the area of professional standards, in the next chapter.

> "Big is not always better. The agility of smaller forces to change direction, shape, focus and innovate has been extremely beneficial to the service as a whole." CE2.13

So, any structural reform considered by this Review must ensure that there are clear mechanisms for local people's views to influence the priorities of the local police. It must also ensure that there is sufficient autonomy for decision makers at the local level that they can work collaboratively with other local services and try out new ideas.

11.4 THE CASE FOR CHANGE

Having described the current system and outlined its main benefits, we now turn to its drawbacks. We argue that the structure as currently configured is simply unable to deliver the policing capabilities required in a way that is effective or efficient.

11.4.1 Cross border crime

The 43 force structure struggles to deal with the rising forms of crime that cross force and national borders. These are crimes in which the victim and the offender do not generally live in the same police force area or even in the same continent. This makes investigating these offences more complex and doing so often requires a degree of specialisation that smaller forces are not able to provide on their own. Some of these cross-border crime types also tend to be less visible to the local public and are therefore less likely to be prioritised in Police and Crime Plans.

For example, fraud is the single biggest crime type affecting people in England and Wales, and yet the amount of police resource dedicated to tackling it locally is tiny. There were five million fraud offences reported in the Crime Survey for England and Wales in the year to June 2021 (ONS, 2021), while just 0.8 per cent of the police workforce is dedicated to tackling economic crime and just 5,000 people are charged annually with fraud offences (Skidmore et al, 2018). Getting on top of

fraud and wider economic crime is critical to making the UK a place in which people want to invest and for the future of the financial services sector.

The number of child sexual abuse material offences increased six-fold between 2014 and 2018. However, charging rates for these offences have fallen over the same period and just one in ten reports leads to a criminal justice outcome (Aitkenhead et al, 2022).

Computer misuse offences increased by 85 per cent in the year to June 2021, partly due to increased online activity during the pandemic. There were 1.8 million such offences in the year to June 2021, and yet just 71 cases (0.2 per cent of those reported) resulted in a charge or summons in the year to March 2021 (ONS 2021, ONS 2021a).

Tackling these forms of crime requires a combination of the following: specialist teams of investigators capable of operating across local, regional and international borders; political and professional leadership that prioritises this work and is accountable for it; a commitment to invest in the technology required; and systems for sharing crime and intelligence data across the whole law enforcement system. The current system of police force organisation does not possess these characteristics.

11.4.2 Specialist capabilities

The model does not support the development of effective specialist capabilities. There are five reasons why it generally makes sense for specialist capabilities to be brigaded at a level higher than a county police force:

- These capabilities tend to have high fixed costs in terms of training and equipment.

- There are learning benefits from concentrating expertise rather than having it spread out and isolated across forces.

- Risk can be pooled at a higher level to help smaller forces deal with infrequent but intensive levels of demand.

- Some of these capabilities do not require an immediate physical presence.

- Public confidence in the police is to some extent dependent on the police managing high risk areas of work in a professional and consistent way. The consequences of mistakes or poor conduct in areas such as firearms or undercover work can be severe both for the individuals directly involved but also for the reputation of policing. This ought to be a strong driver for developing a more consistent national approach and a concentration of specialism in regional centres.

There is evidence that that a number of specialist capabilities are not being effectively delivered through the current structure.

Roads policing

Since the birth of the motorcar in the 1890s the police have always played a role in enforcing the rules of the road. In the last decade, however, austerity has hit this area of policing particularly hard (Halkon and Muir, 2022).

The amount of money spent on roads policing fell by 34 per cent in real terms between 2013 and 2019, compared to 6 per cent for all police functions (HMICFRS, 2020). This has led to a significant loss of traffic officers, whose numbers fell by 22 per cent between 2010 and 2014 and by a further 18 per cent between 2015 and 2019 (Home Office, 2020).

Police traffic enforcement has dropped commensurately. The number of Fixed Penalty Notices issued for using mobile phones while behind the wheel fell by 70 per cent between 2011 and 2018 (Green, 2020). Between 2015 and 2018 the number of breathalyser tests carried out in England and Wales dropped by 25 per cent (HMICFRS, 2020).

This has played a role in the stalling of the UK's progress in reducing the numbers of deaths on the roads: the number of people killed on the roads each year has remained more or less constant since 2012 (DfT, 2020). This contrasts with other European countries where the number of road traffic collisions fell by 23 per cent in the last decade (European Commission, 2020).

Some argue that technology has made the work of traffic officers less relevant, but international research shows that a physical police presence on the roads network is one of the most effective way of reducing road deaths (Halkon and Muir, 2022).

One of the reasons for the lack of investment in this area is that it has not tended to be prioritised locally. HMICFRS found that road safety was listed as a priority in only 19 of 43 police and crime plans in 2019 (HMICFRS, 2020).

Major crime

As described earlier in this report the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) estimates that there is a national shortfall of 6,851 detectives (NPCC, 2021). In Chapter 7 we identified significant capacity and skills shortages across a range of investigatory specialisms.

One sign of this significant capability gap is the difficulties involved in securing mutual aid to support major crime investigations in smaller forces. For example, we were told by officers within the National Police Coordination Centre (NPoCC) that they struggled to secure mutual aid from other forces requested by Essex police following the discovery of 29 Vietnamese migrants who had died in the back of an articulated lorry. The shortage of detectives, victim identification officers and other skilled personnel, alongside high workloads across the system, meant that forces were unable to provide sufficient mutual support.

The shortage of investigatory skills is one of the factors responsible for the fall in detection rates from 15 per cent in 2015 to 7 per cent in 2021. Providing these investigatory resources at a regional rather than a force level would help smaller forces pool the risk of being faced with intensive but infrequent surges in demand when faced with a major incident.

Cybercrime

Repeated studies have found that local forces do not have anywhere near enough capability to meet rising demand in the arena of cybercrime (Aitkenhead and Skidmore, forthcoming; HMICFRS, 2019a).

The Inspectorate has concluded that: resourcing for cybercrime teams is short term and lacks strategic planning; there is duplication of work across forces; there is a lack of specialist analysts; there is too little sharing of good practice; and there is a lack of intelligence gathering. Although HMICFRS welcome the switch to regional tasking in this area it has concluded that this is voluntary and not being consistently implemented (HMICFRS, 2019a).

Economic crime

We have already noted that only 0.8 per cent of the police workforce specialises in economic crime, despite fraud now being the single largest category of crime affecting people in England and Wales. Research by the Police Foundation has found that fraud is not prioritised by local forces, specialist economic crime teams have very limited capacity to take on new work and that most fraud investigation is carried out by generalist officers who do not believe they have the skills to carry out these investigations effectively (Skidmore et al, 2018).

Two recent major reports into fraud policing have called for fraud investigations to be largely carried out by economic crime specialists based in regional units (Skidmore et all,2018, Mackey 2020). This would facilitate investigation and victim management across force boundaries and it would align work to tackle fraud

with wider work to tackle serious and organised crime through the ROCUs. It would also go some way to address the concerns of the Treasury Committee who recently asked the government to consider making economic crime the responsibility of a single government department and a single law enforcement agency (House of Commons Treasury Committee, 2022).

11.4.3 Value for money

The third area where the current structure underperforms is **value for money**. As the 2015 report by the HMIC-initiated National Debate Advisory Group argued there are strong efficiency grounds for specialist capabilities, operational support functions and business support functions being organised at a level higher than that of county forces (National Debate Advisory Group, 2015). This is because of economics of scale in areas like procurement and reductions in duplication.

However, in 2014 HMIC found that just 10 per cent of the savings requirement for police forces was being achieved through collaboration (HMIC 2014). There were also substantial differences between forces, with one force (West Mercia) achieving almost half of its savings through collaboration, while for others such as West Midlands, Merseyside, Sussex and Devon and Cornwall just 1 per cent or less of their savings were being achieved by collaboration (ibid).

The Inspectorate warned that:

> *"Collaboration between forces, public and private sector organisations remains patchy, fragmented, overly complex and too slow….With some notable exceptions, the pace, breadth and depth of collaboration remains disappointing." (HMIC 2014, p.33).*

The potential efficiency gains from increased collaboration and restructuring are illustrated by the example of Police Scotland (Box 11.1). In 2013 Police Scotland replaced the previous eight Scottish forces as a single national police service. It is currently estimated that Police Scotland will achieve £2.2bn in savings in the period up to 2026, which is double the outline business case made at the time of the merger. These savings come to a cost saving of £200m a year, which is 14 per cent of the £1.4bn that was allocated to policing in Scotland the year prior to the merger (Police Scotland, 2020; Audit Scotland, 2012).

It is unlikely that structural reorganisation would yield the same level of savings in England and Wales, simply because police forces here have already banked some of the same types of savings as those made in Scotland, particularly in areas such as estate rationalisation and

Box 11.1 Police Scotland

Prior to its reform in 2013 there were eight police forces in Scotland along with the Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency (SIPR et al, 2019). In April 2013 they were amalgamated into one police force named Police Scotland.

There were a number of drivers for reform:

- Cuts to the Scottish Government's budget alongside an SNP commitment to sustain officer numbers at 17,234, meant that savings would need to come from organisational reform rather than fewer police officers (Fyfe and Scott, 2013).

- There was a desire to ensure that every area of Scotland had access to specialist services. The centralisation of these functions also assisted with savings as it would cut out the duplication of services (Terpstra and Fyfe, 2019).

- A need for the integration of information systems. The eight forces did not use the same IT systems and amalgamating them into one force would make information sharing easier (Fyfe and Scott, 2013).

- Fyfe and Scott (2013) argue that there was also a political imperative: the SNP could not have been unaware that having a national police service for Scotland might aid the cause of independence.

Police Scotland has 13 territorial divisions, which are supported by national specialist divisions. The Specialist Crime Division (SCD) provides investigative and intelligence functions such as major Crime investigation, public protection, organised crime, counter terrorism, intelligence and safer communities. The Operational Support Division (OSD) provides specialist support functions such as road policing, firearms, public order, air support, marine policing, dogs and mounted branch, as well as emergency and events Planning.

Police Scotland is held to account by the Scottish Police Authority (SPA). Its main functions are to appoint the Chief Constable, allocate funding of Police Scotland and hold the Chief Constable accountable (Terpstra and Fyfe, 2019). Along with the policing and specialist divisions Scotland retained its national forensic service which is also run by the SPA (ibid).

There were controversies in the early years of reform. There was a view that police tactics used in Strathclyde, previously Scotland's largest force covering Glasgow and the surrounding areas, were being exported into areas not used to more aggressive forms of policing. The use of stop and search increased across Scotland, following the reform, with the number of searches increasing in the first year in ten of the policing divisions, the most dramatic being a 474 per cent increase in Fife (Murray, 2015). There was also a greater routine arming of officers, which caused a public backlash (BBC News, 2014).

There was also a view that policing was becoming less present in and responsive to local communities. This may be connected to police station closures and the fact that, due to cuts in civilian staff, police officers were increasingly needed to perform office work (Terpstra and Fyfe, 2015).

There has been a small decrease in the number of people saying the police do a good or excellent job from 61 per cent in 2012/13 to 56 per cent in 2018/19, although the levels have been relatively stable for most of the period since 2013 (Scottish Government, 2020).

The reform has over-performed when it comes to saving money. Compared to a target of saving £1.1bn by 2026, Police Scotland now estimates it will have saved £2.2bn by that date, with an annual cost reduction of £200m (Police Scotland, 2020; Audit Scotland, 2012).

The evaluation of the reform also found that there was a significant improvement in access to specialist services. Interviews carried out in year one of the evaluation showed that responses were perceived to have improved significantly (SIPR, 2019).

Looking to the future, it is worth noting that no major institution or political party in Scotland is proposing to reverse the reform and go back to eight local police forces.

reductions in support staff. All three countries went through an austerity programme and cut costs.

However, significantly more of that £200m a year saving in Scotland has come through back-office rationalisation than in England and Wales, where much of the savings came through a 15 per cent reduction in officer numbers between 2010 and 2018 (NAO, 2018). Officer numbers in Scotland were held constant as part of a Scottish government manifesto commitment (NAO, 2018).

Even if we assume that a similar reform programme would not save as much money as that north of the border, the savings could still be considerable. To provide an indication, **if an English and Welsh reform achieved just a third of the Scottish savings (5 per cent of its current budget) that would yield £690m annually.**[43]

43. This is estimated by calculating 5 per cent of the Total Direct Resource Funding received by police forces in 2021/22, including police grant, precept and other specific grants, as set out by the Policing Minister https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CDP-2021-0018/CDP-2021-0018.pdf

11.4.4 Regional and national functions lack a stable legal and financial foundation

The existing approach of bottom-up voluntary collaborative arrangements has created a patchwork of ad hoc arrangements that lack a stable foundation. Most of these are the result of collaboration agreements under Section 22A of the 2011 Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act.

As HMIC has argued: '*it is concerning that the national picture is becoming increasingly fragmented and complex with extremes in variation to approaches to the collaboration agenda*' (HMIC, 2014, p.94).

Rather than forces collaborating in defined regional groups, forces have multiple collaboration agreements, sometimes with forces on the other side of the country. Forces are also free to pull out of these collaborative arrangements which can put their partners at significant risk, as occurred when West Mercia walked away from its strategic alliance with Warwickshire. Warwickshire was left to essentially rebuild its own force headquarters and secure new collaboration agreements with other forces.

Regional Organised Crime Units are the product of collaboration agreements between local Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs). They lack their own legal foundation which means they cannot employ their own staff. They rely for most of their funding on local forces and are therefore vulnerable to local investment decisions, which complicates business planning.

Finally, important parts of the national policing infrastructure have been funded through the Police Transformation Fund and as such suffers from short term funding allocations, which inhibits their ability to plan and develop. This includes vital programmes such as the Forensic Capability Network, the Modern Slavery Transformation Unit and the Digital Policing Portfolio.

11.4.5 Policing lacks a strong strategic centre

In his book *How to Run a Government* (Barber, 2016) this Review's Chair Sir Michael Barber sets out three roles for the centre in any public service system. This role he calls **stewardship**:

- **Strategy**: someone at the centre (whether the government or an agency delegated this role) should be looking to the future and thinking about how the service can meet future challenges. This involves surveying future technological developments, shifts in global patterns of provision, likely demand and so on.

- **Performance management**: the centre should put in place a means of monitoring the overall performance of the system and have an ability to intervene in areas where performance is poor.

- **Human capital:** the centre needs to ensure that there is the human capital in place, properly regulated, with the required skills and motivation. It takes years to train skilled professionals and so this requires long-term planning and a strategic outlook.

How does our policing system weigh up when assessed against these three metrics?

Strategy

Policing lacks a single body responsible for setting the overall strategy for the police service. In the past this strategic function was performed by the Home Office itself, which set out detailed plans for police reform and modernisation, particularly in the 1990s and 2000s. This was supported by ACPO before its abolition in 2015.

Since 2010 there has been an absence of strategic direction in policing:

- With the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) the Home Office chose to step back, expecting such a strategic direction to emerge from a self-governing system of Chief Constables and PCCs.

- That self-governing system of Chief Constables and PCCs through the National Police Chiefs' Council and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners lacks a mechanism for making national decisions that are binding on all parties.

- Although there is a Policing Vision document for the service, this is largely aspirational and the centre has few levers to ensure that those aspirations are achieved.

- Although the College of Policing has recently produced a strong piece of work on the on the future operating environment *(*College of Policing, 2020), there is no permanent strategic hub responsible for horizon scanning.

Performance management

There is a national system of performance management in policing largely because of the role played by HMICFRS. Through its inspections HMICFRS assesses how well forces are performing on grounds of effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy. There is a system in place for intervention, overseen by HMICFRS and backed up by ministerial powers, where police

forces systematically underperform. The Home Office is also now playing more of a performance management role, through the National Crime and Policing Measures that the National Policing Board has set for local forces.

There is however room for considerable improvement in the way performance is monitored and managed from the centre. Too much police data, particularly outside recorded crime, remains 'land locked' on local force systems. Consistent data on mental health incidents for example is not collected across the country and therefore is not available nationally.

The Home Office need to build up a state-of-the-art performance monitoring system that should enable those responsible for system stewardship to have access to close to real time data across key metrics. This would allow for benchmarking, enable systemic learning and facilitate the targeting of resources where intervention may be required. In short, we require a performance monitoring system that is much more agile and up to date, powered by much better data collection, aggregation and analysis.

Human capital

The College of Policing has the strategic responsibility for nurturing policing's human capital. It does this by setting common professional standards, providing a framework for police education and professional development and supporting the development and dissemination of the corpus of professional knowledge.

However, there are three gaps in the national landscape relating to human capital development:

- There is no central planning function in relation to workforce, as discussed in Chapter 7. Recruitment is in the hand of the 43 forces. The result of this is that major gaps in capability can emerge owing to decisions taken at force level, with no one looking across the whole system. Someone within the system should have responsibility for looking ahead and developing plans to ensure an adequate supply of people to meet the future needs of the service.

- The College of Policing has few powers to ensure that forces cooperate with its initiatives and implement its standards. While standards are articulated through its Authorised Professional Practice officers and Chief Constables can diverge from these where they judge it appropriate to do so. Additionally, where the College initiates a new programme of work it has no way of requiring forces to implement these. We will address these gaps in the next chapter.

- While there is plenty of innovation in policing there is not yet a fully developed system for capturing that

learning and sharing it across the profession. There is an online platform, Knowledge Hub, for sharing practice, but far too often initiatives and the learning from them remain unknown to anyone outside a particular force.

In addition to these *system stewardship* functions (strategic direction, performance management and human capital development) the centre can also play a role in *delivering* highly specialist capabilities. Currently for example national agencies or lead forces deliver the Counter Terrorism Command, Action Fraud, the National Police Air Service and, through the National Crime Agency, investigate and pursue serious and organised crime.

However, there are other areas of specialist capability that would benefit from being delivered by a national organisation. This is far from an exhaustive list but we would highlight the following:

- **Procurement:** the police service could save substantial sums if there were more national procurement of goods and services in areas such as equipment, uniform, vehicles and information technology. Blue Light Commercial has been set up as a relatively new vehicle to do this and was able to lead the way on procuring PPE for officers and staff during the pandemic. However, there is still much more that could be purchased collectively at a reduced cost.

- **Collective intelligence:** as discussed above most police data is owned and managed by local forces and is therefore invisible to the service as a whole. This inhibits the ability of the service to spot emerging crime and incident trends and develop a response. There is also no standing capability to consistently use existing databases such as the Police National Computer and Police National Database to identify risk and target activity. Having a permanent national data centre would mean that emerging patterns could be spotted early, trends identified, problems better understood and existing databases better used to inform activity.

- **Forensics:** the state of the forensic science sector has been repeatedly criticised by both the Forensic Science Regulator and the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee. See Box 11.2 for why we think forensics ought to be viewed as a national capability.

If such capabilities are to be delivered once for the whole country then there ought to be a national organisational platform to deliver them. We discuss the possible options for achieving this in the next section.

Box 11.2 Forensics

Forensic science involves the application of "scientific methods to the recovery, analysis and interpretation of relevant materials and data in criminal investigations and court proceedings" (House of Lords, 2019) and includes DNA analysis, fingerprint examination, digital or computer forensics, forensic anthropology and ballistics.

Since the abolition of the Home Office funded Forensic Science Service, private companies have been commissioned by police forces to undertake forensic examination or, in most cases, it has been provided by the police themselves.

Oversight for standards is provided by the Forensic Science Regulator but the postholder does not have any statutory enforcement powers to ensure quality standards and compliance across the landscape.

The Regulator highlighted in her latest annual report that in the last six years forensic science has been strained financially, reputationally and with regard to capacity (Tully, 2021), with the system "on a knife-edge". Digital forensics in particular has "woeful levels of compliance with achieving quality standards". The ultimate upshot of this is misleading evidence (Smit et al, 2018), long backlogs, innocent people being falsely convicted and criminals escaping justice (Tully, cited in Dodd, 2020).

Fragmented governance, systems, priorities and capabilities across the service (public and private) creates and compounds a number of existing challenges (Muir and Walcott, 2021).

First, the demand for digital forensics is increasing rapidly; it is now key to most crime investigations. Alongside this, the sheer volume of data held on digital devices is ever-growing. This increased demand for forensics has not been matched with increased supply. Approximately £120 million was spent on forensic science in 2008 which dropped to between £50-55 million in 2018 (NAO, 2018). This has contributed to the fragility of the provider market.

Second, because of this reduced spending, human resources are diminishing. Recruiting police officers with both technical and investigatory skills is a difficult task. Existing cuts to training have meant basic forensic procedures are not common knowledge. There is also very little research and development occurring to keep on top of new innovations.

Third, technical resources are sparse and, where they do exist, are often outdated. This is of major concern as the range of devices and data formats requiring examination is increasing, and criminals are becoming more sophisticated. Different providers have different technical capabilities which means the quality of evidence being put before courts is inconsistent. Data is also held in formats that are often incompatible between police forces.

Fourth, gaining consistently high common standards (or ISO accreditation) is increasingly difficult. The Regulator has expressed concerns about private companies being commissioned who do not meet international quality standards.

In contrast with England and Wales, Scotland's forensic science service is run by the Scottish Police Authority Forensic Services (SPA FA) and has complete independence from Police Scotland. It is built on a vision of "scientific excellence for safer communities… prevent, investigate and detect crime supporting the delivery of justice and keeping Scotland's communities safe". It has 500 highly trained and skilled scientists operating from four main laboratory sites and its 'crime scene-to-court' model ensures impartiality and independence. Currently in place is an eight-year strategy involving a three-phase plan to improve service delivery (Scottish Police Authority, no date: p10).

SPA's annual review found good evidence of SPA FA delivering its strategic outcomes by increasing capacity, adding value, maintaining high quality standards and improving capabilities (Scottish Police Authority, 2020).

We urgently require a more strategic approach to forensics in England and Wales. The Transforming Forensics Programme (and the resulting Forensic Capability Network) is striving to tackle these interrelated issues on the basis of voluntary cooperation between forces. However, we believe that the Home Office should go further and establish a national forensic science service for England and Wales (see Recommendation 40).

40. The Home Office should establish a national forensic science service. This would not necessarily replace existing private providers but would incorporate most in-house provision currently provided by forces. This would put forensic science services on a stable and secure footing. The new service would:

- Carry out national procurement of forensics services where these would benefit from being commissioned once on behalf of the whole service.

- Ensure a consistent approach was taken to meeting international quality standards.

- Carry out horizon scanning and research and development to ensure that forensics capability can keep pace with technological and scientific innovation.

- Provide for a concentration of specialism at the centre, as well as ensuring that expertise and learning is shared more effectively.

One option would be to house this service within the National Crime Agency, with a regional delivery structure.

11.5 A REALLOCATION OF FUNCTIONS AND CAPABILITIES

The analysis above strongly suggests a reallocation of capabilities and functions to different spatial levels would improve efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy. Here we set out what that redistribution of functions ought to look like, before in the next section looking at what such a reallocation means for organisational structure. Form should follow function rather than the other way around.

Our proposed reallocation of policing capabilities and functions is set out in Box 11.3.[44] Under this model the local level, currently organised into the 43 forces, should focus on the delivery of local police services: 24/7 response, local crime investigation, neighbourhood policing, safeguarding and offender management.

A large number of other functions and capabilities would be organised at the regional level. These include serious and organised crime related capabilities and uniformed specialisms (dogs, horses, public order etc). They also include both operational support functions such as forensics and contact management, and business support functions such as procurement and HR. Note we do not set out here a defined number of regions, as this is an area where some flexibility and adaptation to local circumstances is required. Our starting point for thinking about this is the existing nine English policing regions and Wales, but it is possible that some of the large metropolitan forces might be categorised as a region. The reallocation of functions would largely not affect the Metropolitan Police Service as it already operates as a regional force.

We should also note that local police forces will almost certainly need to retain some proactive investigative capability to deal with issues like local drug dealers and locally based organised crime groups that may not be prioritised by the regional level. There will need to be detailed work on the precise division of labour within the broad reallocation of functions we have described.

The national level would focus on system stewardship functions (strategy, performance management and human capital development), plus the delivery of some high specialist capabilities such as air support and the national IT databases.

This reallocation of capabilities and functions is justified on the following grounds. First, it builds the specialist capabilities required to tackle burgeoning levels of internet enabled and cross border crime at a scale larger than the county police force. These specialist teams will be better able to operate across force boundaries. They will be led and governed by people who prioritise these areas of work and who are accountable for achieving results in relation to fraud, cybercrime and so forth. Many of these capabilities currently struggle at the local level in the competition for resources with more visible forms of local demand.

Second, it aggregates all police specialisms at a higher level, creating better conditions for learning and improvement and allowing for the creation of centres of expertise. It also enables areas of high risk to be managed in a more consistent fashion by the police service.

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44. Note this approach is informed by the HMIC publication Reshaping policing for the public: A discussion paper from the advisory group on the national debate on policing in austerity published in 2015 and written by a National Debate Advisory Group of stakeholders from across the police service https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/reshaping-policing-for-the-public.pdf

Box 11.3 A reallocation of policing functions to achieve greater effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy

Local level
• Local crime and harm prevention work led by neighbourhood policing teams, undertaken collaboratively with partners • 24/7 response • Local crime investigation • Safeguarding and offender management

Regional level	
Specialist capabilities	
Specialist crime investigation • Major crime, economic crime (including fraud), digital investigation and intelligence • Serious and organised crime • Counter terrorism (under the Counter Terrorism Policing network)	Specialist uniformed operations • Roads • Public order • Firearms • Civil emergencies • Dogs • Mounted
Operational support	
• Contact management • Intelligence • Criminal justice • Forensics • Support (professional standards, firearms licensing, communications governance, performance management)	
Business support	
• HR • Finance • Procurement • IT • Learning and development • Transport • Estate • Legal	

National level	
System stewardship	Delivery of national capabilities
Strategic direction • National leadership • Horizon scanning • National data centre Performance management • Inspection • Intervention Human capital development • Setting common professional standards • Educational and qualifications framework • Developing and disseminating the knowledge base • Workforce planning	Specialist crime investigation • Serious and organised crime (including fraud) • Counter terrorism Support functions • Air support • Specialist operational resources • IT and national databases • Forensics • Procurement • Mutual aid coordination

Third, it will be more efficient because it allows for greater economies of scale in areas like procurement, which would be done regionally or nationally rather than locally, and because it strips out unnecessary duplication. Not every local police force should need its own IT or HR department nor should they require uniforms or vehicles that are distinct from their neighbouring force.

Fourth, it creates the opportunity to put the regional serious and organised crime infrastructure on a more stable footing, by locating it within a more robust regional tier with secure funding and clear leadership and governance.

Finally, it builds a stronger strategic centre in policing with a greater ability to set a long-term strategic direction, monitor performance in fulfilling that strategy and developing the people policing will need to meet future demands. It also provides a firmer base for highly specialist capabilities that ought to be provided once for the whole system, whether that by specialist areas of forensics or major components of IT infrastructure.

Having defined in principle where we think these functions should sit, we now turn to the question of what organisational form would best support this allocation of capabilities.

11.6 OPTIONS FOR CHANGE

Box 11.5 outlines six options for reform to the organisational structure of the police service in order to best deliver the redistribution of capabilities and functions described above. We use four criteria for assessing the desirability of these options: first, *effectiveness*: will it help the police to deliver the outcomes we want them to achieve? Second, *efficiency*: will organising police capabilities in this way provide better value for money and realise efficiencies that could be invested in frontline policing? Third, *public confidence*: will organising policing in this way improve public confidence in the police? Finally, *deliverability*: how difficult in practical terms will such a reform be to achieve?

We should be clear that we do not believe there is a structural magic bullet to the challenges facing policing. Nor do we believe in structural reform for its own sake. Radical structural reform would inevitably distract the leadership of the service from day-to-day delivery. It might be worth it in the end, but we should not pretend there are no transition costs. Finally, every option has its downsides and in choosing one or another one may have to choose between different desirable objectives. There are some unavoidable trade-offs.

All that said it is our view that the existing structure is poorly designed to help policing deal with the challenges of the 21st century. No change is therefore not an option.

Option 1. More collaboration

This option is essentially the status quo, although with an additional push by the Home Office to persuade police forces to deliver more collaboratively, using the existing legislative framework.

Under this model cross force collaboration would continue to be a bottom-up patchwork, negotiated according to the needs of particular forces at particular times.

However, it seems unlikely that further exhortation from ministers, without legal direction, will achieve the step change required. Under this model it is almost certain that most of the capabilities that we think would be best delivered regionally would continue to be delivered by local forces. Continuing with the existing laissez-faire approach leaves us with an ad hoc set of collaboration arrangements that can easily be unpicked by any of the parties.

We reject this option of 'one more heave' because it will not achieve significant change and therefore scores poorly on grounds of efficiency and effectiveness. Its impact on public confidence, as with most of our options, is more ambiguous. Retaining the 43 forces means that the system remains anchored in local priorities. However, it should be said that failure to provide specialist capabilities to an adequate standard might also undermine public confidence, particularly in high-risk areas where the public expect consistency.

Option 2. Regional lead forces

Under this option the 43 force structure would continue but within each region one force, normally the largest, would become the organisational home for specialist capabilities, operational support and business support functions. This already happens to some extent through some of the Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCUs), which are delivered on a lead force basis as in the South East and the West Midlands.

This option could improve effectiveness by organising specialisms at a regional level. It could also drive efficiencies if the lead force were to deliver more business and operational support functions to its smaller neighbours.

However, there are two main problems with this model, which mean it scores poorly on deliverability grounds.

One is that not every region has a large metropolitan force surrounded by smaller county neighbours. Some regions like the North West have two large metropolitan forces. Others such as the East Midlands are composed of roughly equally sized county forces.

Another problem is governance. Under such a model it is difficult to develop arrangements which give the smaller forces sufficient voice and weight when relying on a larger neighbour for so much of their capability.

A lead force model may be appropriate for some regions, however, and so while we reject this option, some regions could take forward a version of this under Options 3 and 4 below.

Option 3. Regional police units

This model is a much more structured system of regional police collaboration. The 43 forces would remain, avoiding the need for structural upheaval, but local forces would be principally focused on delivering local policing services, namely neighbourhood policing, 24/7 response, safeguarding, offender management and local crime investigation. They would do this through more extensive collaboration with other local services as described in Chapter 4.

The Home Office would legislate to create Regional Police Units to deliver most specialist capabilities, business support and operational support functions at the regional level. Cooperation with this process would be mandated, although adequate time would have to be provided for forces to put their plans in place and to rationalise their existing collaborative arrangements.

This option scores relatively well on effectiveness and efficiency because it means specialisms will be concentrated at a more appropriate level, back-office duplication will be reduced and more procurement could be undertaken at a regional or national level, delivering economics of scale.

This option also scores well on deliverability grounds as it does not involve a restructuring of the forces and goes with the grain of existing arrangements.

Finally, this option scores well in terms of its impact on public confidence: the local connection via local forces and Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) is retained, but we would also expect to see improvements in the delivery of specialist services in high volume public facing areas like fraud investigation.

However, a potential downside with this option relates to governance. Both the national government and local Chief Constables and PCCs have a stake in the

success of this regional tier and so any configuration would have to ensure both a degree of national and local accountability.

One model would be to have a board of local PCCs and Chief Constables who would provide much of the funding for the regional tier and would appoint its leadership, set its priorities and so forth. The national interest would be secured by having a stronger Strategic Policing Requirement which would set out much more clearly than at present the national expectation particularly in relation to serious and organised crime.

However, as we have seen the Strategic Policing Requirement does not currently have much bite and even under a revised approach central government may have a legitimate concern that serious and organised crime will not be sufficiently prioritised and resourced. Related to this is a concern that the funding for ROCUs is too unstable, depending on myriad local decisions. To resolve that problem it might be better to separate out the serious and organised crime capabilities, in which there is arguably a stronger national interest, from the other functions (support, uniform specialism etc) which are more properly a concern for local forces. Option 4 describes such an approach.

Option 4. An expanded National Crime Agency plus regional police support units

This option would see the same spatial reconfiguration of policing capabilities as Option 3, but it would take a different approach to organisation and governance (see Box 11.4).

Under this model the serious and organised crime (SOC) capabilities currently housed within the ROCUs would be transferred to regional headquarters of the National Crime Agency (NCA). This would include the significant addition to the existing ROCUs of fraud and economic crime investigation, which as we have seen is not being adequately provided by local forces under current arrangements. These regional NCA units would be entirely centrally funded to ensure regional SOC capability is put on a sound and stable footing. They would be managed and led by the NCA, accountable to the Home Secretary. The NCA would retain its existing power to direct forces in relation to serious and organised crime operations. The Metropolitan Police Service, as an existing regional force, would continue to house its own SOC capabilities.

Alongside these, local Chief Constables and PCCs would be required to pool their non SOC specialist capabilities, business and operational support functions

Box 11.4 How policing functions would be allocated under an expanded National Crime Agency plus regional police support units model

Local policing
• Local crime and harm prevention work led by neighbourhood policing teams, undertaken collaboratively with partners • 24/7 response • Local crime investigation • Safeguarding and offender management

Regional NCA units	Regional Police Support Units
• Serious and organised crime, including economic crime and fraud • Counter terrorism would remain under command of the Counter Terrorism Network	Specialist policing capabilities • Major crime • Roads • Public order • Firearms • Civil emergencies • Dogs • Mounted
	Operational support • Contact management • Intelligence • Criminal justice • Forensics • Support (professional standards, firearms licensing, communications governance, performance management)
	Business support • HR • Finance • Procurement • IT • Learning and development • Transport • Estate • Legal

National	
System stewardship	Delivery of national capabilities
Strategic direction • National leadership • Horizon scanning • National data centre Performance management • Inspection • Intervention Human capital development • Setting common professional standards • Educational and qualifications framework • Developing and disseminating the knowledge base • Workforce planning	Specialist crime investigation • Serious and organised crime (including fraud) • Counter terrorism Support functions • Air support • Specialist operational resources • IT and national databases • Forensics • Procurement • Mutual aid coordination

into Regional Police Support Units. These units would be funded via pooled local funding and accountable to local Chief Constables and PCCs, whose forces would of course be critically dependent on the quality of provision. The savings made via reduced duplication would be shared locally for reinvestment, although the government may decide to allocate some of the savings to help build up regional SOC capability and to deliver other national priorities.

This model would deliver similar effectiveness and efficiency gains as with Option 3, but it would have clearer governance for the different capabilities, with the NCA taking charge of regional SOC capability and with local chiefs and PCCs retaining control of the support functions on which their forces rely. While it does mean that there are in effect parallel regional organisations, it has the significant advantage of achieving a clearer focus and governance for the different elements of the regional tier. The Counter Terrorism Network would also continue to have its own regional units as at present.

Option 5. Regional forces

A more radical approach with a view to maximising the effectiveness and efficiency gains described above would be to merge the 43 police forces into a smaller number of regional forces. This was the plan proposed by then Chief Inspector of Constabulary Sir Denis O'Connor in 2005 and supported by the then Home Secretary Charles Clarke.

In the 2005 *Closing the Gap* report O'Connor argued that:

- The best local unit for policing was at Basic Command Unit (BCU) rather than at force level, given that the BCU is closer to local communities.

- There was a need to develop much better capabilities to tackle serious and organised crime, terrorism and other cross border threats.

- The 'protective services' required to meet these challenges are better developed at a larger scale than most existing police forces. HMIC found that forces with fewer than 4,000-6,000 members of staff struggle to meet the standards required to provide protective services.

- Mergers would release efficiencies of around £250m annually and a net present value of £2.5bn

Off the back of the report Charles Clarke proposed to go from 43 forces to 13.

However, the 2005-06 reforms collapsed for the following reasons:

- There was intense local resistance to what was seen as a centralising measure.

- Council taxes would likely rise for many people because taxpayers' contributions to policing would have to be equalised across a region.

- Unlike in Scotland in 2013, the reforms were not central to the government's political agenda and hence they were dropped quickly following Charles Clarke's (unrelated) resignation as Home Secretary (Brain, 2010).

As with Options 3 and 4 there are strong effectiveness grounds for regional mergers and a full merger programme would no doubt release considerable efficiencies.

However, regional mergers would break the local connection in our current system, by operating across wider geographies and abolishing the Police and Crime Commissioners. As we saw with the Scottish merger, there were certainly complaints about a loss of local responsiveness following police reform and there was a drop in public confidence during the early years of the process (see Box 11.1).

This would not only create a risk of reduced public confidence it might also hamper efforts to achieve greater collaboration between local police forces and local public services. Police regional boundaries would not match the boundaries of other local public services. Although these risks might be mitigated by providing greater managerial autonomy for local police commanders, in the end the locus of authority in a regional force would be at regional not local level. Local commanders would look upwards rather than outwards in terms of command. This is a considerable disadvantage given the need to increase local public service collaboration as described in Chapter 4.

One of the greatest challenges to this option is political deliverability: as in 2005-2007 there will be intense local resistance and any programme would have to involve more money up front to dampen any potential council tax rises. It would also require a government willing to expend political capital on a reform to police structures. There are no signs at present that any major political party is willing to do this.

Option 6. A national police force

Our final and most radical option is the establishment of single national police forces for England and Wales. A national option was put forward in 1962 by AL Goodhart in his famous dissenting memorandum to the *Final Report of the Royal Commission on the*

Police. Countering the likely criticism that such a reform would run against our long-standing policing traditions, Goodhart argued:

"There is no need to apologise for recommending the establishment of a regionally administered police force under the direction of the Home Secretary, although it has been suggested that such a system would be unconstitutional and un-English. The police constable is an officer of the Crown; he enforces a national law; and his rights, powers and duties, when not statutory, come from the national common law…the recommendation that the final steps should be taken in the interests of efficiency and good government cannot be regarded as a radical or revolutionary proposal."

Unlike his colleagues on the Royal Commission, Goodhart recommended a single Royal English and Welsh Police and a Royal Scottish Police. The latter has now of course been introduced in the form of Police Scotland and so to that extent Goodhart was ahead of his time. It is probable that if a national police force were to be introduced south of the border then there would be separate national forces for England and Wales, with policing matters being devolved to the Welsh Senedd, and so we make that assumption in what follows.

As Goodhart argued then there is a strong efficiency case for going to a single national force, because of the reduction in duplication and economies of scale. There is also a strong effectiveness case, as it would enable specialist capabilities to be provided in concentrated locations, whether regionally or nationally as appropriate, and it would provide a simple single national platform for delivering support functions and for tackling cross border crime (Goodhart, 1962).

However, there are three problems with the move. First, there is a real danger of centralisation and a loss of local responsiveness. We note that there was a drop in public confidence in the early years of Police Scotland, which has been linked by observers to a loss of local responsiveness (see Box 11.1). We also note similar signs of a reduction in local responsiveness in other countries that have adopted national or regional force models (see the international case studies on Sweden and Norway below).

These dangers are even greater with a national force than with the regional force model described above. While a single organisation might work for Scotland covering a population of 5.4 million, and conceivably for Wales with a population of 3.1 million, England has a population of 55.9 million. A single organisation to cover a population that large poses a real risk of over centralisation and a reduction in local responsiveness.

As discussed earlier this not only poses a potential risk in terms of public confidence but could also make it harder to promote local public service collaboration which is critical to tackle complex social problems.

As with a regional force model it may be possible to counter this by introducing an element of local accountability. So, for example, a model could be adopted in which the Superintendent for Oxford would be accountable to Oxford City Council for the delivery of a local policing plan. The local authority would agree the local police and crime plan for their area and would be able to use the council tax precept to commission policing services from the BCU Commander.

However, those local commanders would need the requisite autonomy to make decisions and choose priorities that are responsive to local needs. Our concern is that almost inevitably in a single national organisation in which operational authority rests at the centre those commanders would look upwards to their chief officers rather than outwards towards local communities.

Second, there is a deliverability challenge. Such a major upheaval would unquestionably distract the service away from the day job, possibly for a few years as the new system was implemented and bedded in. In the meantime, the public may start to be concerned that the police are not focused sufficiently on basic service delivery.

Third, politically this option would inevitably create significant local opposition and would require any government to expend considerable political capital to bring it about. As AL Goodhart pointed out in his memorandum, a Review of this kind should not make recommendations based purely on grounds of political expediency. Nonetheless we should not be blind to the political reaction that such a proposal would likely engender.

So, a national force would perhaps be more effective in some ways and efficient, but there is a real risk that it would break the local connection that it is at the heart of effective and legitimate policing and that it would distract the system both with political opposition and with a major organisational restructure.

Box 11.5 Options for structural reform

SPATIAL LEVEL	More collaboration	Regional lead force	Regional police units	Expanded National Crime Agency (NCA) and regional police support units	Regional forces	National force
National	Status quo	Stronger strategic centre	Stronger strategic centre	Stronger strategic centre	Stronger strategic centre	Police England and Police Wales hosting full range of specialist capabilities and support functions
Regional	Some specialist capabilities and support functions carried out in partnership, but this varies from force to force and is not regionally brigaded	Specialist capabilities and support functions delivered by the lead force in a region	Specialist capabilities and support functions delivered by a Regional Police Unit	Serious and organised crime capabilities within regional NCA headquarters, with uniformed specialisms and support functions delivered by Regional Police Support Units	Specialist capabilities, support functions and local policing delivered by regional police forces	Regional divisions of the national force delivering specialist capabilities and overseeing local policing
Local	Most policing functions with many specialisms and support functions being provided through local forces	Local force delivers neighbourhood policing, response, safeguarding, offender management and crime investigation	Local force delivers neighbourhood policing, response, safeguarding, offender management and crime investigation	Local force delivers neighbourhood policing, response, safeguarding, offender management and crime investigation	Local Basic Command Units delivering local policing, with accountability to local authorities	Local Basic Command Units delivering local policing, with accountability to local authorities

11.7 A STRONGER STRATEGIC CENTRE

Earlier we described which policing functions ought to be delivered at the national level. These can be divided into *system stewardship* functions (ensuring the overall system achieves optimal outcomes) and national *delivery* functions (the delivery of some highly specialist capabilities that it makes sense to deliver once for the whole system).

In Box 11.6 we map out which organisation (if any) currently performs these critical national functions.

The current national landscape is highly fragmented with a number of organisations performing these system stewardship and delivery roles. It is far from ideal to have such a cluttered landscape as this risks poor coordination, inefficient duplication, confused ownership and gaps emerging between institutions. If possible, we should seek to rationalise this landscape. Below we set out how we might do this by 1. developing stronger strategic capabilities for the police service, 2. providing a single home for national policing improvement functions and 3. strengthening the National Crime Agency.

11.7.1 Strategic capabilities

In order for the centre to perform an effective system stewardship role it requires a number of strategic capabilities, some of which are currently lacking. These capabilities include:

- Setting the overall strategic direction for policing.

- Horizon scanning.

- National data analytics.

- Workforce planning.

Responsibility for setting the overall strategic direction for the police service, as a publicly funded, publicly accountable service, should rest with the Home Secretary. The Home Secretary should perform this function in consultation with the other tripartite partners, represented by the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners and the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC). The National Policing Board is the main forum where a national strategy for the police service ought to be determined every five years.

In order that this strategic role of the Home Office is strengthened we think there is a strong case for

Box 11.6 How national functions are currently delivered	
System stewardship	Delivery of national capabilities
Strategic direction - National leadership (National Police Chiefs' Council (NCA)/Association of Police and Crime Commissioners) - Horizon scanning (not delivered) - National data centre (not delivered) **Performance management** (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue, Home Office) - Inspection - Monitoring of national outcomes - Intervention **Human capital development** - Setting common professional standards (College of Policing) - Educational and qualifications framework (College of Policing) - Developing and disseminating the knowledge base (College of Policing) - Workforce planning (not delivered)	**Specialist crime investigation** - Serious and organised crime (including fraud) (NCA , City of London Police) - Counter terrorism (Metropolitan Police Service) **Support functions** - Air support (National Police Air Service, under West Yorkshire Police) - IT and national databases (Police Digital Service, Home Office) - Forensics (not delivered nationally but coordinated through the Forensic Capability Network, under the NCA) - Procurement (Bluelight Commercial) - Mutual aid coordination (National Police Coordination Centre (NPoCC), under NCA)

establishing a new Crime and Policing Strategy Unit within the department to develop the evidence base on which strategic decisions can be taken. This unit would monitor overall system performance, reporting progress back to the National Policing Board. It would also be the most appropriate location for a horizon scanning function, serving all parts of the system including the Crime Prevention Agency and all of the national policing bodies.

There are other strategic capabilities that are better located within a policing body. We argued above that the police service needs a workforce planning function and a national data analytics function. Both of these functions ought to be located within the principal body responsible for national policing improvement. It is to that function that we now turn.

11.7.2 National policing improvement

A major flaw with the national policing landscape is that what we call the **national policing improvement function** is disaggregated and lacks powers to drive change.

This function used to be located in the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) which was established in 2007. The NPIA's aims were to support the delivery of effective policing and foster a culture of self-improvement,

The functions of the NPIA included:

- Providing national police IT systems.

- Developing standard processes for recording and sharing data and developing a shared approach to IT.

- Developing common professional standards.

- Improving training, development and leadership.

- Promoting national procurement.

- It also hosted a number of operational support functions such as the Missing Persons Bureau and the Serious Crime Analysis Section.

The NPIA was abolished as part of the coalition government's desire to reduce the number of quangos. The crime related and operational support functions went to the eventual National Crime Agency (NCA), IT went to the Home Office (although part of this has now been taken on by the Police Digital Service), training and standards went to the new College of Policing and national procurement has (latterly) been picked up by Blue Light Commercial, a collaborative vehicle for collective purchasing.

There is a strong case for having a consolidated national home for police improvement:

- The current landscape is highly fragmented which leads to overlapping remits and confused responsibilities.

- This fragmented landscape contributes to a lack of strategic direction from the centre.

- The existing bodies lack powers to make things happen, and such powers would be more strategically exercised if they belonged to a single coherent body responsible for police improvement.

International case study: Sweden

Prior to its police reform programme Sweden was policed by 21 forces each with a county board which controlled administration and budget decisions. These were overseen by a National Policing Board (NPB) whose job it was to regulate, inspect and support the police forces. A 2012 review found the NPB had limited power to enforce guidelines and ensure consistency, and there were imbalances in the resources and capabilities of different forces. Reform was triggered by a belief that the existing governance system was behind rising crime, particularly in so called "specially crime affected" areas, and a stall in clear-up rates despite increases in officer numbers. It was hoped centralisation would improve efficiency, transform the police force into a learning organisation and increase the quality of the service provided.

In 2015 a single national Swedish police force was created. An oversight body, the Swedish Police Authority, was created by merging the National Police Board and the forensic science services. The force was divided into seven regions (The Local, 2016). Seven police insight boards, made up of elected politicians, replaced the county police boards. Each local area was given a neighbourhood officer responsible for crime prevention and police now make a formal promise to citizens guaranteeing they will give resources to the things that are important to them (Cameron, 2017).

The reform was unpopular with police officers, although public confidence was not affected. Many officers left, meaning there was understaffing, specialist units were broken up to meet the demand for local officers and reorganisation meant a loss of local knowledge. There were complaints that reform took people by surprise and was rushed, and that the budget allocated to it was too small. Budget cuts meant the numbers of lower managers increased while the higher levels were reduced, causing an imbalance in the chain of command. By 2019 a review concluded citizen contact with the police and the service's performance had not improved (Holmberg, 2019).

International case study: Norway

The Norwegian Police has been reformed multiple times over the last 20 years, with varying degrees of success. Centralisation was attempted in 2002, with 54 districts reduced to 27, which was believed to be good for local citizens and was intended to save hours of administrative work (Holmberg, 2014). In reality many local police leaders and officers found that they had fewer resources.

After the 2011 terror attack by Anders Behring Breivik an inquiry found the police were not trained sufficiently, had weak coordination and communication and lacked leadership (Christenson et al, 2018). There were accusations the police service was not equipped to deal with such emergency scenarios. A commission argued for a more reactive police service focused on core functions. The merging of districts and stations was seen as a way to make more resources available, reduce bureaucracy and reduce response times. The commission also recommended a more knowledge-based approach to policing focused on continual improvement.

In response, further centralisation took place with the 27 districts reduced to 12 (SIPR, 2019). The Norwegian Police Service is now made up of the National Police Directorate, seven specialist agencies and the 12 police districts. Each of these districts is led by a Chief of Police. The police service is accountable to the Ministry of Justice.

Although it is too early to judge the reform's success, surveys indicated officers and partners did not believe reforms had improved public service, and there were reports that larger districts had created further distance from communities (Wijnen, 2019).

There are some specific functions that are not well served within the existing landscape:

- IT: police IT remains poor and fragmented, just as it was in 2004 at the time of the Bichard Report into the Soham murders. The Police Digital Service has the right aims and is committed to making progress but has no powers to promote a common approach.

- Procurement: Much more procurement could be done nationally, as shown by Blue Light Commercial's successful purchase of PPE during the pandemic. This could be extended to many more areas of vehicles, equipment and uniform. It would make sense to have a national procurement function alongside the IT function so that a single agency can grow the new technological capabilities required to keep pace with cybercrime.

- There needs to be a stable basis for developing new policing capabilities to meet the changing demands we have described and this will be done much more effectively nationally rather than on a force-by-force basis.

There are four options for hosting the police improvement function:

1. The NCA is expanded to take on the improvement function

2. The College of Policing is expanded to take on the improvement function

3. The NPCC takes on the improvement function

4. A separate agency is created to take on the improvement function

We rule out 3 and 4 on the following grounds:

- The NPCC is the product of a collaboration agreement between the forces and does not exist as a legal entity able to employ staff or spend money in its own right. It is also best seen as part of the governance framework rather than the national delivery framework.

- Founding another agency makes the existing cluttered landscape even more complex.

So, let us now review Options 1 and 2.

1. **The National Crime Agency is expanded to take on the improvement function**

The NCA would be expanded to become a national policing agency (Police England and Wales or the National Policing Agency), which would become the lead national policing agency, with two or possibly three directorates:

- A serious and organised crime directorate (the existing NCA).

- A police improvement directorate (IT, procurement, core national infrastructure, research and development of new capabilities).

- It could also host some of the strategic capabilities described in box 11.6.

The advantages of this option include:

- The NCA is an operational organisation well suited to delivering major pieces of national business.

- It is the largest national organisation and therefore in a good position to become essentially the lead institution in policing.

- It would reduce the clutter in the landscape.

The disadvantages include:

- There is a risk that the NCA loses its focus on serious and organised crime (SOC) by getting pulled into the national management of the police service. Given the importance of the SOC and internet enabled crime this is a very significant downside.

- The governance of the NCA would require reform as it is currently solely accountable to the Home Secretary.

2. **The College of Policing is expanded to take on the improvement function**

The advantages include:

- Improvement sits comfortably with learning and professional standards.

- It would leave the NCA to focus on serious and organised crime.

- It would bring together all the improvement functions in a single home, which would then have powers to deliver in two critical areas: using its existing (and seldom used) regulatory powers to set national minimum professional standards in high-risk areas where consistency is essential and being given new powers to mandate common standards in relation to IT.

- It reduces the clutter in the landscape, essentially consolidating the system around our proposed National Crime Prevention Agency, a National Crime Agency and a national police improvement function hosted by the College.

The disadvantages:

- The College (staff of 600, budget of £43m) would require significant investment and development so that it could become an organisation capable of hosting these additional functions. In this sense it would be less 'ready to go' than the NCA (staff of 4,000, budget of £450m).

- It raises the question as to whether this would move the College away from being an autonomous membership based professional body and towards becoming a Home Office quango like the old NPIA. It has always been a half-way house between these two identities. If we gave the NCA the improvement functions, it would free the College to pursue a future as College akin to one of the medical colleges. If we gave the College substantial delivery functions in relation to IT and forensics for example it would clearly need to be primarily accountable to the government (and the tripartite partners) rather than to its members.

On the balance of these arguments we believe that Option 2 (expanding the College of Policing to take on these functions) makes most sense:

- It would consolidate the improvement function (and improvement related powers) in one place.

- It would keep the NCA focused on SOC, which is a growing and changing threat and one which will require more focus and resource.

- Learning, standards and improvement are a better fit.

- It might be possible to 'ring fence' the membership element of the College's role from some of its expanded delivery functions and we would encourage the College and the Home Office to explore this.

- Although the College is small it could be built up. Simply to attach functions to the NCA because of its current size does not seem very strategic.

11.7.3 The National Crime Agency

The National Crime Agency (NCA) is a core part of the national landscape and should be strengthened so that it is better able to tackle serious and organised crime.

First, it needs more resources. To provide an international contrast, the FBI has a budget which is 15 times larger than the NCA (£7.4bn compared to £504m), despite the US having a population that is just five times larger than that of the UK (NCA, 2021, FBI 2022). Given the increase in complex and serious crime the NCA will need a significant increase in its budget over the next decade if it is to successfully target the most harmful organised crime networks.

Second, as articulated above, there is a case for the NCA taking more of the lead in delivering serious and organised crime capability at the regional level. Under Option 4 (above) the NCA would be expanded to incorporate the existing Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCUs), plus regional economic crime teams, including fraud. We should emphasise that, given our reallocation of specialist functions, this also means most cyber-enabled and cross border fraud investigation would be lifted out of local police forces, where it is not

Box 11.7 Fraud

As a society we have yet to get a grip on the problem of fraud. Fraud offences made up over 40 per cent of crime in 2021, the most common type of crime experienced by people in England and Wales. Fraud is estimated to cost the UK around £15 billion a year and nearly half of fraud victims say their financial loss has affected their emotional wellbeing (Skidmore et al, 2018). While some frauds result in just a few hundred pounds lost and many victims are compensated by their banks, some victims can lose their life savings and receive no compensation at all.

Despite the scale of fraud and the harm caused the police response to it is extremely limited:

- In the year to March 2021 4.6 million frauds occurred, but only 806,637 of these were reported to Action Fraud, CIFAS or UK Finance.

- Of those 806,637 reports just 3 per cent (24,805) were disseminated by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) to police forces for investigation.

- In the same period just 4,853 fraud cases resulted in a charge or summons, which represents just 0.6 per cent of those recorded that year and just 0.1 per cent of those frauds that took place in that period (Home Office 2021, ONS 2021x).

The term "fraud" covers a wide range of offences, from the misleading door-to-door salesman through to complex City frauds and, increasingly, organised online scams which affect millions of people and inflict great economic cost. Each requires different capabilities, and is most effectively tackled at different levels in our public safety system. At present, not enough is done to prevent fraud and the police struggle with unrealistic expectations of what they can achieve. There is a national reporting system for online frauds, but, through lack of well-placed capacity and capability, it rarely leads to positive outcomes.

The restructuring we are recommending should enable a much more comprehensive approach.

The new Crime Prevention Agency we propose would be able to give priority to working with service providers on measures to prevent online fraud on their platforms. One of the main measures of the success of the Agency would be its ability to bring down fraud volumes.

There will be instances where it is most appropriate for fraud investigations to remain with local forces, such as where the victim and the suspect are in a single police force area. Local forces should also have a responsibility to identify and support vulnerable victims.

Where the fraudulent activity crosses force boundaries and involves organised crime, the new regional units, building on the ROCUs but reporting to the NCA, would assume responsibility. Given the volumes of cases, this would also involve some tasking of local forces.

The City of London Police, with its world-renowned expertise in tackling complex fraud, would continue to lead on serious financial sector and commercial fraud, including such cases where they are complex and beyond the capacity of the regional units.

The strengthened NCA, supported by the regional crime units, would lead on investigating and disrupting large-scale online scams, many of which are international in character. This would be new territory for the Agency, not least because the characteristic which marks out these frauds is that they are simultaneously organised and serious, and volume crimes in the sense that they impact on a very large number of victims. The NCA would need to adapt to this, both culturally and in terms of the specialist capabilities they were able to deploy.

This structure would, we believe, enable the delivery of a more comprehensive and effective strategy for countering fraud. Within it, there is a question to be resolved about how best to ensure that reports from the public of online fraud were received and collated in such a way as to support well-focused investigative activity, and to build intelligence on fraud networks. At present, this is done by Action Fraud and the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau, both of which are located in the City of London Police, but with this reconfigured landscape the government would need to consider how best to discharge these functions.

prioritised, and would instead sit within NCA regional units.

This overall package would have the following advantages:

- It would ensure regional SOC capability was put on a stable financial footing, rather than as at present leaving it subject to decisions made by local forces.

- It would create a national SOC network comparable to the Counter Terrorism Network, with a clear chain of command to ensure SOC assets are directed in a coherent and rational way.

- It would recognise that the centre will always own more of the risk when it comes to SOC, which is less visible to local publics and less likely to be prioritised by local police. If the centre owns most of the risk it should control the assets.

Third, there is a case for some highly specialist crime related capabilities which need to be provided nationally, being housed within an expanded NCA. These are operational crime related functions that police forces are not in a position to deliver. This might include for example a new national forensic science service or national police air support.

Finally, we should note for clarity that we see no case for moving the Counter Terrorism Command out of the Metropolitan Police Service. All of the evidence we have seen during the course of the Review has highlighted that this is one of the most successful components of the national policing landscape. It should therefore remain where it is.

11.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter we have argued that the current police service structure does not provide the best organisational platform for delivering the capabilities we set out earlier in this report. It provides a poor basis for organising increasingly important specialist capabilities and for tackling surging levels of cross border crime. It is inefficient and hundreds of millions of pounds could be saved if it were reformed. The existing patchwork of collaboration initiatives does not provide a robust basis for organising cross force policing. Finally, there is a weak strategic centre in policing, meaning that there is lack of strategic direction for the whole system and a fragile organisational basis for delivering important national capabilities.

There are four options for change that would address the main weaknesses of the system by ensuring that specialist and support functions are brigaded at a regional level: Regional Police Units, the expanded NCA plus Regional Police Support Units, regional police forces and a national police force. We believe that all four have merit in terms of efficiency and effectiveness, but that regional forces and a single national solution risk centralising power and diluting the connection between policing and local communities.

Of the remaining two options the expanded NCA approach, combined with Regional Police Support Units, has the considerable advantages of clearer governance and a stronger national model for delivering serious and organised crime capabilities, which would be comparable to the way the Counter Terrorism Network operates.

While this option means the existing 43 forces would remain, we should note that we do not consider 43 to be the right number of forces. It is in many ways an arbitrary figure. We do not rule out future force amalgamations if these would promote effectiveness and efficiency. However, we have taken a 'form follows function' approach, which means we are less concerned with the 'right' number of police forces and more concerned with what capabilities should sit at what geographic levels.

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Recommendations

41. The National Crime Agency (NCA) should be given control of regional serious and organised crime assets. Regional NCA units would host serious and organised crime capability at the regional level, plus specialist economic crime teams including expanded regional fraud investigation teams. These units would be 100 per cent centrally funded through the NCA and would be accountable to the Director General of the NCA for delivery. As an existing regional force, the Metropolitan Police Service would continue to host its own serious and organised crime capabilities.

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42. The government should legislate to mandate the creation of Regional Police Support Units. These would host most specialist capabilities outside of serious and organised crime, alongside operational and business support functions for forces. These units would be funded by pooling local force budgets and a significant proportion of the savings made would be reinvested in local policing. The units should be accountable to regional boards made up of the local Chief Constables and Police and Crime Commissioners. Local police forces would focus on delivering local policing: neighbourhood policing, 24/7 response, local crime investigation, safeguarding and offender management.

This should be accompanied by a stronger strategic centre to ensure that there is a clearer strategic direction for the police service and that there is a stronger organisational platform for delivering important national capabilities.

Recommendation

43. The national policing landscape should be rationalised in the following way:

- The Home Secretary should set the national strategic direction for the service, working in partnership with the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners and the National Police Chiefs' Council through the National Policing Board.

- This strategic role of ministers would be supported by a new Crime and Policing Strategy Unit within the Home Office which would develop the evidence base to inform the national strategy, monitor performance across the system and horizon scan to ensure the system is always thinking ahead.

- There should be three main delivery organisations at the centre: the Crime Prevention Agency, the National Crime Agency and the College of Policing.

- The National Crime Agency should remain focused on serious and organised crime, but should take on more of a role in tackling large scale online scams particularly where these are international in character. It would also be a possible home for other national crime related functions such as a new national forensic science service.

- The College of Policing should be expanded to become the single home for all national policing improvement functions including learning and development, professional standards, developing the evidence base, IT and national procurement. It would also host a national workforce planning function and a data analytics function. The College would have powers to direct Chief Constables in relation to national minimum professional standards, workforce planning and common standards in relation to IT.

12. GOVERNANCE

Summary: The police governance system must ensure that the police are accountable to the public while remaining independent operational decision makers. The fundamentals of our system (the office of Constable, the operational independence of Chief Constables and the sharing of power between the Home Secretary, Police and Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables) remain the best means of achieving this. Police and Crime Commissioners and directly elected Mayors provide a robust form of local governance and their role should be expanded into other parts of the criminal justice system. The biggest problem with our system of police governance is the lack of any mechanism for making binding national decisions. As a solution to this the Home Secretary should be ready to proactively use her powers to direct Police and Crime Commissioners and Chief Constables in the national interest. The College of Policing should also set binding national minimum professional standards, common standards in relation to IT and mandatory requirements in terms of workplace planning.

The central question in police governance is how the police can be made accountable to the public without being controlled by politicians or overly influenced in their operational decisions by public opinion.

The English and Welsh system of police governance has evolved over the years as a response to this question, essentially seeking to strike a balance between the lawful discretion of police officers on the one hand and the powers of elected politicians on the other. Other sources of accountability have also long existed, in particular the police inspectorate (HMICFRS) and since the Macpherson Report into the murder of Stephen Lawrence the body that is now the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC).

In this section we explore these issues by, first, describing how this complex system of police governance has evolved, second, appraising the current system of police governance (looking both at the individual institutions and at how the system as a whole works), and finally making recommendations for change.

12.1 HOW WE GOT TO WHERE WE ARE NOW

The three central constitutional building blocks of the English and Welsh system of police governance are the office of Constable, the operational independence of the Chief Constable and the tripartite system.

The **office of Constable** is a common law concept that goes back way before the creation of the first professional police force in 1829 and so it is not defined in a single piece of legislation. It grants police officers an array of powers to prevent, detect and investigate crime and disorder. Police officers are expected to use their powers "without fear or favour", free from "improper political interference" and to do so "faithfully according to law".

Police officers are given training and guidance on the lawful and effective use of their powers and authority but as office holders they have discretion to act or not to act; for example, they cannot be ordered to make an arrest.

Each sworn Constable is an independent legal official and has personal liability for their action or inaction, although the Chief Constable and the force have a level of corporate responsibility.

All police officers, no matter their rank, hold the office of Constable. Out of that common law office of Constable has evolved a further constitutional principle that structures our system of police governance: the **operational independence** of the Chief Constable.

The legal basis of this was set out by Lord Denning in his famous 1968 judgment, where he said:

"'I have no hesitation, however, in holding that, like every constable in the land, he should be, and is, independent of the executive. He is not subject to the orders of the Secretary of State,....I hold it to be the duty of the Commissioner of Police, as it is of every chief constable, to enforce the law of the land. He must take steps so to post his men that crimes may be detected; and the honest citizens may go about their affairs in peace. He must decide whether or not suspected persons are to be prosecuted; and, if need be, bring the prosecution or see that it is brought; but in all these things he is not the servant to anyone, save of the law itself. No Minister of the Crown can tell

him that he must, or must not, keep observation on this place or that; or that he must, or must not, prosecute this man or that one. Nor can any police authority tell him so. The responsibility for law enforcement lies on him. He is answerable to the law and to the law alone" (R. v Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, 1968)

This definition of operational independence has, more or less, persisted to this day, despite efforts by politicians of all parties to push at its boundaries (Brain, 2010).

The **tripartite system** emerges from that understanding of the lawful discretion of the Constable and the operational independence of the Chief Constable. This is a way of sharing authority over policing between operationally independent Chief Constables and local and national elected politicians.

Over many centuries, local 'Watch Committees', often consisting of lay magistrates and justices, oversaw the work of parish constables and shire officials charged with keeping the peace. The establishment of county police forces, following the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835, led to more formal oversight, and Watch Committees were empowered to appoint 'constables to keep the peace', and also took on a formal, local governance role (Caless and Owens, 2016).

Following the Royal Commission on the Police in 1962, the Police Act 1964 put in place a formal tripartite structure for governing the police comprised of the Home Secretary, Chief Constables and local police authorities. The tripartite arrangements gave the Home Secretary an overall duty to secure an effective police service; made local police authorities responsible for maintaining an effective police force in their area and charged Chief Constables with the direction and control of their officers (Caless and Owens, 2016).

However, almost from the beginning the tripartite system was characterised by the relative weakness of the police authorities, the relative autonomy of Chief Constables and, in response, the increasing power of the Home Secretary.

Police authorities were usually comprised of nine local councillors appointed by the local authorities, five independent members selected following local advertisements and three magistrates from the local area. Over the years they were much criticised for being little known by the public and for their lack of robustness in challenging the police. One Police and Crime Commissioner describes police authorities as "futile" in that they failed to hold the Chief Constable to account but only "okayed" his decisions, while the

Chief Constable in turn only paid "lip service" to them while doing what he or she wanted (Caless and Owens, 2016).

Partly as a response to the weakness of local accountability, the history of policing from the 1964 Act was a process of increasing centralisation, with the Home Office taking greater control over the police, through issuing of policy circulars, tightening controls over senior police appointments, imposing frameworks of centralised performance management, and taking control of funding (Jones and Lister, 2019). By the middle of the 2000s, the government had overseen the introduction of a 'National Policing Plan', supported by national objectives, priorities and targets for the police, and the Police Standards Unit to monitor the performance of local forces and intervene in those seen as 'failing'.

The Police and Magistrates Court Act 1995 and the Police Act 1996 reduced the size of the police authorities and transferred direct management functions and control over budgets from police authorities to Chief Constables. The 1996 Act also enabled the Home Secretary to call on a police authority to require its Chief Constable to retire. Further powers formerly exercised by police authorities were given to the Home Secretary by the Police Act 2002 and Police and Justice Act 2006, including powers to take remedial action where there has been a negative inspection (Home Affairs Select Committee, 2008).

It was in response to these failings that the coalition government elected in 2010 legislated the most radical change to police governance since 1964 with the introduction of directly elected **Police and Crime Commissioners**. The motivation behind the reform was to sharpen the accountability of Chief Constables to directly elected representatives of the public (Caless and Owens, 2016). This would then enable the Home Office to step back from intervening in local policing matters and focus on counter-terrorism and serious and organised crime (see Box 12.1 for a description of the way the current system works).

In in the rest of this chapter we review the existing system of police governance. We do this in three parts. First, we examine whether the three constitutional building blocks of the system remain sound. Second, we look at the component institutions of the system in turn. Finally, we examine how the system as a whole operates, in particular the process for making collective decisions.

Box 12.1 The role of Police and Crime Commissioners, Chief Constables and Police and Crime Panels

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 abolished police authorities and replaced them with Police and Crime Commissioners everywhere but in the City of London. In the Metropolitan Police area the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) was assumed by the Mayor of London and Mayors would later take on the role in Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire.

The 2011 Act gave PCCs responsibility for the "totality of policing" within their force area, requiring them to hold the Chief Constable to account for the operational delivery of policing including in relation to the Strategic Policing Requirement published by the Home Secretary.

The Act also established a Police and Crime Panel in each force, made up of co-opted independent members and local councillors, to scrutinise and review the PCC's key decisions.

The Policing Protocol Order 2011 provides a framework for how the relationship between PCCs, Chief Constables and Police and Crime Panels should operate.

The main responsibilities of the PCC are:
- To set the strategic direction and objectives of the force by issuing a Police and Crime Plan.
- To hold the Chief Constable to account for the performance of the force.
- To set the force budget and the council tax precept.
- To appoint the Chief Constable (except in London where the appointment is made by the Queen on the recommendation of the Home Secretary).
- To remove the Chief Constable subject to a process laid out in the Act.
- To enter into collaboration agreements with other PCCs that improve the efficiency or effectiveness of policing.
- To monitor complaints made against officers and staff.

The main responsibilities of the Chief Constable are:
- To lead the force in a way that is consistent with the attestation made by all Constables and to ensure the force acts impartially.
- To appoint officers and staff.
- To assist the PCC with planning the budget.
- To support the PCC in delivering the Police and Crime Plan.
- To have regard to the Strategic Policing Requirement.
- To explain to the public operational actions.
- To enter into collaboration agreements with other Chief Constables where this will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of policing.
- To remain politically independent of their PCCs.
- To manage complaints against the force.
- To have day to day control of the financial management of the force.

The Police and Crime Panel has powers:
- To veto (outside the Metropolitan Police District), by a two-thirds majority, the level of the PCC's proposed precept.
- To veto (outside the Metropolitan Police District), by a two-thirds majority, the PCC's proposed candidate for Chief Constable.
- To ask HMICFRS for a professional view when the PCC intends to dismiss a Chief Constable.
- To review the draft Police and Crime Plan and make recommendations to the PCC who must have regard to them.
- To review the PCC's Annual Report.
- To require the PCC to attend the Panel to answer questions.
- To appoint an acting Police and Crime Commissioner where the incumbent PCC is incapacitated, resigns or is disqualified.
- To manage complaints against the PCC, except where serious, in which case these are referred to the Independent Office for Police Conduct.

In effect, the legislation means that PCCs define the "what" of policing – what police forces should and should not prioritise, what the public wants, what money is available for various priorities, and what should happen if the police are perceived to be underperforming.

The Chief Constables are responsible for the "how" – how the policing plan is put in place, how money should be spent, how police officers should be managed and led and how the public should be kept informed. (Shannon, 2021).

12.2 THE CONSTITUTIONAL BASIS OF THE SYSTEM

The common law **office of Constable** is the fundamental basis of the English and Welsh model of policing. The office provides the basis for a model of policing in which Constables enforce the law impartially "without fear or favour" and in which they have the discretion to make appropriate and proportionate judgments regarding the issues in front of them, subject to law, regulation and guidance. These are fundamental and important principles and they have helped make the 'British model of policing' one of the most admired around the world. For this reason we believe that the office of Constable ought to remain the basis of our policing system.[45]

The principle of the **operational independence** of Chief Constables is more contested. Few would argue with Lord Denning that a Chief Constable should never be instructed by the Secretary of State as to how to direct their officers or whether to bring a case before the prosecutorial authorities. These are clearly operational matters and politics should be kept out of them. However, as Lord Patten noted in his 1999 report on policing in Northern Ireland:

"In a democratic society, all public officials must be fully accountable to the institutions of that society for the due performance of their functions, and a chief of police cannot be an exception. No public official, including a chief of police, can be said to be "independent". Indeed, given the extraordinary powers conferred on the police, it is essential that their exercise is subject to the closest and most effective scrutiny possible." (Patten, 1999, p.32).

In his report Patten proposed that instead of 'operational independence' the term '**operational responsibility'** should be used instead. This is a subtle but important difference. It means that:

- It is the Chief Constable's right and duty to take operational decisions and that neither ministers nor PCCs should have the right to direct the Chief Constable in an operational matter.

- But that the Chief Constable's conduct of all operational matters should be subject to public inquiry or review after the event.

We prefer this formulation of the remit of the Chief Constable.

Finally, some would argue that the **tripartite system** disappeared with the abolition of police authorities and the advent of Police and Crime Commissioners. However, it remains the case that authority within our system of police governance is shared between three parties: the Home Secretary representing the national interest, the Chief Constables representing the operationally responsible leadership of the service and the Police and Crime Commissioners representing the views of local people.

The implicit principle behind this tripartite structure has always been that power ought to be shared between the three parties and that none of those parties should accumulate too much power. That principle of balancing the professional judgement and operational responsibility of Chief Constables, with the views and interests of the public filtered through both national and locally elected representatives, remains essentially sound.

12.3 POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONERS

The Police Crime Commissioner (PCC) system has now been in place for a decade and we have been through three rounds of PCC elections. We can therefore come to some conclusions about how well the system is working.

First, the aim of those who created the PCC system was essentially to sharpen the accountability of Chief Constables to the public. We concur with the finding of the Home Affairs Committee that PCCs "have provided greater clarity of leadership for policing" and that they "are increasingly recognised by the public as accountable for the strategic direction of their police force" (Home Affairs Committee, 2016, p.3). Although most members of the public could probably not name their local PCC, nor could most people name their local council leader or even their MP, we agree with the Home Affairs Committee that having a single person accountable for policing policy has made the office more visible and accessible than the old police authority system.

Second, by strengthening local accountability in this way the PCC system has helped to anchor the police service around the demands and concerns of local people. While there are concerns about how well the system is responding to cross border and serious crime (which we have sought to address in Chapter 11), the

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45. The office of Constable does have some negative consequences, such as the fact that police officers found guilty of gross misconduct cannot be dismissed under the standard procedures of UK employment law. This can sometimes mean lengthily misconduct proceedings under the police regulations, which can be frustrating for victims of police misconduct.

PCC model has cemented the strong local dimension to our policing system that is so important for public confidence and for promoting collaboration between the police and other local public services.

Third, the PCC system has, by concentrating authority in one individual's hands, unlocked innovation among those responsible for police governance. One elected person with a budget can 'get things done' in a way that is inevitably harder with a committee structure. This is particularly true for the 'and crime' part of the PCC role, through which PCCs can fund and implement new crime and harm reduction and victim support initiatives (see Loader and Muir, 2016 for some examples).

Finally, it also worth saying that the worst fears of the critics of the PCC model have not come to pass:

• It has not led to a general 'politicisation of policing'; or at least policing today is no more or less political than it has always been.

• By and large it has not led to PCCs interfering with the operational responsibilities of Chief Constables, or at least no more so than previous forms of police governance.

• It has not led to the election of 'extremist' candidates.

However, there are number of problems with the way the system operates that ought to be addressed. First, there is the issue of the concentration of power in one person's hands and whether there ought to be further checks and balances introduced into the system. The area where there is most concern is in relation to **the appointment and dismissal of Chief Constables.**

In terms of appointments there has been a notable trend for local Deputy Chief Constables being appointed often without a competitive interview (Shannon, 2021). We addressed this in Chapter 10 by recommending that a national Senior Appointments Board play a stronger role in the appointment process.

The power of the PCC to dismiss the Chief Constable has been the subject of even greater controversy. According to the Home Affairs Committee:

"The statutory process provides little safeguard, since there is nobody—not the police and crime panel, not the Inspectorate of Constabulary, not even the Home Secretary herself—who can over-rule a commissioner who has set his face to dismissing a chief constable." (Home Affairs Committee, 2013, p.4)

The Police and Crime Panels have the power to hold a scrutiny meeting when the PCC moves to dismiss the chief constable and to go to HMICFRS to ask for a professional view on the PCC's decision. However, in practice, these checks and balances are weak: the PCC only has to "consider the panel's recommendation". The power of going to HMICFRS for an opinion has only been used once since 2012 and in that case did not ultimately change the outcome (Cooper, 2020).

The concern is that such untrammelled power in the hands of one person has created job insecurity throughout the Chief Constable rank and this in turn has led to increased churn and reduced tenure. According to a paper commissioned by the National Police Chiefs' Council published in 2018 the average tenure of a Chief Constable (excluding the Metropolitan Police Service) is just 3.65 years. Not all of this is due to the PCC system, but it is notable how many Chief Constables retired prior to the last PCC elections.

One way of addressing these concerns is to introduce greater checks and balances into the dismissal process.

Recommendation

44. The Police and Crime Commissioner should retain the power to dismiss the Chief Constable, but this should be subject to a confirmatory vote of the Police and Crime Panel, requiring a majority of the total membership. The Panel may ask HMICFRS for a review of the Police and Crime Commissioner's decision prior to that confirmatory vote.

Second, there are no mechanisms in place to deal with **PCCs who have lost the confidence of the public as a result of poor conduct**. There is a mechanism for the Police and Crime Panel to suspend the PCC in the event that the PCC receives a prison sentence in excess of two years. However, there is a case for extending this in a way comparable to the recall mechanism for members of parliament.

45. The Home Secretary should put legislation before parliament to introduce recall referenda for Police and Crime Commissioners. The possibility of a recall referendum would be triggered where the Police and Crime Panel has voted by a two thirds majority to express no confidence in the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) on the following grounds:

    • Where the PCC has been sentenced to a custodial prison sentence.
    • Where the PCC has been found following an investigation by the Independent Office for Police Conduct to have breached the Nolan Principles on Standards in Public Life.

    Following such a vote by the panel there would then be a recall referendum where 10 per cent of the local electorate sign a petition to support one.

Third, there is a need to resolve **the relationship between PCCs and the growing number of directly elected Mayors in England**. We consider that the mayoral model has significant advantages. A Mayor can set common outcomes across a range of public services, bring together joint funding streams and encourage joint working. If we want public services that are capable of tackling complex problems through greater collaboration then a mayoral model provides a strong governance model for achieving this.

It seems likely that Mayors will remain a model for the metropolitan areas while counties continue to be overseen by a mixture of PCCs, local authorities and so on. In that case we need to address the anomaly of some police force areas having both a directly elected Mayor and a PCC. To have both a Mayor and a PCC is unnecessary and dilutes the clarity of accountability.

Recommendation

46. Where a police force area is coterminous with the jurisdiction of a directly elected Mayor, the Mayor should automatically become the Police and Crime Commissioner for that area. The government should also seek where possible to promote coterminosity between police force areas and the jurisdictional boundaries of city-regional or regional Mayors.

The fourth flaw with the current system is that because Police and Crime Commissioners are 'corporations sole' and are not elected like MPs to seats on a representative body, they have no system for making collective decisions that are binding on all their peers. We address this problem later in this chapter.

Finally, we note that the Home Office's current review of PCCs (see Box 12.2) is exploring whether additional responsibilities should be given to PCCs. In particular, the Home Office is considering whether their role should be extended into the wider criminal justice system. Although it has not been within the scope of this review to consider wider criminal justice matters, we are supportive of PCCs (and their mayoral equivalents) taking on a greater commissioning role within the criminal justice system.

This is because there are elements of the criminal justice system that would benefit from greater local accountability and greater ability to integrate with the work of other local public services (see Lanning, Loader and Muir 2011). This could include for example some youth and adult offender management services. For example, if a local actor such as the PCC held some of the custody budget then this would create a strong financial incentive to prevent people getting into prison in the first place. An obvious next step for extending the PCC role would be to explore whether PCCs could commission youth custody places.

Recommendation

47. The government should consider extending the remit of Police and Crime Commissioners (and their Mayoral equivalents) to include greater commissioning of wider criminal justice services, particularly youth custody and probation services.

Box 12.2 The Home Office review into the role of Police and Crime Commissioners.

The Home Office is currently working on a two-part review of the functions of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) which intends to examine improving their visibility, ensuring they are accountable to the public, and whether their remit could be expanded into other areas.

The first part of the review, released in March 2021 recommended:

- Changing the supplementary vote system by which they are elected to first past the post.

- Making sure PCCs provide the public with clear information on their force's performance.

- Mandating the appointment of deputy PCCs to ensure continuity in unforeseen circumstances.

- Making changes to ensure more effective and consistent relationships between PCCs and Chief Constables.

- Potentially transferring fire and rescue authority functions to PCCs in England (Patel, 2021).

Phase two of the review, which is expected to conclude soon, is examining:

- Whether PCCs should be given a bigger role in parts of the criminal justice system including youth justice programmes, parts of the prison estate and (jointly) probation services.

- Whether they have sufficient "tools and levers" to drive and coordinate local activity to reduce crime, combat drugs misuse and tackle antisocial behaviour

- The police and crime panel model, specifically the benefits of independent members, identifying and securing the right skill sets and options to strengthen panel support.

- The existing mechanisms for investigating complaints and allegations against PCCs.

- Considering recall for PCCs for very serious breaches of behaviour.

- How PCCs use data in holding Chief Constables to account for the efficient and effective delivery of policing services (Malthouse, 2021).

12.4 THE HOME SECRETARY

The Home Secretary retains significant powers within the policing system, including:

- The power to direct a Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) or Mayor following a negative HMICFRS inspection under Section 40 of the Police Act 1996.

- The power to set the Strategic Policing Requirement, to which PCCs and Chief Constables must have regard.

- The power to recommend that a person be appointed by the monarch as Commissioner of the Metropolis.

- The power to require that the Metropolitan Police Commissioner is suspended and to call upon the Metropolitan Police Commissioner to resign or retire.

- The power to direct that certain policing functions be organised through collaboration agreements.

- The power to issue codes of practice for chief officers.

- The power to give directions to the College of Policing.

- The power to request information from chief officers.

- The power to set police pay and regulate working conditions.

In addition the Home Secretary appoints the Chief Inspector of Constabulary, the Director General of the National Crime Agency, the Director General of the Independent Office for Police Conduct and the Chair of the College of Policing.

Fundamentally of course, the Home Secretary provides most of the funding for police forces through the police grant.

The 20th century was characterised by greater control of the Home Secretary over policing, partly in response to the perceived weakness of local police accountability and partly in response to the political demands of dealing with rising crime. The 2010s

marked a significant departure from this historic trend. Theresa May as Home Secretary saw Police and Crime Commissioners as the principal figures responsible for holding the police to account. The Home Office consequently 'stepped back' and wanted to see policing act as a self-improving system without the need for constant ministerial intervention.

However, as crime started to climb back up the political agenda, the Home Office has increasingly started to reassert itself. In particular as the government has invested in 20,000 additional police officers there has been an emphasis on wanting to see evidence of impact.

A National Policing Board has been brought together to provide greater strategic direction to the police service. In addition the Home Office is now expecting police forces to report back to it on their performance in relation to a set of National Crime and Policing Measures, with an aspiration that these show improvement over a three year period. These cover murder, serious violence, drugs supply and county lines, neighbourhood crime, victim satisfaction and cybercrime.

We believe that central government must play an active system stewardship role in policing, in particular (as articulated in Chapter 11) in setting a strategic direction, ensuring performance is managed well and preparing the police workforce of the future. It should also be ensuring that core national capabilities are put in place to support policing to deal with the public safety challenges of the 21st century, whether these be the IT infrastructure required or the forensic capability upon which the whole system depends.

In Chapter 11 we described what a stronger strategic centre ought to look like in policing and the Home Secretary should play a leading role in putting that stronger centre in place.

Recommendation

48. The Home Secretary should use her powers to put in place a stronger strategic centre in policing. In particular, she should:

- Through the National Policing Board set out a five-year national strategy for policing.
- Develop the Strategic Policing Requirement into a much more detailed document setting out the nature of the capabilities the government expects regional and local police organisations to put in place to tackle terrorism and serious and organised crime, including fraud.
- Legislate to mandate Police and Crime Commissioners to collaborate in Regional Police Support Units that would provide specialist and support functions for local forces.

12.5 HMICFRS

In England and Wales, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) is responsible for assessing and reporting on the efficiency and effectiveness of police forces in relation to operational policing, and has done so since it was founded in 1856. In July 2017, its remit was expanded to include responsibility to assess and report on the efficiency, effectiveness and leadership of the 45 Fire and Rescue services in England (HMICFRS, 2019).

The inspectorate is legally independent from political bodies and the police, and the inspectors are crown servants rather than being civil servants or employees. This independence and the fact that it reports directly to the public, is important in ensuring the objectivity of its reports. Its budget is determined by the government. Under the Police Act 1996 HMICFRS's annual inspection programme for police forces became subject to the approval of the Home Secretary (HMICFRS, 2019).

HMICFRS makes clear it is not a regulator as it does not have the hard power of intervention, direction and enforcement but only the soft power of its "voice and authority" (HMICFRS, 2019). Tensions between HMICFRS, Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and Chief Constables have emerged, in particular, over the resource implications of forces accommodating the PEEL regime. Critics have claimed that HMICFRS makes no allowance for the fact that forces have to make choices between competing priorities.

There have also been criticisms of the inspection regime becoming too onerous. For example, forces are now required to publish an annual 'Force Management Statement' detailing management, resource and performance information (Jones and Lister, 2019). These are intended to aid forces in understanding current and future demand so it can be proactively managed but have been seen by some as another administrative burden (EMPAC, 2019).

In interviews with chief officers, Shannon (2021) found that many resented significant aspects of Inspectorate oversight and half said the Home Secretary used HMICFRS to exert pressure indirectly through instructing it to carry out longer and more frequent inspections. Chief officers reported that HMICFRS contributed to their anxiety and added little to the quality of policing. An Assistant Chief Constable interviewed by Shannon described the relationship between HMICFRS and chief officers as "adversarial" whereas prior to the the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act, 2011 it had been "supportive and advisory".

Some submissions to our Call for Evidence called for HMICFRS to be given powers to direct forces to make changes, rather than rely on the discretion of PCCs. Another said HMICFRS "lacked bite" and can easily be ignored by those who do not agree with it (CE2.20).

It is our view that HMICFRS plays a critical role in ensuring that police performance is measured and assessed transparently. The PEEL process is well structured and the clarity with which outcomes are presented on its website contribute significantly to the transparency of policing and its accountability to the public. We do not think there is a need for HMICFRS to take on regulatory powers and that its use of 'soft power' (voice and authority) is sufficient to drive change. We welcome the recent changes to the PEEL regime which aim to make it more proportionate and less onerous on forces, particularly those that are performing well.

There are two areas where we think change ought to be considered. First, it is not altogether clear what the relationship is between the standards set by the College and the standards HMICFRS uses in its inspections. This could be clarified somewhat if, as we argue below, the College were to craft a clear basket of national minimum standards that all forces must follow. If this were the case there would be an important role for HMICFRS in reporting on compliance with those standards.

Second, there is a need for more systemic lesson learning from HMICFRS inspections with the other national stakeholders. There should be a regular forum through which the lessons emerging from the work of both HMICFRS and the Independent Office for Police Conduct can be discussed with the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, the National Police Chiefs' Council, the College of Policing and the Home Office.

12.6 THE INDEPENDENT OFFICE FOR POLICE CONDUCT

The Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) oversees the police complaints system in England and Wales. It is independent of the police and the government, although its budget is set by the Home Secretary, who also appoints its Director General. It investigates the most "serious and sensitive cases" including injury or death after police contact, which must be referred automatically to the IOPC. Most complaints are dealt with by the professional standards departments of local forces, although the IOPC can assess the case for a review. In 2020/21 the IOPC received 4,674 referrals from police forces, began 465 investigations and completed 460 (IOPC, 2021).

The IOPC is the latest manifestation of various police complaints bodies and took over the function previously performed by the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC).

One consistent cause for concern, directed at both the IOPC and the IPCC (Independent Police Complaints Commission), is around the timeliness of investigations. Speaking at a recent Home Affairs Committee Inquiry, a Police Federation representative said while there had been progress, the pace of change was far too slow. He characterised the organisation as being "completely unaccountable" and "shrouded in secrecy", meaning it was not under any pressure to ensure investigations were completed rapidly and transparently. He told the committee that those being investigated felt "treated as though they are guilty" unless the Police Federation could actually prove their innocence from the start (Home Affairs Committee, 2021). Although the purpose of the organisation is specifically not to "punish police officers" (College of Policing, 2017, p.6), studies suggest police officers do feel punished by the length of investigations, the lack of communication from investigators, the lack of awareness of the effects of being investigated and a perception that investigations are weighted against them. Moreover, there is little acknowledgement about the effect of the process on the mental health of those being investigated (McDaniel, 2020).

These same concerns about the length of investigations and poor communication are shared by representatives of the families of victims who have died as a result of police contact. Representatives from INQUEST told the House of Commons inquiry that families bereaved due to police-related deaths are often failed by a system which does not meet their needs or give them the speedy justice they deserve (Home Affairs Committee, 2021).

However, a self-commissioned report states that the IOPC has made progress in in reducing the time investigations took (IOPC, 2021). The current Director General Michael Lockwood argues that while there are some "legacy issues" relating to the length of investigations, these are left over from previous iterations of the organisation (Shannon, 2021). Speaking to the Home Affairs Committee in 2021 Nottinghamshire Chief Constable Craig Guildford (whose role includes implementing changes to the police complaints and discipline system) echoed this view. He stated that under the IPCC, the average length of investigation was 12 months, whereas under the new system, the majority were over in eight months, and 90 per cent were concluded within 12 months. He also said the regulations had recently changed so IOPC investigations were now less focused on sanctioning individual officers but rather on addressing systemic issues and seeking to generate and share learning so that mistakes were not repeated (Home Affairs Committee, 2021a).

The IOPC and IPCC before it have also been criticised for being too close to the police. It has been pointed out that 30 per cent of its investigators and 40 per cent of its senior investigators are former police officers. Some accuse the organisation of having "divided loyalties between enforcing the law and protecting their brothers-in-arms from legitimate criticism" (Gould, 2021). It is however common for independent complaints bodies to employ some former members of the service they are overseeing. This is for the simple reason that they understand the way the system works. There is inevitably a balance to strike between having investigators from inside and outside policing.

There has also been a criticism of the fact that so few officers (just 8 per cent found to have a case to answer for gross misconduct actually end up being dismissed (Busby, 2021). However, the IOPC does not make those decisions, which are made by police forces themselves under the misconduct process.

As discussed in Chapter 6 recent attempts to improve transparency by bringing in lay members and legally qualified chairs may have backfired as these chairs appear more reluctant to dismiss officers (Busby, 2021; Home Affairs Committee 2021).

We welcome the progress made by the IOPC in seeking to conclude investigations more speedily and this progress needs to continue. We also welcome its shift away from a 'blame' focus and to more of a 'learning focus', with the aim of ensuring that lessons are learned so that the same problems do not reoccur in the future. We do think that more could be done to ensure that the lessons learned from IOPC investigations are considered at a strategic level in the police service. Again, there is a strong case for establishing a regular forum at which the major national bodies can discuss the implications of both IOPC investigations and HMICFRS inspections. In addition the IOPC ought to work with the College of Policing to discuss how learning points from its investigations can get into the hands of police officers so as to inform everyday practice.

Recommendations

49. The national policing bodies should establish a regular forum to share learning from Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) investigations and HMICFRS inspections and agree actions to ensure that learning is taken forward.

50. The IOPC should work with the College of Policing to look at how lessons learned through IOPC investigations can be turned into learning points and put into the hands of frontline police officers.

12.7 THE COLLEGE OF POLICING

In Chapter 11 we set out an expanded role for the College of Policing as the single home for national policing improvement functions. Here we set out the governance implications of these changes. To perform its function effectively the College should possess powers in three areas.

First, the College's powers to issue 'codes of practice' should be strengthened so that it can (with the support of the Home Secretary) issue binding regulations, mandating compliance with a basket of national minimum professional standards. Authorised Professional Practice would remain as guidance to which chief officers must 'have regard', but for these minimum standards, compliance would be mandatory. HMICFRS would inspect against these standards at the

relevant points in the PEEL process. These standards would be in areas where risk is high, where the public expect consistency or where the evidence base is so strong that there is no excuse for police forces not to follow the standard.

Second, the College would be given new powers to require compliance with common IT standards across policing, so to ensure interoperability and much more effective sharing of police data. We support the notion of operational independence (or operational responsibility) of Chief Constables but this relates to the direction and control of police officers and should not extend to complete autonomy in relation to IT. Policing needs information systems that work across force boundaries.

Third, the College would have powers to require police forces to cooperate with national recruitment, educational and learning and development programmes and to address emerging skills gaps. So, for example, if a decision is taken nationally to promote direct entry programmes or to create new career pathways for digital forensic examiners or financial investigators, then forces would have to cooperate with these. Operational independence (or, as we prefer, operational responsibility) does not mean the freedom to opt out of workforce programmes that are in the public interest as determined by the National Policing Board.

12.8 THE NATIONAL SYSTEM OF POLICE GOVERNANCE

One of the most significant problems with the existing system of police governance is that it lacks formal mechanisms for making collective decisions. The legal entities in the system are the 43 Chief Constables and the 43 Police and Crime commissioners or Mayors. Each of these is a 'corporation sole' and cannot be bound by any collective decision of the others.

The result is a system which, for the purposes of making national decisions, moves at the speed of the slowest passenger. Requiring unanimity to develop shared national capabilities in critical areas is preventing policing from keeping pace with the major transformations we described earlier, not least in terms of technology. The fact that we lack a national forensics capability or a common framework for IT is because the system has tried to develop policy in these areas on a voluntary basis.

The Chief Inspector of Constabulary Sir Tom Winsor has proposed to resolve this by establishing a legally binding decision-making process for policing, which

he has called the 'Network Code'. This should apply to any area of policing where there is a need to make joint decisions and to provide a shared capability. The result is a system for collective decision-making in which majority or qualified majority votes would be binding on all parties.

We consider that such a legally binding agreement would be necessary if we were to retain an essentially 'self-governing' police decision-making system. However, there is an alternative, which does not require establishing a national decision-making body. This is that the Home Secretary takes a much more interventionist approach, using the powers she already possesses in statute to ensure decisions are taken in the best interests of the country. For example, the Home Secretary can require Police and Crime Commissioners to collaborate to provide particular functions jointly, which might be one mechanism for creating a national forensics service.

12.9 CONCLUSION

We have argued that there is much that is good in the English and Welsh system of police governance. The fundamental building blocks of the system (the office of Constable, the operational responsibility of Chief Constables and the tripartite system) are essentially sound and should be retained.

Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) have sharpened the accountability of Chief Constables and anchored police forces around local priorities. They are superior to the less visible and powerful police authorities that they replaced and should be considered as the core local anchor in our system of police governance. Nevertheless we think the PCC system requires reform: the power of the PCC to dismiss the Chief Constable ought to be reformed to provide for greater checks and balances and there should be the possibility of a recall referendum if a PCC is convicted of a criminal offence or if they are found to have breached standards of conduct.

We also observe that the mayoral model has the benefit of helping with the integration of public services and we think that more areas should adopt this model. In those cases the Mayor should automatically take on the functions of the PCC.

We think PCCs could in principle play a commissioning role in relation to offender management, which would help to create a more preventative emphasis within the criminal justice system and which could help to improve collaboration between the criminal justice system and other local public services.

We do however believe the time has come for a stronger role for the centre in our system of police governance. In particular the Home Secretary should be ready to intervene and use her powers to ensure binding decisions are taken with regard to policing in the national interest. In addition the College of Policing should be given regulatory powers in relation to professional standards, workforce planning and IT. Much more needs to be done to ensure that systemic lessons are learned from HMICFRS and IOPC findings.

13. FUNDING

Summary: In this chapter we propose a new funding system for the police service. This would retain the principle that local policing is funded in part by government grant and in part from local revenues. However, it would ensure that the funding system better matched the distribution of functions we have proposed between the local, regional and national levels. It would be designed to ensure that several of the priorities we identify are adequately funded. We also urge the government to attempt again to design and win support for a fairer and more targeted system for allocating the Police Grant among forces.

Although local government structures are outside our terms of reference, we favour the spread of more integrated models, in which the police and other services with a part to play in crime prevention are accountable to a Mayor. On that scenario, we argue for consideration to be given to a single specific government grant to support the crime prevention and harm reduction activities of all the relevant local agencies.

Finally, we review the cost implications of our recommendations and assess them against a framework of public value.

13.1 PRINCIPLES

The principles which have informed our approach to this part of the Review are these:

1. The funding of local policing should continue to reflect the shared interest of local communities and central government.

2. The arrangements for funding local forces should be transparent, as fair as can be achieved consistently with a strong element of local discretion, and based on need, and ensure the provision of at least a minimum level of policing provision.

3. Funding should ensure that long-term priorities, such as training and leadership, which represent investments for the future, are not neglected as a result of short-term pressures.

4. National functions should continue to be wholly or largely government-funded, including the Crime Prevention Agency and the National Crime Agency (NCA), including the new NCA regional units to tackle serious and organised crime.

5. The funding arrangements should provide a timely and reasonably certain basis for business planning, both at force level, and in the national and regional institutions, extending beyond a single year.

6. Funding should support, and not obscure, rigorous assessments of performance and outcomes.

13.2 THE EXISTING FUNDING SYSTEM

Plans for government spending are set by regular Spending Reviews (SRs). These Reviews are, in principle, multi-year, in the sense that they make plans for the current financial year and several successors, with revisions as necessary through more limited annual reviews. In practice, political and other considerations (including, most recently, Covid) often intervene, and the planning cycle becomes more irregular.

The conclusions of the most recent SR were published in October 2021. The white paper (HC822 2020/21) indicated that the planned Home Office totals included an extra £540m by 2024/25 to complete the recruitment of the final 8,000 police officers of the promised 20,000 uplift, taking the total number of officers to 148,000 by 2023. It provided Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) with the flexibility to increase funding in each year, with a £10 council tax referendum limit (see below), noting that, if all PCCs took advantage of this, it would raise up to an additional £774m by 2024/25. There was also an indication of new money for crime prevention and to tackle drug misuse (£42m) and, from 2022/23, money laundering and fraud.

As each financial year approaches, the Home Office splits the Departmental planning totals for the following year between the services they support - police, immigration control etc; and within the total for policing, the amounts for the National Crime Agency (NCA) and the centrally funded "arm's length" bodies (the College of Policing and the Independent Office for

Police Conduct (IOPC) (all of which, save for income generated, are 100 per cent government funded), and for the main Police Grant to forces.

As an indication of the amounts involved, for 2021/22, of the £14.6bn provided for the Home Office, the estimated amounts for policing were £4.7bn for the main police grant, £564m for the NCA, £49m for the College and £73m for the IOPC (HM Treasury, 2021).

The amount available for Police Grant is then divided among the 43 police forces in England and Wales, according to a formula which has been applied since 2013/14, and was originally developed in 2006 by the then Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG). This is an attempt, based on historic information, some dating from the early 2000s, to weight the different activities undertaken by the police in each area. The original data have never been updated. The formula is simply rolled over from year to year and applied to whatever total sum is available.

The formula is widely believed to be an inadequate reflection of the real relative needs of individual forces. It has been criticised in successive reports by the National Audit Office (NAO) and the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) and has been acknowledged by the Home Office to be increasingly detached from the real demands on policing. Following a review, the Home Office consulted about a revised formula in 2015, but it ran into opposition, mainly from parts of the country which would have stood to lose out financially and was abandoned in 2017. In 2018, the PAC returned to the charge, noting that the Department "needed to change the formula, to take account of all the demands on police forces, funding from local taxation, forces' efficiency, and their financial resilience" (House of Commons Public Accounts Committee, 2018).

There are two other elements of central government support for local policing: a share of the DCLG formula funding for local government as a whole; and a smaller amount for legacy council tax grants.

These three elements come together in the annual Police Grant Report, which is usually published as a provisional settlement towards the end of the financial year and laid before Parliament in final form weeks before the beginning of the financial year to which it relates. Taking 2021/22 as an example, the formal determination, published on 22 February 2021, set out the distribution among the 43 forces of total Police Grant of £8.46bn, of which £4.7bn was the main Home Office grant, £3.6bn from the DCLG formula funding and £0.5bn from legacy council tax grants (Home Office, 2021).

To the government contribution can be added, for each force, a local contribution. Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) are required to agree with their Chief Constable a medium-term financial strategy aligned with their four-year Police and Crime Plan, and an annual budget which meets the statutory requirement in the Local Government Finance Act to achieve a balanced budget. In meeting these requirements, they have discretion to top up the central government grant, with a precept on the council tax revenues for the area. There are rules governing this. Above a certain level, set by the government as a proportion of revenue raised on a band D property, it requires the approval of a local referendum. But the government has, in recent years, been willing to increase the trigger point to allow more local funding, as they did in the example quoted above from the recent white paper.

This increased flexibility was particularly important during the period of austerity, when there was a substantial real terms increase in the local contribution. Between 2015/16 and 2019/20, it increased from £3.1bn to £4.1bn, and as a proportion of total funding from 28 per cent to 35 per cent (ref).

The current funding system for local policing is therefore a hybrid of central and local funding, with the central element including a substantial specific grant from the Department with the strongest interest in policing (Home Office, 2019).

13.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE REVIEW

The first question for any review from first principles is whether this mixed system of central and local funding makes sense. There are two obvious alternative approaches. The first would be 100 per cent central government funding. Had we been recommending a national police force, this might have been a natural corollary. But the model we favour, with local forces concentrating on local issues amenable to their capabilities, a stronger regional tier and a stronger centre, if anything highlights the shared interest of central and local government in policing, and therefore the case for a mixed funding model, with a significant element of local discretion.

The other possible model would be to treat policing like any other local service, and fund it entirely through the rate support grant mechanism, i.e. to abolish the specific grant. But even with local forces focusing more on the local problems which they are best placed to

deal with, the government's interest in outcomes and professional standards would exceed that in most other locally delivered services. The Home Office is the natural home for that interest; and although, as discussed below, the Police Grant is, at present, ill-fitted to be used as a vehicle for this, it still makes sense to have it.

With local forces even more locally focused than at present, there is, however, a case for further relaxing the restriction on PCCs' and mayors' exercise of discretion to supplement police budgets by precepting on council tax revenues.

There are however real weaknesses in the existing arrangements. The first is the inadequacy of the funding formula, as noted above, as a distributional mechanism for the Police Grant. This goes beyond the fact that the base data for the formula are out of date. The justification for a specific grant should be that it gives the government an opportunity to secure a measure of fairness between forces, and at least a minimum level of service across the country, to influence priorities, and to mitigate the fact that wealthier areas have more scope for using the precept to increase spending than poorer ones. The present formula does none of these. The existence of local discretion to top up the Police Grant from local sources means that the distribution of spend is never going to be absolutely fair. But there is evidence that some forces do much better from the Police Grant than others. Moreover, there is evidence that the gap between the best and least well provided forces widened during the period of austerity, in part because of the government's decision to reduce the grant evenly across all forces ("damping"), without regard to their historic funding, council tax base or financial resilience (Hales, 2020). That gap is being perpetuated by the mechanistic application of the formula in funding the 20,000 uplift in police officer numbers.

The second significant weakness in existing arrangements is in the funding of the Regional Organised Crime Units (ROCUs). These are, at present, funded by the PCCs and Chief Constables in their region, with a smaller contribution from the Home Office. There is an annual negotiation between the head of each ROCU and the PCCs in the region, an annual budget which isn't settled until the last minute or later, and no certainty at all about funding in later years. The ad hoc nature of the ROCUs' funding has been criticised by the NAO and in successive Inspectorate reports, the most recent of which, published in April 2021, concluded that funding was "the single greatest barrier to ROCUs operating efficiently and effectively", and recommended that the Home Office should lead work to identify a more sustainable funding model (HMICFRS, 2021).

Moving the ROCUs into the National Crime Agency (NCA), which this report recommends, provides an opportunity to put the funding of regional serious and organised crime capabilities on a sounder footing. In line with Recommendation 41 the regional NCA units would be 100 per cent funded by the central government grant. The other part of the regional tier (the Regional Police Support Units) should remain funded by local forces, accountable to local chiefs and PCCs, given that they are essentially a pooling of local specialist and support functions. A significant proportion of the money saved by pooling these functions should be retained for investment in local policing.

Third, several of the respondents to our initial Call for Evidence argued that the current funding system was so complex and short-term that it provided a poor basis for longer-term business planning at force level. It is certainly the case that the arrangements are complicated, with multiple sources of funding. The sum available for any individual force in a given financial year becomes known with any precision only a matter of weeks before the money begins to be spent. For future years, in relation to the government contribution, the best police planners have to go on is broad statements in expenditure white papers of the kind quoted above. All this sits uneasily with the PCC's duty to agree a medium-term financial strategy with the Chief Constable.

Others whom we have consulted, well placed from experience to comment, take the view that this is less of an issue than it might appear. In practice, experienced police finance officers have a good sense of how funding from the various sources is likely to stack up, sufficient to enable them to construct the budget. As in local government generally, the ability to hold and draw on reserves and carry funds from one year to another provides more flexibility than exists in central government.

Nevertheless, we think that it is desirable for the government to provide a more reliable guide to future funding. In particular, the implementation of a new funding formula should be done gradually so as to allow for proper financial planning.

13.4 A NEW FUNDING MODEL

The new funding model would therefore be as follows:

1. The organisations responsible at a national level for policing and public safety, including the Crime Prevention Agency, the National Crime Agency (NCA) and the College of Policing, would be 100 per cent government-funded.

2. The new NCA regional units hosting regional serious and organised crime functions would be 100 per cent government funded.

3. The Regional Police Support Units would be placed on a statutory footing but they would be funded from local police force budgets, given that they represent a pooling of existing local capabilities.

4. Local police forces would be funded through a revised formula which more accurately reflected an up-to-date assessment of need, improved incentives and ensured the provision of a minimum level of service.

5. Above that level, there would continue to be discretion for the grant to be topped up by contributions from council tax revenues. The restrictions on the exercise of such discretion could be further relaxed.

6. The overall policing budget would be redesigned to create a number of national ring-fenced funds to ensure that the priorities we have set out in this report are protected. These are set out in Recommendation 55.

55. A number of earmarked national funds should be established to ensure that the priorities identified in this report are protected. These funds would be:

- A Serious and Organised Crime Fund: all funding dedicated to tackling serious and organised crime, including the funding for the National Crime Agency and its regional units.
- A Counter Terrorism Fund: all funding dedicated to tackling terrorism.
- A Crime Prevention Fund: all funding dedicated to crime prevention activity, including the funding for the Crime Prevention Agency and the funding for local Crime Prevention Units.
- A Learning and Development Fund: most funding for police learning and development would be channelled through this fund and disseminated by the College of Policing, which would commission learning and development from police bodies.
- A Technology Fund: to ensure adequate funding for national technology programmes.

There is one further change which would be consistent with our recommendations, but would be hard to implement without significant changes in local government which are beyond our terms of reference. Perhaps the greatest impediment to the prevention of crime and social harm is the weakness of collaboration between the police and the other public agencies with a stake in the issue and enough locus to make a difference. The need for such cooperation is well-established, and serious efforts have been made over many years to create and operate machinery for that purpose. But all too often, whether as a result of austerity or just the pressure of other, seemingly more immediate, demands on resources, these achieve less than they should.

A concerted cross-agency effort to tackle the deep-seated problems in society which the police end up dealing with, frequently beyond their own capabilities, would be greatly assisted if there was a more integrated system of local accountability. As remarked earlier in this report, where elected Mayors also have oversight of the police, there have been moves in this direction. But

a more systematic, integrated approach could provide the political leadership that is badly needed.

Under such an approach, a funding option worth considering would be a government grant specifically directed at cross-agency work to prevent and reduce crime. This would not be easy to design or operate, not least because the government itself tends to be siloed and ill-adapted for the purpose; and the position of the NHS as a significant player organised on a largely national basis would complicate the picture. But the idea, in our view, merits further examination.

56. We would encourage the development of a more consistent and integrated approach to local government structures in England and Wales. Under such an approach, we would recommend a more detailed examination of the idea of a specific government grant to support cross-agency work to prevent and reduce crime.

13.5 THE RESOURCING AND PUBLIC VALUE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS REVIEW

In this final section we offer a broad assessment of the resource implications of the report's recommendations. We also assess them against the public value framework recommended to the government by Sir Michael Barber in his 2017 Review of Public Value (HM Treasury, 2017).

13.5.1 Resource implications

This Strategic Review has been charitably funded and carried out with the assistance of a small team of the Police Foundation's staff. Without the resources of a government department it has not been possible for us to fully cost all of our recommendations. But it is possible to outline, with a degree of confidence, their implications for the resources devoted to policing and public safety.

The first, and in some ways most significant, point to make is that the time frame within which we have cast our recommendations is intentionally long, and extends beyond a single expenditure planning period. Some recommendations, we believe, are urgent, and where that is the case we have said so. But elsewhere our purpose has been to set a long-term direction and argue for a shift in focus over the next decade, principally towards prevention and public safety,

which, over time, would have profound implications for resources and how they are used. This is not, however, to say that they would necessarily add significantly to public expenditure, for reasons which are set out below.

The main changes we are recommending, which would have resource implications, are:

1. The creation of the Crime Prevention Agency, and of a ring-fenced Crime Prevention Fund, to fund both the Agency and its regulatory activities and an expanded system of Crime Prevention Units (CPUs) in each police force area. Some of the funding for the latter would come from the existing Violence Reduction Units which would be incorporated into the CPUs.

2. An uplift in community policing, though this is largely about the priority to be given, within existing resources, to community and neighbourhood policing. We envisage more of the already funded extra 20,000 police officers being dedicated to neighbourhood policing to deliver this commitment.

3. The establishment of a dedicated Learning and Development Fund, to be used by the College of Policing to support minimum levels of training for continuous professional development and leadership programmes. This is intended principally as a means of ring-fencing existing funds to give priority to such training, although the improvements to the quality and extent of the learning offer, plus the new Police Leadership Centre, will require additional funds.

4. Improved clinical and occupational health support for police officers.

5. A larger budget for the National Crime Agency so that it is better able to build up national and regional capability to tackle serious and organised crime. This would include funding for the new regional units, which would also incorporate existing force funding for serious and organised crime.

6. A technology uplift for policing through an increased police technology budget, with priorities including the modernisation of the national databases, the delivery of interoperability and a significant investment in digital forensics.

7. Establishing a national forensic science service.

Some of these are, as noted, primarily about priorities within existing resources, and therefore cost neutral. Others would undoubtedly add to cost, but we also set out areas where significant savings could be made. In particular, doing much more procurement nationally would deliver economies of scale in areas like uniform, vehicles and equipment. Most significantly, forming mandated Regional Police Support Units would reduce duplication across local forces in relation to specialist capabilities and support functions. The lesson from the formation of Police Scotland is that significant funds would be saved by such a move over a ten-year period. These savings ought to be invested in delivering the spending priorities highlighted in this report.

At a broader level, the holistic approach to crime prevention and public safety outlined earlier in this report, and in particular the statutory duty to prevent crime would, if implemented, mean that much of the cost of essential preventive measures fell on businesses providing services, especially in the technology and finance sectors. These costs would, of course, need to be taken into account by the government, but there is a strong argument that they would also be business-justified, in terms of reputation and the consequent enhancement in consumer confidence.

13.5.2 Impact on public value

Sir Michael Barber's 2017 report to the government *Delivering Better Outcomes for Citizens* (HM Treasury, 2017) set out a public value framework, which has since been adopted by the Treasury as a tool for assessing the capability of public services to turn funding into policy outcomes for citizens. The framework is summarised in the graphic below (reproduced from the report).

The outcomes being seen from the policy or programme

The Four Pillars of the Public Value Assessment Framework – how to use funding effectively to deliver outcomes and maximise value for the taxpayer

The funding that has been provided for the policy or programme

Outcomes

1. Pursuing goals
2. Managing inputs
3. Engaging users and citizens
4. Developing system capacity

The Four Pillars of the Public Value Assessment Framework cover 16 'areas to consider' with criteria to enable judgements against a four-point scale

Total funding

The framework is intended for use by government departments and others responsible for public services. In the time and with the resources available, we have not undertaken any formal assessment of that kind. But we have considered, for each of the four pillars, whether, and if so to what extent, this report's recommendations will lead to a stronger policing and public safety system, more capable of delivering public value.

The first pillar (Pursuing Goals) highlights the importance of understanding the organisation's goals, and of ambition in pursuing them. We believe this report's recommendations, if adopted, would bring greater clarity about objectives, by defining the principal goals as being the prevention of crime, the improvement of public safety and the prevention of harm, and through a redefinition of the police role within a wider system in a way that is both ambitious and realistic about the particular contribution the police are equipped to make.

The second pillar (Managing Inputs) draws attention to effective processes for managing resources, the quality of data, benchmarking and cost control. Our recommendations for a revised funding system should contribute to better use of public money, through a better targeted police grant, more responsive to local needs, and active steps to ring-fence funds for priority purposes. The establishment of Regional Police Support Partnerships, delivering shared capabilities and support services at a geographical level where they can be provided more economically should release very significant efficiency savings.

The third pillar (Engaging Users and Citizens) emphasises the importance of legitimacy and engagement with the public. These are issues to which we have given much attention, because winning and retaining legitimacy with the public seems to us to be one of the biggest challenges facing the police. Our recommendations in Chapter 6 are directed towards that end, as is our support for a revival of community policing.

The fourth pillar (Developing System Capacity) is focused on the longterm stewardship of the organisation, building leadership and capability for the future. A recurring theme in this Review has been the challenges which, for all its strengths, the police service faces in the modern world; the need to develop the

relevant capabilities, and for high quality leadership. Our recommendations for an enhanced College of Policing and ring-fenced funding for training and leadership development are relevant to this, as is the proposed redistribution of functions geographically, which should provide an impetus and resources to build skills in areas such as cyber and combatting online crime.

Finally, if our report succeeds in driving down the burgeoning levels of online crime, it will have enabled the creation of substantial public value. Online fraud is estimated to cost business and the public £15bn a year (Skidmore et al, 2018). The economic impact of removing even a proportion of that would be significant. Even more significant, in human terms, would be the benefit if, together, our public safety agencies could prevent much more of the other forms of online criminality, notably child sexual exploitation, the human cost of which is incalculable.

13.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter we have called for a recalibration to the way the police service is funded. We support the principle of a system that is partially locally funded and partially nationally funded. We do however think there is a strong case for reviewing the outdated funding formula that leads to the allocation of Police Grant. The politics of such a move are always treacherous but in principle there is no justification for keeping such a flawed formula as it is. We also think Mayors and Police and Crime Commissioners should have greater flexibility to raise additional funding via the council tax precept.

The redistribution of policing capabilities set out in Chapter 11 of this report also has financial consequences. The new regional National Crime Agency units ought to be 100 per cent centrally funded which will require a reallocation of the resource from local forces that currently goes to the Regional Organised Crime Units. The Regional Police Support Units would be locally funded, given that they represent a pooling of local specialist and support functions.

Finally we think that the government should be more active in its use of the funding system to focus resource on strategic priorities, such as those highlighted in this report, including serious and organised crime, technology and learning and development.

14. CONCLUSION: A CRITICAL JUNCTURE

We started this report by quoting what Robert Peel told parliament in 1828 as part of his call for a professional police service to be established. Peel was clear that England was undergoing such profound change (a growing population, rising wealth and what he described as "the multiplying development of its energies") that the country had 'outgrown her police institutions'. The old system of the voluntary parish constable and the raising of hue and cry that went back to the Statute of Winchester of 1285 was simply untenable as a basis for public order during the raging tumult of the industrial revolution. Peel concluded that what was required was a "new mode of protection".

It is our assessment in this report that we have reached a similarly critical juncture. In the last year alone there have been a number of events that have tested the relationship between the police and the public. The police have been asked to enforce unprecedented restrictions on civil liberties during the pandemic. They have been challenged over racial disproportionality following the murder of George Floyd. The Metropolitan Police has been rocked by the horrific abduction, rape and murder of Sarah Everard by a serving police officer. Further disgrace came with the conviction of two officers for sharing photographs of murder victims Nicole Smallman and Bibaa Henry.

These events have taken place against a backdrop of longer running tensions and debates about the police use of stop and search, falling crime detection rates and the use of new technologies such as automatic facial recognition. Establishing police legitimacy may be a process of ongoing dialogue, but it is hard to escape the conclusion that we are at a critical point in the conversation.

In this report we have also identified a number of structural trends that have weakened our existing 'mode of protection'. The internet has undermined the traditional criminal justice role of the police, which functioned well where local offenders were committing crimes against local victims in local places. The technological revolution has created an entirely new venue for crime and harm that puts offenders beyond the reach of local police agencies.

Similarly, the impact of humanity on our natural environment is creating unprecedented tumult. We will need to develop new forms of resilience to cope with the kind of large-scale exogenous shocks that are likely to result.

Society is changing radically too, generating new demands and expectations. Social needs have become too complex to be dealt with by single agencies operating in professional silos. The criminal justice system has appeared unable to cope with rising reports of male violence against women and girls and of non-recent sexual abuse. The police have been left struggling both to deal with these new forms of demand and at the same time deliver their traditional service offer.

So how do we promote public safety in these changing conditions? First, the scale and complexity of these challenges mean that the police on their own cannot meet them. Instead, we need to take a much more systemic approach to preventing crime and harm. We need a public safety system as well as a criminal justice system. Such a public safety system should be anchored around a Crime Prevention Agency and backed up by a duty on business to design crime out at source. Locally public services should become much more integrated, so that the police, councils, health providers and others can design preventative services that take a holistic approach to complex needs.

Second, we need to provide the police service with the capabilities it needs to successfully fulfil its mission. We require a police service that is trusted and in which all members of the community have confidence. Almost everyone agrees with that, but if we are to make it a reality it means putting 'legitimacy first' especially when that is in tension with other objectives. It means that the industrial use of stop and search must end. It means developing a culture where bad behaviour is called out and those responsible for gross misconduct removed from policing. It means making neighbourhood policing the fundamental building block of the local police system, rather than a marginal extra.

We need a police service that has the skills and technology to meet the demands of the future. This requires workforce planning to become a

national function so that action can be taken to fill gaps in relational, digital and investigatory skills. We need to develop new career pathways in allied policing professions such as data analytics, financial investigation and digital forensics.

We need radical reform to police learning and development. The quality and delivery of training needs to change so that it is tailored to the individual officer and their aspirations. To transform learning expectations and raise standards, the College of Policing should become responsible for issuing a Licence to Practise to all police officers. Officers will need to renew their licence every five years, to demonstrate that they are up to date in terms of the knowledge and skills required to carry out their role. And we need to invest much more in the professional development of police leaders, particularly frontline supervisors.

Third, if those capabilities are to be delivered effectively and efficiently the police service requires organisational reform. Local police forces should focus on local policing. Regional police support units should be established that will deliver the vast majority of support functions and specialist capabilities. Serious and organised crime related capabilities should be housed within regional units of an expanded National Crime

Agency, and more such capabilities should be delivered at a regional level. These reforms would mean the system is better equipped to tackle cross border crime and would improve the delivery of specialist capabilities. They would also save hundreds of millions of pounds that would be reinvested in policing.

There needs to be a much stronger strategic centre in the police service. This means the Home Office taking a more strategic role, with enhanced capabilities. This means consolidating the currently fragmented national policing improvement functions within an expanded College of Policing, with powers to direct Chief Constables in relation to professional standards, IT and workforce planning.

Policing is at a critical juncture. If it does not embrace reform it will likely be overwhelmed by the scale and complexity of the demands coming down the track. But if we take the necessary decisions now the prize will be great: to develop the conditions in which our people can live freely and safely in the 21st century and to renew for our age the promise of the Peelian model, a form of policing that serves rather than oppresses the people and that can continue to be an example to the world in the art of reconciling order with liberty.

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APPENDIX A –
TERMS OF REFERENCE:

THESE TERMS OF REFERENCE DESCRIBE THE PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE STRATEGIC REVIEW OF POLICING IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

Purpose

1. To consider the challenges to public safety the country will face in the 2020s and beyond.

2. To consider what kind of strategic response is required to meet those challenges;

3. To determine what role the public professional police service should play as part of that strategic response.

4. To consider what changes may be required to the police service in order that it can play its part in meeting those challenges, with a view to improving the effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy of the police.

In doing so the Review will:

1. Describe the changing nature of crime and the non-crime threats to public safety.

2. Understand the implications of those changes for how both state and non-state actors should respond to better keep people safe.

3. Consider what the mission of the police service should be in the 21st century, with reference to how the police mandate has changed over time and to public attitudes and expectations of the police.

4. Describe the main capabilities the police service will require if it is to meet the mission set for it.

5. Consider what the police workforce of the future will look like and what changes will be required so that police officers and staff have the skills

and knowledge required to deliver the capabilities identified.

6. Consider how the police service ought to be organised at the local, regional and national levels, balancing the need for the police to meet both local and national priorities.

7. Consider how to ensure the police are best held to account at these different levels.

8. Consider the efficiency of the police service and how it ought to be resourced in order to meet the challenges of the 2020s.

Scope

1. The Review will focus on policing in England and Wales, although it will refer to evidence from Scotland and Northern Ireland and indeed to international evidence.

2. The Review will be strategic in that it will think about the long term challenges facing policing and public safety and will aim to set a strategy for policing that is designed to take it into the 2030s.

3. The Review will consider all of the different elements required to keep the public safe and secure, many of which are not within the control of the police service. It will consider the role of non-state actors, as well as other parts of public service, in achieving the outcomes identified. It will focus on the role and capabilities of policing but understands that policing alone cannot achieve the outcomes sought.

APPENDIX B –
CALL FOR EVIDENCE SUBMISSIONS

Phase One

ADS

Amy Aeron-Thomas, Vision Zero

John Apter, Chair of the Police Federation of England and Wales

Association of Police and Crime Commissioners

Cambridgeshire Constabulary

Capgemini

Phil Cheatle, right to die campaigner

Andy Cooke, Chief Constable of Merseyside Police

City of London Police

College of Policing

Criminal Justice Alliance

On behalf of the Chief Constable of Cumbria Police

Cressida Dick, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service

Durham Constabulary

Office of the Durham Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner

Deputy Chief Constable Claire Parmenter and Police and Crime Commissioner Dafydd Llewellyn of Dyfed Powys Police

On behalf of the Chief Constable of Essex Police

Roger Geffen, Policy Director at Cycling UK

Penelope Gibbs, Director of Transform Justice

John Gilli-Ross, Chairman of the National Association of Police Fire and Crime Panels

Jodie Gosling, shadow chair, safer communities in North Warwickshire Borough Council Labour Group

Paul Griffiths, President of the Police Superintendents Association

On behalf of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable of Hampshire Constabulary

Roger Hirst, Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex Police

Robin Hodgkinson, retired Sussex Police Officer and member of Sussex CrimeWatch

Chief Inspector Patrick Holdaway of the National Business Crime Centre

Dr Chloe Holloway of the School of Law at University of Nottingham

Howard League for Penal Reform

Keith Hunter, Police and Crime Commissioner of Humberside Police

Caroline Hynds, a campaigner for Assisted Dying

Martin Jelley, Chief Constable of Warwickshire Police

Arfon Jones, Police and Crime Commissioner for North Wales

Just for Kids Law

Peter Langmead-Jones on behalf of Greater Manchester Police

Edward Leigh of Excogitate Consultancy

Lincolnshire Police

London Fire Brigade

Andy Marsh, Chief Constable of Avon and Somerset Police

On behalf of Darren Martland, the Chief Constable of Cheshire Police

Kevin Moore, Retired Detective Chief Superintendent at Sussex Police

Sue Mountstevens, Police and Crime Commissioner for Avon and Somerset Police

David Munro, Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey Police

National Aids Trust

National Crime Agency

Joint response from the National Police Chiefs Council leads for Neighbourhood Policing, PCSOs, Social Media & Digital Engagement, Troubled Families and the Public Health Approach to Policing

Prof Carole McCartney, Prof Michael Rowe, Marion Oswald, Dr Kyriakos N. Kotsoglou of Northumbria University, Newcastle

On behalf of the Chief Constable and Police and Crime Commissioner of Northumbria Police

Police and Crime Commissioner Paddy Tipping and Chief Constable Craig Guildford, of Nottinghamshire Police

NPCC Local Policing Co-ordination Committee (LPCC)

Alan Pughsley, Chief Constable of Kent Police

Resolve Anti-Social Behaviour

Chris Rowley, Deputy Chief Constable of Humberside Police

Royal United Services Institute

Inspector John Shuttleworth of Devon and Cornwall Police

Dr Jonathan Smith, Director of Salmon Personal Development

Anthony Stansfeld, Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley Police

South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel

Desmond Thomas, Associate Lecturer at Solent University

Martyn Underhill, Police and Crime Commissioner for Dorset Police

Jeremy Vaughan, Deputy Chief Constable South Wales Police

On behalf of the Chief Constable of West Mercia Police

West Midlands Police

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner

West Yorkshire Police

Dr Emma Williams of Canterbury Christ Church University, Centre for Policing Research

Phase Two

Amal Ali, Criminal Justice Alliance

Amy Aeron-Thomas, Action Vision Zero

Avon and Somerset Constabulary

Mark Brown, MA in Criminal Psychology

Councillor Amanda Carter, Shadow Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Leeds City Council

City of London Police

College of Policing

Dr Simon Cooper, University of Essex

Elsa Corry-Roake, Revolving Doors Agency

Cumbria Police

Keith Ditcham and Helena Wood, RUSI

Mary Fraser

Owain Gower

Paul Griffiths, The Police Superintendents' Association

Craig Guildford and Paddy Tipping", Chief Constable and Police and Crime Commissioner at Nottinghamshire Police

Gwent Police

Linda Hindle, The Public Health and Policing Consensus Task Force

IOPC

David Jamieson, West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner

John Gili-Ross, Chairman of the National Association of Police Fire and Crime Panels

Will Kane. Mark43

Kent Police

Leicestershire Police

Lincolnshire Police

Nathan Mathiot, ADS

Merseyside Police

National Crime Agency

National Police Chiefs Council

North Wales Police

Police Care UK

Sherry Ralph, Chief Operating Officer ICVA

Dr Jonathan Smith, Salmon Personal Development

South Yorkshire Police

South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel

Louise Sutton

Bill Tillbrook, Thames Valley Police

Thames Valley Police

David Tomlinson, retired Chief Superintendent and staff officer to Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary

UNISON

Warwickshire Police

West Yorkshire Police

Vicky Wibberley, Chair Derbyshire Police and Crime Panel

APPENDIX C –
KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWEES

Andy Cooke, Chief Constable Merseyside Police, NPCC lead Crime Operations

Olivia Pinkney, Chief Constable Hampshire Police, NPCC Lead for Local Policing and Children and Young People

Gareth Morgan, Chief Constable Staffordshire Police, NPCC Lead Communications and Director of Strategic Command Course

Neil Basu, Assistant Commissioner Metropolitan Police Service, NPCC Lead for Counter Terrorism

Peter Goodman, Chief Constable Derbyshire Police, NPCC Lead for Cybercrime

Martin Surl, Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire, APCC Board

Paddy Tipping, Police and Crime Commissioner for Nottinghamshire, APCC Board

Nic Pole, Principle Analyst (Futures), College of Policing

Nina Champion, Director, Criminal Justice Alliance

Suzanne Jacob, Chief Executive, Safe Lives

Anna Edmonson, Head of Policy and Public Affairs, NSPCC

John Hayward-Cripps, Chief Executive of Neighbourhood Watch

Melissa Case, Director General, Policy, Analysis and Communications at Ministry of Justice UK

Martin Griffiths, Clinical Director Violence Reduction Network NHS London and Trauma Surgery Lead Barts Health NHS Trust

Professor Martin Innes, Director of Crime and Security Research Institute and Director of Universities' Police Science Institute

Professor Betsy Stanko, Consultant, public sector analytics and Chair, Ministry of Justice Data, Evidence and Science Board

APPENDIX D –
ADVISORY BOARD

Nick Alston CBE, DL, Former Police and Crime and Commissioner for Essex

Sir Michael Barber, Chair of The Strategic Review of Policing in England and Wales

Dee Collins CBE QPM, Former Chief Constable of West Yorkshire Police

Nick Dale, Vice President Business Transformation for the UK Justice Sector, CGI

Dr Carlene Firmin MBE, Principal Research Fellow at The International Centre Researching Child Sexual Exploitation, Violence and Trafficking

Michael Fuller QPM, Former Chief Constable of Kent Police

John Graham, Adviser at The Dawes Trust

Inspector Caroline Hay, Inspector in the Metropolitan Police Service

Richard Hobbs, UK Policing Lead at Deloitte

Rt Hon Nick Hurd, Former Minister of State for Policing

Sir Bill Jeffrey KCB, Vice Chair of the Strategic Review, Chair of the Police Foundation

Helen King QPM, Principal of St Anne's College, University of Oxford

Sophie Linden, Deputy Mayor of the Greater London Authority

Stephen Lloyd, Former MP for Eastbourne and Willingdon.

Professor Ian Loader, Professor of Criminology at All Souls College, University of Oxford

Sir Denis O'Connor CBE QPM, Former HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary at HMICFRS

Matthew Polega, Co-founder and Head of Marketing, Mark43

Nick Ross, Broadcaster

Rt Hon Jacqui Smith, Former Home Secretary

Dame Sarah Thornton DBE QPM, Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner at the Office of the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner

Rt Hon Sir John Wheeler JP DL, Vice Chair of the Police Foundation and former Chair of the Home Affairs Select Committee

STRATEGIC REVIEW OF POLICING
IN ENGLAND AND WALES

The world around policing is changing as radically as the world in which Sir Robert Peel founded the Metropolitan Police in 1829. It is in that context that the Police Foundation established the Strategic Review of Policing in England and Wales, chaired by Sir Michael Barber. It is the first independent review of policing for many years and is intended to be as influential as the last Royal Commission on the Police in 1962. This final report from the Review is our attempt to describe what kind of police service we will need to address the challenges of the 21st century.

THE POLICE FOUNDATION
The UK's policing think tank