ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF ARTS, HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING: COMMUNITY, CONFIDENCE AND LEGITIMACY IN A LONDON BOROUGH

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A thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Anglia Ruskin University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Submitted: January 2020

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

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January 2020

This thesis examines how confidence and legitimacy are maintained through the processes of neighbourhood policing; an area particularly important for the legitimation of the police, but which has come under severe pressure from austerity-driven budget cuts. These pressures have been accompanied by a shift away from community-driven police priorities and towards concerns for risk, vulnerability and 'hidden harms.' Together, these changes could have serious consequences for police legitimacy.

This study, for which fieldwork was undertaken between June 2016 and September 2017, looks at neighbourhood policing in a single London borough. It was undertaken as an embedded case study, enabling comparisons between wards. Interviews were carried out with neighbourhood police officers, ward panel members, council officers and local councillors, as well as senior police officers. These were supplemented with observations of panel and public meetings.

The study found that the mechanisms by which neighbourhood policing were originally intended to deliver confidence were still valued. However, they required face-to-face engagement with the public, and so were particularly susceptible to resource limitations. The London system of ward panels could support neighbourhood policing in unexpected (although not entirely unproblematic) ways. However, the study also found that resident priorities and values were highly variable, and often differed from police priorities, and that these disagreements could also be exacerbated by resource constraints.

The research concludes that legitimacy and confidence are locally and situationally contingent, as are ideas of 'fairness' and other values. This means that maintaining confidence and legitimacy in a complex modern society needs a model of policing that includes processes to determine what residents value. Such a model must also include a community-driven element; it is not sufficient to decide what it is that policing should achieve and then hope that confidence and legitimacy will follow. This has important consequences for the way that neighbourhood policing is conceptualised, organised, and supported.

Keywords: neighbourhood policing, confidence, legitimacy, political realism, austerity

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Declaration

I declare that the thesis I have presented for examination for the PhD degree of Anglia Ruskin University is solely my own work. The copyright of this thesis rests with the author. Quotation from it is permitted, provided that full acknowledgment is made. This thesis may not be reproduced without my prior consent. I warrant that this authorisation does not, to the best of my belief, infringe the rights of any third party.

I declare that my thesis consists of 89,306 words.

Carina O'Reilly

Introduction

Background

I came to this research sideways. I had followed developments in British policing closely in my role as an analyst for security publisher Jane's, but like most people, I had had very little contact with police officers themselves. In 2011 that changed; I became a local councillor. Councillors live strange lives, spending much of their time in empty church halls talking about subjects that most people avoid. But policing, as a topic, always got a full house.

The meetings that the police attended in my home city of Cambridge were council-run 'Area Committees,' (Cambridge City Council, n.d.) which covered three or four wards. Police officers would bring a written report, and councillors and members of the public would ask them questions. At the end of this discussion, councillors would vote on the priorities they wanted for the next three months. This sometimes involved some political haggling to ensure a distribution of police priorities that the parties could live with across all the wards. What an amazing system, I thought. How democratic. I wonder, why do the police do it like this?

The answer, of course, was that mostly they didn't. The system in Cambridge was pretty much unique as far as I could discern – in no other city could I find councillors alone making these decisions. Everywhere else I looked, the police consulted directly with the public; or, increasingly, didn't hold such local

meetings at all. In fact, increasingly, the conversations at our local area committees were turning to a list of things the police could not or would not do: they could not answer the phone if you rang 101; they would not step in to deal with HGVs breaching an overnight ban. They would no longer automatically base their priorities on the local issues we raised with them.

The structure and shape of neighbourhood policing was changing, and this intrigued me. It particularly interested me in the context of police legitimacy, as the legitimation of state power was of direct relevance to me in my day job as a security analyst; every day I watched governments try to justify the use of coercive force. I also observed the profound changes to the size and shape of the public sector after the 2010 elections, and the protests that ensued. All of this coalesced as a desire to know more about how policing, and particularly neighbourhood policing, worked on the ground.

Policing in the UK is currently under extraordinary pressure from shrinking budgets and changing demand. More than 20,000 police officers have been cut from forces since 2010, and both structures and priorities have been forced to change (Elliott-Davies et al, 2016). Neighbourhood policing, a resource-intensive model of policing aimed primarily at building public confidence, has come under particular pressure: its structures have fractured, nationally, as officers are abstracted and those that remain find their workload expanded and, in some cases, fundamentally changed (Higgins, 2017; Higgins and Hale, 2017; Higgins, 2018a).

Meanwhile, the legitimating motivation behind neighbourhood policing is receding in policy terms, in favour of a focus on risk and vulnerability; and

particularly on 'hidden harms': crime that takes place behind closed doors, rather than in the public domain (NPCC, 2017). While police governance and accountability has been localised in the form of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), the direction of police priorities is moving away from community-driven concerns and towards 'objective' measures of risk (Sherman, Neyroud and Neyroud, 2016; Ashby, 2017). It is not yet clear what effect, if any, such changes will have on overall confidence in and legitimacy of the police. However, the way the state's coercive power is legitimised and the processes used to do so are undoubtedly as important during a time of crisis for policing as they were during times of plenty.

Indeed, police legitimacy more generally has received increased attention in recent years. Much of this work has focused on the role of procedural justice: the idea that the way the police behave affects how they are perceived, and this in turn affects how the public behave towards the police. The direction of recent scholarship (Bottoms and Tankebe, 2013; Nix, Pickett and Wolfe, 2019) has moved towards a consensus that legitimacy is dialogical and negotiated, based on mutual assessments of moral alignment between police and citizens. However, much of this work is survey-based, and it is increasingly recognised that more qualitative work is needed that examines the dynamic contexts of such processes (Radburn and Stott, 2018).

Much of the scholarship on public confidence in policing has come to similar conclusions about its constituent factors. Confidence has repeatedly been found to be based less on assessments of police effectiveness, and more on expressive concerns, such as perceptions of social cohesion and of local order; low-level

rule-breaking is "an affront to shared values and norms" (Bradford et al, 2008). In this model, the police are representatives of a social and moral order (Sunshine and Tyler, 2003). Neighbourhood policing was developed in the hope it would build and maintain confidence (Tuffin, Morris and Poole, 2006), in part through demonstrating community values and addressing local concerns about order. It is therefore the best place to examine how, exactly, police officers negotiate such expectations in practice, particularly given the national shifts to police priorities noted above. These changes to demand and priorities also underline the need to look at the extent to which the original processes and mechanisms of neighbourhood policing still contribute to confidence and legitimacy, and how they might be endangered under conditions of austerity.

I take a political realist perspective on the source and role of values in political life (Philp, 2010). This position, explained further in Chapter One, argues that values and norms cannot be determined prior to the political, and legitimacy is always negotiated under terms of disagreement over our moral values (Sleat, 2018). We disagree, and we disagree even within broadly liberal societies on the meaning of basic ideas such as equality, justice and freedom (Sleat, 2012). This has consequences for police legitimacy and confidence. If legitimacy and confidence are negotiated, and based in part on a perception of shared values, which values should the police share? A political realist perspective indicates that this cannot be pre-determined; the police cannot simply decide what the 'right' thing is to do, and hope that legitimacy will follow. This highlights the need to identify when values may be in tension, and how these disagreements are negotiated, as a crucial part of the work that neighbourhood policing does.

Research aims and methods

This thesis explores neighbourhood policing in practice in a London borough, seen through the lens of the ward panel system. I did not feel it appropriate (for ethical reasons among others) to study my own city and a system which, at the time, I was part of. Moreover, of the emerging models of local policing that can be discerned in the current fractured landscape, neighbourhood policing in London is perhaps the closest to the original universalist philosophy (Higgins, 2018a). It retains a structure that is locally based on the boundaries of local authority wards; each ward is assigned a single Dedicated Ward Officer (now two), plus at least one PCSO; and each ward also has a ward panel. This system, in which local residents come together to determine which priorities and promises that neighbourhood officers should focus upon, is increasingly unusual, as forces withdraw from formal community engagement structures (Higgins, 2018b).

This background gives context to the following research questions. The core research question of the thesis is:

- How does neighbourhood policing, as seen through the operation of ward panels, contribute to confidence in and the legitimacy of the police?

The subsidiary questions are:

- How are the mechanisms of neighbourhood policing - community engagement; visibility, accessibility and familiarity; and problem-solving - seen as contributing towards confidence and legitimacy in Borough One, and what are their weaknesses?

- How do ward panels in particular contribute to neighbourhood policing?

- How are shared values and police legitimacy negotiated through the mechanisms of neighbourhood policing?

As noted above, much of the existing research into confidence and legitimacy has been survey-based (Harkin, 2015b). I chose to undertake a qualitative case study to explore neighbourhood policing in depth, so that I could look at the processes of neighbourhood policing and my respondents' experiences of them (Sarantakos, 2013). An embedded case study (Yin, 2014) introduced a comparative element to this, which allowed me to explore not just the different ways that the mechanisms of neighbourhood policing were implemented, but, crucially, the variability in local values and priorities, and how police officers responded to these. This was of particular importance in understanding how neighbourhood policing contributed to confidence and legitimacy, given the importance of police demonstrating an understanding of residents' priorities. Semi-structured interviews facilitated an openness to respondents' understanding of their social world (Miller and Glassner, 2011), while observations of panel meetings allowed me to triangulate this data (Angrosino, 2007) and explore further a particular setting and structure that proved to be of central importance to the operation of neighbourhood policing in Borough One.

Ward panels are the major focus of this thesis and much of the experience of neighbourhood policing, as recounted here, is filtered through them. Ward panels are slightly different from public meetings commonly held elsewhere in two ways: they are constituted on local authority ward boundaries, whereas many

other police-public meetings cover larger geographical areas; and they were originally envisaged as panels of community representatives, rather than open public meetings, and are often still run like this. This research therefore examines a single London borough, treating individual wards as sub-cases and Borough One as the common case, allowing the contextualisation of wards as sub-cases in their wider context. My focus on ward panel observations and on interviews reflects the centrality of the panels to community engagement and problem-solving in Borough One, as well as the very local focus of neighbourhood policing. This allowed an in-depth and iterative exploration of participants' understandings of neighbourhood policing, how it worked, and how it contributed to confidence and legitimacy; as well as a comparative understanding of how panel members' and police priorities and values differed from ward to ward.

Structure of the thesis

In order to explore how neighbourhood policing contributes to public confidence and police legitimacy, I begin by examining the nature of confidence and legitimacy themselves. Chapter One therefore begins by exploring the centrality of public confidence to the British model of policing, and its relationship to police legitimacy. Confidence is explained as a type of trust, whether institutional or individual, whereas legitimacy - though closely related - is about the authority that the police can claim by right. It is in part through earning public confidence that the police establish their claim to legitimacy. I argue that the evidence around what influences public confidence, and what kind of police behaviour can damage or improve confidence, emphasises the importance of locally-based

policing that engages systematically with the communities being policed - neighbourhood policing, in other words.

In the second section, I tie these discussions of confidence more explicitly to police legitimacy, and in particular, the perspective offered by current scholarship on procedural justice. This suggests that the legitimacy of the police is related to perceptions of moral alignment between the police and the public (Jackson et al, 2012). Here I highlight the dangers in assuming common values, and introduce the political realist approach as a way of shedding light on this issue. I argue that there is no set of universal normative principles within a given polity on which to rest such legitimation. Legitimacy is always partial, and always ongoing. I therefore suggest, with Bottoms and Tankebe (2012) and Radburn and Stott (2018), that legitimacy needs to be understood as a negotiation rather than a performance, between participants whose idea of each other can shift according to context. Police legitimacy and public confidence depends not just on shared values, but on their negotiation. Confidence and legitimacy are therefore social relationships, in which consent is never complete.

This underlines the value of an investigation into those social relationships in practice, and argues that neighbourhood policing, as a model specifically developed for the legitimation of the police, is an appropriate place to do so. In the second half of the chapter, I then apply this perspective to show that democratic policing scholarship rests on particular understandings of democracy, and contains inherent potential value conflicts; and I outline the potential consequences of such conflicts and the importance of understanding the sources of our beliefs about how the processes of democratic policing - such as

community consultation - should be undertaken. Confidence, legitimacy, and beliefs about democracy are all inextricable from the processes of neighbourhood policing, and this chapter sets out the warrant for exploring these processes in practice - particularly given the current context of policing, which is laid out in Chapter Two.

The second chapter begins with the development of neighbourhood policing. It looks at the then Labour government's 'new localism' (McLaughlin, 2005), and the associated focus on communities, responsibilisation, and public services reform. This chapter makes the case that the shape of neighbourhood policing was deeply rooted in New Labour's philosophy and policies, and rested on a particular set of beliefs around the value of participation. These provided a context in which neighbourhood policing could be designed and funded as a means not just of increasing and maintaining police confidence, but also of building social capacity.

After the 2010 election, the new Coalition government's approach saw reductions in budgets and the local direction and democratisation of police accountability in the form of PCCs. While neighbourhood policing was never formally discontinued, policing was stripped of resources. Without the political drive for community involvement, neighbourhood policing became susceptible to abstraction and reorganisation, while focus shifted nationally to issues around vulnerability, risk and harm. This chapter concludes that the 'oil tanker' of public confidence in the police (Bradford et al, 2008; Bradford and Jackson, 2010c) may have quietly begun to change direction. This brings urgency to the need to examine neighbourhood policing and its mechanisms, and lends weight to the

argument for doing so in a force where neighbourhood policing remains recognisably the same model as was implemented in 2005.

This then frames the third chapter, which looks at the genesis of the original Neighbourhood Policing Programme (NPP) in Reassurance Policing and the signal crimes perspective (Innes and Fielding, 2002). It takes each of the mechanisms by which neighbourhood policing was intended to contribute to confidence in turn: community engagement; visibility, accessibility and familiarity; and problem-solving. It outlines what is known about each of these mechanisms, and highlights some areas where further research could usefully contribute. It argues that these mechanisms are effective in contributing to public confidence in the police; but underlines how fragile these may be to reductions in resources or organisational support. This chapter highlights the importance of understanding how neighbourhood policing processes now work in practice, a decade after the end of the NPP, and frames the fieldwork outlined in Chapters Five, Six and Seven.

Chapter Four explains the methods used for this fieldwork, justifies the choice of qualitative interviews and observations, and the selection of participants, and explains the particular structures of neighbourhood policing and ward panels in London and in Borough One.

The next three chapters report on the findings of the research, and are broadly structured around the mechanisms of neighbourhood policing identified above. Though community engagement, visibility and problem-solving overlap considerably in practice, taking this approach allows a systematic examination of how these processes operate, and how they are supported by the ward panel

system, while also facilitating the exploration of how confidence and legitimacy are negotiated through these mechanisms. This structure was chosen for two related reasons: firstly, to lend clarity to the way these findings address the first two of my subsidiary research questions, which are directly related to the way that these mechanisms are seen as contributing to confidence and legitimacy; and secondly, because the negotiation of values and moral alignment, to which my third subsidiary research question is addressed, can be understood in a richer, thicker way when contextualised by the workings of neighbourhood policing on the ground. In the final discussion chapter, I draw out the themes of conflicting values further and look at some of the particular clashes that are so exposed.

Chapter Five, which tackles community engagement, begins by offering a typology of ward panels. It explores the ways in which panels varied in their relative openness, and the extent to which participants were connected to wider networks. This variation led to different ways of negotiating security as a public good, and also affected the extent to which panels began to become sites for the development of social capital and collective efficacy. Most importantly in terms of support for neighbourhood policing, some panels began to develop autonomy. This affected many aspects of community engagement, both within panels and beyond them. These included recruitment to and participation in the panels, and the devolution of recruitment to many panels flagged up tension over the importance of representativeness to the legitimacy of the panels and their decisions. This move to autonomy rested in large part on the efforts of chairs and volunteers, and facilitated the development of a local collective identity. However, the pressure to make collective security decisions meant that consensus was privileged, and dissent looked upon with suspicion. The chapter also

explores the odd position of elected representatives in ward panels, and the way the pressure for consensus contributed to a depoliticisation of the panels.

This chapter underlines the importance of the ward panel system to community engagement in Borough One, particularly in terms of the legitimacy of decisions made by the panels. However, this process also exposes value-based tensions. In particular, the articulation of 'community' desires can conflict with 'democratic' imperatives around representativeness, and this has consequences for the wider legitimacy of the police.

Chapter Six then turns to the second of the specific mechanisms through which neighbourhood policing was to contribute to confidence: visibility. This is used as a designation of convenience to encompass all three of its common constituent parts: visibility, accessibility and familiarity (Povey, 2001). Visibility was the core component of the earliest discussions of reassurance policing, and this chapter explores the symbolic value of a visible policing presence to Borough One participants. This incorporates foot patrol, but also the value ascribed to police stations, and the affective as well as practical consequences of their closure. The value of familiarity and continuity in local policing is also explored, noting how such experiences for officers contributed to the development of a community-oriented occupational identity, which could stand in tension at times with other core police values. The chapter contextualises these concepts in a wider examination of reassurance as a style of policing, and the continuing value of the signal crimes perspective. This chapter underlines the symbolic importance of visibility, but also the way that priorities and values were locally contingent, and the way that communities craved an intimate relationship with their local

police - a demand increasingly at odds with changing national priorities and the pressures of shrinking resources.

The final substantive findings chapter looks at the third of the mechanisms, that of problem-solving. It begins with an overview of how problem-solving worked in Borough One, and the extent to which it involved the public. Problem-solving was the site for several disagreements; between residents, and with officers, over what counted as a 'problem,' and the weight that should be given to community knowledge versus the expertise of the police. This, like many of the tensions discussed in the thesis, was exacerbated by resource constraints. Problem-solving was particularly endangered as it could only be delivered by neighbourhood officers. Chapter Seven also looks at the extent to which problem-solving was collaborative in Borough One, and identifies three different types of partnership working: police-driven, meeting-driven, and panel-driven; and it shows how the ward panel system was again able to support the work of neighbourhood officers in sometimes unexpected ways. Finally, it explores how problem-solving processes exposed a particular set of tensions present in the contribution that problem-solving made to confidence and legitimacy: namely the need to keep promises to residents, and to manage expectations and demand. This particularly highlighted the differences between residents' conception of harm and risk, and that of police officers; again, a conflict between the value of community expertise and direction, and the privileged and 'expert' knowledge of the police.

Chapter Eight discusses the findings outlined in the three previous chapters and shows how the themes that emerged from the fieldwork address the original research questions. It begins by summarising the findings of Chapters Five, Six

and Seven, and argues the continuing value of community engagement, visibility and problem-solving, despite changes to demand. It then outlines the weaknesses of these mechanisms, showing how resource limitations can exacerbate these susceptibilities; and explores the way that ward panels can to some extent ameliorate some of these effects by supporting neighbourhood policing work. The discussion then turns to the value conflicts that the research encountered. It focuses on four in particular: between individual and collective ideas of security; between representativeness versus community self-definition; between community expertise and that of the police; and between different conceptions of justice and fairness; and argues that many of these conflicts are inherent in policing. The chapter then outlines the implications of these findings to the mechanisms of neighbourhood policing, and to neighbourhood policing itself.

Currently, neighbourhood policing is being redefined at force level to reflect a shift in priorities towards risk, harm and vulnerability. However, in doing so, the processes by which neighbourhood policing worked to support and maintain confidence are being undermined. Public confidence in policing is under threat, and if confidence matters, the philosophy underpinning neighbourhood policing needs to be revisited and supported along with the mechanisms by which it works. This thesis argues that this is increasingly urgent, as the long turn in public confidence may have already begun. Finally, I conclude with a discussion of the contribution that this thesis makes to our understanding of confidence and legitimacy, outline the limitations of the study, and suggest some further research.

A word on nomenclature: The Neighbourhood Policing Programme was a three-year programme that ran from 2005 to 2008. What I refer to, uncapitalised, as

'neighbourhood policing,' is a type of policing based on this model which has in some cases significantly diverged from it since 2008 (Higgins, 2018a). Community policing is a much broader term, which has long suffered from definitional issues (Seagrave, 1996), and from which many of the principles of neighbourhood policing were drawn. For the purposes of this thesis, community policing describes a general philosophy and set of programmes implemented internationally; neighbourhood policing is the type of community policing that has operated in the UK from 2005 onwards, in all its current variability.

Chapter One - Legitimacy and confidence in policing: a realist approach

Introduction

This thesis begins by looking at the central role of confidence in British policing. The establishment of neighbourhood policing under the Labour government of 1997-2010 was in part based on the importance of public confidence in policing as a way of measuring police success, a story told at greater length in Chapter Two. This chapter contains four sections: the first outlines existing knowledge about public confidence, what affects levels of confidence, and what can damage it or improve it. The section concludes by underlining the importance of neighbourhood police activity in supporting confidence, but noting that much of the work so far undertaken in this area has been quantitative and survey-based. I argue that there is also a need to understand how confidence is built through the eyes of those participating, such as through the fieldwork outlined later in this thesis.

The second section of the chapter then explores the relationship between confidence and police legitimacy, and notes the complex relationship between the two concepts. It looks at existing work on procedural justice and its contribution to police legitimacy, and outlines the evidence that perceptions of fairness and moral alignment are primary antecedents of legitimacy; and the overlaps between this and the scholarship on what contributes to confidence. I underline that

judgements of fair behaviour are not made once and for all time, nor are they homogeneous within a polity, but are the subject of ongoing negotiation at a local level. This contingent, local basis for police legitimacy means that local conditions, interactions, and negotiations are crucial to understanding how confidence and legitimacy are built in practice, which in turn suggests the qualitative approach which I employ.

Here, I also introduce the idea of political realism as a way of thinking about confidence and legitimacy. A political realist approach rejects the idea that moral judgements about the content of legitimacy can emerge from a realm outside politics. Rather, moral judgements like this are deeply political: as citizens, we disagree, profoundly, about what we consider to be right, and there is no set of shared values that can be determined simply through abstract reasoning. Instead, we must negotiate the level of disagreement we are prepared to live with, and how to do so. Thus the normative content of police legitimacy needs to be considered as a subject for political debate that requires contextualising in the moral environment where people live; again, at a local level. This raises questions of how such questions are answered in practice, and how legitimacy is negotiated by local police officers.

The third section expands on legitimacy to explore arguments for democratic policing. Principles of democratic policing are used to exhort the police to interact with the public in particular ways; to determine how, for example, local priorities should be determined, and what values should order police activities. Much of the scholarship on democratic policing seeks to determine a set of universalist moral principles that can be referred to in order to determine whether

a particular mode of policing is correct. A political realist position, however, argues that any claims made for the universalism of a set of principles cannot be sustained. The values assigned to democratic policing are not only variable according to the particular account of democracy on which they rest, but according to the vagaries of the political realities in which they are enacted at every level. Moreover, policing in a democratic society will seek to achieve multiple goals, some of which may clash. One of the questions the fieldwork will explore is the extent to which such principles are shared in practice, and some of the practical implications of these contradictions will be explored in later chapters.

My political realist position contends that politics - and, by extension, policing - is the site for fundamental disagreements over values, which are not necessarily reconcilable. Perceptions of moral alignment between police and citizens are central to legitimacy and confidence in policing. But a political realist perspective insists that this cannot be taken for granted, nor the content of these shared values pre-determined. We disagree on fundamental issues. Policing is subject to these disputes; for example, whether justice or order should take priority; or what kind of policing counts as equitable. The final section outlines the ramifications of such a position for my research, and for neighbourhood-based policing.

This chapter, and the analysis that follows, argue that an explicitly political realist approach adds weight to existing scholarship emphasising the importance of negotiating shared values in the construction of legitimacy and confidence in policing. It highlights the importance of engagement with the community and the

promise of neighbourhood policing in reducing disorder and building social cohesion - and begins to hint at the dangers of a mode of policing that ceases to invest time and resources into such structured public encounters.

Confidence in policing

Confidence holds a central place in British policing. This centrality is demonstrated in two key ways: the importance assigned to it by successive governments (Bradford, Jackson and Stanko, 2008) and by police forces, and also the importance of 'policing by consent' to official conceptions of how policing should be done; enshrining a care for public opinion as core to the British model of policing (HMIC, 1999; NPCC, 2017; HoC, 2018).

Given this centrality, it is of little surprise that confidence is a common metric in UK policing, and is regularly measured through the Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW), previously the British Crime Survey (BCS), and other similar exercises (Bradford, Stanko and Jackson, 2009; Stanko and Bradford, 2009; Stanko et al, 2012; Kantar Public and ONS, 2017). As the next chapter expounds, the Labour government of 1997-2010 came to place such a premium on confidence as a measure of the success of policing that it ultimately abolished all police targets except the single confidence target. There were, however, significant issues with the single target; including its inability to take account of local issues or other influences on public confidence (Bradford, Jackson and Hough, 2013). Despite the target being abolished by the Coalition government that took office in 2010, confidence remains important to the way that police forces and inspection bodies measure police performance (BMG Research, 2019) - although what exactly is being measured can vary (see below).

The attention given to confidence rests on two pillars: firstly, an acknowledgement that crime rates are not particularly good metrics for police success (see Chapter Two for more on this); but secondly, on beliefs about legitimacy; a recognition that: "the policing function depends critically on the authority that the police can command, rather than the force that they can deploy as a last resort." (Hough, 2003, p.146).

Confidence rolls up many different measures of perceptions of the police, including police effectiveness, fairness, trust, and level of engagement with the public. Some argue that there is a distinction between trust and confidence: the former is individual (the decision to trust a police officer) and the latter institutional (the decision to trust 'the police') (Tyler, 2005). Bradford and Jackson (2010c) prefer to think of confidence and trust as much the same thing. They argue that trust can be both interpersonal and institutional. Both types of trust are subject to revision according to events, but institutional trust is slower to change; however, "like an oil tanker, once a change of direction is underway it might be difficult to halt or reverse." (Bradford and Jackson, 2010c, p.2). It is largely institutional trust that will be meant by the term 'confidence' throughout this thesis (Myhill and Quinton, 2010).

Confidence also has a complex relationship with legitimacy (Bradford and Jackson, 2011), and the two concepts are occasionally used as synonyms. However, as the next section elaborates, they are two distinct ideas; confidence rests on trust (Bradford and Jackson, 2010c), while legitimacy refers to the right of the police to claim authority and obedience. Confidence is an outcome of legitimacy, in that it is hard to trust a police force which one believes to be

illegitimate; but confidence is also a cornerstone of legitimacy, in that an institution that is not trusted by the public will struggle to assert its claim to authority: "power can be assigned, but legitimacy and authority have to be earned." (Hough, 2003, p.146). It is partly through gaining the public's confidence that the police seek to establish their legitimacy.

Both confidence and legitimacy are usually (though not always) assessed through survey measures. Typically, confidence is measured through questions about citizens' assessments of their local police, while legitimacy is operationalised as the perceived obligation to obey (Sunshine and Tyler, 2003). However, sometimes, as with Sunshine and Tyler above, trust in the police (or confidence) is included in measures of legitimacy. Given the complex relationship between the two constructs, and the qualitative nature of this thesis, I treat confidence and legitimacy as mutually reinforcing ideas.

Citizen confidence in the police has a multitude of benefits (Rix et al, 2009), including the encouragement of active citizen participation, and increasing the local accountability of the police (Bradford and Jackson, 2010b). It allows for the fair allocation of police resources - if citizens do not engage because of a lack of confidence, police cannot know where to send officers (Bradford and Jackson, 2010a); but if they do engage, they act in ways that assume the police can be trusted, and enable the police to behave in a fairer and more effective manner. In this way, these "moment-to-moment acts of consent, compliance and cooperation" (Bradford et al, 2009) express trust in the police and the perception of legitimacy, and serve to build confidence and legitimacy as well.

Confidence can also increase legitimacy by encouraging the public to co-operate with the police and comply with the law (Tyler and Fagan, 2008). Bradford, Jackson and Hough (2017) note the particular importance of confidence, and therefore legitimacy, with regard to the justice system, which both imposes intrusive and coercive demands on citizens, yet requires their broad consent and engagement to operate effectively.

This section looks first at what general factors affect levels of confidence in policing, before looking at the evidence as to what kinds of police activities and public encounters can damage or improve confidence. Finally, I explore the 'expressive nature' of public confidence (Jackson and Bradford, 2009) and the way that confidence appears to reflect concerns about local social order. I conclude that the evidence indicates that the negotiation of police legitimacy and confidence needs to take place at a neighbourhood level. However, I warn that confidence may be particularly susceptible at a time of straitened resources, a theme I return to in the next chapter and throughout this thesis; and that this has the potential to endanger police legitimacy in a general sense as well as the citizen engagement with the police upon which the service relies.

What affects levels of confidence?

Confidence is usually assessed through survey measures asking respondents to rate the performance of their local police (Bradford, 2011). Factors shown to affect confidence at the macro level include gender, ethnicity, and age (ibid); males are slightly more likely to be dissatisfied with the police, and younger people much more likely (Jackson and Sunshine, 2007). In the UK, black and Asian residents are more likely to regard their local police positively than white

residents (Jackson and Bradford, 2009) - a finding that the authors suggest may reflect a decline in trust and confidence among white citizens relative to other ethnic groups. Jackson and Bradford suggest that whites may increasingly perceive society as fractured and less cohesive, a situation for which the police are regarded as partially responsible.

There is significant evidence that citizens' social environments predict their willingness to trust the police (Bradford et al, 2018). Bradford, Jackson and Stanko (2009) found that community cohesion was more important than collective efficacy in opinions of the police, even controlling for deprivation. Moreover, different neighbourhoods can respond in different ways to confidence-building measures: more cohesive, prosperous areas are more alert to disorder; but less cohesive neighbourhoods respond more to high quality police-community engagement (Perkins, 2016). This suggests the police need to be aware of neighbourhood-level variations in response if planning confidence-improving interventions.

For some scholars, confidence and legitimacy need to be approached from a wider perspective, ebbing and flowing largely at a societal level (McLaughlin, 2007; Reiner, 2010). Reiner (2010) argues that the public confidence in the public police evident from the 1950s to the 1970s was a result of a broad incorporation of the working classes into the prosperity of the new post-War society. This was accompanied by something of a 'golden age' for policing (Reiner, 1992a; Loader, 1997). The last 20 years, by contrast, have seen the abandonment of what once was a broad acceptance of a wider police role, and the return to a very narrow publicly expressed conception of what the police are for.

He argues that the driver for this recent change has been a shift from the fairly consensual politics of the 50s and 60s to "globalised neo-liberalism" (Reiner 2012, p5), which has been accompanied by the de-incorporation of the working classes and their increased alienation. However, while important, this perspective is perhaps too broad to sufficiently make out important details: there is, for example, important evidence that suggests that public confidence in the police can be influenced by police behaviour; and, moreover, that the types of police behaviour that can gain public confidence operate at a neighbourhood level (and therefore warrant examination at that level). It is to this I turn next.

What damages or improves confidence?

Confidence is fragile; unsatisfactory contacts with the police have consistently been shown to adversely affect confidence in the police (Skogan, 2006; Bradford, Jackson and Stanko, 2009). Moreover, the effect of contact is asymmetric - any contact with the police is much more likely to lead to poorer perceptions than to higher confidence, regardless of whether contact is self-initiated (such as reporting a crime) or police-initiated (such as stop and search).

However, Bradford, Jackson and Stanko's (2009) study, based on the Metropolitan Police Public Attitude Survey (MPS PAS), suggests that positively received encounters between the police and the public can deliver small improvements to confidence. The MPS PAS divides assessments of confidence into four measures: perceptions of effectiveness, fairness, community engagement, and overall confidence. The authors found that any kind of contact damaged attitudes to effectiveness. This may be because police-initiated contacts damage attitudes overall, while self-initiated contacts may lead to disappointing

results; the police can rarely solve residents' issues with the speed and completeness they might want. Low perceived police visibility was linked to low opinions of both effectiveness and fairness. The authors suggest that this may be about the communication of competence: in terms of instrumental effectiveness in solving crimes, but also in being seen to do the job 'properly', in the way that the public expect - an expression of moral alignment. However, while perceptions of effectiveness were not improved by contact, some positively assessed self-initiated contacts saw improvements in assessments of police fairness and community engagement.

There is in fact a range of evidence to suggest that some interventions can improve public confidence in the police. Tackling signs of disorder at neighbourhood level, for instance, can help improve confidence (Wilson and Kelling, 1982; Dalgleish and Myhill, 2004; Innes and Roberts, 2007; Rix et al, 2009). Rix et al (2009) found four types of intervention that had shown improvements in confidence: high quality community engagement; neighbourhood or community policing; local communications; and restorative justice. Broadly, these tend to be about fairness and engagement rather than about effectiveness. Trust in effectiveness seems to be separate to trust in police fairness and community engagement and overall confidence (Bradford and Jackson, 2010b). This may be a problem for forces which assume their main purpose is to be effective in solving crime.

High quality community engagement includes responding to the public politely and respectfully, and making contact with residents while undertaking foot patrol (Bennett, 1991; Myhill and Beak, 2008). The implementation of neighbourhood

policing in the UK, which included increased visibility through foot patrol, community engagement and problem-solving, had a positive effect on police confidence (Tuffin, Morris and Poole, 2006) - the mechanisms of which will be explored in more depth in Chapter Three.

Feeling well-informed as to police activity also affects confidence. Sometimes it can negatively affect perceptions of fairness (Bradford, Jackson and Stanko, 2009), perhaps due to greater public knowledge of negative press stories and scandals affecting the police. However, the type of information makes a difference. Low-level communication about the criminal justice system does seem to improve confidence (Salisbury, 2004). Hohl, Bradford and Stanko (2010) found that the widespread delivery of newsletters containing information about what the police were doing to find out about public concerns, reporting police actions on these issues, and their successes, substantially improved public assessments of police community engagement - and served to 'buffer' levels of confidence in the neighbourhoods concerned from negative media coverage of policing and crime. Finally, visibility is thought to improve confidence (Bradford et al, 2009; Sindall and Sturgis, 2013). Residents who believe that they see the police more also tend to report higher confidence.

However, most studies on confidence have been snapshots. In an important time series analysis, Sindall, Sturgis and Jennings (2012) found that perceptions of crime and the property crime rate were the only factors that contributed to changes in confidence levels. This challenged previous findings that police effectiveness was the least important of the factors contributing to confidence. Responding to this, Bradford and Myhill (2015) looked at the findings of the

Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) panel experiment to see if expressive concerns about issues such as social cohesion could contribute to changes in levels of trust. They found that changes in perceptions of disorder and to collective efficacy were consistently associated with changes in confidence in the police - though earlier victimisation could also affect later levels of confidence. These findings support a model of confidence where levels over time can be affected by changes to instrumental concerns, but that perceptions of local order remain more important to changing perceptions of the police. Bradford and Myhill (2015) root this in Earle and Cvetkovich's (1995) 'value-bearing narrative', in which the police are embedded, and which also incorporates a sense of local community order. Any perceived breakdown in local order implicates the police. This adds weight to the need to understand how the subjective concerns of local communities are responded to by the police.

The expressive nature of public confidence

The evidence therefore seems to suggest that confidence in policing has less to do with fear of victimisation or perceptions of risk (Jackson and Sunshine, 2007) than with 'expressive concerns' (Jackson and Bradford, 2009) over issues such as social cohesion; moreover, that 'confidence' represents broader social anxieties about social changes well beyond police remits. In this analysis, and reflecting earlier discussions of legitimacy, residents take up orientations towards the police that position the latter as symbolic representatives of the nation, the state, and of broad social norms.

Some argue that policing serves to construct national identities. Loader (2006) argues, after Bayley (2001), that the symbolic power of policing extends beyond

local reassurance to help shape people's place in their world. Loader's wider thesis is that policing is a "social institution whose routine ordering and cultural work communicates authoritative meanings to individuals and groups about who they are, about whether their voices are heard and claims recognised, and about where and in what ways they belong" (Loader 2006, p.204).

Confidence in the police may in part represent a confidence in what policing – and the police - stand for. This "organised defence of the norms and social ties" (Jackson and Bradford, 2009, p.499) that root people's social existence may, however, take different forms. Jackson and Bradford argue that citizens concerned by social change may look to the police to defend a sense of order. In London, they found that people who saw society as breaking down generally were also more likely to see their neighbourhoods as more disordered, and to worry more about crime and police effectiveness. People think about the police, and base their judgements of them, in terms of local disorder, social order, and incivilities. The visible presence of the police reinforces a sense of stability and order, and shows the authorities have not abandoned the communities concerned (Giacomantonio et al, 2015).

While scholars have acknowledged that this dominant model of orientations towards the police may not include all social groups, for the most part, the exclusions suggested have been young people or ethnic minorities (Loader, 1996; Bowling and Philips, 2002; Jackson and Bradford, 2009). However, recent events such as Brexit, and opinion polling around core issues of immigration and national identity, suggest that the UK is fractured along many different fault lines. This is supported by research on trends in public confidence (Bradford, 2010),

highlighting the increasing diversity and individuation in public attitudes. This adds weight to arguments that police legitimation needs to be contextualised both historically and locally, and, suggests that the 'local' - in other words, the neighbourhood - may be the best site within which confidence in policing can be built.

All this generates a series of important questions, particularly at a time of straitened resources. Police activity that promotes effectiveness in fighting crime will not necessarily improve measures of confidence; but are other activities seen as worthwhile when resources are limited? Confidence can be improved by better information, positive experiences of contact, more and better police engagement with communities, and active engagement with issues around social cohesion and disorder; but is this still achievable under the conditions of austerity? Activities that foster a sense of social order and collective efficacy increase public confidence in policing, but equally push at the limits of the police remit (Millie, 2013), and give rise to the question of what should be the limits of police activity. This is potentially a problem for a service finding that demand is increasingly focused around 'hidden harms' (CoP, 2015a), and underlines the importance of research that explores how demand is managed and explained on the ground. Much work on confidence is survey-based. There is, therefore, a clear need for a qualitative, in-depth exploration of the processes used to build confidence in the police, particularly on a local level, as this thesis seeks to do.

Procedural justice and police legitimacy

As outlined in the last section, legitimacy is a separate concept to confidence or trust, and refers to the right of an institution to claim authority and obedience.

Legitimacy rests on legality, effectiveness, and shared values; whereas trust is a prediction about others' behaviour (Bradford and Jackson, 2010c). Expanding the discussion from confidence to legitimacy thus directs our attention beyond individual assessments of the trustworthiness of individuals and institutions, to a wider sense of the right of the police to call on the public to co-operate. Hohl et al (2010) suggest that trust underlies and constitutes legitimacy. Others suggest that police legitimacy is expressed through confidence (Sunshine and Tyler, 2003). As noted in the last section, given the complex relationship between confidence and legitimacy, I treat them here as mutually reinforcing, while acknowledging their distinct nature.

As with confidence, the legitimacy of the police in the UK is often linked to the idea of policing by consent. Reiner (2010) argues that the early police were so successful in achieving 'consent' in the face of a hostile polity that 'policing by consent' became an "animating idea of official discourse about British policing" (Reiner, 2009, p.52), one that still provides it with a 'legitimating philosophy' (McLaughlin, 2005). More recently, the study of what creates and sustains the legitimacy of the police has become almost a sub-discipline in its own right. While Reiner (2009) maintains that the legitimacy of the police is only partly related to what the police actually do - rather, he argues, their legitimacy lies in broad social, economic and cultural processes - the thrust of much recent research (Myhill and Quinton, 2011; Mazerolle, 2013) has focused on the way that officers' behaviour affects the way the police are perceived, and how that in turn affects the way that the public behave towards the police.

This section looks first at the nature of police legitimacy, and explores how procedural justice contributes towards it. I show that police legitimacy is mutual, reciprocal, and in Reiner's words, "tenuous and constantly subject to negotiation and redefinition" (Reiner 2009, p.53). I then outline the evidence that suggests that - as with confidence - police legitimacy lies not in effectiveness, but in the demonstration of shared values and moral alignment. I underline the difficulties that this presents in a complex modern polity, and introduce a political realist perspective, which I expand upon later in the chapter, that argues that no such legitimation can ever be complete, but is constantly subject to political debate in its widest sense. I conclude by reiterating Radburn and Stott's (2018) observations regarding the need to look at processes of legitimacy in their social context, and argue that this offers a warrant for the examination of the negotiation of police legitimacy in the context of community policing.

The nature of legitimacy

Legitimacy can be defined as a circumstance in which people believe that decisions are right and ought to be followed (Tyler, 2006). As with confidence in the police, a distinction may be drawn between assessments of police effectiveness, and those of fairness. Tyler and Fagan (2008) contrast two theoretical models of co-operation with the police: an instrumental model, in which individuals are largely motivated by self-interest; and a legitimacy model, in which co-operation is also influenced by people's beliefs about the police and the law. In the first model, people will be more co-operative if they believe that this will help the police to reduce crime; and the police can encourage this by demonstrating effectiveness. In the second, normative, model, people obey the

law because they believe it (and by extension the police) to be legitimate (Tyler, 2004, 2006; Tyler and Fagan, 2008). The authors found perceptions of legitimacy were linked to the way that police exercised their authority: procedurally just encounters increased legitimacy regardless of those encounters' outcomes; suggesting legitimacy is primarily driven by assessments of fairness rather than effectiveness. As with the scholarship on confidence, this has implications for the way the police present themselves; prioritising 'crime fighting' may not have the outcomes in terms of legitimacy that police leaders might expect. This model has formed the basis for much of the subsequent work on legitimacy in the criminal justice sphere, an area in which research has proliferated in the past two decades (Worden and MacLean, 2017).

The thrust of much of this work is that there appears to be a demonstrable link between procedurally just encounters and the way that people perceive the police related to that encounter (Mastrofski, Snipes and Supina, 1996; Tyler and Fagan, 2008). However, it is less clear how procedural justice affects general assessments of legitimacy (Mazerolle et al, 2013). Global views of procedural justice may be a key antecedent of general perceptions of legitimacy (Sunshine and Tyler, 2013). However, this process is complex and perhaps circular; perceptions of institutional legitimacy or community norms may shape perceptions of procedural justice, which shape beliefs about legitimacy, and so on (Hawdon, 2008; Antrobus et al, 2015).

Perceptions of moral alignment appear to be key. People consent to be policed not just when they feel obligated, but when they believe the police to be "exercising their authority in fair ways" (Tyler, 2011, p.257) within an

appropriate ethical framework. Trust and shared values are more important than effectiveness in fostering police legitimacy (Myhill and Quinton, 2011). By treating people fairly, Tyler argues that the police communicate the status of those being policed as valued members of society (Tyler, 2006) and can "demonstrate moral alignment through procedural fairness and representing community values" (Jackson et al, 2012, p.1054). It is not clear from this, however, who defines fairness; or what happens if these judgements conflict: how it is determined which communities and whose values are to take priority, and how such disagreement affects the communication of status and the fostering of legitimacy.

Determining shared values

Adapting Beetham (1991), Bottoms and Tankebe (2012, p.142) say that to meet the demands of legitimacy, power holders must pass three tests: power must be derived from a valid source of legitimate authority; should be exercised in a manner considered justified in the context of that society; and must be seen to serve a recognisable general interest. Authority is legitimated, not by a pre-existing set of normative rules, but "because it can be *justified in terms of* [citizens'] beliefs" (Beetham, 2013, p.11, italics in original). This is a perspective on legitimacy and normative values that can be described as political realism: an approach that begins with the realities of politics itself, rather than looking for a set of antecedent moral values from outside the messy realm of political debate. Political realists - among whom Beetham can be included - instead insist that moral values themselves are determined politically. This means that shared

values must be negotiated within a polity, rather than called down from a morally superior height.

Shared values here define the conditions within which legitimate power can be exercised. Bottoms and Tankebe argue, following Walzer (1994), that individual cultural groups may well have different 'thick,' or particular, moralities, but that there are the makings of a 'thin,' or universalist, morality within each of these: a skein of moral alignment that can unite a complex and multicultural populace. Based on this, and the observation that liberal democracies share a belief in formal equality, Tankebe (2013) outlines a set of specific normative expectations of policing in a liberal democracy: distributive fairness (the allocation of policing and its outcomes); procedural fairness (quality of decision-making and treatment); and effectiveness. Effectiveness here is treated as a value in its own right; it cannot simply be seen as utilitarian and unrelated to legitimacy (Bottoms and Tankebe, 2012). Rather, the belief that police should be effective is a normative value in itself. The value in question is a belief in the role of the police.

This assumption, that shared values exist, and can form a largely unproblematic body which power-holders can reflect, is a troublesome one. It is not clear that 'thick' moralities accrue to distinct, identifiable communities, or that they invariably contain the kernel of a universalist thin morality. Neither is it clear that a 'thin' morality would contain enough common ground to provide legitimacy, or that the order in which those values might be ranked would be unproblematic.

A political realist perspective would preclude such a universal morality, arguing instead for the inevitability of disagreement, even on foundational principles

(Sleat, 2018), a theme I return to later in the chapter. The particular must therefore remain a subject of attention. This is not to suggest that shared values are irrelevant to legitimacy, but to argue for the "situational and cultural contingency of fairness 'rules'" (Radburn and Stott, 2018, p.2): what is seen as just, fair and therefore legitimate may not be the same in one time and place as in another.

Legitimacy is better seen in the reciprocal and negotiated terms that Bottoms and Tankebe (2012) set out. "Legitimacy … is more like a perpetual discussion, in which the content of power-holders' later claims will be affected by the nature of the audience response" (Bottoms and Tankebe 2012, p.129). One of the advantages of this is that legitimacy can take different forms - indeed, it will have to, given the different sociopolitical settings in which such dialogues will take place (Tankebe, 2013; Tankebe, Reisig and Wang, 2016). Thinking of legitimacy as negotiated also reincorporates the social context of police-public interactions, which is often overlooked (Radburn and Stott, 2018).

An important aspect of this contextualisation is the status of the police. Loader (2006) argues that security is not just about objective threats and their minimisation, but the membership ("confident, effortless") of a political community (Loader 2006, p.210). The police have the power to send signals about who is legitimate within a community and the kind of place that community is: they are both "minders and reminders" (ibid) of what a community is or aspires to be. The legitimacy of the police is also therefore an expression of how and where people belong. Unfair treatment excludes people

from these identities, so they comply less with those norms (Bradford, 2014; Bradford, Murphy and Jackson, 2014).

However, these conceptualisations tend not to see the police as a distinct social group - rather they are "constituted unproblematically as being prototypical representatives" (Radburn and Stott, 2018, p.8) of a broader social category (though Bradford and Quinton (2014), for example, have examined police officers' self-legitimacy). This can elide the separate group identity of the police. Seeing the police in terms of a group allows the investigation of how other groups might identify with them, rather than a 'thin' universal citizenship that the police might represent. It also allows the police to be seen as holding a set (or several sets) of values that differ in important ways from those of the wider public (Loftus, 2010; Reiner, 2010; Charman, 2017). If demonstrating shared values and moral alignment are necessary for legitimacy, the content of these values and their local context both need to be examined.

The conclusion I draw from this is that police legitimacy appears to rest on perceptions of moral alignment. However, this is problematic from a perspective in which no such common values can be guaranteed. If there is no 'thin' morality, but rather an overlapping patchwork of the particular, how can police legitimacy be achieved? The answer clearly must also lie in the particular. This is not to argue that there can be no stated common purpose for policing, or account of what policing does. It is simply to note that its legitimation must have concern for difference and dissent. This suggests that the negotiation of legitimacy, thought of as a mutual, ongoing conversation, must take place at multiple levels - national

and local - and have concern for the mutability and variability of citizens' moral positions.

As noted in the introduction to this thesis, and elsewhere in this chapter, much of the work on police legitimacy has been survey-based; there is a clear need for qualitative studies that examine legitimation as a situationally contextualised negotiation in order to offer a much richer account of the processes involved. Community policing, as the next chapter makes clear, is the ideal area for such a study, as it is generally intended to perform precisely this situationally contextualised process of legitimation. First, however, the next sections of this chapter look firstly at the role of democratic policing in the legitimation of the police, and lastly at the way that a political realist perspective can help illuminate the moral landscape upon which this legitimation takes place.

Policing and democracy

The last two sections have underlined the importance of shared values and moral alignment to confidence and legitimacy in policing. However, these are not the only spheres in which the values which the police espouse are seen as important to legitimacy in its broadest sense. The question of which principles should be embedded in policing, particularly in post-conflict environments, has been a subject of increasing attention since the end of the Cold War (Bayley, 2009). Democratic policing is also a concern for police services in developed, Western countries such as the UK; particularly when dealing with incidents such as terrorist activity which can prompt illiberal responses. In this context, community or neighbourhood policing, as a vehicle for building trust, and with its focus on

consent and consultation, can be regarded as a form of highly localised democratic policing (Innes, 2006b).

However, if there is consensus on the need for democratic policing, there is less agreement as to what it should consist of. As Jones, Newburn and Smith (1996, p.188) say, "There appears to be universal agreement about the desirability of 'democratic policing', but equally universal disagreement about what exactly this would constitute." Moreover, the 'aspirational' nature of much of the thinking on democratic values in policing can sometimes elide the practical collisions between such principles in practice, as well as their historical and local particularity.

I argue, in line with a political realist position, that these underlying differences in values may be irreconcilable. The purpose of this section therefore is not to outline a new set of democratic criteria, but to focus on the contested elements of existing criteria: how and when their content is left undetermined, and why and how these principles might conflict.

This section follows Aitchison and Blaustein (2013) in distinguishing between policing for democracy and democratic responsiveness; and focuses on the latter. The first part looks at how democratic policing principles are shaped by particular understandings of democracy and the values that are associated with them. It then looks at how democratic policing contains the police, and the questions of accountability and governance that arise from this. Finally, it examines democratic responsiveness to the general public. I show how the values associated with different positions on democracy can come into conflict, and can fail to reflect the realities of the political world in which policing takes place. The

way that democracy is done is just as important at the micro level of neighbourhood policing as in post-conflict environments, and carries with it the same set of often unexamined assumptions about the content of democratic policing - which just as much consequence for the legitimacy of the police.

Democratic policing

Democratic policing is policing that is enacted according to democratic criteria. These usually attempt to go beyond the practices of representative democracy, to say something essential about the beliefs and principles upon which democracy rests. As noted above, much of the relevant literature addresses itself to developing or post-conflict environments. However, there is also a considerable amount of scholarship about the content of democratic policing in a mature democracy (for example, Jones, Newburn and Smith, 1996; Loader and Walker, 2007). This thesis focuses on neighbourhood policing in the UK, and I have therefore utilised Aitchison and Blaustein's useful (2013) distinction between policing for democracy (the role of policing in supporting and building democratic institutions) and democratic responsiveness in policing, and have chosen to focus on the latter.[1]

The content of 'democratic responsiveness' depends on the particular model of democracy that is favoured. The elite pluralism of the 1950s and 1960s rested on a belief - supported by wartime experience - that democracies should be built on consensus and compromise, steered by men with cool heads. Happily, pluralists

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[1] This is not to suggest that there is no role for policing for democracy in mature Western states. However, the protection of the exercise of democratic freedoms, which is at the heart of policing for democracy, is not the central concern of this thesis.

felt participation in politics to be of only marginal interest for most people. Politics was "the interest of some, the hobby of a few, and the passion of even fewer" (Jones, Newburn and Smith 1996, p.184). Democratic accountability and legitimacy could be maintained simply through providing regular elections.

In contrast to the pluralists, advocates of participatory democracy argue that participation has value for all citizens. Participatory democracy gives citizens a more active role in making decisions, through discussion and voting (Bevir, 2009). It deepens critical faculties, but it also "assist[s] the growth of a democratic personality: self-confident, public-minded, civically engaged, and 'authentic'" (Sklansky, 2005, p.1761).

Advocates of deliberative democracy go further: they argue political decisions should be the product of sincere public debate among citizens (Sklansky, 2005). Democratic input would contribute to better decisions, and avoid bureaucracies (such as the police) making them on the basis of "self-corroborating biases" (Loader and Sparks, 2012, p.33). Public deliberation would instead create a constant flow of information about public needs and wants to keep institutions in touch with citizens and their beliefs.

None of these positions has overwhelmingly defeated the others, and each has weaknesses. Some criticisms of elite pluralism, such as the argument that such systems are weighted in favour of the wealthy and articulate, and reinforce patterns of dominance and repression, can also be made of participatory forums; a concern returned to in Chapter Three. Theories of deliberative democracy tend to elide conflict, and avoid the fact that some positions are simply incompatible with others: consensus cannot always be reached regardless of how long one

deliberates. And indeed, in some cases, consensus perhaps should not be reached: as Sklansky (2005, p.1766) argues, "some arguments are incoherent, …some political positions are unworthy of respect, and … some systems should be overthrown."

Each perspective continues to wield influence; and can be traced in contemporary arguments. Some proponents of democratic policing are explicit about how their position on democracy shapes the principles they propound. Loader and Walker (2007), for example, rest their claims on the 'republican' account laid out by Pettit (2001) and the role of deliberative practice in limiting the dominating tendencies of the state. Manning (2010) takes Rawls' (1999) theory of justice as his starting point. However, others are less clear. The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), for example, offers no theoretical grounds for the principles it seeks to embed in the actions of transitional police forces (Carty, 2008). But the fact that such principles have been codified indicate unspoken assumptions about the nature of democracy. These principles are therefore worth unrolling and examining for the assumptions they contain, to show how these can come into conflict in theory; and to show how these conflicts in practice may need to be resolved.

Containing the police

There is consensus among scholars on the need for oversight of the police (Jones, Newburn and Smith, 1996; Marenin, 1998; Bayley, 2001). Pino and Wiatrowski (2006) perhaps go furthest, insisting that the subordination of policing to civil authority should include the public determining police objectives, and the civilian review of police operations.

One objection to this is practical. As Harkin (2015a) points out, there is a limit to how democratically responsive policing can be, due to its 'form'. If effectiveness is a value which policing should seek to attain, then some policing activities cannot be subject to civilian oversight until after the fact. A second objection is based on the nature of police discretion (Goldstein, 1960). The police do in some ways make the law, in that they decide when it is applied and, on occasions, how it is interpreted. This discretion is at the heart of adaptable and flexible policing. Limiting police discretion seems likely to encourage the inflexible over-enforcement of the law, with potentially anti-democratic consequences.

Moreover, the extent to which policing should be politically directed is very much contested. In the UK, the boundary between the strategic responsibilities of Police and Crime Commissioners and the operational ones of Chief Constables is somewhat unclear (Lister, 2013), and the establishment of PCCs came after years of opposition to the politicisation of the police (Mawby and Smith, 2013).

To say, therefore, that police accountability and oversight is a good thing, is to say very little about the content of that accountability, and to whom exactly the police ought to account for themselves. Democracy does not guarantee liberal attitudes in the authorities responsible for oversight, for example (Wood, 2014). If police legitimacy, as we have seen, is based on the demonstration of shared values, then it is at least imaginable that police may find themselves accounting for their activities to an authority that does not share values with the citizens being policed. The content of democratic values therefore may have to be negotiable itself - which may preclude its predetermination according to a given set of principles, however well thought out.

Responsiveness

There is also a consensus that the legitimacy of a democratic police force requires that it should respond to citizens, not the state. Marenin (1998) calls this 'accessibility;' the police should be available to those who want their help, and all citizens should feel entitled to ask for it. Skolnick (1999, p.2) argues that an emphasis on this access works to counter inequalities in power and influence: "openness to the free and the poor should be a master ideal of democratic policing."

Loader and Walker (2007) similarly focus on 'recognition' as one of their four principles: each citizen should be seen and recognised as a full member of society and all voices should be heard; recognition demands "mechanisms whose guiding orientation is that of inclusion" (2007, p.220). Inclusive processes signal to all citizens that they belong, and can therefore live more securely with risk.

The principle of responsiveness has found its way into OSCE guidance for transitional states (Carty, 2008), and echoes Marenin's idea of 'congruence' between the values of the police and the existing normative order. However, again, there are problems with the practical content of 'responsiveness'. Some argue that focusing on the accessibility of services risks the reproduction of existing patterns of order in the face of demands by existing elites (Marenin, 1998). Sklansky (2005) underlines that policing is a type of redistribution - in this case of coercive force. However, ideas of accessibility as a guiding principle are challenged by those that argue that policing services should be allocated on the basis of need, rather than demand.

Jones, Newburn and Smith (1996) roll accessibility together with the distribution of police enforcement to create the single criteria of equity, which they consider the most important of the democratic values. However, any principle of equity without content does not engage with what an equitable distribution of police services might look like and who should decide.

Laying down the content of 'equity', particularly in the distribution of police services, can have undesirable consequences. Manning (2010) for example suggests that a democratic police force apply coercion equally to groups regardless of the relative violence of citizens. Jones, Newburn and Smith (2007) are more circumspect, noting that potential consequences of demanding equality of outcome in policing can include increased inequity for victims of crime, who are often concentrated in the same areas as the perpetrators. It was exactly this recognition from left realist criminologists that informed New Labour's approach in the 1990s, a theme returned to in the next chapter.

For this and other reasons, Jones, Newburn and Smith (1996) argue that the application of the general principle of equity cannot be determined in advance. Similarly, Loader and Walker (2007), who favour deliberation, argue that the state needs to highlight and publicise the trade-offs in determining the allocation of security. They emphasise the importance of acknowledging that equity in the distribution of police services means that some claimants will get less than they desire, and argue the importance of acknowledging these constraints. In this way, the managing of demand can itself become valuable to democracy, as it channels particularistic demands into a conversation about common security.

The practice of responsiveness is also subject to deep disagreement. Jones, Newburn and Smith (2016) are hesitant, suggesting that some places might want to set up participatory mechanisms, but others might not. For Jones, Newburn and Smith, participation is really only of value to a small elite, as few people are interested in policing until it goes wrong. Loader and Walker (2007) by contrast prioritise an idea of public reason as one of their four principles. Particularistic demands based on emotion rather than reason do not have "to be responded to in the form in which they present themselves" (2007, p.229). Instead, engaging in public reasoning will persuade citizens to "reformulate their demands using criteria that are considered 'cooperatively admissible' within the settings of public deliberation within which they are being considered and weighed." (2007, p.230). Such an activity will persuade the public that political freedom can only be found through common deliberation, not as individuals, consumers, or members of particular communities.

However, one danger in the integration of participatory and deliberative democratic ideas without an explicit account of differentiated power is that it leads to the dominance of the most privileged voices - exactly the weakness of pluralist democratic theory. Thus, Loader and Walker's (2007) conception of public reason is culturally particularistic in its own right, more accessible to those who have been trained in its requirements. Those able to understand and stick by the rules of public reason are also likely to be those who have other advantages, such as education, or professional knowledge in the case of the police. Moreover, these reasoning structures are not content-free, but restrictive on the kind of expression, understanding and reason that is permissible - and the rules are set down by those already advantaged. The idea of public reason is therefore is not

just constrained by pre-existing assumptions about democracy, but also by the limits imposed by the realities of the political environment in which it might take place. In practice, community policing rarely intrudes upon the operational autonomy of the police (Sklansky 2005, p.1798) - which leads to a related, more insidious danger: a complacency around community engagement in which the fact of participation can be cited to demonstrate that the process has been sufficiently democratic.

Much of the scholarly argument for certain principles of democratic policing assume that a reasoned consensus can be found if certain 'universal' understandings of democracy are adopted. The above examination underlines that, even within democratic policing scholarship, values clash. We disagree. Moreover, the nature of policing itself limits the extent to which some of these ideals can be attained. All this raises questions as to whether the structures that are in place to deliver 'democratic' policing in fact meet any of the promises suggested above, and to what extent the difficulties and conflicts I have highlighted above are present in practice.

These issues matter, because the structures of policing are not determined simply on the basis of what we know to work, but within a framework of assumptions about what is 'right'. Concern for these structures is often absent from scholarship devoted to the principles of democratic policing (Sklansky, 2005). This is particularly the case with regard to community and neighbourhood policing, with their reliance on consultation and community involvement (explored further in the next chapter). Questions of fairness, of access, and of representativeness are always present, embedded in wider expectations of what

the police themselves represent and how they should behave. This makes neighbourhood policing an ideal location to explore how structures of democratic policing evolve, and how principles of democracy are articulated and expressed, in practice.

All of these questions are ultimately about legitimacy, the extent to which its content must be normatively determined, and from whence those normative principles derive. The next section outlines how a political realist approach, which rejects pre-determined assumptions about what is morally right or what 'reasonable' people might agree to, can help us understand not just how the content of democratic policing can be determined, but how this can contribute to confidence and legitimacy in practice.

Political realism as an approach to policing

The preceding sections have demonstrated the benefits of a political realist approach to questions of legitimacy and democracy in policing. Political realism heightens awareness of important issues for policing: the ways in which societies are not consensual in their beliefs or in their politics; the fact that values are not universally shared, and are often divisive; and how beliefs and values can actively conflict. The political realist approach also highlights that, to the extent these issues are dynamically if temporarily resolved, it is through the means of politics in its broadest sense.

Political realism is an approach that attempts to understand politics by beginning with the realities of politics itself. Political theorists who take a realist approach place themselves in opposition to a swathe of contemporary political theory which has "conceived of politics as little more than the instrument for the

application and realisation of some antecedent moral values, principles or ideals." (Sleat, 2018, p.3). The central reality upon which political realists insist is that no such antecedent values can be determined. Rather, all values are subject to profound disagreement, and we cannot reach agreement on them outside the political. Insomuch as our differences can be resolved, it is through the messy, contingent and flawed processes and structures of politics. This has important consequences for the legitimacy of the state, and by extension, for policing.

I begin by explaining how 'moralist' approaches attempt to provide a normative account of what the state should do, and how and why political realists reject these attempts. I explain the importance of this for the expression of the state's coercive power and the legitimacy of policing. I then explore the consequences of such an approach for what we believe, and how we police. The final part of this section outlines the questions that a political realist approach raises for policing and how this thesis responds to them.

The political realist approach

Much modern political theory is a response to a perceived normative absence in Weberian thinking about political legitimacy. In Weber's (1958) account, legitimacy is defined, not as the evaluation of a regime, but the belief of citizens that the regime is legitimate (Graftstein,1981). Legitimacy therefore becomes circular: a regime is legitimate if its subjects believe it to be so, regardless of its content - an "infinite regress" (Beetham, 1991, p.39). Many of the responses to this are rooted in a liberal moral philosophy, which aims to specify the way we ought to relate to each other as members of society, and only then take into account existing conditions and individual and social beliefs (Larmore 2013,

p.277). However, if we acknowledge that there exists no universal consensus either on what is right or on what is good, we begin to regard not just politics but also morality as a domain shaped by profound and unreconcilable disagreement. This is the position of political realism.

This position is relevant to policing for several reasons. Firstly, the focus of the moralist position is justice (cf. Rawls, 1999). However, Williams (2005) argues that the first political question is not justice, but order - without which there will be no opportunity to pose any other questions. Policing is the expression of the state's coercive power and its capacity to maintain that order. Policing is therefore deeply political; and a necessity for the existence of politics in its ordinary sense (Aitchison and Blaustein, 2013).

Secondly, political realism casts morality as subject to politics, not a precursor of it. The distinction is important: the loser in a moral argument is an outcast; they are immoral. The loser in a political argument lives to fight again, and perhaps to win in the next contest (Pippin, 2007, p.523). There is no expectation that the loser in a political argument will be reconciled to the winner's argument. Indeed, a functioning democratic polity is designed around allowing those who fundamentally disagree to coexist. This is crucial to our understanding of how the state should wield its coercive power. A conception of politics in which those who disagree with us on values must be overcome or excluded from debate is very different to one in which our right to disagree is protected. A realist approach highlights the inevitability of irreconcilable clashes between values[2]

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[2] This includes liberal values. Current debates over sex-based rights flag the way that a priori assumptions of the relative weight of 'oppressions' can lead to "impossible and absurd competitions" (Frazer, 2018, p.336)

(Sleat, 2018). There are clear ramifications for how a state should police protest, and how it should respond to illiberalism.

More importantly for this thesis, this has consequences for how we think about police legitimacy. For political authority to be experienced as political rather than as brute force, there must be a way of explaining its existence in a manner that makes sense to those who live within it - there must be a claim to legitimacy (Williams, 2005). The political realist position insists that this claim is political and contingent, not moral and prior to politics. The claim to legitimacy of a political authority - and by extension, the police - is contingent on place, time, and history, and will never be completely accepted. There will always be those who reject the state's (or police) authority, or who obey its demands through the recognition of its coercive power rather than its legitimate right to make such demands. An imperfectly legitimated authority is the norm rather than the exception (Sleat, 2014). By extension, policing by consent can never be complete (Myhill and Quinton, 2011); not least, as Reiner (2010) has argued, because someone is always being policed.

The legitimation of political power and its associated coercive force is historically and socially contextualised. Consent is derived from the legitimacy that is negotiated politically in a particular social, cultural and historical context: "legitimation is part of the concept, and the reality, of politics" (Galston, 2010, p.389). Policing is an expression of the coercive force of the state that, as such, must make a claim for legitimacy. It is how that claim is made, and how in this particular social and political context that legitimacy is negotiated, that is the subject of this thesis.

The consequences of a political realist approach

As noted above, moralist accounts of political legitimacy tend to argue, with Rawls (1999), that the first virtue of social institutions is justice, and that considerations of order, for example, are thus secondary (Larmore, 2018). Such an approach makes the moral prior to the political, and constrains what politics can do, by relying on a set of principles which derive from a source that is independent of the political order under discussion (Larmore, 2013; Sleat, 2014). In this approach, the legitimacy of policing would ultimately be determined by universalist values, however minimalist; i.e. that were not adaptable to particular circumstances. Certain police behaviour (as an expression of the state's authority) would always be wrong, or always be right, regardless of the particularities of state, regime, local situation, or historical context.

One problem with these accounts is that they often assume that the ethics that constrain that politics must be subject to a minimum of consensus. This imagined consensus is necessary in order that such values can have an "antecedent normative authority over politics" (Sleat, 2014, p.6). But, in fact, there is no such antecedent consensus. Take, for example, the nature of justice. We cannot assume that we could find a minimal reconcilable set of beliefs about justice, were we to sit in a room with a communist, a neoliberal, and a religious fundamentalist (Sleat, 2012).

By extension, we cannot assume a minimal reconcilable set of beliefs about the fair distribution of policing resources: whether everyone is entitled to a minimal police presence, or whether policing should be allocated strictly according to need. Nor is it immediately clear who is to determine the relative weight of those

needs; police officers, politicians, or communities themselves. Similarly, we cannot assume that everyone will consider justice as more important than order (Sleat, 2018). We disagree. We disagree in a non-reconcilable way about what justice means, and what precedence it should take, and this applies equally to ideas about freedom, rights, equality, and the way we should live our daily lives.

Legitimating the police

This chapter has focused on three elements of police legitimacy: firstly, the pragmatic assessment of what can contribute to confidence in policing; secondly, recent scholarship on the contribution that procedural justice can make to police legitimacy; and thirdly, the question of what kind of policing might be considered democratic. Reiner (2010) would add that police legitimacy must be seen as an outcome of broader historical, social and economic processes, a context a political realist position would consider vital to understanding the contingent nature of the political debates and structures within which the negotiation of legitimacy on the ground takes place.

Confidence is a useful way of thinking about legitimacy, and, helpfully, is regularly measured. The evidence, outlined earlier in the chapter, suggests that confidence in policing rests largely on expressive concerns about local order, the symbolic capacity of the police to represent stability, and motive-based trust: perceptions that the police share citizens' ideas of right and wrong (Bradford and Jackson, 2010). Confidence cannot be sustained by perceptions of police effectiveness alone. The expressive nature of confidence underlines its subjective nature, and the variability of citizens' assessments of local order. Here, a political realist approach illuminates the variety of perspectives on local order, and

underlines the danger of assuming that any single set of beliefs as to what the police should do - including, and perhaps particularly, those of the police - should take precedence.

Police legitimacy is distinct from confidence, and can be defined as "the belief that the police are entitled to call upon the public to comply with the law." (Murphy, 2009). Recent scholarship on procedural justice suggests that legitimacy is reciprocal, and rests on perceptions of legality, obligation, and moral alignment - citizens must trust the police and believe that they share their values. A moralist position, faced with the realities of imperfect police legitimation in practice, might reach one of three conclusions: either police values are fundamentally flawed; or the citizenry must be educated to understand why the police behave in the way that they do; or some citizens simply cannot be fully included in the group that the police serve - they are, rather, 'police property' (Lee, 1981, cited in Loader, 2006). Political realism by contrast underlines that legitimacy is only ever partial, and also that there is profound disagreement over values that needs to be reconciled, even if this process is never complete. Legitimacy is contingent, and its negotiation must be an ongoing and central part of the process of policing.

Democratic policing is a concept developed to describe a "desired mode of policing" (Bayley, 2009) that generally incorporates police behaving legally, according to human rights standards, in a way that is accountable to some kind of external body, and in a way that is responsive primarily to citizens rather than the state. It is largely used in the context of police reform, but also to theorise how policing 'should' work in developed democracies. As the last section showed,

there are important differences in the specific demands of these theories, several of which rest on explicitly moralist political positions (Manning, 2010). Moreover, many contain internal weaknesses and contradictions that rest on their particular understanding of democracy. A political realist approach allows some of these problems to be explained not as a failure of reasoning, but as an outcome of prior moral assumptions that fail to account for the realities of the political environment in which policing actually takes place.

The consequences of all this are as follows. Firstly, the legitimation of policing needs to be dynamic; it is not sufficient to philosophise about what policing 'ought' to do and to 'educate' the public about what this is. Such an approach assumes there is a correct set of policing priorities and behaviours that can be established through moral reasoning, and that those that disagree are morally wrong; this is not a sustainable platform for the legitimacy of the police. Secondly, police legitimacy may be locally contingent; the neighbourhood may not be a perfect site for politics in its broadest sense, but confidence in the police is at least partly a product of concerns for local order, and thus the negotiation of shared values may also need to reflect those local concerns. Finally, the processes and structures of this negotiation may also vary in their potential legitimacy on a local basis. Structures of police-public engagement may be more or less effective depending on who is involved in them. All of these issues again highlight the need to look at the local negotiation of legitimacy, particularly through the exercise of 'democratic' principles such as consultation in practice at the neighbourhood level.

Curiously, though political realists have turned their attention to a range of different 'real-world' applications, there has been no implementation of an explicitly political realist framework with regard to policing. Yet the consequences of such an approach are potentially far-reaching, particularly when looking at neighbourhood policing as a site for the negotiation of legitimacy and confidence. This thesis, which foregrounds values and dissent, therefore fills an important space in our understanding of public confidence and the legitimacy of the police.

Discussion and conclusion

Confidence (or trust) in the police is a social relationship, resting on expressive factors like perceptions of social order, and how visible and engaged the police are in the community. However, it is not clear that such modes of policing are still organisationally valued under conditions of austerity. The questions this raises include whether such activities are still regarded as a worthwhile use of resources by police officers and residents.

Assessments of confidence or trust are closely related to perceptions of police legitimacy, which in turn rest on beliefs that the police share values with the public. This underlines the importance of what Radburn and Stott (2018) call the "situational and cultural contingency" of these judgements. Understanding the values that communities and the police hold (and the heterogeneous nature of both groups) is clearly important to our understanding of legitimacy and confidence. This chapter therefore also prompts the question of to what extent values are shared between the police and the public. The evidence that many of the factors affecting confidence are related to local order also points to the

neighbourhood as the best context in which to explore how confidence and legitimacy are negotiated in practice.

The structures and processes of such negotiations are also important. As noted earlier in the chapter, many accounts of democratic policing fail to be explicit about their approach to democracy, and the sources of legitimacy that those approaches rest on. What if consensus cannot be found? What to do about those who disagree? What happens in practice in such situations? For policing, incorporating a political realist perspective into our thinking on legitimation foregrounds dissent as part of the process. As long as policing is experienced in different ways, and moral values are subject to profound disagreement, legitimation must also be differentiated. Some will value order more highly than justice, or value distributive over procedural justice. This approach suggests that the legitimacy of the police therefore must be negotiated as close to citizens' experiences as possible; but it is not clear from existing research whether and how such negotiations take place. This adds weight to the need to study neighbourhood policing as a location where the structures suggested for democratic policing operate, and to explore whether the value conflicts suggested in this chapter are present in practice.

This discussion has underlined the extent to which questions of legitimacy and confidence are inextricable from community or neighbourhood policing, and offered a warrant for the closer examination of the processes of neighbourhood policing and their relation to confidence and legitimacy; with special attention paid to the role of values in these processes of legitimation. The next chapter explores the promise that community policing could hold for governments

concerned with public confidence in policing, and the particular social and political context which framed the development of neighbourhood policing in the UK. It then explores the changes to the political and policing environment after the general election of 2010, in order to contextualise the current practice of neighbourhood policing on the ground.

Chapter Two - The historical and political context of neighbourhood policing

Introduction

The last chapter established the relevance of a realist approach, and the value of seeing the legitimation of policing as dynamic and contextualised. This chapter shows how the development of neighbourhood policing in the UK was a political choice, based on beliefs about the value of local participation and co-production, as well as the evidence about the potential contribution of community policing to confidence. However, it also suggests the dependence of neighbourhood policing on the endurance of the political philosophy in which it was embedded, and shows the way that political choices in the post-2010 environment have undermined neighbourhood policing's focus, purpose and practice.

The chapter begins by looking at the history of community policing and the benefits it promised, including the instrumental promise of reduced crime (Skogan and Hartnett, 1997; MacKenzie and Henry, 2009), the less concrete promises of reassurance and reduced fear of crime (Tuffin, Morris and Poole, 2006); the increased legitimacy of, and public confidence in the police (Dalgleish and Myhill, 2004); and finally, the possibility that community policing could serve to build communities that could better regulate themselves (Singer, 2004).

This was a set of promises that was particularly attractive to the New Labour government. I trace how New Labour's ideological roots impelled it towards a particular outlook on local policing: addressing low-level crime and disorder and asking 'communities' to step up to participate in this (Home Office 2004b; McLaughlin 2005). This is contextualised in the push for public engagement in public services more widely, before focusing on three related themes: the measurement of police performance; the role of partnerships; and the encouragement of participation in policing.

The change of government in 2010 had a profound effect on UK policing. Cuts to police budgets forced a reassessment of assumptions about the purpose and capacities of police forces (HMIC, 2013) and, coupled with changes in demand, prompted a new set of priorities focused around risk, harm and vulnerability (NPCC, 2017). In the third section, I examine the fundamental changes imposed on policing, its focus and its governance since 2010, and the consequences of these.

The establishment of the three-year Neighbourhood Policing Programme in 2005 was shaped by New Labour's particular beliefs. The end of the programme, followed by the receding of this vision from public discourse, has therefore left neighbourhood policing somewhat unanchored, and the final section of this chapter will explore the current context and practice of neighbourhood policing in this light. It examines the changes to neighbourhood policing that have taken place since Labour lost power in 2010, and finds a fractured landscape (Higgins, 2018a) with multiple visions of neighbourhood policing in terms of practice and purpose. I argue that these changes are potentially endangering public confidence

in policing, and that the new Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines produced by the College of Policing (CoP, 2018a) cannot fully rectify this.

This serves as a warrant to explore how neighbourhood policing works in practice. London retains perhaps the most universal approach to neighbourhood policing (Higgins, 2018a), making this an ideal location for a case study. The fieldwork for this project took place between 2015 and 2017; well after the end of the formal Neighbourhood Policing Programme in 2008, but before the publication of the College of Policing's new guidelines in 2018, allowing a snapshot of neighbourhood policing 'in the wild': how it works and how it is valued, and which particular elements are the most susceptible to a shift in the prevailing ideological winds.

Community policing in context

The three-year Neighbourhood Policing Programme (NPP) launched in 2005 could trace its pedigree to several sources, and this section takes these in turn. Firstly, it drew on a rich seam of ideas and practices from home and abroad. Secondly, it rested on evidence, albeit limited, that community policing programmes could contribute to reducing both crime and the fear of crime, as well as contributing to public confidence. Thirdly, there seemed to be some promise that community policing could strengthen communities themselves. All of these spoke directly to New Labour's aims and ambitions, as the next section of the chapter will describe.

Background

Many accounts present community policing as a reconnection with 'traditional' modes of policing, as opposed to the 'professional' model that developed in the 1960s and 70s (Skogan, 2008). This latter saw the responsibility for crime control shift to the realm of the state, while the public became recipients of services (Crawford, 1999, p.23). The police became separated from citizens, through processes of centralisation, professionalisation and specialisation. In the UK, Unit Beat Policing saw foot patrol replaced by Panda cars. Police officers relished the dynamism of the new way of policing; however, officers found themselves cut off from the ordinary intercourse of walking the beat (Holdaway, 1977).

Similar processes were at work elsewhere. Perhaps the most influential attempt to redress these changes was the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS), which began in 1993. This saw teams of officers assigned on a long-term basis to small local beats, with systematic problem-solving processes and monthly 'beat meetings' (Skogan and Steiner, 2004). The programme attracted global attention for its potential to rebuild relationships between police and the public.

In the UK, John Alderson, former Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall, had long been an advocate of community policing (Alderson, 1979). He believed that the sources of crime lay in deeper social conditions, requiring proactive policing, the identification of social problems, and work with other agencies. However, it took until the 1980s for the Brixton Riots to provide what Tilley (2008, p.98) calls the necessary "spark" for community policing in the UK. The Scarman Report that followed argued that the riots stemmed in part from policing that was

focused too much on law enforcement, damaging relationships with the community (Scarman, 1982; Savage, 2007a).

This highlights an ongoing tension in policing between law enforcement and what might be termed order maintenance. Reiner argues the last several decades has seen policy discourse assuming that crime fighting is the central task of the police. He blames this on a shift from the consensual politics of the 50s and 60s to "globalised neo-liberalism" (Reiner, 2012, p.5). However, this argument underplays the extent to which a service orientation has been incorporated into government policy at intervals during this period. Neyroud characterises this as a cyclical process, at times "seesawing between crime-fighting and community models of policing." (Neyroud, 2008, p.341). As Innes (2006a) points out, this is not to say that community policing completely disappears during the periods where government attention regarding police reform is focused elsewhere; but to note that the "heat and light" of discourse around policing is coming from other sources (Innes, 2006a, p.95).

Bittner rejects this distinction between law enforcement and service orientations, arguing, "no human problem exists, or is imaginable, about which it could be said with finality that this certainly could not become the proper business of the police" (2005, p.161). What police do is, in essence, emergency order maintenance. However, the see-sawing nature of discourse on policing is not about what the police do, but a normative account of what they should do. If we accept Bittner's earlier (1970) contention that policing's distinctive feature is the capacity (however rarely used) to use non-negotiable coercive force, then a claim to legitimacy is required. Manning (2013) argues that Bittner's police 'mandate'

reflects the bargain between police claims for legitimacy and the response to those claims, and can be seen as separate to the 'situations' in which police act.

Policing thus embodies two conflicting purposes, as the last chapter suggested: it is both the coercive arm of the state, and the symbolic representative of the state as a political entity, requiring a political claim for legitimacy. In the UK, this claim is made in the particular terms of 'policing by consent'. This tension is therefore not a cycle so much as a tug of war between two competing imperatives, both integral to the nature of policing. These purposes are not fully reconcilable. In particular, under conditions of austerity, the coercive purpose of the police is likely to be prioritised over the legitimating purpose, with ramifications for legitimating models such as neighbourhood policing. However, under New Labour, the direction of public rhetoric shifted towards legitimacy, and the site for this was to be the community, as the next section describes.

The promise of community policing

Appeals to community are often part of a strategy of legitimation. Such strategies have "uncertain and contested outcomes" (Crawford, 1999, p.3), but their attraction rests in part on ambiguity (Fielding, 2005; MacKenzie and Henry, 2009). Community is an attractive idea perhaps because we always feel as though we have lost it (Glynn, 1986) - what Nisbet (1953) called "the ideology of lament". The form of community that community policing appeals to is overwhelmingly geographically defined (Bullock, 2014). While community is not the same as place, and communities do not exist in every place (Brent, 2004, p.217), the idea of community can define the rough borders of a landscape within

which the networks of community - based on place, relationship or self-definition - can be located.

For New Labour, community policing also promised concrete benefits. The professional model had not been notably effective in bringing down crime levels (Kelling et al, 1974; Pate et al, 1976). Community policing offered some hope of bringing down both crime and the fear of crime (Skogan and Hartnett, 1997; MacKenzie and Henry, 2009). The CAPS programme in Chicago found that community policing could ameliorate issues such as street crime, and reduce perceptions of disorder (Skogan and Hartnett, 1997). The early pilots of the National Reassurance Policing Programme (NRPP) in the UK also showed reductions in fear of crime, explored further in the next chapter (Tuffin, Morris and Poole, 2006).

A strong case also existed for other outcomes of community policing, such as general satisfaction, confidence and trust in the police. The NRPP evaluation showed a 15% rise in public confidence, while the CAPS trial also saw confidence rise across all ethnic groups in Chicago. Visibility and familiarity in police patrols offered increased perceptions of police effectiveness and public confidence (Dalgleish and Myhill, 2004). Moreover, the evidence on what drives confidence (as outlined in the last chapter) suggests it is heavily influenced by citizens' judgements of community cohesion, police presence and neighbourhood stability (Jackson and Bradford, 2009; Merry et al, 2012). All this made community policing an attractive model to a government concerned for public confidence in policing.

However, the relationship between the immediate and measurable benefits of community policing around confidence, and longer-term outcomes around crime levels, has never been entirely outlined or measured (Gill et al, 2014). This leaves community policing potentially susceptible to the periodic changes in emphasis towards law enforcement over legitimation. Without such a clear and measurable link, community policing may be hard to justify when the prevailing philosophy sees the purpose of policing as fighting crime. This suggests that neighbourhood policing in the post-2010 environment might suffer from a lack of political support; to which I return later in the chapter. First, however, I turn to the promise that community policing offered to communities themselves.

Building communities, fighting crime

The idea that crime and disorder might be a feature partly of the community rather than of individuals has its roots in early sociology. Social disorganisation theory suggests that crime is a normal response to the collapse of community social control in disorganised neighbourhoods (Shaw and McKay, 1969). Stable communities, by contrast, act like villages, allowing communities to exercise informal social control. Putnam and others developed ideas of social capital as the ability of people to benefit from their membership of social networks (Putnam, 1995; Colman, 1988). Collective efficacy is the capacity to draw on these resources (Sampson, 2002), and collective efficacy theory suggests that neighbourhoods can vary widely in social control, regardless of residential stability or poverty.

However, research has generally struggled to find a consistent relationship between social capital, collective efficacy and community policing. There is

some evidence that fear of crime is lower in neighbourhoods where residents feel a level of control over their area (Greenberg et al, 1982). Community policing can help generate social capital through officers making themselves more accessible, and through ensuring representative participation (Scott, 2002); there is also evidence that efforts to co-produce community safety lead to increases in levels of participation and greater knowledge of other people in the area (Singer, 2004). Satisfaction with police can also contribute to informal social control (Silver and Miller, 2004). However, Hawdon (2008) argues that the process is actually the other way around, and perceptions of police legitimacy might rest on existing levels of social capital. The NRPP evaluation found no significant effects on informal social control (Tuffin, Morris and Poole, 2006).

It may be that community behaviour has changed. Informal social control is often measured by willingness to intervene, or perceptions of neighbours' willingness to do so. These assessments require some knowledge both of one's neighbours, and of disorder, neither of which can be taken for granted (Hipp, 2016). Direct intervention may no longer be a normal way of dealing with problems; calling the police is much more likely (Gau, 2014b). A willingness to intervene may rest on factors such as communication skills, fear, and what Kleinhans and Bolt (2014) call 'public familiarity' with neighbours. The decline of local facilities such as shops may be damaging the "casual public contact" which operates as informal reassurance (Barker, 2014, p.3059).

Bradford and Jackson (2016) argue that, in modern cities, informal social control is demonstrated by willingness to co-operate with the police, in the sense of Carr's (2003) 'new parochialism'. This is a set of behaviours that exist at the

neighbourhood level of social control, often facilitated by public sector actors, though largely independent of existing political structures. Crawford (2006a) argues that in a modern urban environment, fostering such 'weak ties' (Granovetter, 1973) is in any case a better aim than strong social cohesion, as it has the potential to promote open and tolerant communities. As Barnes and Eagle (2007, p.170) put it, perhaps "it is not the role of the police to create social capital but to allow the space for it to flourish by providing a sense of security where connections can be made". Community policing may, therefore, have promise for building communities, but the collective efficacy of those communities may not be self-sustaining. Instead, increased informal social control may manifest in a greater tendency to call the police. Such a model does little to help the police manage or reduce demand. Although this particular 'promise' proved an attractive one to the New Labour government, as the next section outlines, it seems likely to prove more susceptible to erosion in an environment in which resources are restricted.

Politics and policing under New Labour

As the last section argued, community policing promises not only to reconnect the police with the public that they served, but also to contribute to building communities. This was an attractive set of promises to the Labour government of 1997-2010. This section looks at what drove that administration, and how its approach to policing changed. It begins by outlining how Labour's 'new localism' impacted the public sector. I then turn to Labour's policing policy and the early emphasis on performance management; finally, I outline its emphasis on partnerships and participation in policing and the potential weaknesses of such an approach. I argue that neighbourhood policing was embedded in a wider policy

context which in turn was rooted in a particular set of beliefs, and question whether neighbourhood policing can thrive in an environment where these founding principles no longer have political support.

New Labour, communitarianism and the local

New Labour's 'third way' philosophy was not so much a moral philosophy of how the state should behave as a sociological commentary on what society had become (Finlayson, 1999). Much of the thrust of New Labour's thinking was based on the idea that traditional conceptions of 'left' and 'right' were breaking down (Giddens, 1994). The move towards 'reflexive modernity', in which traditions are interrogated and deference has declined, signalled the potential for a new form of social order[3] (Clarke et al, 2007, p.11). This perspective suggested that there existed a political gap for a 'radical centre,' in which policy should start with what was most local to citizens, with the state as an enabler. This was a departure from the traditional left-wing preference for a command model enshrining the bureaucratic delivery of services by a central state.

A key feature of New Labour thinking was a belief that economic facts could constrain people's lives but were not deterministic of them. Equality was therefore recast as social inclusion and exclusion (Finlayson, 1999). Redistribution would not be sufficient to ensure inclusion; indeed, it could reinforce dependence. Instead, the government would focus on "asset-building" (White, 1999). This was reinforced by ideas around social capital that suggest

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[3] Presciently, Clarke et al suggest that this shift is far more likely to see a populist, demotic shift in politics and culture, resting on claims that the "voice of the people is typically excluded or repressed by the dominant institutional forms of politics and social life" (Clarke et al, 2007, p.11).

that participation, for example in public services, was beneficial both to those services and those participating (Bochel et al, 2007). New Labour's communitarianism is associated with thinkers such as Amitai Etzioni, who saw communities as possessing a moral voice and being capable of sustaining a value-based social order (Etzioni, 1995). Newly included citizens would take responsibility for the facts of their own lives, and by doing so, would create a virtuous circle of effective, thriving communities.

This led to an odd dichotomy: on the one hand, discussions of neighbourhood renewal and citizen engagement suggested a potential resurgence of local government (Sullivan, 2001, p.1). On the other hand, it became apparent that power was to be wielded by citizens themselves, bypassing local political bureaucracies. In policing, the rhetoric around the involvement of local councillors was hedged around with caveats. For example, while the 2004 White Paper, *Building Communities, Beating Crime,* acknowledges that local councillors are central to communities, it also alludes to "some people" thinking that councillors were "out of touch" with local concerns (Home Office, 2004a, p.70, para 3.65). Rather, the role of local councillors was to act as advocates; a role some might argue they already played. Questions of power were often underplayed in New Labour's focus, and it was never quite clear which members of the community would step up to shape public services, and what happened if that proved to be inequitable. With local government bypassed, the structures of accountability became unclear (Levitas, 2000).

Instead, the public with whom the police were to consult were "citizen-consumers" (Vidler and Clarke, 2005; Clarke et al, 2007) entitled to choice and a

basic standard of service; law-abiding; and actively contributing to the public good (Clarke, 2005). Interestingly, given the roots of these policies in participatory democratic thinking, 'active citizens' not only had more opportunity to participate, but perhaps also more right to do so (Hope, 2005). Lowndes and Sullivan (2004) warned that this risked a kind of 'delegate democracy,' with all the problems of representative democracy, but without the redress. The concept of active citizenship also risked replicating existing patterns of inequality; active citizens are likely to be produced in communities already rich in social capital (Hope, 2005). Thus, even as 'active citizenship' encouraged participation, it risked rewarding those already most heard. These issues remain particularly problematic when considering public participation in policing, with all its coercive capacity.

Some argue that the New Labour government simply underestimated the complexity of the local (Wallace, 2010). Clarke (2002, quoted in Hughes and Rowe, 2007, p.336) suggests that community appears in policy discussions during this period as a site of governance, a mode of governance, and the intended effect of governance. However, all of these are unstable in practice: as Hughes and Rowe (2007) argue, it is difficult to find them when you need them, to decide who are their legitimate representatives, or to hold them stable. These instabilities meant that the practices of the 'new localism' potentially contained the seeds of inequity; and this applied to policing as much to other arenas.

What works and performance management

New Labour will be perhaps best remembered for Tony Blair's 'tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime' mantra. Well before 1997, the Labour Party had

begun to reshape its attitude towards policing and crime, moving away from the traditional hard left mistrust of state power towards a recognition that crime was a problem that affected the poorest the most. New Labour's early policies on crime and policing are often, and with some justice, described as punitive and performance-obsessed (see Brownlee, 1998). The rhetoric of punishment was certainly trumpeted in the years leading up to Labour's 1997 landslide. However, crime and policing had become hostages to fortune for Labour (Downes and Morgan, 1997; Downes, 1998). The statecraft of New Labour demanded that crime be neutralised, if at all possible, in the political debate (Buller and James, 2012). But one can also see its policies as a social democratic attempt "to make police and criminal justice agents of social integration" (Loader and Sparks, 2012, p.26).

New Labour did not in fact enter into government with an explicitly community-focused agenda. Rather, in its early years, it focused on 'evidence-based' policy making and the search for 'what works' - and its preferred framework was one of identifying public needs rather than public demands (Fleming and McLaughlin 2012, p.283). The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 was in part an attempt to ensure that sufficient information was gathered to allow the police to allocate resources. At the same time, however, its extension of the 'value for money' agenda of the previous Conservative government presented complications and contradictions to this agenda. It was only after the Comprehensive Spending Review of 2000 that real-term spending increases were delivered (H.M. Treasury, 2000).

New Labour's designs for policing were both centralised and managerial, and localised and flexible (Bullock 2014). It was known for its target culture and

emphasis on performance measurement (Leigh, Mundy and Tuffin, 1999; McLaughlin, 2005) - yet it also saw a vastly increased emphasis on low-level crime and disorder (Neyroud, 2008). These contradictions may be easier to understand if New Labour is understood first as a pragmatic political project, which attempted to address public demands around antisocial behaviour and fear of crime (Millie and Herrington, 2005; Savage, 2007a).

Fleming and McLaughlin (2012) argue that the priority in these early years was not responding to demand, but its management. More information about police performance needed to be given to the public in order to "choke" public expectations and "dampen public demand in a much more proactive manner" (p.283). Hope (2005) describes this as a kind of criminological naivety, in believing that public reactions to crime would track recorded crime.

By the early 2000s, and partly in response to extensive criticism of the limits these targets placed on police flexibility - as well as evidence that public confidence was not rising in line with crime reduction - Labour's rhetoric started to shift. The publication of the Green Paper *Policing: Building Safer Communities Together* in November 2003 (Home Office, 2003) was in some ways a concession that 'audit overload' (McLaughlin, 2005) had closed off policy from local people. The White Paper that followed confirmed that a major shift had taken place, albeit framed as an innovation in consumer voice and choice, rather than "democratic discourse" (McLaughlin, 2005). However, even in 2009, when central top-down targets were abolished in favour of a single confidence measure (BBC News, 2009), this still demonstrated a political commitment not just to support neighbourhood policing, but to measure and judge its effects.

Partnerships and participation

The Home Office's 2004 Strategic Plan announced that "safety starts in the local community." (Home Office, 2004b, p.11). As such, much of the delivery of its pledges was to be at local community level. Local accountability was to rest on direct engagement between the police and local partners, as well as the public. The introduction of the new Community Safety Partnerships under the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act required a range of private, public and voluntary groups to become involved in the auditing and development of local crime and disorder strategies. This was a formal acknowledgement that many of the causes and the consequences of crime fell outside the realm of the police (Crawford, 2001). The local policing officer, usually a constable, was to in effect become a co-ordinator (Savage, 2007b) of an extended policing family (Crawford, Lister and Blackburn, 2005) which would include PCSOs (introduced in 2002), local community wardens, volunteers, security guards, and new local actors such as community safety managers (Hughes and Gilling, 2004; Robinson, 2006). This created a 'mixed economy' of those delivering community safety services and residential patrols (Crawford and Lister, 2004).

The practical outcome of this was sometimes confused. The rhetoric of partnership working tended to underplay the plurality of some of the partners concerned: local businesses, for example, do not have identical interests (Crawford, 2001). This is equally true of the different tiers of local authorities. While multi-agency partnerships promised integration and the 'joining-up' of various providers (Lowndes and Sullivan, 2004), in practice, the cultures of these organisations were often very different. As one community safety director

explained, "The police want to do everything yesterday and the Local Authority have to go through three committees." (Hughes and Rowe, 2007, p.332).

New Labour's conception of partnerships was not limited to organisations, but included communities as well. The 2004 White Paper laid out the government's belief in the ability of policing - and in particular, co-production within policing – to build community capacity (Home Office, 2004a). Similarly, the 2004 Strategic Plan also elaborated on the government's commitment to 'active citizenship' as part of the core business of the Home Office (Home Office 2004b). Residents were envisaged as participating in a range of ways, from the more formal - local priority-setting - to the informal, such as "looking out for neighbours" (Home Office, 2004b, p.38). All of this was to contribute to "building a community that upholds basic standards of decency and is strong enough to prevent and deter offending" (ibid). The idea of active citizenship thus provided context for a neighbourhood policing that did not need to engage everyone in the neighbourhood to be doing its job. Partial consent was enough. Whether that was sufficient to sustain public confidence in the police was a question left largely unanswered. The way this played out in practice in the Neighbourhood Policing Programme is outlined in the next chapter; while later chapters explore the longevity of these approaches.

There were, however, some inherent weaknesses in New Labour's approach: in partnerships, in the democratic accountability of bottom-up participation; and in the risk that active citizenship could replicate existing inequities. Part of the remit of this research will be to identify the extent to which these flaws are perpetuated in neighbourhood policing structures. Nevertheless, given how important this

particular philosophical and policy context was to neighbourhood policing, one question that arises is whether neighbourhood policing can be sustained without it. The next section looks at the post-2010 environment: the ideology of austerity and the policing policy of the Coalition government, and of the Conservative governments that followed.

The landscape of austerity

In May 2010, the Labour Party was narrowly defeated in a general election. The new Coalition government that took office instituted an austerity programme aimed at reducing the budget deficit (IFS, 2010). This section will focus on the effects that this change of government had, from its beliefs about the size and role of the public sector, to the practical consequences on policing in general and neighbourhood policing in particular.

Firstly, it will show how the new government's approach led to deep cuts to policing and the need for forces to re-examine their purposes, functions and activities. I will show how the establishment in 2012 of Police and Crime Commissioners contributed to the fracturing of neighbourhood policing nationally and the devolution of responsibility for the outcomes of central government policy. I will then explore how changing demand and deep budget cuts contributed to a changing sense of national police priorities, and the development of a new focus on risk, harm and vulnerability (CoP, 2015a). Finally, I will discuss more recent policy pronouncements suggesting an increase in police numbers in the years to come; and whether this is likely to reverse the changes to purpose and priorities outlined above.

Austerity and police policy

The new government instituted a programme of 'austerity', which involved cuts to public sector spending across the board. This austerity programme was presented as a response to the financial crisis of 2007-08 and the related increase to the public deficit (Stanley, 2016). This was married to beliefs in the possibility of the 'Big Society,' in which volunteers and the third sector would step up to replace elements of a swollen public sector (Cameron, 2011).

The police were not exempted from these cuts, as they had been partially protected from the reforms of the last Conservative government. The Conservative Party in the late 1970s had campaigned on a clear 'law and order' platform, pledging ahead of the 1979 election to 'back' the police (Savage, 2007a). Reiner (2010, p.90) has described the first few years of the Thatcher government as a "love affair" between the police and the Conservative Party. In the early years of that administration, both the police and the armed forces were effectively given a free pass from the kind of reforms imposed on other public services. Partly this appeared to be an affair of the heart - both the police of the time and the Conservative government had similar aims; what Savage (2007a, p.168-169) calls "a coincidence of philosophy" between ordinary police officers and the Conservative Party in office. However, this was also partly influenced by the need to keep order at a time of significant upheaval and confrontation (ibid).

The new Coalition government had no such qualms. Police forces were regarded as having expanded their activities beyond their proper remit, as well as sitting on excessive reserves (May, 2015). Both of these were to be challenged.

The rhetoric of the Coalition cast the police as crime fighters. This 'new orthodoxy' (Reiner 2013, p.164) saw any other tasks as non-core duties from

which the police needed to be liberated. Home Secretary Theresa May, addressing the Conservative Party Conference in October 2011, said: "Some people question why we're reforming the police. For me, the reason is simple. We need them to be the tough, no-nonsense crime-fighters they signed up to become." (May, 2011). The Coalition government rejected the public confidence agenda established by the Labour Party, abolished the Policing Pledge, and rescinded the single confidence target (May, 2010). It maintained that cuts to police budgets could be met by efficiencies, particularly in 'back room' functions, while maintaining front line, 'crime-fighting' officers (Independent, 2010). The current government remains clear in its public rhetoric that its vision of the police role is a narrow one, focused on law enforcement (Javid, 2018).

The practical implications of these policies were severe. Policing nationally saw a 14% drop in officers from 2009 to 2016, reversing all the expansion of the 2000s (Disney and Simpson, 2017). A reduction of 'back room staff' was in some cases facilitated by mergers with other forces, but also saw 'front line' officers taking on a wider range of tasks (HMIC, 2013) This funding squeeze was compounded by swingeing cuts to other public services whose responsibilities overlapped with those of the police; such as mental health services, and local authority social and housing services; local councils in particular suffered up to 40% budget cuts over the same period (Calver and Wainwright, 2018).

While philosophically policing has broadly absorbed the need for community models to play a central role (Lister, Adams and Phillips, 2015), a public discourse focused on the maximisation of limited resources has focused attention again on what policing should attempt to do. A number of "emerging problems"

(CoP 2017, p.15) have begun to take priority, such as child sexual exploitation and online crime. These 'hidden harms' take place behind closed doors rather than in the streets; they are crimes of private, rather than public spaces. These changes in philosophy and in funding have affected every aspect of policing. Neighbourhood policing has been particularly exposed to these changes, as its focus on low-level and non-crime, and on public confidence, stands in conflict to a governing philosophy that sees the police as fighting crime.

PCCs and governance

Instead of public confidence, the Coalition's agenda was one of democratisation. The introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners in 2012 was intended to address concerns of a democratic deficit in police oversight, and a perceived lack of input from local people into setting strategic police priorities and holding the police to account (Almandras et al, 2010). However, the scrutiny mechanisms set up to hold the commissioners themselves to account were left relatively toothless (Lister, 2014), meaning the four-year elections remained the only real mechanism for holding PCCs to account.

There were initial fears that PCCs would succumb to populism (Lister and Rowe, 2015). Most PCCs appear to have embraced the public desire to see 'bobbies on the beat' and are advocates of neighbourhood policing, at least on the surface (McDaniel, 2018). Nearly 60% of successful PCC candidates promised to prioritise increasing or protecting police visibility; while nearly 70% of successful Labour candidates pledged to safeguard neighbourhood policing (just ten per cent of successful Conservative candidates did so) (Lister and Rowe, 2015). This underlines an increasing politicisation of the PCC function, which

might be expected to lead to some divergence in policy. In London, Mayor Sadiq Khan in 2016 made a political commitment to neighbourhood policing and promised two dedicated police constables and one PCSO for each London ward (Crerar, 2016). However, this was not backed with significant new funding streams. London is therefore recommitted to universal neighbourhood policing, but without fully reversing the structural changes already imposed by austerity.

The pattern of policing policy over the last several decades has largely been one of centralisation (Savage, Charman and Cope, 2000; Reiner, 2010). However, the establishment of PCCs has allowed the devolution of responsibility. Cuts may be made centrally; but the responses to them are local. Funds set aside for neighbourhood policing and for PCSOs have been incorporated into mainstream police funding (Higgins, 2018a), underlining this delegation of power. This means that unless there is a central political decision to again ring-fence funding streams - and there is little sign of this in current policy[4] - the structure and delivery of local policing may continue to diverge.

All of this describes a fracturing of approaches to neighbourhood policing shaped by centralised government policies that no longer support the wide remit of policing that flourished under New Labour. As the next section outlines, in some cases, this seems to have led to deep damage to neighbourhood policing structures and purposes. This was recognised by HMICFRS in its 2017 PEEL report, to which I return shortly.

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[4] The new administration of Prime Minister Boris Johnson has pledged a 'national policing board' to oversee an increase in police recruitment. However, this has not, at the time of writing, been associated with concrete funding pledges.

Changing demand and focus

One of the justifications for the cuts to police budgets was that the increase in numbers in the 2000s had reflected the 1990s rise in crime; falling crime should therefore see falling numbers. And indeed, at first, crime rates continued to fall. However, this has since begun to change. ONS statistics for the year ending March 2018 noted a rise in violent crime, with police-recorded crime showing a 16% increase in knife crime year on year (ONS, 2018), while homicides, vehicle offences and robberies are also increasing (ONS, 2019). There have also been significant rises in reported levels of domestic abuse and sexual offences.

Demand has also begun to change, with new expectations on the police to investigate online offences, child sexual abuse, and to safeguard vulnerable people (CoP, 2015a). The House of Commons Select Committee for Home Affairs has warned that police are struggling to cope with these increased demands (HoC, 2018). Some forces have reacted by focusing on managing or suppressing that demand - on occasions, according to HMIC, to the extent of putting people at risk (HMIC, 2017, p.8).

These changes to demand and resource have been accompanied by a renewed focus on police professionalism. The College of Policing was established in 2012 with a remit, in part, "to ensure that policing practice and standards are based on knowledge, rather than custom and convention" (CoP, 2017b). The College introduced a new entry qualifications framework, based partly on arguments that the job of policing had become less of a craft and much more of a complex profession requiring professional qualifications (CoP, 2017c). The growth of evidence-based policing contributed to the move towards professionalism: 2016

saw the launch of the Cambridge Crime Harm Index (Sherman, Neyroud and Neyroud, 2016) and the adoption of a similar Crime Severity Score by the ONS (Bangs, 2016). All of this pushed policing away from seeing itself as a craft and towards searching for measurable outcomes based around harm and risk, potentially devaluing subjective assessments of fear of crime, and community reassurance, as legitimate tasks for the hard-pressed police.

Many forces have responded to these new challenges by prioritising areas of high risk and harm: the "re-imagining of the policing task" (Millie and Bullock, 2012). Several forces have completely reconstituted their neighbourhood teams to focus their work on 'hidden harms' such as domestic abuse and hate crime (Higgins, 2018a). The *Policing Vision 2025*, a joint publication from the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners and the National Police Chiefs' Council, eschews any mention of neighbourhoods in favour of 'local policing'. This is to be aligned to other public services to "improve outcomes for citizens and protect the vulnerable" (APCC and NPCC, 2017). However, HMIC warned in 2017 that this focus on risk, harm and vulnerability was in some areas critically undermining the provision of neighbourhood policing (HMIC, 2017), explored further in the next section.

The change in political outlook and philosophy has significantly undermined the importance of confidence as a force in shaping police activity. Confidence has moved from a dominant position to a marginal one. Instead, changes in demand and the pressures of austerity have combined to fundamentally reshape the pattern of police priorities. Simultaneously, changes in the funding of policing

and the removal of ring-fencing, accompanied by the transformation of police governance, have contributed to an increasingly fractured landscape of policing.

This landscape may yet change; the new prime minister, Boris Johnson, has pledged an increase of 20,000 new officers. Moreover, this pledge was accompanied by a promise to set up a new 'national policing board' to "hold police to account" (Home Office, 2019b) for meeting these recruitment targets. This is significant not just in terms of resources but also in its apparent reversal of the devolution of policing policy since 2010. However, such new funding would be slow to be reflected in frontline numbers, in part because of the changes to entry and training mentioned above; moreover, without new ring-fencing, these numbers would not necessarily be reflected in changes to neighbourhood policing.

Though the extent to which these changes have altered neighbourhood policing have been explored nationally by HMICFRS, the College of Policing, and by the Police Foundation, there have been few localised case studies of the effects of these changes in practice, on the ground. This research therefore addresses something of a gap in examining the state of neighbourhood policing in depth, in the changing context outlined above. The next section examines the state of neighbourhood policing nationally; concern expressed by HMICFRS; and the new guidelines drawn up by the College of Policing to try to support and revitalise the model.

The state of the neighbourhood

This chapter has so far explored the context and promise upon which neighbourhood policing rested, and the particular ideological and policy

commitments of New Labour that allowed it to be brought into being. It then showed the policy positions of post-2010 governments and how that affected policing in general and neighbourhood policing in particular. This last section looks at the current state of neighbourhood policing, and the most recent responses from HMICFRS and the College of Policing. It argues that the new neighbourhood policing guidelines published by the College are an important contribution towards reversing some of the erosion of neighbourhood policing, but that the general focus on hidden harms and vulnerability, on reflecting existing practice, and the demotion of confidence as neighbourhood policing's prime purpose, all risk damaging long term police legitimacy.

Fragmentation of Neighbourhood Policing

In 2013 the College of Policing undertook a practice stocktake to understand the current condition of neighbourhood policing in England and Wales in the context of spending cuts, the new PCCs, and the loss of ring-fenced funding for PCSOs (CoP, 2015b). The College found a range of local policing models. HMIC's 2016 PEEL report found a "varied and inconsistent" set of approaches to neighbourhood policing. It identified just 25 forces that retained a dedicated neighbourhood model, in which local staff spent their time on engagement, problem-solving and prevention (HMIC, 2017, p.29). The picture of neighbourhood policing in the UK has fragmented. In some places, neighbourhoods have been recast as whole towns; in others, neighbourhood policing teams have been consumed by response teams.

The Police Foundation found an even more fragmented set of approaches (Higgins, 2017, p.2). The report identified five broad 'types' of neighbourhood

policing in the UK, with the percentage of workforce in neighbourhood roles ranging from around three per cent to as much as 37 per cent. However, Higgins also notes that the vast majority of respondents spoke of a significant deterioration of capability, despite official headcounts suggesting that neighbourhood allocations had remained robust (ibid, p.27).

The responsibilities of neighbourhood officers also varied; the roles of response, neighbourhood and investigation were becoming less separated (HMIC, 2019). In several forces, NPTs had been given new responsibilities to investigate crimes. However, the College notes that force reviews from a recent HMIC inspection round suggested these expanded responsibilities were crowding out officers' capacity to undertake problem-solving and other proactive work. The Police Foundation found similar problems, describing it as a "'perfect storm' of increasing workload and shrinking resource." (Higgins, 2018a, p.27) These misgivings were reflected by HMIC in their 2016 PEEL report, which warned of "further evidence of the erosion of preventative policing in our neighbourhoods" causing "significant concern" (HMIC, 2017, p.4). The Police Foundation further noted a change of language: the activities that neighbourhood officers undertake might include those related to visibility, engagement and problem-solving, but they were no longer the holy trinity. 'Neighbourhood' officers instead "find themselves dealing with 'whatever is happening here right now'" (Higgins, 2017, pp.14-15).

Finally, HMIC also found a large amount of abstraction among neighbourhood officers; between half and two thirds of PCs were being abstracted once or more a week; one-fifth were being taken away three times a week or more, essentially

no longer being able to perform their neighbourhood policing function. Even PCSOs were taken away from neighbourhood work, one third at least once a week, a move O'Neill (2014) argues undermines the development of social capital upon which the success of the PCSO role depends. The majority of forces had no policy for managing this process; HMIC found "very limited evidence of any assessment or understanding of the effect that taking officers away was having." (ibid, p.30).

Taken together, these findings strongly suggest that the job now being undertaken by neighbourhood officers is wider, vaguer and considerably under-resourced than it was a decade earlier. This raises the question of whether the activity being called neighbourhood policing is, in fact, faithful to the original model; or whether it is a new model entirely. If the latter, the question then arises as to whether this new model can achieve any of the outcomes of the original; particularly in terms of public confidence.

Changing focus and functions

The original vision of neighbourhood policing was universal, and focused on building and maintaining confidence. However, by the time of the College of Policing's practice stocktake of 2013 this had begun to shift. The College reports that the majority of the forces that responded identified a need "to design service against demand" (CoP, 2015b, p.11).

Managing demand is an increasing national concern for forces. The Policing Vision 2025 (APCC and NPCC, 2016) underlined the commitment of police leaders to 'local policing'. However, it also noted the imperative for policing in

the UK to address rising demand, given the shrinking budgets and the reduced capacity of partner agencies. Though the Vision may reflect a consensus on the need for 'local' (rather than neighbourhood) policing to remain central to forces' operations, it does not lay out any methods or structures by which forces should deliver this, acknowledging the variability already in place (APCC and NPCC, 2016; Higgins, 2017). In several forces, neighbourhood policing increasingly differentiated between high- and low-risk areas, with risk determined by the police rather than by communities. Instead, neighbourhood policing had shifted focus "from providing reassurance to preventing/reducing crime, demand and harm." (Higgins, 2018a, p.33).

In short, both the purposes and practices of 'neighbourhood policing' had begun to change. By 2018, the Police Foundation reported that the reduction in staff and the changed demands had seen "significant attrition to the outputs and outcomes traditionally associated with neighbourhood policing; community engagement, visibility, community intelligence gathering, local knowledge and preventative proactivity are consistently reported to be in decline." (Higgins, 2018a, p.2). Higgins particularly notes that community-led priorities had become more marginal; and in general, forces expressed concern that legitimacy-building activities such as schools work or general visibility were being pushed out by force priorities around harm and vulnerability, while neighbourhood resources were being called on to service reactive demand. Higgins also reports that the understanding of problem-solving had changed from community-driven issues to case-based working around high-risk individuals; and that visibility had fallen. A report from the House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee (HoC, 2018) warns that some forces' neighbourhood offerings had become little more than the

co-location of multi-agency teams. Even those forces that had 'reset' their neighbourhood policing approach had made fundamental changes. In South Yorkshire for example, neighbourhood policing has a new statement of purpose, "to reduce crime, protect the vulnerable and enhance community safety" (Higgins, 2018b). Higgins also reports that public meetings have been abandoned in South Yorkshire, and decisions about priorities left to officers' discretion.

London was an exception, noted as retaining an "emphasis on universal provision" in its delivery of neighbourhood policing[5] (Higgins, 2018a, p.26). As noted in the last section, new London Mayor Sadiq Khan underlined the Labour administration's commitment to neighbourhood policing on his election in 2016 by promising to double the number of Dedicated Ward Officers. Elsewhere, however, many forces had begun to differentiate according to demand, or assessments of risk (ibid). Activities dedicated to confidence have receded, as has the philosophical commitment to public confidence in policing as a purpose. As Higgins describes the new 'neighbourhood policing,' in South Yorkshire, "It's … not fixated on public confidence or reassurance; those things will follow if the team can consistently get the right things done." (Higgins, 2018b). However, without the focus on confidence as an outcome, it is hard to see how the 'right things' might be ascertained, or who should determine what the right things might be. It is in this context that the CoP delivered its guidelines, intended to shore up and structure neighbourhood policing for the future.

New guidelines

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[5] London's current system of neighbourhood policing is differentiated by ward but still retains a minimum provision of officers for each (MPS, 2014).

HMIC's 2016 report expressed deep concern about the state of neighbourhood policing, the "cornerstone of the policing model" (HMIC, 2017, p.4). HMIC believed that neighbourhood policing was vital to generate trust and confidence, to understand in detail community risks and threats, and to thereby prevent crime and disorder (ibid). Concerned at the deterioration it observed, it recommended the College of Policing draw up new national guidance on the "essential elements" of neighbourhood policing (ibid, p.23) which all forces would be expected to provide. These elements included public engagement, problem-solving, and partnership work; and it underlined the importance of neighbourhood policing's preventative function and its role tackling serious organised crime and extremism. All forces were expected to immediately review their neighbourhood policing approaches to ensure these guidelines were met.

The new CoP guidelines note that the context for neighbourhood policing has significantly changed, particularly in terms of decreasing resources and escalating demand, and the "increased reporting of crime in private spaces" (CoP, 2018a, p.2). This is likely to have contributed to the guidelines' acknowledgement and reflection of existing practice: the relevance and implementation of any new guidelines would be contingent on forces' financial limitations and the business case that senior leaders could make for investing in neighbourhood policing. One senior officer involved in the development of the new guidelines explained, "a lot of the stuff that Neighbourhood Policing used to address is not sufficiently serious." The guidelines also reflect the fact that, as Higgins (2018c) argues, "these are matters over which the current policing settlement gives chiefs and PCCs particular privilege." This reality informs the small but important changes of emphasis that the new guidelines display.

The new guidelines depart from the original philosophy of neighbourhood policing in three main ways: targeting, the demotion of confidence as a central preoccupation, and the focus on reflecting existing changes to practice. The emphasis on targeting is a departure from the universalism of early neighbourhood policing. Instead of universal 'visible' policing, the new neighbourhood policing rests on targeted foot patrol, and visibility is replaced by "police officers, staff and volunteers accessible to, responsible for and accountable to communities" (CoP, 2018a, p.3). The guidelines later speak of visibility only in terms of a "targeted visible presence" (p.5). Indeed, in the supporting material, visibility is replaced entirely by "targeting activity," (CoP, 2018b); an acknowledgement of evidence showing the benefits of targeting work over reactive (Telep and Weisburd, 2012), but also of police limitations. The requirement to be accountable to communities remains, but the impetus towards community-driven policing has receded.

The exception to this general shift is in problem-solving: here the guidelines have not adapted to reported changes in practice towards individual case management (Higgins, 2018a). The guidelines instead emphasise the systematic use of processes such as SARA, and the power of problem-solving to reduce demand on the service. In this area at least, involving communities is encouraged at every stage. In the new guidelines, the priorities of those involved in neighbourhood policing still include community confidence - but this is at the bottom of a list of four priorities. The others are protecting local neighbourhoods, safeguarding the vulnerable, and managing and diverting offenders (CoP, 2018a, p.3). Enhancing public confidence and feelings of safety are longer the central drivers of neighbourhood policing.

The House of Commons Select Committee on Home Affairs welcomed the new guidelines in its 2018 report, but warned that they were "insufficient to prevent forces from de-prioritising proactive neighbourhood work, when faced with competing demands and limited resources." (HoC, 2018, p.21, para 39). The report describes neighbourhood policing as absolutely vital to public trust and police legitimacy, and asked the government to report back to it on the measures it had taken to maintain core neighbourhood functions in all forces. The government's response was to welcome the new guidelines, which would "help forces more effectively use their local policing resource." (Home Office, 2019a).

Higgins (2018c) praises the guidelines as providing "a value-rich framework on which a compelling vision for local policing might be developed and articulated." However, he makes some further suggestions. Higgins calls for the embedding of practitioners in neighbourhoods and for that remit to be ring-fenced from response. He also calls for problem-oriented prevention work to be distinguished from individually centred case work. These reflect existing issues within the delivery of neighbourhood policing identified by the Police Foundation's 2018 report, as noted above (Higgins, 2018a).

Overall, the shift from broad community-driven priorities to a much more limited sense of the police task is clear. Neighbourhood policing remains a cornerstone of British policing, but will operate within the limitations of force financial constraints and with a function and purpose changed in subtle but important ways to support changed priorities. Whether these guidelines can pull neighbourhood policing back from disintegration, or retain enough of the original function to continue to support public confidence, remains to be seen.

HMIC has underlined the dangers of this. There is not sufficient evidence to predict how these changes will affect public confidence; but early indications suggest the public has begun to notice the loss of visible policing (HMIC, 2017). However, if the early work on reassurance and neighbourhood policing and its relationship to confidence is robust, and if this relationship has not been significantly altered by changes to demand and to crime in the intervening years, there could be a real risk to public confidence in the police; underlining the need for research into how neighbourhood policing is operating in practice under conditions of austerity.

Discussion and conclusion

The development of community policing in the UK can be seen as not so much as a cycle but as the expression of two competing purposes. The first is law enforcement, tightly linked to the use of coercive power, and the second, the need to legitimate that power, and the claim to legitimacy as expressed through community policing. Thinking about community policing as a response to regular crises of legitimacy helps to explain why community policing is often so poorly defined - it adapts (and has to be adapted) to particular local demands.

This obligation to legitimate sits alongside a range of promising outcomes for community policing. These include reducing crime, but also of reducing the fear of crime and of increasing confidence. However, the limited measurability of these benefits, particularly in the short term, means that they may not be sufficient to warrant continued political support when the emphasis of national politics changes.

Under New Labour, there was a clear emphasis on the legitimation of policing over its coercive force. This was also embedded in philosophical beliefs about the value of communities and their capacity to act as moral and practical locations for social inclusion and individual development. New Labour's hesitancy around the role of the state contributed to the pluralisation of policing in the form of PCSOs and the priority given to partnerships (see the next chapter for more on this). Its communitarian roots contributed to a much-expanded role of the community in determining local policing priorities, reflected also in the requirement for the police to be not just accountable to communities but responsive to them. However, the commitment to the context needed for neighbourhood policing to flourish begs the question of whether it can do so absent that political environment.

Many of the features of neighbourhood policing as it was originally rolled out can be traced to these features of the New Labour policy landscape - and also its flaws. The government's particular construction of local involvement and accountability had a tendency to ignore the kind of structural inequities that are reproduced by patterns of deliberation and participation rather than bypassed by them. The depoliticisation of New Labour's new localism risked the devolution of responsibility without matching resources, and the construction of a kind of delegate democracy.

The biggest weakness, however, was that neighbourhood policing had confidence as its central purpose. With the waning of the ideological assumptions of New Labour, so too has retreated much of neighbourhood policing's supporting structure. In a much harsher political environment, where policing is more often

defined on law enforcement terms, with changed and more sophisticated demand, and a significantly reduced budget, neighbourhood policing has had to be recast in terms of its capacity to support other force goals. Confidence has receded, in every sense. Neighbourhood policing is being repackaged and repurposed as a mechanism for delivering work on vulnerability, hidden harms, counter-terrorism and organised crime, partly perhaps because a stronger business case is needed to make the case for retaining local policing teams under budgetary pressure.

However, the marginalisation of confidence as a guiding principle is problematic. It seems unlikely, given the evidence outlined in Chapter One, that confidence can be generated as a happy by-product of work focused on hidden harms and vulnerability. Nor is there robust evidence that such targeted work can replace the universal, visible presence that the original Neighbourhood Policing Programme envisaged. The new guidelines outlined by the College of Policing may go some way to encouraging a return to community engagement work and problem-oriented policing, but without the common purpose that the NPP and the single confidence target enshrined, it is hard to see how this fragmented, demand-driven landscape of local policing can support confidence in the way that the previous model envisaged.

In consequence, if confidence is an oil tanker (Bradford et al, 2008; Bradford and Jackson, 2010c), it may have already begun its long turn. A deeper understanding of the mechanisms of neighbourhood policing, and how they are implemented and valued in practice, takes on a greater urgency within this context. The next chapter looks at the evidence base that was offered at the time of the roll-out of

neighbourhood policing, and what the evidence currently says about the efficacy

of the mechanisms that were meant to support public confidence in policing.

Chapter Three - The mechanisms of confidence: Community engagement, visibility and problem-solving

Introduction

This chapter reviews the three main mechanisms by which Neighbourhood Policing was to foster public confidence, in turn developed from the key elements of the National Reassurance Policing Programme (NRPP). These were visibility, community engagement, and problem-solving (ACPO, 2006). This is not to underplay the importance of other issues such as organisational support and accountability (Lloyd and Foster, 2009; Colover and Quinton, 2018); but these aspects are beyond the scope of this research.

The chapter is structured in four sections. The first explores the genesis of neighbourhood policing, particularly through the signal crimes perspective developed by Martin Innes, Nigel Fielding and others at the University of Surrey (Innes and Fielding, 2002), and the trials of the National Reassurance Policing Programme (NRPP); and it shows how neighbourhood policing stood at the end of the official three year programme in 2008. The following three sections are each dedicated to one of the three mechanisms through which neighbourhood policing was to deliver and maintain increased confidence in policing.

The second section looks at community engagement, with a particular focus on the role of public meetings in setting police priorities. It notes the poor track record of consultation in policing and the risks associated with traditional engagement methods. This section also explores other methods of public engagement and the way that the police communicate with the public. It notes the relative weight given to different democratic values in different types of community engagement, and the curious longevity of the public meeting in this context. This section frames the later Chapter Five, which looks at the way that public engagement was constituted in Borough One.

The third section examines visibility, accessibility and familiarity. I outline the "insatiable demand" (Povey, 2001) for foot patrol, and the evidence as to its efficacy in reducing crime, fear of crime, and increasing confidence in the police. The section also weighs the value of familiarity, local knowledge and continuity in neighbourhood policing; and notes the evidence that these are difficult to maintain in situations of high staff turnover and limited resources. This section frames Chapter Seven, which examines the role of visibility, accessibility and familiarity in policing Borough One; how ward panels offered a unique capacity to support neighbourhood policing in some of these areas; and the endurance of reassurance as a style of policing.

The final section considers problem-solving. It looks at the history of problem-oriented policing in the UK and how this was embedded in the new model of neighbourhood policing, and what is known about the operation of problem-solving in practice. This serves as a structure for Chapter Eight, which explains the processes of problem-solving in Borough One, the way that partners were

engaged and involved, and the ways in which police officers and others attempted to manage demand and expectations.

The genesis of Neighbourhood Policing

The last chapter illustrated the political roots of neighbourhood policing. It showed how New Labour's vision stemmed from a belief in the possibility of improving both the security and the social cohesion of neighbourhoods through partnerships and participation, entrenched alongside the gradual pluralisation of policing functions, most notably with the establishment of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and community wardens (Innes, 2005a; Robinson, 2006).

Some senior police officers, and police regulatory agencies, had come to similar conclusions about how policing needed to change. This stemmed partly from a deep fall in public confidence, and a diagnosis that married this to a concern about the 'professionalisation' of policing and the concomitant distancing of the police from their communities. HMIC in its 2001 report 'Open All Hours,' prescribed a strong dose of visibility, accessibility, and familiarity to reassure people and increase public confidence in policing (Povey, 2001). This section will look at how Reassurance Policing developed from this vague prescription (Innes, 2005a) and what was learned. It will then turn to the subsequent development of the Neighbourhood Policing Programme (NPP).

Background

The idea of reassurance policing dates from the 1970s (Bahn, 1974). However, the development of Reassurance Policing and subsequently Neighbourhood

Policing in the UK emerged from an extended period from the mid-1990s in which public confidence in policing did not seem to be reflecting a decline in crime. The British Crime Survey (BCS) measure of public confidence fell by 17% between 1982 and 2001/02 (Myhill and Quinton, 2010), and, in the early 2000s, the public tended to believe that crime was rising both in their local areas and in the country as a whole (Innes and Fielding, 2002). This became known as the 'reassurance gap', after an ACPO paper, *Civility First* (ACPO, 2001, cited in Tuffin et al, 2006).

This led to a shift away from intelligence-led policing to community models (Innes, 2005a). HMIC (2002) argued that the problem was one of detachment: the police needed to become closer, more visible, accessible and familiar to the public (HMIC, 2002; Innes, 2005a). At the same time, growing evidence was available from the CAPS programme in Chicago (Skogan and Hartnett, 1997) that community policing was capable of delivering improvements in public perceptions of the police, as well as reducing concern about crime (Tuffin, Morris and Poole, 2006).

The drive to develop a community policing function may also have come from within (Savage, 2007a, 2007b). Senior officers may have seen the pluralisation of policing in the late 1990s as a threat; the private sector could increasingly take over local patrol functions if the police service was not seen to be taking this role seriously (Johnston, 2003; Innes, 2005a). Innes argues that Reassurance Policing thus provided the cover for the later development of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), and the pluralism of policing that followed, by in essence providing a cloak of philosophy and values in which to drape them.

Signal crimes

The signal crimes perspective was at the heart of the National Reassurance Policing Programme (Innes, 2004a). Developed by academics at the University of Surrey (Innes and Fielding, 2002), this concept suggests that some crimes matter more to people than others, in the way they shape residents' beliefs about an area, and how they affect residents' sense of safety. This means fear of crime can remain high while recorded crime falls. Moreover, fear of crime may be a metaphor within which people articulate a wider set of anxieties about the social order and their place in it (Innes and Fielding, 2002). Survey measures might not actually be measuring fear of crime so much as anger, annoyance or heightened awareness of it (Ditton et al, 1999; Farrell and Ditton, 1999; Hough, 2017). For Innes, this is not a sign of public ignorance; rather, incivilities are important because of "how they encode messages about levels of unwanted risk and social control in an area" (p.341).

Signals can be interpreted in different ways, and this can be affected by the characteristics of residents as well as the situated context of the crime or disorder (Innes and Fielding, 2002). For example, low-level disorder such as graffiti may not be remarkable in a neighbourhood that suffers from high crime and disorder in general; but it can be of real concern in a more orderly neighbourhood precisely because it is unusual (ibid). This perspective also allows differentiation within a community: incidents such as graffiti may send different signals to teenagers than to the elderly, for example. A cumulative exposure to weak signals could suggest a decline in order sufficient to generate a shift in people's belief in their own safety. The signal crime perspective was therefore one that sat

comfortably with the Labour government focus on localities, and on antisocial behaviour and low-level disorder.

The presence of police was not by itself sufficient to 'reassure'. Police presence could sometimes signal insecurity (Crawford, 2007) and increase the fear of crime. The signal crimes perspective suggested that police could address the gap between recorded crime and fear of crime by focusing on incidents that had a disproportionate effect on the public's perception of risk (Innes and Fielding, 2002; CoP, 2017) by designing their interventions to "communicate the presence of a protective form of action" (Innes, 2005a, p.163). These control signals, "acts of social control that communicate a message to the public," (Innes, 2004b), would harness the "dramaturgical power" of the police capacity for formal social control (Innes, 2007, p.133) and thus symbolise security for local residents (Barker, 2014).

Not everyone welcomed reassurance policing. Crawford (2007, pp.155-156) argued that signal crimes could lead to police focusing less on serious crimes that caused real harm and more on crimes that that were symbolic of harm, undermining the idea that the seriousness of crime was established by "normative principles of law"; while it moved policing itself into an "impossible realm" (p.144) of managing public and private anxieties. Public policing could be 'captured' by the "fearful middle classes" (p.161); and target the socially marginalised (FitzGerald et al, 2002). Despite these concerns, the signal crimes perspective was largely welcomed both by politicians and by police leaders (Crawford, 2007; Barker, 2014).

The National Reassurance Policing Programme

Informed by the signal crimes perspective, Surrey Police initiated the development of a model that became the National Reassurance Policing Programme (NRPP) (Tuffin, Morris and Poole, 2006; Millie, 2010). This was originally implemented in 16 wards in eight police forces (including the MPS) from October 2003 (Quinton and Morris, 2008a).

An early review of the literature suggested that Povey's mechanisms of visibility, accessibility and familiarity (Povey, 2001) were not on their own likely to produce the desired outcomes (Innes, 2005a, p.161); they were necessary, but not sufficient. Systematic problem-solving was needed, as well as multi-agency partnerships, acknowledging not just the variety of agencies involved in dealing with crime and disorder, but also the importance of informal social control (Sampson and Raudenbusch, 1999). This also reflects a recognition that communities of had been stripped of the 'guardianship' of public sector stewards such as park-keepers and bus conductors (Innes, 2005a; Crawford, 2007). The three 'mechanisms' by which reassurance policing would achieve its aims would be targeted policing activity and problem-solving; community involvement in identifying and tackling problems; and visible, accessible and familiar police officers and PCSOs in neighbourhoods (Tuffin, Morris and Poole, 2006, p.xii).

The NRPP evaluation was considered one of the most robust evaluations of community policing ever undertaken (Tuffin, Morris and Poole, p.i). The pilots saw 'Reassurance Policing' introduced under controlled conditions, in small areas (local authority wards). This allowed the ACPO programme team to tightly control and monitor the intervention. Although, as Quinton and Morris (2008a)

note, these were hardly laboratory conditions, it was considerably more controlled than were later BCU-level and national evaluations.

The first evaluation of the NRPP showed it to have delivered increased confidence, lower victimisation,[6] improved feelings of safety, perceptions of lower crime and anti-social behaviour, and greater community engagement, visibility and familiarity (Tuffin, Morris and Poole, 2006). The pilot also showed some effects on social capacity and collective efficacy; however, these were limited. Improvements in trust were sustained into the second year, but no other programme effects, such as involvement in community or voluntary activity, were evident. However, analysis showed consistency between the delivery mechanisms of visibility, engagement, and problem-solving and improvements in confidence, and most of these benefits were sustained over the longer term (Quinton and Morris, 2008a). The evaluation concluded that rolling out a programme of neighbourhood policing on a national level would likely deliver "improvements in crime, public confidence, feelings of safety, fear of crime and perceptions of anti-social behaviour" (Tuffin, Morris and Poole, 2006, p.93). The evaluation suggested that changes in social capacity might require a longer timescale and different activity with partners - but did not rule out such an outcome in the longer term.

Transitions

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[6] Crime reduction had not been part of the programme aims, but was included in the evaluation as it had been shown in other studies of community policing to be a potential outcome (Tuffin, Morris and Poole, 2006).

There was early recognition that reassurance as a concept presented definitional difficulties. The original philosophy of the NRPP saw reassurance as a style of policing, rather than an outcome, but this was not always clear in policy documents (Herrington and Millie, 2006). Innes (2005, p.159) argues that the transition from Reassurance to Neighbourhood Policing was in part an act of rebranding. The idea of 'neighbourhood' appealed to a desire for a shared identity based around geographic locality and common interest, as opposed to 'reassurance,' which was complex, had multiple meanings, and was more difficult for the wider public to immediately understand.

The launch of Neighbourhood Policing was certainly a decision rooted in political motivations. As the last chapter outlined, the Labour government had multiple policy aims for which Neighbourhood Policing was a suitable vehicle, including its focus on citizen participation; the acknowledgement of low-level disorder and antisocial behaviour as disproportionately affecting the poorest; and the pluralisation of the 'policing family' (Innes, 2005a).

The extent to which NP was a major change from the NRPP, rather than an evolution, is arguable. Innes himself believes that most of what became neighbourhood policing began as reassurance policing (Innes, 2005a, p.160). Many of the policy documents of the time treat Reassurance Policing as a direct antecedent of Neighbourhood Policing. ACPO's 2006 practice guidance for example explicitly links the signal crime perspective - the foundation of Reassurance Policing - as being "equally valid in neighbourhood policing" (ACPO, 2006, p.6). Similarly, the NPP was not envisaged as necessarily leading directly to a reduction in crime rates at programme level, as it was designed - like

the NRPP, and in keeping with the signal crimes perspective - to focus on crime and disorder that mattered to local residents, which sometimes might include issues that would not register as crimes (Quinton and Morris, 2008a).

Neighbourhood policing

The rollout of the NPP was different in important ways to the NRPP. In its first year, the NPP was rolled out to 43 BCUs, and in its second year, began to be implemented across entire forces. It was fully implemented by 2007/08 (Quinton and Morris, 2008a). The BCUs in the early NPP were much bigger - the largest was 360,000 residents (Quinton and Morris, 2008a, p.16). As Quinton and Morris underline, Borough Commanders at this level had to consider a range of competing demands, and thus the NPP faced implementation issues not encountered during the much smaller NRPP, not least resourcing and recruitment.

Early evaluations of the NPP took place after just a year into an intended three-year implementation process. The first evaluation showed a slightly different model of public confidence. Evaluated at BCU level, variables related to visibility, community engagement, and collaborative problem-solving could predict reductions in confidence, but only foot patrol seemed to be linked with increases. Positive experiences of community engagement, problem-solving and procedural justice, for example, were not linked to increased public confidence. Quinton and Morris (2008a, p.21) suggest that this may have been as a result of the BCUs focusing on getting the necessary resources in place, meaning increased foot patrol may have 'cut through' to residents more than nascent efforts around engagement and problem-solving. The evaluation also suggested that the provision of information to the public could be vital.

The next stage was to evaluate the project at a national level. This consisted of repeated surveys at force and BCU level across all of the 43 forces in England and Wales. This suggested that there was no consistent pattern of change at BCU level, and Quinton and Morris (2008a) suggest that this may again reflect the stage of the programme (just 18 months into the force-wide implementation), but also weaknesses around community engagement and problem-solving. These, it was suggested, were only likely to be resolved "with sustained effort and commitment in the long term" (p.31). The findings suggested public confidence in the police was fragile: easily damaged, but difficult to mend. Overall, the evaluation concluded, all three delivery mechanisms - visibility, community engagement, and problem-solving - had to be delivered together, over the longer term, supported by wide organisational change (ibid, p.xii).

By the third year of the programme, HMIC was able to say that "all forces [had] achieved the basic standard of making sure that Neighbourhood Policing is a core part of policing work." However, progress varied considerably between police forces. With the end of the formal programme, there was an increasing emphasis on community engagement and public confidence in policing more generally (Longstaff et al, 2015). The introduction of a single target for police forces, that of public confidence, reflected this emphasis.

Nevertheless, the Home Office's 2008 Green Paper notes that the confidence gap had still not closed. The Green Paper therefore committed the government to the new Policing Pledge. This included promises that the police would arrange monthly meetings with the public in every neighbourhood, and reinforced the government's developing focus on accountability. The follow-up 2009 White

Paper, *Protecting the Public - Supporting the Police to Succeed*, saw the introduction of a 'Police Report Card', measuring performance on local crime and policing; satisfaction and confidence; protection from serious harm; and value for money. The focus was now a clear set of standards and "a stronger right for the public to have a say in shaping local policing priorities" (Home Office, 2009, p.8).

All of the above were abolished by the incoming coalition government in 2010. However, as Chapter Two set out, neighbourhood policing itself was not dismantled. Rather, individual PCCs were enjoined to make their own decisions about the relative weight that should be given to neighbourhood policing in the context of considerably straitened resources.

The next three sections look at the particular mechanisms by which neighbourhood policing was to deliver enhanced confidence. Each section looks at some of the particular issues thrown up by the literature on these mechanisms. This prepares the ground for an examination of how these work in practice in one borough in London, one of the areas where neighbourhood policing does appear to be clinging to its original form, albeit with fewer resources, to show the resilience and the weaknesses of these mechanisms in conditions of austerity.

Community engagement and priority setting

Community engagement was one of the three core 'mechanisms' by which neighbourhood policing was expected to deliver improvements in public perceptions and confidence in the police. The government's policy agenda prioritised the involvement of the public in the delivery of public services in general. It believed that the engagement of the public in policing had both

instrumental benefits to the police, but also to communities in terms of capacity-building.

This section outlines the background to this commitment to public engagement in policing, and explains how the NPP was to achieve this. It then looks at what is known about police-public engagement, and the problems that have been identified, particularly with regard to public meetings. This is intended to frame the findings outlined in Chapter Five.

Background

There are different levels of community engagement in policing. Myhill (2006) offers a useful typology: information and reassurance at the bottom, through monitoring or accountability; strategic consultation; partnership/co-operation; and at the top, empowerment, which Myhill interprets as public-initiated, police-supported problem-solving initiatives. Much of the evidence from the UK relates to community participation at a strategic consultation level - in particular the Police and Community Consultation Groups (PCCGs) established after the Brixton Riots of 1981 (Scarman, 1982).

By the time of a 1985 Home Office study into the implementation of the Scarman report, PCCGs covered most of the country. Whether participants' hearts were in it was a different matter. "More prevalent is the view that in many parts of the country they are probably a waste of time, but that in the meantime, everyone has to go through the motions." (Morgan and Maggs, 1985, p.14). Research found that the issues that residents tended to raise were localised and immediate, and that the public were broadly uninterested in strategic issues such as the Policing

Plan (Elliott and Nicholls, 1996, p.11); rather, the meetings were simply legitimating the status quo (Reiner, 1992b). By the end of the decade, there was a consensus that consultation through PCCGs was not working as intended (Morgan and Maggs, 1985; Elliott and Nicholls, 1996). Nevertheless, around 75% of police authorities still ran these sorts of meetings (Myhill et al, 2003).

Formal public meetings remain a long-standing tradition of British policing, and are rarely challenged (Foster and Jones, 2010). The 2004 White Paper called for "direct and continuous engagement" between the police and the public: "Moving beyond relying on public meetings as a sole form of engagement is a key aim of our reforms." (Home Office, 2004a, p.63, para 3.45). Yet, four years on, at the culmination of the roll-out of the national Neighbourhood Policing Programme (NPP), the Casey Report found that 74% of forces were publicising such meetings on their websites, albeit referring to them by 15 different names (Casey, 2008, p.25). The Flanagan Review of that year again called for public meetings to be "supplemented by more innovative engagement methods that increase representation" (Flanagan, 2008, p.66). But there was little in the White Paper or the Flanagan Review by way of examples of other activities to replace their central role, other than a nod to the street briefings and door knocking that had been successful in the pilot of the NRPP.

Neighbourhood policing and community engagement

The pilot of the National Reassurance Policing Programme had shown that "improved perceptions of police effort in finding out what the public think" were associated with improved public confidence (Quinton and Morris, 2008a, p.8). By the launch of Neighbourhood Policing, this had been formalised into a list of

critical success factors on three related vectors: public priorities, community engagement, and communication (ACPO, 2006).

The first vector, public priorities, included the creation of mechanisms for the public to tell the police about their concerns; the establishment of Key Individual Networks; the participation of partners; managing expectations; and ensuring regular feedback and regular opportunities to review priorities. No mention is made in ACPO's practice guidance as to whether meetings would be appropriate venues for these. However, the second set of critical success factors (for engagement) does suggest that the police need to go beyond public meetings to include street briefings, house to house calls and "other innovative methods" (ACPO, 2006, p.15), and to use community engagement to "actively involve community participants in problem-solving processes".

Neighbourhood Policing teams, in line with the National Intelligence Model, were to draw up a neighbourhood profile, then to engage in structured community engagement to identify problems; to draw up a plan to prioritise and solve those problems, and then to hold regular neighbourhood co-ordination meetings. Public (or panel) meetings thus remained central to the vision of how neighbourhood policing was carried out, even as the teams were exhorted to go beyond them. In essence, the ACPO advice acknowledges in practice that meetings are not easily replaced in terms of legitimate methods of reviewing and co-ordinating police activity and priorities.

By the time of the first national evaluation of early implementation, some 48% of BCUs surveyed reported that neighbourhood priorities were being set by local people rather than by the police. The survey also showed changes in the methods

used by the police to engage with local people; in particular, the 'Pathfinder'
BCUs (the first to implement the Neighbourhood Policing Programme) showed
much greater use of methods such as street briefings, door knocking, key
individual networks and environmental visual audits (Quinton and Morris, 2008a,
p.24).

Public meetings in practice

There are good reasons for the curious endurance of the public meeting. They are
cheap; they allow issues to be explored in discussion, and they can be quick to
get results (Forrest, Myhill and Tilley, 2005). They can operate as a mechanism
for the public to let off steam, to hold officers to account, to build personal
relationships, and to assist with intelligence gathering (Myhill et al, 2003).
However, there are also many recognised problems with them.

The structure of meetings can influence how well they work. Police-appointed
chairs in PCCGs may have contributed to the committees becoming self-selecting
groups of supportive local organisational representatives (Bull and Stratta, 1994,
p.245). There was consistent evidence that police (particularly in the UK) were
inclined to monitor and control what made its way onto the agenda; which in
turn, were often dominated by operational police issues (Myhill et al, 2003). In
effect, meetings were used to "broadcast information and to rubber stamp
decisions that had already been made" (Bullock, 2018a, pp.246-247); in essence,
being used as public relations exercises (Forrest, Myhill and Tilley, 2005).

Public meetings are also often ineffective. Policing priorities can be adopted even
when they are not realistically 'problems'; or when police knew they could do

little to resolve the issues concerned (Foster and Jones, 2010). Community and police priorities are often in conflict, while residents' articulation of the problems most pressing in their neighbourhoods rarely correspond with police officers' estimation of risk (Bullock and Leeney, 2013). However, the most repeated critiques of meetings as a venue for police-public engagement are low participation and poor representativeness of communities.

There is consistent evidence from the literature that attendance at police-public consultative meetings is low (Bull and Stratta, 1994; Jones and Newburn, 2001; Myhill et al 2003; Mistry, 2007; Harkin, 2014; Higgins, 2018a). The post-Scarman PCCG meetings often had fewer than 15 members of the public, and they were on occasion outnumbered by the officials in attendance. Those who did attend were overwhelmingly white and over the age of 40 (Elliott and Nicholls, 1996). Low attendance may not just be an outcome of public apathy, but can contribute to it (Harfield, 1997). The Home Office acknowledged that, after nearly a decade of community engagement, the common image of neighbourhood meetings remained "the same few people sitting around in a local hall" (Home Office, 2010a, p.15, para 2.29).

The factors affecting attendance and participation are not always predictable. Many areas found that only meetings addressing issues of immediate local concern would attract a large turnout (Myhill et al, 2003). Low attendance may also be related to existing community relationships; whether tensions between police and ethnic minorities, or the lack of existing community networks (Grinc, 1994; Skogan et al, 1999). However, participation is not always skewed towards wealthier communities. Skogan and Steiner (2004, p.ii) found attendance rates

especially high in areas with poor housing and high crime rates ("beat meetings give people a place to go to do something about them"); while Bullock and Sindall (2014, p.18) found that, while awareness and participation were influenced by demographics, this was not entirely regressive.

There are a number of negative repercussions from low participation and attendance. Some have suggested that the relative homogeneity of consultative groups might itself be off-putting, discouraging a wider range of residents from joining them (Bull and Stratta, 1994; Harfield, 1997). Low participation can also mean that such meetings are not representative of the areas they are set up to reflect. Traditional PCCGs were found to be dominated by white, middle-class, older citizens, and did not reflect the communities they purported to represent (Bull and Stratta, 1995; Myhill et al, 2003). More generally, activeness in community groups is associated with particular demographic traits - being well-educated, relatively wealthy, and possessing social capital (Herbert, 2006).

A lack of representativeness brings its own problems. Poor representativeness can damage the general legitimacy of police-public meetings (Harfield, 2007). There are risks that decisions taken by a small number of active citizens may not represent the wider population, and will leave those who are not active participants feeling ignored and resentful (Herbert, 2006; Foster and Jones, 2010; Bullock and Leeney, 2013). A lack of representativeness also risks a dominant group being able to direct police action against a minority group with which they have an issue (Harfield, 2007).

Finally, the participation of particular police officers can also have an effect on the success of meetings; the presence of officers of higher ranks can have a

chilling effect on general participation and encourage the absence or silence of those with day-to-day operational experience of the area (Bull and Stratta, 1994).

Moving beyond the meeting

Police forces in the UK have been encouraged to widen their community activities, though overall there seems little appetite for the complete abandonment of formal meetings in favour of other approaches. HMIC (2008) found that effective community engagement went beyond scheduled meetings, but it did not explain the distinction between a 'traditional' meeting and 'innovations' such as Police and Community Together (PACT) meetings or Neighbourhood Watch. National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) guidance suggests that neighbourhood engagement should go beyond public meetings, but not that it should leave them behind (NPIA, 2010, p.25).

The evaluation of the NRPP had also suggested that community engagement needed to go beyond meetings. Traditional public meetings by themselves did not change perceptions of police engagement, and those trial sites that did see significant improvements had undertaken activities other than meetings, including "'open forum' events, large scale public surveys, the use of outreach workers, door knocking exercises and dedicated media officers to ensure wide press coverage of reassurance initiatives." (Tuffin, Morris and Poole, 2006). One site's early 'open forum' saw residents using flags to identify problem areas on a scale model of the neighbourhood (ibid, p.86). However, it is not clear which of these might have had the most influence on perceptions.

A variety of alternative methods of community engagement have been tried elsewhere. Door knocking seems to be effective in crime reduction (Myhill, 2006). Community engagement has been enhanced in some forces by focus groups, particularly for vulnerable and hard to reach groups. 'Outreach' work undertaken by forces appears to be successful, and is a particularly effective way of targeting hard-to-reach groups; though often more concerned with profile-raising than interactive consultation (Myhill et al, 2003). The quality and effectiveness of outreach may also rest on who the police reach out to. A tendency to rely on existing, well-established groups can mean that less easy to reach groups are largely left disengaged (Lister et al, 2015).

The problems for more innovative engagement activities are often similar to those for public meetings. Innovative community engagement can also be "limited in its ambition" (Lister et al, 2015, p.2) and focused more on information gathering than preventive problem-solving. All community engagement work is resource-intensive, and planned activities can be disrupted by urgent work or abstraction (Lister et al, 2015; Higgins, 2018a). Other issues included a lack of specialist training for community engagement work (Lister et al, 2015). Where innovative engagement is successful, it is often flexible and adapted to particular communities (Pate et al, 1986). However, as with the NRPP evaluation, it is sometimes difficult to disaggregate innovative engagement methods from the resources invested in publicising these methods.

Communication

Communicating effectively about police responses to problems raised is an essential part of the problem-solving process (Clarke and Eck, 2005), as will be

explored further in Chapter Eight. Communication also plays a wider role in the relationship between the police and the public in terms of democratic transparency (Hohl, Bradford and Stanko, 2010). The police are reliant on the public for co-operation and information, for which they must know what information and co-operation is needed; and evidence suggests that confidence is improved when the public feels well-informed by the police (Bradford, Jackson and Stanko, 2009; Hohl, Bradford and Stanko, 2010). Moreover, evidence suggests that the provision of information alone can make small but nonetheless notable differences to the way that people perceive the police (Quinton, 2011).

As noted in Chapter One, tailored local newsletters can increase confidence and perceptions of police-community engagement (Wünsch and Hohl, 2009; Hohl, Bradford and Stanko, 2010), though there is also evidence that suggests that newsletters can have limited effects, especially when the target audience doesn't read them (Pate et al, 1986). Handing pamphlets to residents on their doorsteps can increase their impact, but it is not clear if this is because the contact encourages greater readership (Singer and Cooper, 2008). In London, Stanko and Dawson (2016) found that newsletters could improve public confidence, but (in an unpublished internal study) could damage trust and confidence if they did not appear to reflect residents' real concerns. Newsletters could therefore act as a multiplier of good face to face engagement, but could not replace it.

The possibilities of the internet for facilitating two-way police-community engagement at relatively low cost sparked interest from its earliest years (Myhill et al, 2003); and social media initially appeared to have great potential for

engagement and legitimacy (Grimmelikhuijsen and Meijer, 2015). Community police teams adopted the new media with some enthusiasm.

However, consistent findings suggest that police forces tend to use social media in the same way as other media: to broadcast information rather than to engage interactively (Crump, 2011; Bullock, 2018a, 2018b; Walsh and O'Connor, 2019). Research suggests that, while police officers often aim to break out of this 'broadcasting' pattern, for the most part, the practice of engagement has not been transformed (Bullock, 2018a), in part because of organisational constraints and fears over the security and reputation of police forces being damaged by careless use of social media (ACPO, 2013, Bullock, 2014a; Goldsmith, 2015). A further issue is the tendency of police forces to focus their social media work on Twitter, which has a limited audience and, despite common beliefs on the part of officers, is not particularly well-used by younger people (Bullock, 2014; Ofcom, 2018). While legitimacy can be increased by the use of Twitter, the effects are minor and it appears to be a result of increased transparency rather than participation, as interaction is very limited (Grimmelikhuijsen and Meijer, 2015). Facebook, too, is seeing a decrease in younger users and an increase in the over-50s (Ofcom, 2018). It is not clear to what extent police organisations have internalised this knowledge or adapted their social media strategies in response.

Flexibility appears to be key - methods of community engagement that succeed in one area may fail in another, and some groups may not see themselves as coherent communities at all (Myhill et al, 2003; Myhill, 2006). HMIC (2008) praised the way that many forces had asked local communities how they

preferred to be engaged with, and recommended that engagement continue to be "flexible and adapted to local circumstances" (HMIC, 2008, p.25).

Meetings are therefore likely to remain an integral part of the way that police engage with the local community, and looking at how particular meeting structures work is a valuable way of understanding police-community engagement. Chapter Five will look at how ward panels in Borough One were constituted; how they dealt with the recurring issues of participation and representation; and what their strengths were in contributing to community engagement and priority setting. First, however, the next section will examine what is known about the second of the mechanisms of community engagement, that of visibility.

Visibility, accessibility and familiarity

In the HMIC report *'Open All Hours,'* Povey (2001) described visibility, accessibility and familiarity (sometimes referred to as VAF) as being vital to the work of reassuring the public. Visibility was defined as "the level, profile and impact of police resources"; accessibility as "the ease with which the public can obtain appropriate police information, access services or make contact with staff"; and familiarity as "the extent to which police personnel both know and are known by the local community" (Povey, 2001, p.24). Clearly these overlap, and in general, this thesis will use 'visibility' as a shortcut for all three ideas. However, this section will separate them into two groups: visibility and accessibility; and familiarity (along with the associated idea of continuity) of police presence.

This section looks at the background to visible policing, and what is known about the effectiveness of foot patrol. It also touches on the role of plural policing in providing visible patrols, and other mechanisms of visibility such as mounted units and police stations. This provides a warrant for the fieldwork which examines how and to what extent visibility, accessibility and familiarity are being maintained in practice in conditions of austerity in Borough One.

Background

There is considerable evidence of the symbolic importance of foot patrol as part of a general service model of policing (Manning, 1997, 2003; Brunger, 2014). The 2002/03 British Crime Survey reported that more than 50% of respondents felt foot patrol should be among the top three priorities for the police (Wakefield, 2006). This is a long-standing disposition: in 1990, an Operational Police Review found that most people felt resources should be directed away from the reactive and crime fighting role of the police and allocated instead to non-law enforcement jobs such as foot patrol. Just 20 per cent of respondents believed that the police did a great deal or a fair amount of foot patrol (Police Federation and Police Superintendents' Association, 1990, S.4&5, p.2). The Casey report listed visible, uniformed foot patrol as among the top five most important public priorities (Casey, 2008).

It is difficult to disentangle public expectations about foot patrol from the way that 'bobbies on the beat' have been used as symbols of policing, whether by politicians or the police themselves (Wakefield, 2007). The 'bobby on the beat' has become part of a cultural mythology of Englishness (Brunger, 2014), which in turn makes it a powerful tool of legitimation. It is associated with a nostalgic

image of officers who are "friendly, familiar and trustworthy" (Wakefield, 2006, p.10). However, as the College of Policing (2017a) warns, the idea of neighbourhood policing can take on such symbolic power that its actual content loses focus; instead it becomes a vision defined by individuals' own values and expectations, which can cause problems when it comes both to implementation, and to measuring success. Crawford and Lister (2006, p.177) argue that this nostalgic yearning for local officers dealing with local problems is at times so strong that no attempt to replicate it can really measure up. Moreover, media coverage can call to the iconic status of the 'bobby on the beat' such that the complexity of the tactic's contribution is lost (Innes, 2004a).

There is consistent evidence that visibility and familiarity are successful ways of improving perceptions of the police (Pate et al, 1986; Skogan and Hartnett, 1997; Dalgleish and Myhill, 2004). Those most in favour of foot patrol see it as evidence that "something is being done," and a powerful message of reassurance (ibid, p.10). Visibility therefore formed a large part of the Home Office's promises as outlined in its 2004 White Paper, *Building Communities, Beating Crime*. Citizens were promised "a more visible, accessible police presence on the streets and in their communities" (Home Office, 2004a, p.8), and it formed a core part of the new National Reassurance Policing Programme (NRPP).

Neighbourhood policing and visibility, accessibility and familiarity

The NRPP was partly premised the idea that visible authority figures in neighbourhoods would help facilitate community involvement (Dalgleish and Myhill, 2004; Quinton and Tuffin, 2007). The pilot of the NRPP showed that the programme had increased the numbers of those who had seen police on foot

patrol; and that increased perceptions of police visibility were associated with increased public confidence in the police. There was also a 12% increase in the proportion of residents who knew their local police by name or by sight (Tuffin, Morris and Poole, 2006).

However, by the end of the second year, programme effects for police visibility had fallen; the proportion of people across the sites, and particularly in London, reporting that they had seen an officer on foot patrol once a week or more fell. Perceptions of the police were still higher than at the start of the programme, leading Quinton and Morris (2008, p.12) to conclude that in the long term, police visibility may be less important than the other identified mechanisms of community engagement and problem-solving. Familiarity, however, had been sustained, in terms of the numbers of respondents who could say that they knew their local officers by name or by sight.

The rollout of the neighbourhood policing programme at BCU level had some interesting outcomes with regard to visibility. Firstly, public perceptions of visibility did improve - something that Quinton and Morris (2008) assign to the large increase in PCSOs in the neighbourhoods under study. However, this did not lead to an increase in confidence, perhaps as visibility was the area primarily focused upon, to the exclusion of problem-solving and engagement. It seems much harder for the police to undertake activities on a large geographical scale that are substantial enough to raise confidence, though fairly easy for them to do things that may damage public confidence. This led Quinton and Morris (2008, p.22) to raise concerns that raised expectations could threaten confidence if public perceptions of visibility were set against a higher benchmark than had

previously existed. The trial and the early evaluations thus underlined that visibility by itself was not enough to raise confidence - but the promise of visibility could raise expectations that forces might not be able to meet.

Foot patrol in practice

Foot patrol is often associated with preventing crime and reducing fear of crime (Pate et al, 1986; Zhao, Schneider and Thurman, 2002; Wakefield, 2006). However, there is little evidence that random patrol alone can prevent crime (Kelling et al, 1974; Sherman and Eck, 2002; Telep and Weisburd, 2012). Notoriously, Clarke and Hough (1984) suggested that the likelihood of an officer on foot patrol coming across a burglary in progress was about once every eight years. Targeted foot patrol by contrast can affect crime levels (Sherman and Weisburd, 1995; Braga, Papachristos and Hureau, 2012; Sorg et al, 2013; Weisburd, 2018). However, as Hail, Aston and O'Neill (2018) note, it is not always clear what exactly police do during these 'hotspot' patrols. The same caveats apply to foot patrol as a means of tackling fear of crime. Police presence alone has no significant effects on fear of crime (Hill et al, 2014). However, increased disorder raises fear - suggesting that changes to people's assessment of a neighbourhood may depend on what the police do, not simply their presence alone.

Foot patrol does, however, seem to boost confidence (Zhao, Schneider and Thurman, 2002; Bradford, Jackson and Stanko, 2009; Skogan, 2009; Sindall and Sturgiss, 2013). There is evidence to suggest that residents have better perceptions of police who patrol on foot compared to those they see patrolling in cars (Salmi, Voeten and Keskinen, 2000). The desire for visible foot patrol is

differentiated among different groups of the population; perhaps unsurprisingly, those most likely to demand the most visible patrolling are older women and those over 60 (Bradley, 1998). It is often introduced or emphasised to achieve some element of 'reassurance'; raising visibility, accessibility, familiarity or improved local knowledge (Wakefield, 2007). Loader (1997, p.15) notes its symbolic value, describing the bobby on the beat as representing "consensus, community and order".

Again, it may matter more what the police do, and the style in which they do it, than simply whether they are present (Hail, Aston and O'Neill, 2018). Using targeted foot patrol to make increased stop and searches, for example, is not likely to have a salutary effect on public confidence (Wood et al, 2014; Kochel and Weisburd, 2017). Chapter One showed how encounters with the police are more likely to damage than maintain or improve confidence even when these contacts are positive (Bradford, Jackson and Stanko, 2009). It may also require a significant investment of resources to make a tangible improvement, as small-scale changes to foot patrol levels may simply be missed by residents (Crawford, Lister and Wall, 2003).

There are also a number of complications to policing in a 'visible' way. Some areas are easier to police visibly than others. Rural areas are particularly difficult to police in a visible fashion (Mawby, 2009); but certain types of residential architectural space can have a similar effect. Blocks of flats may not lend themselves to foot patrol beats in the way that terraced housing does.

Some particular groups, such as young people or ethnic minority groups can also find police patrols threatening rather than reassuring due to a history of poor

relations (Foster and Jones, 2010). Barker (2014, p.3054) highlights the ambivalence of her respondents towards visible police presence and warns: "a healthy social order does not require the routine presence of police personnel."

Other kinds of visible policing

Though foot patrol is often regarded as synonymous with visible policing, there are other types of highly visible ways of the police being present. Though rarely used in community policing, Giacomantonio et al (2015) found that mounted patrol had benefits for trust and confidence, and suggested that police horses decreased the social distance between residents and police, allowing more relaxed interactions to develop.

The existence of police stations is a visible signifier of the presence of the police, as well as of their accessibility, but the effect of the presence of police stations on confidence is little-studied (McLaughlin, 2008; Millie, 2012; Smith and Somerville, 2013). The Audit Commission described the traditional police station as "a tangible reminder of the police's presence, a source of reassurance second only to the sight of a 'bobby on the beat'" (Audit Commission, 1999, p.2). However, in the same report, it warned that much of the police estate was no longer fit for purpose and many stations needed to be closed. Some 700 stations had already been closed in the course of the 1990s (Rogers and Houston, 2004). Over the next ten years, pressure on police forces to demonstrate efficiency saw the closure of more stations, especially in rural areas (Smith and Somerville, 2013), but also across major cities such as London (McLaughlin, 2008). Since 2010, this process has accelerated. A Freedom of Information request by the Sunday Times in September 2018 (Ungoed-Thomas, Harper and Shveda, 2018)

showed that 606 stations had closed since 2010. The disappearance of police stations from many towns and cities seems likely to have damaged police visibility, accessibility and familiarity, as well as causing operational difficulties.

Officers in vehicles are visible, but there is some debate as to whether they are accessible or reassuring. Wilson and Kelling (1982) famously suggested that officers in cars used the vehicle as a barrier between themselves and residents. The Povey report insisted that the quality of the visible presence mattered as well as the visibility itself, and quotes one ACC as saying: "a marked police vehicle with blue light and sirens activated sends a different message. This is currently visible policing, but we would suggest it is far from reassuring." (Povey, 2001, p.23). However, Singer (2004) found that officers, at least, believed that cars were highly visible and could offer a way of having a presence while officers did paperwork.

More recently, forces have also attempted to use social media to augment their visible presence (Walsh and O'Connor, 2018). Indeed, the new Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines make specific reference to the need for more evidence on how social media can be used to improve visibility and community engagement. However, as with community engagement, there is little evidence that social media can work in isolation to improve the visibility of the police rather than acting as a magnifier of a presence that is already there.

Familiarity

The 2004 White Paper pledged that citizens should "know who their local police officer, community support officer and wardens are – and who is in charge

locally – and how they can be contacted" (Home Office, 2004a, p.23). A 2006 progress report focused on familiarity and continuity as the key element of 'visible and accessible police': "local people seeing and having regular contact with the same officers - week in and week out - who stay in the job long enough to build lasting and trusting relationships with the communities they serve" (Home Office, 2006).

Visibility and familiarity were both regarded by ACPO as critical factors in the success of community engagement (ACPO, 2006, p.15); familiarity in particular was seen as a factor in building trust. Casey (2008) also reported that the public felt very strongly that they wanted to see more continuity in postings, with officers and PCSOs serving a minimum of two years in their areas. In 2010, the Home Office underlined the value of familiarity, promising to "encourage forces to think creatively about ways to incentivise officers and PCSOs to stay in particular neighbourhoods." (Home Office, 2010b, p.15).

Visibility and familiarity are closely linked. Foot patrol increases officers' understanding of the areas they police in a way that is not available to those patrolling by car. "Officers accumulated knowledge over time of specific spaces and places, and the people that flowed through them" (Wood et al, p.363). This in turn allows officers to have a more textured understanding of who and what might threaten local order (Chappell, 2007; Peaslee, 2009; Colover and Quinton, 2018).

However, studies have suggested that this knowledge is rarely institutionalised; rather it is held by individual officers, making this knowledge fragile and easily lost through staff turnover (Lister, Adams and Phillips, 2015). Familiarity is

therefore a harder goal to achieve than visibility, as high staff turnover is a trickier problem to resolve than a lack of presence (Wakefield, 2007).

Staff turnover is reported in several studies as posing a barrier to community policing initiatives. Higgins and Hale (2017) found the delivery of community cohesion work in Luton was undermined by a "lack of a consistent and familiar neighbourhood policing presence" (p.11), with the absence of continuity leading to the erosion of working relationships, and ultimately, resistance. Both turnover and abstractions (police being withdrawn for other duties) limit the level of familiarity that residents can develop with their local officers, and limit their capacity to develop local knowledge (Crawford, Lister and Wall, 2003; Singer, 2004; Higgins, 2018a). Positive changes to how neighbourhood work is regarded can also make continuity more difficult; Higgins (2018a) describes how the value of neighbourhood work from a career perspective encouraged officers to leave.

There are also difficulties in formulating clear objectives for a team if there are multiple supervisors over a relatively short period of time. Co-ordination between local neighbourhood teams and other specialist departments can also suffer for a lack of continuity in supervision (ibid). Problem-solving (explored further in the next section) is also damaged by a lack of continuity and long-term community engagement (Colover and Quinton, 2018).

However, there are also potential dangers in binding a designated officer to a particular area. The personal attributes of individual officers may become key variables; a situation exacerbated by the way community policing entails a high level of autonomy and discretion (Crawford, Lister and Wall, 2003). While familiarity can allow officers to access local knowledge and enhance problem-

solving, there is an 'ambiguity' to it, in that police who are attached to segments of the community may be unable to "hold the required 'detached stance', which constitutes a central value in establishing policing neutrality, equity and legitimacy." (ibid, p.46).

Plural policing

The early years of the Labour government saw a transformation in the pluralism of policing. The establishment of PCSOs was seen as a way of contributing to the "insatiable demand" (Povey, 2001) for foot patrol. A 2006 Home Office assessment found PCSOs spent up to 70% of their time on patrol (Cooper et al, 2006) - by contrast to an earlier PA Consulting report (PA Consulting, 2001) which had found that police constables were spending just 17% of their time on the beat.

There was a parallel growth in other types of patrol officers. In 2000, the government launched its neighbourhood wardens scheme (Robinson, 2006), and street wardens followed a year after. By 2008, McLaughlin was able to claim that all police areas in England and Wales had a 'mixed' neighbourhood policing team including not just police officers and PCSOs but neighbourhood wardens, security guards, park rangers and other authority figures (McLaughlin, 2008), to which Crawford, Lister and Blackburn (2005) would add municipal policing and citizen volunteers.

This "mixed economy" (Crawford, Lister and Blackburn, 2005) had a number of advantages. Some research found that PCSOs were generally welcomed, by police officers, residents, and other agencies (Paskell, 2007; O'Neill, 2015). In

particular, they were valued for the way in which they could contribute to police visibility on the streets (O'Neill, 2015). Their very lack of authority contributed to the guardianship role of police patrols, facilitating rapport and familiarity and encouraging other agencies and residents to step up where they might have left a warranted officer with greater powers to deal with a problem alone (Paskell, 2007). This advantage is not limited to PCSOs; Johnston (2003) found that residents were more willing to give information about crime and disorder to street wardens than to the police.

However, others expressed concern, some from the perspective of the democratic governance of such a multiplicity of different actors (Rhodes, 1997; Loader, 2000). From a pragmatic perspective, some officers believed that PCSOs for example simply made more work for the police (Johnston, 2007). And as with foot patrol by warranted officers, the way that PCSOs and others behave while on patrol also matters to confidence; presence alone is not sufficient. Thus Cosgrove and Ramshaw (2015) note that PCSOs were persistently being used by many forces for crime control purposes, rather than utilised to their full capacity as a bridge between the community and the police.

Visibility is only really effective if foot patrol is combined with the kinds of activity that see local police getting to know an area and its residents, and can be seen to be listening and responding to them. However, this requires a long-term commitment on the part of officers and preferably some way of institutionalising the local knowledge that is generated. There is evidence that this is difficult to achieve (Lister, Adams and Phillips, 2015); staff turnover also damages the capacity of neighbourhood officers to retain local knowledge and relationships

(Higgins, 2018a). Visibility is mediated by the environment, including the architecture of an area; but also by the social context. Nevertheless, it remains central to any strategy of reassurance, as the public seems unwilling to be educated out of their insatiable desire.

The need for effective visibility is recognised by the College of Policing. Its 2018 guidelines warn that "there is a need to ensure sufficient capacity, capability and continuity of resource … to enable productive and trusting relationships with communities and partners to be maintained." (CoP, 2018a). Nevertheless, visible, accessible and familiar policing is an element of neighbourhood policing under increasing threat from the current trajectory of policing - and from changes in wider society. An increased focus on vulnerability and hidden harms leads to police resources focused on crimes taking place behind closed doors. Budget pressures have caused the closure of police stations, meaning that swathes of towns and cities have no consistent police presence. And forces have focused on how resources can be allocated towards the greatest risk and harm; undermining the justification for foot patrol in areas of low immediate risk. Yet those are the places where people live.

Chapter Seven will look at how Borough One is managing these tensions. It shows how visibility, accessibility and familiarity are valued by residents and officers, and the contribution that the ward panel system makes to their continuance. It also shows how the pressure on police resources leads to a clash of values between community-driven priorities that recognise the symbolic importance of visible policing, and a risk-driven agenda focused on less visible harms. First, however, the final section of this chapter will look at what is known

about how problem-solving operates as the last of the three mechanisms intended to build and maintain confidence.

Problems and solving them

This section will begin with a general background before looking at how problem-solving was thought of as a mechanism within the NRPP and the Neighbourhood Policing Programme. It will then look at what is known about problem-solving in practice, focusing on the areas most germane to neighbourhood policing: the involvement of the public, and of partner agencies. This examination frames the findings presented in Chapter Eight.

Background

The Problem-Oriented Policing (POP) framework put forward by Goldstein (1979) heavily informed the later development of neighbourhood policing (Read and Tilley, 2000; Savage, 2007a, 2007b; Bullock and Tilley, 2009). 'Problems' for Goldstein are recurring incidents that are of concern to the community, and which constitute police business; police should focus more on problems, rather than incidents (Goldstein, 1990; Cordner and Biebel, 2005). In the POP model, the police should systematically gather information about the issue and target responses on aspects of the problem likely to benefit most. These responses can be from other agencies as well as the police; but either way, should be rigorously evaluated (Goldstein, 1990; Bullock, 2010).

Involving partners in crime prevention work has been institutionalised in British policing since the 1984 issue of Home Office Circular 8/84 (Singer, 2004; Bullock and Tilley, 2009); which stated that many of the factors involved in

crime were outside the control of the police, and thus "all those agencies whose policies and practices can influence the extent of crime should make their contribution" (Home Office, 1984, cited in Singer, 2004).

The major difference between POP and community policing approaches in general is one of focus: POP seeks to find solutions to problems, the path to which may involve engaging the community. Community policing prioritises engagement, and problem-solving may or may not be part of that approach (Gill et al, 2014). Bullock (2010, p.4) adds four further distinctions between POP and neighbourhood policing: POP is not primarily concerned with the relationship between the police and the public; neighbourhood policing prioritises the role of the community in identifying problems (over, for example, police data); neighbourhood policing should include the community in resolving issues (this is possible but not necessary in Goldstein's model); and neighbourhood policing should also include the community in evaluation.

The most common model for problem-solving in the UK (Forrest, Myhill and Tilley, 2005; Myhill, 2006) is the four stage SARA model (Scanning, Analysis, Response, Assessment) first developed in the Newport News police department by Eck and Spelman (1987). SARA is now well established despite attempts to improve upon it with a range of other models (Sidebottom and Tilley, 2011) and some recognised issues in its delivery; Tilley (2010, p.186), for example, has warned that its use is often "rather desultory and formulaic".

SARA involves the identification of problems through systematic grouping of recurring issues; an attempt to understand why the problem occurs; attempts to respond to the problem in partnership with other agencies; and the ongoing

analysis of that response (Clarke and Eck, 2003). Collaborative problem-solving was emphasised in the government's 2004 White Paper 'Building Communities and Beating Crime' (Home Office, 2004a; Myhill, 2006). In particular, community involvement both in identifying and resolving problems was regarded as an "essential element" of successful neighbourhood policing.

Neighbourhood policing and problem-solving

The pilot of the NRPP showed that problem solving had significant potential to reduce crime in limited areas, especially if the community was involved; and that the public noticed such interventions, particularly around anti-social behaviour (Tuffin, Morris and Poole, 2006). The signal crime perspective distinguished between 'problems' and 'signals' – with the latter defined as incidents with a particular "cognitive visibility" for the public (Innes, 2005b, p192). Collaborative problem-solving was set out as a central part of Neighbourhood Policing (ACPO, 2006). However, the systematic approach to tackling signal crimes and disorders in particular had receded (Bullock, 2010).

Problem-solving was seen from the beginning as a process that involved other agencies, volunteers and residents, in identifying problems and participating in solutions. The co-production of community security was central to the neighbourhood policing vision. In order to achieve this, the community had to be involved at every stage of the process - definition, analysis and delivery, using the National Intelligence Model and rigorous analysis of information (ACPO, 2006, p.13).

Evaluation of the implementation of problem-solving was more difficult; the national evaluation was only able to survey the extent to which BCUs reported that they had systems in place: for example, the allocation of problems to officers, the training provided to those officers, and the presence of analytical support. Most were able to report positively on these by 'sweep three' which took place 18 months into the evaluation. However, fewer than half were training partner agencies or local people in problem-solving, appraising neighbourhood problem-solving activity, or carrying out longer-term analysis of neighbourhood problems (Quinton and Morris, 2008a).

By the third year of the programme, HMIC (2008) was able to say that all forces had ensured the basic standard of making Neighbourhood Policing a core part of their work. However, when it came to problem-solving, HMIC found only 'pockets' of good practice. It identified a series of problems including the processes of Police and Community Together (PACT) meetings, and feeding back to communities; training needs for partners and community members; and the development of "coherent problem-solving evaluation" (p.36). In particular, HMIC felt that the processes of joint problem-solving had not been embedded systemically within forces or among partners; while evaluation and feedback to communities were also highlighted as areas where improvement could be necessary.

The extent to which neighbourhood policing is directed by local communities has been less than clear from the start. The second-year evaluation of the NPP (Quinton and Morris, 2008a) showed a big increase in the number of areas saying that local neighbourhood priorities were set by residents; but this was still only

around half of BCUs. The extent to which the community was involved in responses and evaluation was likely much less; something HMIC noted in their 2008 report.

Problems with problem-solving

The weaknesses found by HMIC are not uncommon. General evaluations of problem-solving approaches have repeatedly found problems with implementation. Police are identified as being less than systematic in their initial analysis of problems and in their interventions (Scott, 2000; Weisburd et al, 2010; Telep and Weisburd, 2012). Police can make assumptions about the cause of a problem, or fail to check that a problem really exists to be resolved. For example, forces can assume a nationally identified problem exists locally (Read and Tilley, 2000).

Analysis is also often flagged as one of the weakest areas of the problem-solving process (Cordner and Biebel, 2005). The analysis of problems needs to be systematic (Read and Tilley, 2000) and draw on a range of information; so, for example, Tuffin, Morris and Poole (2006) in their evaluation of the NRPP found that the most successful problem-solving with regard to 'juvenile nuisance' often had detailed analyses of location, victim and offender (Bullock and Tilley, 2009). However, it is common for analysis of 'problems' to be limited and largely focused on police data and statistics, and for problems to be defined too broadly (Cordner and Biebel, 2005; Bullock and Tilley, 2009). Other weaknesses included use of only the most short-term data, when long-term analysis is likely to bring more benefits (Clarke and Goldstein, 2002); and failure to properly examine the source of a problem (Read and Tilley, 2000). Studies found that

officers tended to "jump to the response" (Sidebottom and Tilley, 2011, p.16) before a proper analysis had been completed.

Police officers often rely on personal experience when considering responses to problems, and are more likely to informally discuss problems with other officers than to search out research evidence on what might work (Read and Tilley, 2000; Cordner and Biebel, 2005; Bullock and Tilley, 2009). This can lead to an over-reliance on interventions based on traditional responsive policing, such as high visibility patrols and arrests. There can also be failures to fully plan out how measures could work in practice or to think about why responses would work. Read and Tilley (2000) also cite examples of failures to consolidate successes following short term interventions.

Finally, the monitoring and evaluation of problem-solving interventions is rarely undertaken effectively (Bullock and Tilley, 2009). Systematic evaluation has generally been found to be weak, often using selective evidence and failing to consider alternative explanations or why an intervention might have had a given effect (Read and Tilley, 2000).

Nevertheless, problem-solving has been described as 'doomed to succeed' (Weatheritt, 1986), reflecting a perception that the police are institutionally reluctant to admit failure (Read and Tilley, 2000; Sidebottom and Tilley, 2011). Many of the problems in embedding problem-solving can be traced to organisational factors, some of which are beyond the scope of this thesis. These include management commitment to problem-solving as a philosophy of work and the hierarchical nature of policing, as well as the difficulty of producing measurable outcomes (Bullock and Tilley, 2009). The reactive nature of policing

can also lead to short-term 'containment' of issues rather than long-term resolutions (Sidebottom and Tilley, 2011). Other issues include an absence of analytical capacity and data sharing, issues that retain their relevance in the context of enhanced privacy rules such as the GDPR and budget cuts to support staff. The abstraction of officers from neighbourhoods was identified as an issue for the success of problem-solving by HMIC in 2008. Finally, a lack of dedicated, protected time to undertake problem-solving was cited by officers, especially those who also had response responsibilities (Read and Tilley, 2000; Colover and Quinton, 2018). This was particularly the case where problems involved engaging with the public or with partners. Nevertheless, Braga and Weisburd (2006) suggest that even what they term "shallow" problem-solving can have real benefits for everyday policing.

- **Involvement of public**

The signal crime perspective saw problems as issues that could be tackled with the help of members of the community with particular knowledge. Interestingly, this perspective meant that it was not always necessary to consult with the wider community, so long as 'key individuals' could be identified who had an in-depth knowledge of the relevant issues (Innes, 2005b; Bullock, 2010). However, early Neighbourhood Policing guidance on involving the public warned of the risks of problems being defined by those who turn up for meetings, underlining a transition towards a more participatory conception of the consultative process, and a focus on problems, rather than signals (Forrest, Myhill and Tilley, 2005).

In principle, neighbourhood policing was to involve the community at every stage of problem-solving, from identification of problems to resolving issues and

evaluating interventions (Bullock, 2010). Such involvement was, like general community engagement, to go beyond traditional public meetings. However, as outlined earlier in the chapter, the extent to which this took place was limited. Some suggest that in practice, there are a limited number of ways in which citizens can legitimately participate in problem-solving (Myhill, 2006). Thus Eck and Rosenbaum (1994) suggest that citizens are limited to acting as the eyes and ears of the police, lobbying local authorities, changing their own behaviour, or patrolling their neighbourhood.

There are a number of common ways of involving the public in scanning for problems, and their analysis, including surveys, public meetings, focus groups, and citizens' juries or panels (Forrest, Myhill and Tilley, 2005). Innovative tools that could be added include visual audits, door knocking, diaries, and micro-beats (ibid). However, the authors warn of problems in public involvement at this stage; it may be seen as superficial or tokenistic, and there may be a lack of clarity on objectives.

Community involvement in response is largely limited to surveillance and crime prevention, but Forrest, Myhill and Tilley (2005) also list interventions such as 'local action teams' formed to deal with specific problems; community 'speedwatch' schemes; and resident involvement in activities such as community clean-up days.

However, there are a number of possible reasons why the community may not want to be involved in solving local problems. People may be afraid to be seen talking to and working with the police (Singer, 2004). There may be a history of poor relationships between the police and local residents (Skogan et al, 1999).

Promises may have been broken in the past by the police and by other public sector organisations; public involvement rests on building trust (Singer, 2004) which can be damaged by previous broken promises or failure to manage expectations (Skogan et al, 1999). It may be particularly difficult to stimulate public involvement in policing in more deprived areas, as crime itself can lead to withdrawal from community life, and such neighbourhoods can themselves be minefields of inter-community hostility. There may not be a coherent 'community' for the police to mobilise to solve local problems. Nor will there necessarily be any inherent experience or capacity to take part in such activities - problem-solving therefore needs to be a developing process and expectations need to be carefully managed (ibid).

- **Partnership working**

Partnership work in neighbourhood policing was recognised by HMIC (2008, p.35) as "absolutely key to delivering success". This builds on Quinton and Morris's (2008a, pp.30-31) suggestion that partner work with other agencies was not just desirable, but in many ways inevitable, not least because communities would often prioritise non-crime issues that could not be resolved by the police alone. In the UK, partnership working has been mandatory since the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 which specified a statutory duty for partnership in crime reduction. This was added to by the £400 million Crime Reduction Programme (Bullock and Tilley, 2009) which was almost all aimed at partnership initiatives.

There is a large amount of literature on partnership working across the public sector (e.g. Singer, 2004; Newman and Clarke, 2009; Gasper and Davies, 2010). Key factors in success include commitment, common goals, continuous

evaluation, communication, responsiveness and trust (Singer, 2004). The resolution of large-scale issues in particular seems to be improved by multi-agency teams (Read and Tilley, 2000).

However, partner organisations can often fail to understand each other's working practices (Read and Tilley, 2000; Hughes and Rowe, 2007). Crawford (1999) observes that much discussion on partnership working suggests that the partners in an enterprise are equal; but in fact, as the later New Earswick project demonstrated (Crawford, Lister and Wall, 2003), partner agencies may have very different working cultures and organisational goals. In New Earswick, for example, officers were resistant to attending the large number of time-consuming meetings held by the funders of the post, fearing (among other things) the likelihood of such meetings generating extra demand.

Previous analysis of problem-solving initiatives suggests that the majority are police-centred. For example, Read and Tilley (2000) found that in just 5% of initiatives reported by police forces were they the junior partners. Effective collaboration may require the construction of a new collective identity for the partnership (Hardy, Lawrence and Grant, 2005). However, it is not clear the extent to which the limits of the police 'form' permit the shedding of one identity and the construction of a different, more collective one (Harkin, 2015a).

Finally, the multiple organisations and individuals involved often mean that partnership working can lead to the attempted incorporation of a wide range of goals and ideologies. This risks diluting the focus and effectiveness of initiatives, occasionally to the point where the purpose of the original initiative is lost. As

Read and Tilley (2000, p.31) warn, "There is a risk that partnership in all things is fetishised as an end in itself."

- **Expectations**

In partnerships, as in all problem-solving, expectations need to be managed. Objectives need to be specific, achievable and realistic. The police cannot realistically always respond, as Bittner put it, to "something-that-ought-not-to-be-happening-and-about-which-someone-had-better-do-something-now!" (2005, p.161).

There is a limited amount of literature looking specifically at how the police and partners deal with residents' expectations. In Chicago, Skogan et al (1999) found that previous broken promises had damaged problem-solving capacity, while Singer (2004, p.73) speaks of the years of "perceived and real neglect" in the areas where his pilot reassurance programme was undertaken, and the related necessity to not over-promise to residents.

Crawford, Lister and Wall (2003) discuss the difficulties in managing resident expectations in their evaluation of a community policing initiative in New Earswick. The project was a failure, in that both crime and fear of crime increased during the initiative, and residents' satisfaction with the police declined. The authors note a sizeable 'expectations gap' between public demand and the level of policing that forces are in general able to provide; and also a number of lessons, accentuated by the nature of the initiative as a purchase of extra police time, but several of which are applicable to problem-solving more generally: limited resources must be linked to limited aims, or the resource will be stretched too thinly; the limitations of projects must be made clear to all

stakeholders from the beginning; and managing the expectations of residents has to be an integral element of community policing. As noted above, partner organisations are also susceptible to mismatched expectations, especially in terms of each other's capacity and working practices.

The existence of the neighbourhood policing programme in itself may have raised public expectations (McLaughlin, 2008); something also noted in New Earswick (Crawford, Lister and Wall, 2003). This is something of general concern in a context of straitened resources. However, announcing the limits of police capacity risks encouraging crime, and endangering public confidence. Managing expectation and demand on the police is therefore a very risky business.

The new neighbourhood policing guidelines published by the College of Policing specifically address recognised weaknesses of problem-solving at neighbourhood level, suggesting that structured models such as SARA be incorporated into problem-solving approaches (CoP, 2018a). However, and as the guidelines note, there are known implementation issues with problem-solving that require dedicated organisational and financial resources to solve. Problem-solving does not always produce measurable outcomes; it needs dedicated back room analytical resource; officers need to be properly trained; partners need to have capacity; and officers need to be given the time and space to do the work. As Tilley (2010) observes, it is still not clear why problem-oriented policing works in some times and places, and not others; moreover, it is not clear what balance needs to be struck between identifying problems through 'sound data analysis' and responding to problems identified by the community.

Moreover, problem-solving often relies on the availability and engagement of partners - in particular local councils and health services. Not only are there structural problems in doing so in the UK - data sharing is a known point of difficulty - but most police partners have suffered from significant budget cuts also, limiting their capacity to participate, let alone fill gaps left by the partial withdrawal of the police under similar constraints. Problem-solving is therefore peculiarly exposed to budget cuts, as it relies so much on collaborative working.

Chapter Eight looks at the way problem-solving and partnership working is approached in Borough One, and in particular, at the contribution that the ward panel system makes. It shows once again the difficulty officers and others have in resolving the competing claims of community-driven values and priorities and those engendered by a more risk-based professional model, and how the latter is being given prominence by the scouring effect of financial pressures. Finally, it underlines the susceptibility of problem-solving processes to political headwinds that pay lip service to neighbourhood policing, but fail to adequately resource it.

Discussion and conclusion

This chapter has outlined the three core mechanisms through which neighbourhood policing was to boost and maintain confidence. Community engagement was to operate on three vectors; priority setting, engagement and communication. However, despite exhortations to try to go beyond traditional police-public meetings, police have only rarely managed to go very far beyond them. Moreover, the issues that attend public meetings appear to be common to other forms of engagement: problems around participation and representation; a tendency for the police to broadcast information rather than to seek interactive

engagement or community direction; and, particularly since 2010, resource constraints enjoining forces to seek efficiencies. Indeed, some forces have largely abandoned public priority setting entirely (Higgins, 2018b).

The extent to which this matters rests on the weight given to public confidence in policing and the importance of legitimating the police; and the role and importance of public participation in policing as a means of ensuring accountability and building communities. If participation and neighbourhood-level accountability have value, then the attrition of these mechanisms should be of great concern for policing.

The question has knock-on effects for the operation of the other two 'mechanisms.' Visibility is necessary but not sufficient for confidence. At a time of limited resources, police forces might reasonably consider whether foot patrol and visibility in general generate sufficient return to be worth the investment. If visibility can only affect confidence in conjunction with other mechanisms, and the judgement of the force is that public participation in policing is no longer affordable or necessary, it might be reasonable to consider whether visible policing can be replaced by less labour-intensive methods, such as the increased use of social media and broadcasting of police information.

Similarly, problem-solving and partnership working is under huge pressure, as budget cuts have hit partners such as local authorities even harder than the police (Calver and Wainwright, 2018). A withdrawal from structured community engagement damages the capacity of the police to identify and analyse problems, while pressure on time, the damage to partners' capacity, and a lack of dedicated police resource makes it increasingly unlikely that officers will be able to deliver

appropriate and effective responses, let alone to assess their effects. The new neighbourhood guidelines attempt to address some of these issues by prioritising areas where the evidence is clear, such as structured problem-solving through SARA. However, the loss of 'confidence' as a primary driver leaves these mechanisms somewhat uprooted.

There are also important questions about whether local accountability can co-exist with the new emphasis on hidden harms and vulnerability. For example, if a local resident complains about drug dealing, officers may have difficult decisions to make over who is vulnerable in this scenario, the homeless addict; the teenage courier; or the comfortable resident whose life is not materially affected, but whose sense of safety is at risk. Moore (2008) for example finds local officers to have more lenient views towards those living on the streets to those of local residents. If the philosophy of policing has moved away from publicly driven concerns and towards police assessments of harm, the mechanisms of neighbourhood policing to deliver confidence become levers that are no longer attached to anything.

Innes (2005, p.158) notes that 'soft' policing is always hard to deliver because of what he describes as a series of 'inhibitors', including the need to relinquish power to communities and respond to their agendas; the cultural adaptations required; the need to negotiate rather than to enforce; the dominant political understanding of the police role; and the difficulty of measurement. The literature underlines the fragility of these mechanisms and the danger that a reduction in focus and a withdrawal of resource will lead to long-term damage to relationships and thus to public confidence.

This underlines the importance of understanding how existing processes work and are understood. Many of the most important evaluations of reassurance and neighbourhood policing were undertaken after just a few years of the programmes, and sometimes just months. Such evaluations (e.g. Tuffin, Morris and Poole, 2006; and Quinton and Morris, 2008a) underline the time it takes to establish relationships and structures.

As noted in the last chapter, neighbourhood policing has fractured since the formal end of the programme in 2008. Politicians have not rejected the premises upon which neighbourhood policing rests; but the government has in effect stripped it of the resources that once supported it. In some ways, all of neighbourhood policing has become what Higgins and Hales (2017) termed a 'natural experiment'. London is thought to have retained a system most similar to the original universal provision of neighbourhood policing, making it the ideal site for a more textured understanding of the mechanisms that this chapter explores and outlines. The next chapter explains the justification for such an approach and the research context in which it took place.

Chapter Four - Methods

Introduction

The first three chapters have outlined the context to the fieldwork. Chapter One showed how confidence and legitimacy are influenced by shared values; it also offered a political realist framework which argues these values are negotiated politically. This suggests that community policing in general is a good place to look at these processes, as it is explicitly framed as a way of legitimating and building confidence in the police. The second chapter argued that neighbourhood policing in the UK was a political construction, rooted in a particular set of beliefs about the value of participation in public services. It then explored the sharp reduction in resources since 2010. Chapter Three then set out a brief account of the development of the Neighbourhood Policing Programme; and the mechanisms through which it was intended to deliver and maintain confidence.

This background gives context to the following core research question:

- How does neighbourhood policing, as seen through the operation of ward panels, contribute to confidence in and the legitimacy of the police?

The subsidiary questions derived from this are as follows:

- How are the mechanisms of neighbourhood policing - community engagement; visibility, accessibility and familiarity; and problem-solving - seen as contributing towards confidence and legitimacy in Borough One, and what are their weaknesses?

- How do ward panels in particular contribute to neighbourhood policing?

- How are shared values and police legitimacy negotiated through the mechanisms of neighbourhood policing?

This chapter describes how I sought to answer these questions and why I chose these methods to do so. I undertook a detailed exploration of the experiences and understandings of neighbourhood policing in Borough One, seen through the filter of the ward panel system. Over the course of 15 months of fieldwork I travelled to Borough One on numerous occasions and got to know the wards, the panel members, and the police officers well. I learned a great deal about the context of ordinary life and of policing work in Borough One, which can only be partially reflected in this thesis. My study was immeasurably enriched by this wider knowledge, of which I hope the fieldwork chapters give a flavour.

The first section explains my research approach; how my desire to explore the way that mechanisms worked, and values were negotiated, lent itself to a qualitative research design and a case study in particular. I align myself with a critical realist position and explain why this research design is particularly appropriate for such an approach. I then explain my choice of an embedded case study, and my reasons for approaching this through interviews and observations.

The second section explains the context to this study, and my choice of research sites. I describe the particular structure of London policing, recent changes, and how that affected the research. Here I also discuss the issues I encountered with attaining access to participants and how the limitations this imposed shaped my decisions.

The final section then explains how I conducted my research. I discuss the process of conducting observations and interviews, of transcription and analysis, and I explore questions of validity and reliability in qualitative research. I also discuss situating the self of the researcher in qualitative work and how my particular (multiple) professional identities influenced the research process. Finally, I discuss ethics and confidentiality. I conclude that this research approach offers a unique contribution to the understanding of neighbourhood policing, and of its contribution to public confidence.

Research approach

This first section outlines my research approach. It begins by showing how Chapters One to Three suggest a qualitative approach, and explains how this is rooted in a critical realist tradition. It explains my choice of a case study research design, and an embedded case study in particular. It finishes by outlining my choice of observations and interviews as part of this approach, and the benefits of this to my research questions.

A qualitative approach

The first chapter outlined my political realist perspective. This states that values clash, and have to be negotiated. It also showed how police legitimacy and confidence in the police both rest on citizen perceptions of shared values or moral alignment. Neighbourhood policing is a site for the legitimation of the police, and Chapters Two and Three demonstrated the way it was adopted as an extension of a particular political philosophy, as well as on a desire to improve levels of confidence in the police. As outlined in Chapter One, most research into both legitimacy and confidence rests on quantitative, survey-based approaches (e.g.

Sunshine and Tyler, 2003; Skogan, 2005; Bradford, Jackson and Stanko, 2009; Tankebe, 2013). However, such methods can limit the extent to which the researcher can understand the reasons behind a given phenomenon, its context, or the value that participants place on it (Yin, 2014; Denscome, 2017), all of which are central to this research.

A qualitative approach by contrast allows the researcher to try to build up an understanding of social reality from the inside. I wished to explore my respondents' subjective understandings of their social world (Layder, 1998); particularly in terms of how they believed the mechanisms of neighbourhood policing to work, and in terms of their understanding of their own values, and that of others, and how some consensus between these might be negotiated. Qualitative research "allows researchers to get at the inner experience of participants, to determine how meanings are formed through and in culture." (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, p.12). The understanding of values, and the negotiation of those values, is much better understood through an approach that locates them within participants' lived experiences (Barbour, 2014).

In this thesis, I align myself with a critical realist tradition, "the doctrine that there are determinate facts about unobservable processes" (6 and Bellamy, 2012, p.60). Reality is real, but only imperfectly understandable. This involves acknowledging the social construction of knowledge, but rejecting the postmodernism denial of the possibility of knowledge itself. It is possible to see the construction of knowledge as something that includes meaning, agency and reality, while accepting that it is impossible to generate laws within the social sciences that are "applicable always and everywhere" (Byrne and Ragin 2009,

p.9). Critical realists therefore have a strong interest in both context and causation (Kessler and Bach, 2014).

A critical realist approach (Bhaskar, 2008) accepts that subjective understandings are valid subjects for study. For example, Chapter One suggested that police legitimacy itself was created and maintained by the demonstration of shared values. Values are unobservable and are socially constructed. A critical realist approach allows me to explore my respondents' subjective accounts of their own values and their experience of others. Moreover, Chapter Three outlined the mechanisms by which the Neighbourhood Policing Programme was believed to contribute to confidence in the police. A qualitative approach allows me to explore my respondents' understandings of these mechanisms and any deeper causal relationships which may not be immediately visible through quantitative approaches (Vincent and O'Mahoney, 2018).

Case studies

A case study allows an "empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident." (Yin, 2014, p.16). Its key features include that it can cope with many sources of evidence and variables of interest, and it can benefit from the prior development of theory (Yin, 2014, p.17). A case study has the capacity not just to set manageable limits on the field to be studied, but also to cope with the subtleties of complex social situations - the relationships and processes that explain a phenomenon (Denscome, 2017, p.58). Case studies can be flexible, in-depth, and allow multiple perspectives (Carolan, Forbat and Smith, 2015).

An understanding of neighbourhood policing processes, respondents' beliefs about the contributions of those processes, and of respondents' own values, all requires a dense, 'thick' understanding (Geertz, 1973) which is time-consuming and needs depth of data to be prioritised over breadth. All of this points to a case study as the most appropriate route. Its advantages in dealing with porous boundaries seemed particularly appropriate given the nature of neighbourhood policing and its various overlaps, not just between wards or other 'neighbourhoods', but also with public sector partners; and to the study of values in discussions of local security, which cannot be separated from their context.

A critical realist approach takes a catholic approach to research design. However, Vincent and O'Mahoney (2018, p.208) suggest that the case study is the most common "and arguably the most useful" form of critical realist research. This is because it can allow the in-depth examination of a particular mechanism in its context, and where appropriate, the exploration of how the same mechanisms operate in different contexts. I also knew at the beginning of the project that I was interested in the relationship between neighbourhood policing and legitimacy and confidence; so, unlike a pure grounded theory approach, for example, I had already taken some theoretical decisions. Both a critical realist approach and a case study design allow a role for theoretical propositions to provide a framework for the choice and development of research methods (Yin, 2014; Vincent and O'Mahoney, 2018).

Case study structure

Embedded cases involve more than one unit of analysis, situated within a single larger contextual unit. This can combine the benefits of the holistic single case

study - the study of a given phenomenon in depth - along with those of the multiple case study - the potential to make comparisons between cases. There are a number of advantages to the embedded study. Yin (2014, p.55), for example, suggests that a single case holistic design can tend towards the overly abstract, and can be insensitive to slippage in the research study questions as the evidence emerges. A set of sub-units can increase sensitivity to such occurrences.

Borough One as a single case had many attractions, particularly when seeing the borough as structured for the purposes of neighbourhood policing by the ward panel system. It appeared to be what Yin (2014) calls a 'common' case, offering an example of an everyday situation (the practice of neighbourhood policing in London, seen through ward panels) which could provide lessons about wider social processes (how the mechanisms of neighbourhood policing worked, and how values were negotiated through its practices). In this sense, it was what Flick (2018) describes as a "particularly instructive example of a more general problem." Ironically, the universalism of neighbourhood policing in London was increasingly unusual. Neighbourhood policing operates in separate and formally bounded contexts, governed by a force or Basic Command Unit (BCU); but of necessity integrated with its surroundings. Neighbourhood policing in London is organised by electoral wards, embedded in these BCUs which, at the time that the fieldwork was undertaken, were coterminous with London boroughs. The wards each have their own ward panel and separate Safer Neighbourhood teams. Neighbourhood policing in London thus presented itself as embedded cases within the BCU context.

I saw the process of research as an iterative one, and felt that the constant comparison between data and research questions across several embedded cases would encourage me to be sensitive to the quality of my own questions and adaptable where the need arose. Moreover, an initial focus on ward panels on my part had quickly given way to a belief that neighbourhood policing had to be understood in the round. Treating wards as embedded cases in the wider case of Borough One allowed me to understand the wider context of the panel meetings and the broader practice of neighbourhood policing in the borough.

Embedded designs can have pitfalls. One is to focus only on the subunit level and to fail to return to the larger unit of analysis as the focus rather than just the context (Yin, 2014). To mitigate against this, I focused at a later stage on interviews with officers at Chief Inspector level and above, to discuss their experiences and to explore how Borough One as a BCU regarded these issues. I also undertook interviews with council officers and members to gain a fuller insight into the context in which the ward panels took place. One further potential problematic area is the boundaries between cases, where in applied social research the lived experience of those on the peripheries can be missed as the case construction focuses on the central experience of each case (Byrne and Ragin, 2009). The boundaries of my embedded cases were constrained by electoral boundaries rather than the lived experience of policing or crime. However, this felt like an appropriate construction, as respondents had to negotiate these boundaries in their daily experience of neighbourhood policing.

Interviews and observations

One of the advantages of a case study approach is the range of methods it allows (Denscome, 2017). My qualitative case study approach used interviews and observations as the prime methods of enquiry. Interviews are regarded as one of the most important sources of case study evidence (Yin, 2014, p.110). Qualitative semi-structured interviews can allow participants to 'meander' in their responses; to talk freely around topics that may be emotionally loaded (Roberts, 2014). This seemed particularly important given that the topics I wanted to explore included the values that people associated with their feelings of safety or of insecurity, and their assessments of ideas such as confidence, legitimacy and fairness.

Part of the purpose of this kind of enquiry is to be surprised; so I did not want to impose my own beliefs and experiences of priority-setting in neighbourhood policing on those of my respondents. For this reason I foreswore more structured approaches. However, I preferred not to operate without any structure at all. I had a theoretical focus on legitimacy and confidence, and wanted to ensure that the interviews touched on these issues. Moreover, as I was undertaking embedded case study research, I wanted to ensure some element of cross-case comparability for the purposes of analysis (Yin, 2014). As such, I decided to undertake semi-structured interviews, in which I had a list of questions, but felt able to depart from these if necessary, to allow participants to depart from them as well, to ask them in different ways according to how the conversation proceeded, and in different orders (Bryman, 2016).

This was supplemented by a series of observations. A key part of all qualitative research is establishing the research setting, as the aim is to go "deep into a definable setting in which phenomena can be placed meaningfully within a

specific social environment" (Holliday, 2007, p.33). Among the criteria Holliday specifies is the 'roundedness' of the setting, the way in which it provides a variety of relevant and interconnected data, its richness in terms of instances and viewpoints, its size - it must be logistically and conceptually manageable - and the extent to which it allows access. I felt that my study would be much less meaningful if I only pursued interviews and failed to study the ward panel meetings themselves. Observations of other neighbourhood policing activity in practice could also have supplemented this, but practical considerations of time and access - particularly given my embedded case study design, which involved multiple settings - precluded a more ethnographic approach. The study therefore presents a picture of neighbourhood policing as seen through the ward panel system.

There are several well-known limitations to the above methods. For example, it is not always wise to assume that the responses given in interviews give direct access to experience (Silverman, 2013, p.47). I felt this was likely to be a particular issue when interviewing police officers, given the isolationist nature of police culture (Punch, 1979; Reiner, 2010) and hostility towards the value of academic research in policing (Stanko and Dawson, 2016; Hallenberg and Cockcroft, 2017). However, given that I was looking at the public presentation of beliefs, priorities and values within the context of neighbourhood policing, I felt that interviews were likely to facilitate a sufficient insight into these processes. The researcher also has to be alive to 'interviewer effect'; the way that participants can respond differently according to the personal characteristics of the interviewer (Denscombe, 2017). I discuss how I ameliorated this later in the chapter. Observations, too, carry pitfalls; both in terms of the dependence of the

researcher on the 'self' of the researcher, and on field notes for data. As I discuss later, this former was mitigated to some extent by the passive position I took in relation to the panels and meetings at which I was present. The latter was partly addressed by using these observations as context and to triangulate the data garnered through the interviews. Issues of validity and reliability are also addressed later in the chapter.

Research context

The last section explained my choice of research design, and situated it in a critical realist approach to knowledge. It showed how my research questions led me to choose an embedded case study structure, and the use of interviews and observations as my key methods. It also explained how this decision was shaped by my subject of study. This second section explores that research context further. It begins with a brief discussion of the benefits and difficulties of London as a site for research, before explaining why I chose to locate my study in Borough One. It then lays out the characteristics of the wards that made up the embedded case study, before discussing the general governance and operational structures of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), and how these structures contributed to gaining access to my research sites.

London as a site for research

London is a particularly interesting location to study policing. With a population of more than 8 million people, a high proportion of which are first- or second-generation immigrants, its sheer size and demographic variation lend an interest of their own.

London presented itself as the ideal site for this research for several reasons. Firstly, I wanted to look at neighbourhood policing in an area where its structure most nearly resembled that which existed during the three years of the Neighbourhood Policing Programme, in order to see how the mechanisms identified then might contribute to confidence and legitimacy now. This would have been more difficult in a force where neighbourhood policing had been revised to target only the areas of greatest need, for example. London, however, has retained a universal approach, and is unusual in doing so (Higgins, 2018a). Secondly, London's ward panel system is distinctive; most forces operate open public meetings, rather than recruiting local residents and stakeholders to sit on panels (Casey, 2008). These panels are little-studied and offered a particular perspective on universal community engagement and problem-solving. Finally, London has a history of confrontation over police governance and accountability (Dixon, 1999). This suggested that there might be interesting lessons as to the role of politics in panels and community engagement in general.

Borough One

Borough One is an Inner London borough and comprises 18 wards. It has been controlled by the Labour Party for most of the past 50 years. There were at the time of fieldwork two major police stations within the borough which were open to the public, and a number of other stations and 'contact points.' The borough is demographically diverse, including business centres, residential areas of considerable wealth, and wards of high relative deprivation. It has several higher education institutions (HEIs) and mainline railway stations. It has considerable 'churn' in its population each year, partly due to the concentration of HEIs. The

daily transient population - those visiting the borough for leisure, shopping, study or work - is also considerable. Borough One is one of London's smaller boroughs by area but has a relatively large share of its population and a considerably larger share of its employment. Some 30% of the residents in Borough One were born outside the UK and EU. Its population is ethnically diverse, with 34% of its residents from BAME groups in 2011 according to census figures ([Borough One], 2019). The local authority states that "every part of [Borough One] has areas of relative affluence alongside areas of relative poverty" (ibid, p.4). The most deprived area in Borough One is among the 5% most deprived areas in England.

All these demographic factors suggested that Borough One would be an interesting site for research. Additionally, there were practical and personal reasons for choosing Borough One: firstly, its mainline railway station was on a direct line from my home city, and secondly, I had lived in Borough One as a young child, and attended a primary school in Chapel Hill. While the borough has changed considerably in the intervening 30 years, I at least knew my way around; and this also acted as a way of connecting with research participants and establishing common ground. All of this took on particular value as a part-time researcher with limited opportunities to undertake fieldwork.

Wards as cases

In Borough One, there were 18 wards, each of which was entitled to a ward panel. Of these, two at the time of fieldwork had not met for several months due to changes in personnel. Of the remaining 16, I directly observed five panel meetings. I interviewed the chairs of these five, as well as the chairs of two more

panels, for a total of seven. I also spoke to officers in a further three wards, giving an overview of the processes of ten of the 16 functioning ward panels, as well as interviewing police officers with an overview of panels in Borough One and beyond.

Within Borough One, I sought to focus on a limited number of wards as embedded case studies. I wanted these to broadly reflect the geographic and demographic diversity of Borough One. This was to ensure that my embedded cases offered as broad a range as feasible of the demographic range of Borough One. Of the eighteen wards mentioned above, I chose to focus on Brookgate, Mountjoy, Fleetwood, Priory and Chapel Hill. Within each of these five core wards, I attended and observed panel meetings; interviewed the Chair of the ward panel and where possible other residents; and interviewed at least two members of the policing team. These five central wards contributed more to the analysis than other wards studied due to the richness and quantity of the data available. I also interviewed officers and/or participants in ward panels in a further five wards (Mandeville, Honeycutt, Central, Cowden and Halliburton) but without observing any of their panel meetings in action. The choice of wards I focused on was guided by a combination of theoretical sampling to ensure a demographically diverse selection, and pragmatic issues of access and availability

The choice of wards could be criticised on the grounds that they exclude some of the most deprived in the borough and those with very high turnover in dedicated ward officers, and that they focus by necessity on those with active ward panels; it may well be that poorer wards with less stability in policing personnel, or lower collective efficacy and capacity to take part in ward panels, might have

experienced neighbourhood policing differently. I address these issues further later in the chapter. Details of interviewees can be found in Appendix A.

Brookgate is a mixed ward with a substantial business sector and a high transient population. It contains several social housing estates as well as some very expensive housing. Brookgate lies to the far south of Borough One. Mountjoy is one of the northern-most wards. Mountjoy is a largely residential ward with a high proportion of relatively wealthy residents and very little social housing. Fleetwood is also a relatively wealthy ward but less dominated by residential housing than Mountjoy. It is also a northern ward, but has a slightly more mixed population and more business areas, as well as more of a transient population. Neighbouring Mandeville is demographically similar but almost entirely residential. Priory stands in complete contrast to these northern wards; it has been the home to successive waves of immigrant populations and has a very high proportion of social housing. Priory's neighbour, Cowden, is notable for its very high residential turnover. Chapel Hill, which lies towards the centre of Borough One is divided by a main road into two very different segments. The lower half contains largely social housing, many of whose residents have been living there for some years, while the northern half includes substantial family residences that are similar to Fleetwood and Mountjoy, both of which it borders. Honeycutt was once demographically similar to Priory, but has visibly gentrified over the past several years. Its southern neighbour, Central Ward, has the largest night-time economy in Borough One, while Haliburton, bordering Brookgate in the southern part of the Borough, is dominated by businesses rather than residential areas. The range of wards studied therefore reflected the demographic and geographic variety that Borough One offered.

General context and governance

The governance of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) is different from that of other regional police forces. As a much bigger force, with a wider set of responsibilities, the MPS answers to the Home Office as well as to the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime. The Home Office retains responsibility for the national policing functions that the MPS carries out, while the Mayor sets the strategic direction of London policing (MOPAC, 2017). MOPAC in turn is responsible for Safer Neighbourhood Boards. These were the direct replacements for the previous Community and Police Engagement Groups (CPEGs), which themselves were the post-Scarman structures (referred to in the rest of the country as PCCGs). Borough One is one of very few in which the SNB was a direct inheritor of the established CPEG. This means that Borough One's community safety structures have unusual continuity. In 2014 the Borough One CPEG became the first SNB in London ([Borough One] Connected, n.d.). As with the ward panels, the structure is reliant on volunteers, though it employs one full-time member of staff.

In terms of its operational structure the MPS is again unique. It is the largest force in England and Wales, comprising more than 30,000 officers at the time of writing, and nearly 1,500 PCSOs. These numbers are supplemented by around 2,700 Special Constables (volunteers with police powers) and almost 9,000 members of police staff (MOPAC, 2017). The force is divided into four 'business groups.' One of these is Territorial Policing, responsible for day-to-day local policing across the city (including neighbourhood policing). It in turn is divided into Basic Command Units (BCUs); at the outset of this research, these were

commensurate with the 32 London boroughs. In 2017, the Met experimented with a new structure known as the One Met Model by merging BCUs (MPS, 2018). These mergers were piloted in two areas (four boroughs in total); one of these mergers included Borough One. The mergers were not immediately successful, with deteriorating response times, and were put on hold in September 2017 (Weinfass, 2017). However, following remedial measures, the model was expanded across London in 2018. At the time of fieldwork these mergers had not yet been implemented; this thesis refers throughout to Borough One as a single BCU coterminous with its namesake London borough.

MOPAC runs Safer Neighbourhood Boards (SNBs) for each borough. These are distinct from ward panels, which are run by the Met and operate at ward level. Nonetheless, there is some overlap. In Borough One, several ward panel chairs also sit on the SNB. Ward panels were originally established as a result of the Safer Neighbourhoods Programme launched in April 2004 (MPA, 2005) and rolled out across London in subsequent years. By the time of fieldwork, there were 622 official ward panels across London and seven further semi-official panels running with the blessing of the MPS.

In 2013, the Safer Neighbourhood Programme was replaced by the Local Policing Model (LPM). This programme's stated aim was to "enhance neighbourhood policing by redeploying over 2,600 officers into neighbourhoods and refocus neighbourhood teams so that they have a broader remit to reduce crime, investigate offences, tackle offending and support victims" (MOPAC, 2015). In practice, the LPM was driven at least in part by a need to reduce costs. The new model made significant changes to the number of officers deployed in

each area and how they were deployed. Under the Safer Neighbourhood Programme, each ward had six dedicated ward officers; one sergeant, two Police Constables and three Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). Under the LPM, this was reduced to just two dedicated officers: a PC and a PCSO. The other officers were redeployed in roles that operated across ward boundaries, with the aim that these roles could 'flex' to demand. The LPM also significantly increased local officers' responsibilities, to include crime investigation, abstraction for aid beyond the borough, appointment cars and backfilling for Emergency Response Teams (MOPAC, 2015).

New Labour Mayor Sadiq Khan was elected in May 2016, and in July, the Mayor's Office announced that existing Dedicated Ward Officers (DWOs) would be supplemented so that two PCs and one PCSO would be allocated to each of London's 629 wards (this announcement came during the fieldwork period, allowing me to integrate questions on this topic). However, no extra funding was available to increase the number of officers in London overall, leaving some fears that the plans would simply see fewer officers available for response duties. In December 2017, the Mayor's Office announced that the target had been met (GLA, 2017).

Access and gatekeepers

My first task in terms of access was to get permission to work with the MPS. I did so through contacting the MPS research department, completing a Research Protocol and Information Sharing Agreement, and then getting directly in touch with the Borough Commander of Borough One, who had been identified by the MPS. The Borough Commander sent out a general email, encouraging officers'

participation. I suspect it would have been impossible to gain the access and co-operation that I did without the Commander's explicit and sympathetic encouragement. However, I was conscious that this might have been interpreted by officers as an order to take part and I was very careful to try to mitigate this when explaining participants' right to withdraw.

I then contacted police participants directly, taking their names from the MPS website for Borough One and, where possible, double checking their job status and email addresses with other participants. Getting email addresses was often a matter of guesswork. However, I was aided by one or two particularly helpful police participants, who went out of their way to introduce me to other officers who might be willing to take part, or who supplied the email addresses of other officers. Almost all officers I contacted were willing to participate; though there were one or two who were simply too busy to set up a time to talk.

My engagement with residents, however, presented unexpected difficulties from the beginning. I had approached ward panel meetings based on my own experience with area committee meetings in Cambridge, which are essentially council-run public meetings. This meant that I underestimated the extent to which many ward panel meetings are regarded as private rather than public spaces.

This also meant that the relationship of participants to the police was even more heavily weighted towards those already engaged than it would have been with a public meeting. Of the local residents interviewed for this study, the majority were Chairs or former chairs of their ward panels, while the remainder were long-standing participants in their local panel. Many of the participants in the

panel meetings I observed were also described to me as long-serving members, though this was not the case in the public meetings that I observed. My findings from resident participants cannot therefore be assumed to represent the views of ordinary residents, particularly in terms of knowledge of and engagement with the police. It should also be noted that all police officers interviewed for this study were involved in some way with neighbourhood work; a wider sample of officers might have given a different perspective on the activities involved.

Gaining access to the panels became my first challenge; while I had planned to ask permission to observe from each of the ward panel chairs, I had not understood the extent to which the identities of those chairs might be protected because of the sensitivity of the issues being discussed within the ward panels. Access to Chairs was largely facilitated through the Chair of Chairs who acted as a gatekeeper, and who initially introduced me as a researcher via email to the chairs of the various ward panels. I was also able to make contact through police participants who were able to pass on my details to their respective chairs. The unexpected slowness of access contributed to the iterative process of research; it became clear that I had to be flexible about how I approached my embedded cases. As a part-time researcher I had limited time in which to arrange and carry out observations and interviews and, though I would have liked to speak to more participants, I felt that the number of observations undertaken (seven in total) and interviews (33, with a total of 43 individuals) was sufficient to reach saturation of the data. Details of the interviews and observations are provided in Appendix A.

Conducting research

Observations

Despite the issues referred to in the first section, in the end I gained access to and attended five separate ward panel meetings, one of which was an open public meeting, as well as two Borough-wide public meetings. My role in these was clearly that of observer-as-participant (one of four types of researcher roles identified by Gold (1958), cited in Angrosino 2007, pp.54-55). My 'membership' of these groups was very much peripheral - I aimed to observe and interact closely with the participants, but not to actively participate. Even within an environment where it might have been possible, I felt that participation in determining police priorities for a neighbourhood in which I did not live would not have been an ethical way to behave. Thus, even when present at public meetings (and, on occasion, being asked to actively participate), I aimed to take as unobtrusive a position as possible.

I was usually introduced as a researcher to the meetings I observed. However, as is common with ethnographic research (Bryman, 2016, p.129) it was impossible in the case of the public meetings to gain full consent from all participants. Similarly, given the size of many ward panels, gaining informed consent from each individual participant would have been disruptive. I did not therefore record these meetings. Instead, I took longhand, contemporaneous notes, which I then transcribed (Angrosino, 2007). Due to the absence of informed consent (Ritchie et al, 2014), I have not incorporated direct quotes taken from any of my observations within this thesis, though I do use information from such observations to contextualise my findings.

The early challenge of access required that I step back and reassess my approach and my own assumptions - for example, that the content of the ward panel

meetings might be uncontentious and similar to that which I had experienced previously. I had instead to understand the extent to which these discussions could cover highly sensitive subjects, and raise issues of accidental breaches of confidentiality (Ritchie et al, 2014). These issues had not arisen in Cambridge, as the meetings in which priorities were determined were public meetings at which filming by third parties could legally (and regularly did) take place. The emphasis in the meetings that I had experienced had therefore been towards openness and transparency, and I underestimated the extent to which this was specific to the particular structure of police priority-setting in Cambridge. These early challenges were instructive, in that they underlined the extent to which I was carrying assumptions about the social world I was about to enter.

Interviewing

I held semi-structured interviews with participants in all five wards in which I observed ward panels, as well as in five other wards - ten in total of Borough One's 18 wards. In total, I undertook 33 interviews with 43 participants; the total recorded interview time was just over 26 hours, averaging out at just under 48 minutes per interview. All of my interviews bar one were undertaken face to face; the exception was carried out by phone at the participant's request. All interviews were recorded using a digital recorder and later transcribed (see below).

Most but not all of my interviews were undertaken on a one to one basis. However, on several occasions, officers and residents asked to be interviewed as a group. I was very aware of the time constraints facing officers (on one occasion I carried out an interview with an officer as he was eating his lunch in a 30-minute break) and agreed to this. The one occasion I had cause to doubt this

decision was when a sergeant (without warning) joined an interview with two PCs that was already underway. Though the sergeant's contribution was interesting and useful, I felt it had something of a chilling effect on the willingness of the other officers to speak freely, a situation Arksey and Knight (1999, p76) warn of. The presence of rank in policing is constant and its effect can be underestimated by outsiders (Davis, 2018). In future joint interviews, I was careful to ensure that I spoke to officers with supervisory responsibilities separately.

The interviews I undertook were semi-structured, as set out in the last section. I encouraged respondents to diverge from the set questions and, if needed, to challenge me as to what information they felt it was important for me to know (Ritchie et al, 2014). Bryman (2016) suggests that going off at tangents gives insight into participants' lives and what they see as important, and is to be encouraged - indeed, I often explicitly did so at the beginning of each interview. The interview protocols developed as the study did. For example, it was clear from the beginning that I might want to ask slightly different questions to police officer respondents than to residents or ward panel chairs. As the study went on, it became clear that I might also need to adapt the protocol to make it more suitable for council officers or for senior police officers who might no longer take part in ward panels or neighbourhood policing as part of their daily work.

When designing my interview schedule, I incorporated theoretical ideas derived from previous literature and scholarship around legitimacy and democratic policing. However, as themes emerged, I found myself prioritising some over others depending on the saturation of data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), or the

generation of interesting ideas. For example, in early interview protocols I asked a number of questions about communication methods within neighbourhood policing. Towards the end it appeared that I had reached saturation point with this data, as there were a limited number of ways of communicating and several officers had similar experiences (Morse, 1995). On the other hand, I found that asking how ward panels could be improved produced a rich seam of data on concerns about their existing structure and operation. I have included an example interview guide at Appendix B.

Analysing data

At first, I transcribed my interviews and observation notes personally, but I found that as a part-time researcher I was unable to keep up with these demands within the time that I had available. I therefore chose to focus on analysis, and paid to have the interviews transcribed despite the potential drawbacks of this (Tilley and Powick, 2002). To ensure accuracy of transcription, I prepared each transcript for NVivo by hand, which meant listening to the recording and re-reading the transcript line by line. This meant that I came to know the interviews in great depth. I then used thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) to examine my data. Thematic analysis remains somewhat under-developed as a procedure; indeed, Bryman (2016) notes that it did not appear as a separate section in the first two editions of his book on research methods. Part of the issue is that researchers may claim to have undertaken a thematic analysis when in fact they have simply coded their data to a handful of obvious themes (Braun and Clarke, 2006). I used NVivo throughout the process of coding and analysis (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013).

As a new qualitative researcher, it took me a while to find a balance between coding everything on the page and coding next to nothing; and to move to analysis (Bazeley, 2009). A grounded theory approach would have encouraged open-coding texts at the beginning, so as many codes are generated as the data throws up (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). This initial coding then gives way to a much more restricted type of coding as the 'core' codes emerge from the data (Layder, 1998). To some extent my early coding followed a similar pattern. However, as noted earlier, I approached my case study with a number of theoretical propositions, which helped me develop an early coding structure. For example, Jones, Newburn and Smith's (1994) analysis of the key concepts of democratic policing acted as a skeleton for my early development of themes, though several of these concepts were barely reflected in the data and were eventually discarded.

I kept my coding relatively open throughout the process of analysis, though the organisation of the structure of my themes was ongoing and iterative (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013). This served several purposes: it allowed me to leave the analysis open to revision, including through deeper and more patterned forms of analysis; it allowed for insights from new theoretical ideas; and it allowed the data to speak beyond the confines of the core ideas and themes that emerged. In particular, this process helped me see the importance of the unexpected role that ward panels played in helping to support the mechanisms of neighbourhood policing.

The final stage outlined by Bryman (2016) is the writing up of these insights to provide a compelling narrative about the data. As Bryman notes, these stages do

not necessarily follow a strict sequence; "there is a constant interplay between conceptualisation and reviewing the data" (Bryman, 2016, p.589). I found myself jumping back and forth between several stages, structuring and restructuring my themes and revisiting the connections between them; and finding that the action of writing up itself revealed connections and insights that had not previously been apparent.

Validity and reliability

Reliability and validity in qualitative research is more troublesome than in quantitative. There are two broad schools here: one tries to adapt the notions of reliability and validity to qualitative research. The other position, championed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) is that qualitative research should be judged by entirely separate criteria, best described as trustworthiness and authenticity. Trustworthiness is made up of four criteria which parallel reliability and validity in quantitative research (Bryman, 2016, p.384). These are credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability. For example, credibility is the qualitative equivalent of internal validity, and requires the demonstration that the findings are internally coherent and the descriptions meaningful. Often, it is suggested that the analysis and findings are approved by other readers, whether peers or participants (Riege, 2003). However, some have argued that this latter shift has led to a tendency towards post hoc evaluation of qualitative methods, and instead argue for the integration of strategies that ensure rigour throughout the qualitative process (Morse et al, 2002). I have taken this latter, integrative approach.

The strategies outlined by Morse and colleagues for methodological rigour include investigator responsiveness, methodological coherence, theoretical sampling and sampling adequacy, an active analytic stance, and saturation. Here I have chosen to focus on three main themes: theoretical sampling; triangulation; and adapting to the data.

- **Theoretical sampling**

Although Yin (2014) argues that the selection of cases in multiple-case study designs should be based on replication rather than sampling logic, the nature of my embedded cases meant that they were not necessarily literally or theoretically replicable (Yin, 2014). My embedded case study approach was designed to reflect the demographic range of Borough One, and the complexity of the social environment in which neighbourhood policing was operating. I also went beyond my embedded cases to ensure that my single overarching case, Borough One, was understood in a rich and 'thick' fashion (Geertz, 2008).

My initial approach was based on an assumption[7] that demographic differences might affect the way that participants understood neighbourhood policing. I chose wards in part for their demographic variety, and allowed my subsequent approaches to potential participants to be partly directed by the data that emerged. I also explained my approach to participants, and asked existing participants whether there were others whose perspectives they felt I would be interested in.

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[7] This could be understood as the theoretical replication of which Yin speaks.

This theoretical sampling was limited by practical considerations. Gobo (2007) describes how a qualitative case study sampling plan should be "set in dialogue with field incidents, contingencies and discoveries". (Gobo, 2007, p.207-8, in Silverman, p.147). Thus, though two particular wards within Borough One would have been interesting to study because of their demographic characteristics, I knew that the Designated Ward Officers were so new to the job that they were likely to have little experience to recount. My embedded case study therefore consists of a limited number of wards where I was able to study the operation of the ward panels in depth, complemented by some partial case studies of wards elsewhere in Borough One which were chosen according to how well they suited the demographic range I was aiming for. I was seeking neither generalisability nor redundancy but adequacy. Small (2009, in Silverman, 2007), for example, argues that each case should prompt a set of cases that informs the next one; the last case should provide very little new information.

- **Triangulation**

I also sought to triangulate my data, seeking 'completeness' rather than 'confirmation' (Jick, 1983, cited in Arksey and Knight, 1999). I chose to interview a range of different participants involved in ward panels and neighbourhood policing, spiralling up from those engaged in the work of Safer Neighbourhood Teams on a day to day basis, such as Chairs of panels, PCSOs and police officers, to include local councillors, council officers, MOPAC and other employees, and senior police officers. I also sought to highlight the negative cases in my analysis; for example, those officers whose perspective on neighbourhood policing was more cynical than the majority, which shed light on

problems with the ward panel system; and also the rare incidents of open conflict that were reported within ward panels, which led me to examine more closely the way that participants dealt with issues around politics.

- **Adapting to the data**

The researcher's ability to adapt to the data is a central part of methodological rigour, according to Morse et al (2002). Failure to do this is regarded by Morse and colleagues as a serious threat to validity. It requires the researcher to be prepared to relinquish categories or ideas that are not properly supported by the data, and Morse et al argue it is one of the hardest things to evaluate after the fact (ibid, p.18). The necessity to be sensitive to the data and adaptive in terms of categorisation was one that I encountered on more than one occasion. For example, I had expected, based on preliminary reading and my own prior experience, to find that dissent over police priorities would be common within panel meetings. In fact, I found a strong drive towards consensus. For my participants, consensus was a sign that a collective idea of security had been established and that the panel meetings were working as they should. This led me to re-evaluate my ideas about how the panels worked.

Morse et al also stress the "dynamic relationship" between sampling, data collection and analysis, theoretical thinking and the development of theory (Morse et al, 2002). The process of collecting data and analysis should be iterative, and this process is central to reliability and validity in qualitative research (Morse et al, 2002). The iterative nature of my research benefited from the relatively extended process of data collection. Partly as a result of my status as a part-time researcher, my data collection took some 18 months to complete.

This allowed me to begin analysis of the data I had gathered while data collection continued, which allowed the interaction of "what is known" and "what one needs to know" (Morse et al, p.18). The ideas that emerged from the data could be explored and confirmed with new interviews and observations, and my theoretical thinking could be developed incrementally.

Ethics and reflexivity

- **Ethics clearance**

My research was cleared by the Anglia Ruskin ethics board in September 2015 and by the MPS in October 2015; a copy of my approved ethics application is available at Appendix C. For each of my participants, I provided a participant information form and a consent form, based on Anglia Ruskin guidelines. Copies of these are also available at Appendix D. Each form outlines the purposes of the research and my institutional attachment, and the nature of the consent that participants were agreeing. The forms also outline the way in which data was kept and the way in which participation would be anonymised. Participants were told that they could withdraw from the research at any time without giving any reason.

Data from my interviews and observations was held in a password-protected file on my personal computer, and transferred for analysis to a password-protected computer at Anglia Ruskin University. No names are included in this thesis, and all individuals, police stations and geographical areas have similarly been anonymised. I refer to my respondents by their broad job title - senior police officer, for example, or PCSO. However, it remains possible that some police

participants may be identifiable to other officers who know the borough well; there are limits to anonymity (Barbour, 2014), particularly in case study research (Wallace, 2010). The identity of those involved in the ward panels and public meetings I observed remains completely confidential to ensure no risk to them exists. I felt it necessary to openly locate the study in London. Attempting to anonymise the city would have made it difficult to discuss, for example, decisions by the London Mayor. However, I felt that anonymising the geographical location of Borough One (as one of 32 boroughs), and the individual wards, was sufficient to ensure as far as possible the anonymity of the participants. Data will be destroyed within five years of completion.

- **Situating myself**

I was always transparent about my own multiple identities as a councillor, a doctoral researcher and a lecturer, and I began each interview by introducing myself as researcher who was also a local councillor in Cambridge. My identity and status is openly available online; failing to be explicitly transparent in my early relationships with participants would have been dishonest by omission and easy to challenge. Being open about my multiple identities risked doubts from participants as to my objectivity; however, it also offered different points at which I could make a connection with my respondents; for example, in shared experiences of public meetings, or of low-level complaints of disorder.

In the case of councillors in particular, being clear about my political affiliation eased potential tensions, rather than creating them. Though I explained that my research was not undertaken with any political agenda, this transparency allowed members of my own party (the ruling group in Borough One) to feel more

comfortable in my presence, and non-members to know with clarity an important part of the identity of the person to whom they were talking.

The police service can notoriously create obstacles to prevent outsiders from seeing into its mechanisms (Punch, 1985; Reiner, 2010). With some police officers my identification as a councillor appeared to lift a gate; with others, it brought down barriers. Brown (1996) outlines four categories of those undertaking police research: inside insiders; outside insiders; inside outsiders; and outside outsiders. Technically, my position was one of an 'outside outsider', conducting 'research on the police' (Innes, 2010). However, as Westmarland (2016a, p.166) suggests, "a certain amount of 'insiderness' has to be negotiated" for research to take place at all. As noted earlier, the identity of the academic in police research can sometimes be seen by officers as a hostile one (Punch, 1979; Hallenberg and Cockcroft, 2017), or at the least disconnected from officers' daily work (Stanko and Dawson, 2016).

The fact I had been cleared by the Borough Commander lent me credibility with officers and encouraged an occasionally alarming candour on the part of my participants. In other cases, especially with council officers and councillors, as noted above, my identity as a councillor in another constituency clearly identified me as an 'outside insider', with participants immediately assuming common knowledge and a common language. There was a risk in this that I might have missed understandings that would have been obvious to a genuine outsider; the absence of a sense of the 'strange' for example (Burgess, 1997), and I have tried to counter that by approaching my data analysis with this in mind.

My 'borderline' position also necessitated that I remain an actively reflexive researcher, involving firstly, philosophical self-reflection and the "self-critical examination of one's own beliefs and assumptions," (Lynch, 2000) and secondly a "methodological self-consciousness" of the relationship between the researcher and those studied (Bryman, 2016, p.388), as outlined above. Moreover, this was an active, dynamic consideration, rather than simply a post hoc assessment. I had to consider at each point whether the identities I was wearing were ethical, and whether the access I was being granted had risks in its own right to the wellbeing of my participants.

In practice, this had three main effects. The first was on recruiting participants. As noted above, I stated my multiple identities in my introductory emails. This likely had less relevance to police officers than my endorsement from the Borough Commander; but for those associated with the council it may have had a greater import. Councillors I interviewed from all parties seemed more open about the practicalities of their work knowing that we shared a common language and experience.

The second effect was on the way that I analysed and interpreted data. When interpreting participants' responses to questions on these policies, I had to consider whether they might have adapted their responses knowing my position. Ironically the clearest example of this was a respondent who was very explicit that she did not share my political affiliation and who was at pains to explain exactly why London's mayoral policies were irrelevant to the problems facing her ward. This proved to be very useful and illuminating.

The final element was more reflective. I came to political maturity under the premiership of Tony Blair, and it is difficult to disentangle the strands of political belief, academic engagement and even nostalgia that may have contributed to my own outlook on policing policy. I therefore challenged myself at every stage of the doctoral process to engage deeply with critiques of these policies, and to do justice to what my respondents were telling me.

Conclusion

This research sought to understand how participants saw neighbourhood policing in general, and ward panels in particular, and how they contributed to confidence and legitimacy. It also examined how neighbourhood policing acted as a site for the negotiation of common values between the police and the public. I therefore chose to undertake an embedded case study rooted in a critical realist position. This recognised both the reality outside our personal understandings, and the extent to which social facts are constructed through interaction.

All methodological decisions bring their own limitations. Choosing this approach means my conclusions are only hesitantly generalisable. However, there are lessons to be extracted from the experience of Borough One. This study provides a unique insight into the ongoing importance of neighbourhood policing to the support of confidence in policing, and it does so through a rich and textured understanding of the experiences, beliefs and values of those involved in it. The findings outlined in the next three chapters, structured around each of the mechanisms outlined in the last chapter, show how neighbourhood policing in Borough One retains a central, and irreplaceable, role in maintaining public confidence in policing.

Chapter Five - Engaging the community

Introduction

Community engagement was the first of the mechanisms through which neighbourhood policing was to deliver and maintain confidence. Police-public meetings can suffer from low attendance and can be dominated by groups who are already highly engaged; Chapter Three described these problems and the emphasis placed on reaching out beyond meetings. However, it also noted the continued dominance of meetings in police-community engagement.

This chapter explores the way that neighbourhood police officers in Borough One undertook community engagement in practice, and charts the continued pre-eminence of priority-setting public meetings in this process - something that Higgins (2018a) found is increasingly unusual nationally, as community-driven priority setting recedes.

The chapter begins by outlining a typology of ward panels in Borough One. These dimensions can help understand the variability in the operation of the panels, their autonomy, and their perceived legitimacy. They can also affect the way that security is experienced as an individual or as a collective good; the extent to which ward panels are linked to the wider community; and the level of autonomy that the ward panels can develop.

As outlined in Chapters Two and Three, neighbourhood policing was constructed around a conception of security as collective. Though the signal crimes perspective acknowledged that different people would experience crime and disorder differently (Innes and Fielding, 2002), the structures of neighbourhood policing were intended to enable collective community priorities to be set. Two ways of trying to ensure such a collective mandate are to open panel meetings up to everyone, and to encourage the attendance of those who act as representatives of wider groups. Thus these two dimensions took on particular prominence in looking at the way that meetings worked and how this affected the legitimacy of the panels, and by extension the police.

One promise of community policing (outlined in Chapter Two) was the possibility that it might generate social capital. Szreter and Woolcock (2004) distinguish between bonding, bridging and linking capital. Bonding social capital is dense and localised. Bridging capital by contrast is characterised by weak ties, but can connect people across broad social divisions. Szreter (2002) regards levels of bridging capital to have a high predictive power in terms of whether individuals see existing institutions such as the police as legitimate, and therefore feel part of a social order. Linking capital is a specific mode of bridging capital that links formal organisations with the community itself: "people who are interacting across explicit, formal or institutionalised power or authority gradients in society" (Szreter and Woolcock, 2002, p.655). The 'connector' panels in particular appeared to be generating linking capital through their multiple affiliations and their openness to local residents.[8]

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[8] This is an area that would perhaps benefit from further exploration.

This linking capital in turn had benefits for problem-solving and the capacity of the panels to exercise autonomy. The ward panels had begun as what Cornwall (2004) calls 'invited spaces', created by officials with residents encouraged to take part (MPA, 2005). However, they had, over time, begun to look much more like 'popular spaces,' where residents came together of their own volition; a development that had both benefits and dangers to the aims of the SNTs, in that the 'community' thus empowered did not always share exactly the same ambitions.

Following the outlining of the typology of ward panel meetings, the chapter then explores how the panels were recruited, and the meanings and importance that respondents assigned to issues such as attendance, participation, and representativeness. It locates all of these as part of an ongoing negotiation of legitimacy of both the police and the panels themselves. The chapter then outlines how some of these negotiations took place by focusing on the processes of the meetings, the central role of the chair, and the place of politics and politicians in the ward panel system.

Finally, the chapter looks at the engagement activities of both the police and the panels themselves outside the meeting. It argues that the experience of Borough One suggests that meetings remain a central element in community engagement and by extension in maintaining confidence and legitimacy in policing. The chapter concludes by discussing how community engagement activities, both within and outside the panels, contribute to the development of a local identity and a capacity to support neighbourhood policing work, the ramifications of which will be explored further in Chapters Six and Seven.

A typology of ward panels

The structures of the ward panels have diverged considerably since the original Safer Neighbourhoods programme was established in 2004. Panels were from the beginning given a certain latitude in how they ran themselves, and guidance was not written until some years later. Panels were originally envisaged as having a limited, standing membership (MPA, 2005). However, over the years they were encouraged to open up to the public. Officially, the MPS now encourages all panels to hold meetings that are open to the public (according to Officer Twenty-Eight, who oversaw the panels), and to hold 'virtual ward panels' (online surveys sent out every few months) to complement this. Nevertheless, in Borough One, there remained a great deal of variation. Some panels functioned as closed meetings and did not invite members of the public. Others held supplementary public meetings alongside closed panels, while still others made all their meetings entirely open to the public.

This first section offers a typology of ward panels which classifies meetings according to two dimensions: how open or closed the meetings are, and whether attendees tended to represent wider networks, or only themselves. These dimensions are labelled open versus closed, and atomised versus networked. By classifying the panels along these two dimensions, it is possible to discern particular types of panel in operation in Borough One: traditional; boardroom; super-connectors; and technology-enhanced. These 'types' seem to contribute in different ways to the operation of ward panels, with the most open and networked panels demonstrating the most autonomy, a theme returned to later in the thesis.

In creating a working model or typology, one must be careful that the dimensions actually measure something (Collier, LaPorte and Seawright, 2012) and these dimensions are particularly problematic: for example, the extent to which people are members of networks is not always clear, and whether members are long-term attendees of a given panel meeting; future research could usefully explore these elements further.

Open versus closed

This dimension describes the extent to which panels were open to the general public. Some panels were entirely open to the public and actively canvassed for new attendees. In Borough One, the panels which were closest to this end of the range were Priory and Chapel Hill.

Priory operated as a sort of hybrid panel/public meeting; a closed panel would be held where officers presented crime statistics and panel members discussed problems, followed a week or so later by a general meeting open to the public at which members of the public were encouraged to raise issues, and where priorities and promises were determined. The Chair of Priory said he hand-delivered leaflets advertising the panel meetings to every housing estate in the ward. Chapel Hill meetings were open to all members of the public and the Chair also actively advertised these; for example, in the letters page of the local newspaper.

At the other end of the scale, some panel meetings in London were not only closed, but no public meetings were held at all and the attendance of members of the public discouraged (according to Officer Twenty-Eight). I observed no

meetings like this in Borough One, but at least two panels were publicised only to those who were formal members, and operated with no explicit public component. Others were only publicised to those on the mailing list, though new members were welcome and actively recruited.

Panels can therefore be classified along a dimension of 'openness'. A completely open meeting allows any member of the public to attend; their credentials are not questioned, and it is advertised within the ward as a public meeting. A completely closed meeting would be one where invitations are sent to a limited group only, attendance by 'outsiders' requires the explicit approval of the panel, and existing panel members must approve new members.[9] The relative openness of the panels had important effects on recruitment, attendance and participation, which in turn affected the way that panels took part in problem-solving and supported the other work of the neighbourhood officers (Chapters Six and Seven explore this further).

Atomised versus networked

This second dimension is based on the extent to which panel members represented networks beyond themselves. Becher (2010) uses the concept of 'intermediation' to describe the dynamic way that individuals in participatory fora can move between their roles as individuals and as representatives of wider groups. This dimension is of course dependent on the extent to which such

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[9] The effects of this range on participation and representation are addressed in the next section.

networks are visible to the researcher, such as through participants' descriptions of their own or others' networks.

Some of the panels I observed had connections to both community and institutional networks. In Chapel Hill, for example, local councillors regularly attended, as did a highly regarded local council housing officer. When I observed the panel, the council officer had also invited housing wardens who undertook patrols in the area, demonstrating the practical value of her institutional network. Unusually, Chapel Hill's wider Safer Neighbourhood Team was in attendance as well as the dedicated ward officers; and among the residents were several who were identified to me by the Chair as leaders of local residents' and tenants' groups, and a representative of the local market traders.

At the other end of the scale were panels described to me by police officers where panel members, while they might be geographically or demographically representative of the ward, were not attending as representatives of anyone but themselves. No panels I observed were as extremely 'atomised' as this; partly because most of the panels in Borough One were long-standing and had often recruited members who were already active in the community. Even in Mountjoy, where the panel had been reconstituted relatively recently, there were representatives from the Parks police as well as the local policing team, and at least one member each of a residents' association and of the local Neighbourhood Watch. However, officers described panel meetings in other boroughs with as few as four elderly attendees, none of whom were acting as representatives of any local groups.

The dimension suggested here thus runs from 'atomised' to 'highly networked'. At one end, an 'atomised' panel is one in which members attend only in a personal capacity. At the other, the panel contains members of local community groups such as residents' associations; and, either directly or indirectly, has access to local councillors, council officers, and other institutions. A highly networked panel in terms of institutional links offers the promise of effectiveness in getting things done. A highly networked panel in terms of community links offers benefits to the police and other institutions in that information is shared in both directions and often disseminated to a much wider range of local residents than those who attend.

Working model

Figure One below roughly plots the location along these two dimensions of several of the ward panels studied. This is not intended to be an accurate representation and none of those surveyed were as closed or as atomised, for example, as the visual representation might suggest.
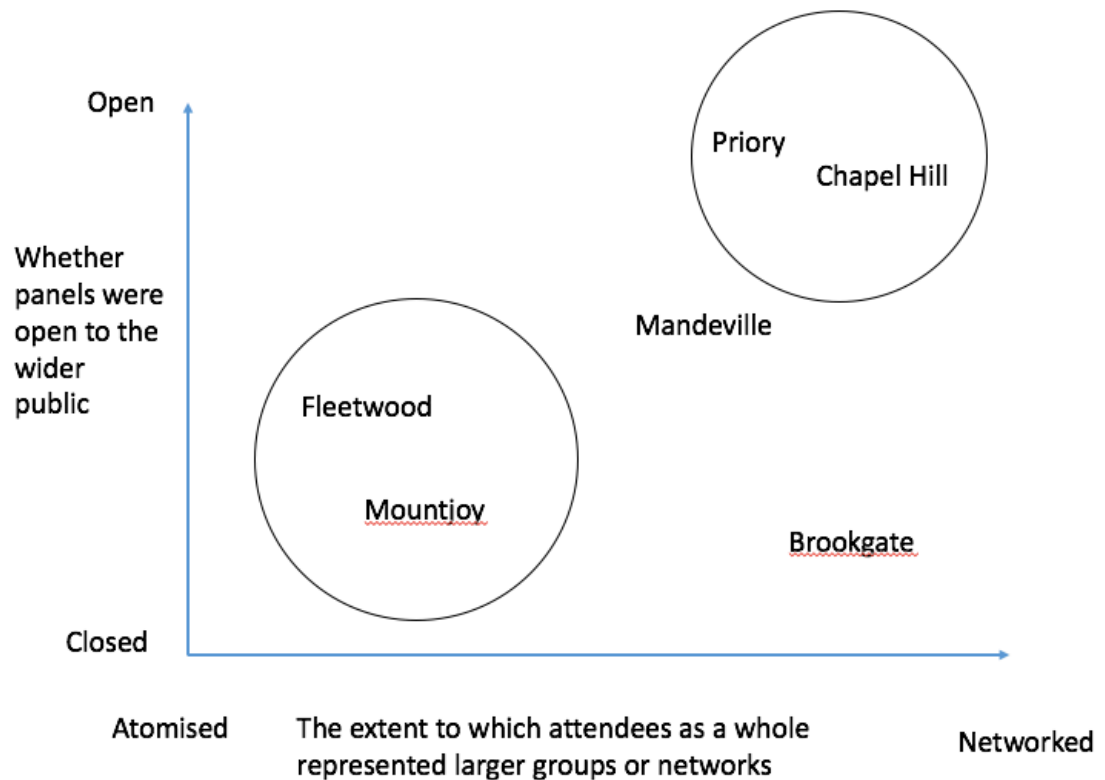
Here, Brookgate is close to the original vision for ward panels, as outlined in early MPA guidance (MPA, 2005). Brookgate was a large, well-attended panel, and its members included representatives of the local business community as well as members of local residents' associations and local councillors and council officers. This type of meeting can be described as a 'boardroom' type: those who attended were generally invited, and had a specific reason for being there. The post-Scarman PCCGs might also be categorised as 'boardroom' type meetings.

Fleetwood and Mountjoy operated in a similar fashion to the boardroom type, but their attendance was smaller and appeared less connected to wider networks than some of the other panels. These might be described as 'traditional panels.'

Priory and Chapel Hill can be clustered together as both highly networked and very open, and this category has been labelled as 'connectors.'

Mandeville and Cowden have been designated 'technology-enhanced'. Both had low attendance, but otherwise were not quite open or networked enough to fit into either the boardroom or connector categories. However, the activities of both were systematically enhanced through the use of online networks, which were fed into the panel meetings themselves and thus contributed to the determination of priorities and promises. The Chair of Mandeville runs a Facebook page that encompasses at least three local wards and has some 3,000 followers. This is used regularly to share warnings about scams and news stories about crime that might be of interest to local residents, along with other local events and news. This compares to the Facebook pages of the local SNTs, which at the time of writing had 60, one, and zero followers respectively. Cowden ward struggled with its attendance, but the local team had to some extent bypassed this problem by building and maintaining an email list of some 3,000 local residents, and running a virtual ward panel through this list. The physical attendance at the panels does not therefore fully reflect their characteristics.

Finally, the model allows for very open but largely atomised meetings in which attendees are present only to represent themselves. It seems likely that such 'town meeting' police-public meetings take place elsewhere in London, but the shape, longevity and particular history of the panel structure in Borough One meant that I did not come across them in my fieldwork.

As noted in the introduction, the dimensions discussed above have consequences for the extent to which a given panel can build a collective identity, generate linking capital, and become autonomous. The next section of this chapter begins to explore these dimensions further, by looking at the way ward panel members

are recruited, before examining how participants understood the idea and importance of participation and representativeness in building a collective mandate for the determination of local priorities.

Recruitment, participation and representativeness

As the last section showed, ward panels worked in a variety of ways. This section looks at some of that variability in practice, and the effect this could have on confidence and legitimacy. The composition of ward panels was bound up with continuous questions of participation and representation. This section looks at the way that panels were recruited, who participated, and the extent to which representativeness was achieved. It also examines what representativeness and participation meant to respondents and whether they had the same meanings for the police and the public.

Recruitment

Most panels were well-established, so recruitment was an ongoing process aimed at maintaining the panels. On rare occasions, panels had to be rebuilt; this had recently been the case for Mountjoy. Guidance for recruitment to panels was available to all officers (see Appendix E); however, many appeared unaware of its existence. A second document, including guidance as to membership, had been drawn up by Chair One in her capacity as 'chair of chairs' (see Appendix F). This was circulated to all panel Chairs in Borough One.

The MPS guidance allocates responsibility for recruitment to the police (MPS, 2014). It suggests a range of groups from which members might be drawn, and adds: "The panel members must be able to feedback the results of police/partner

activity and the reasons for priorities being set," (MPS, 2014), underlining the suggestion that panel members should be representative of larger groups; though Elliot and Nicholls (2001) raise the question of whether those attending meetings as representatives of local groups actually canvass the opinion of those groups, and whether they faithfully report back.

The MPS guidance adds that ward panels should be "made up of local people who live and/or work in the area and have a close connection with the area." (MPS, 2014, p.2). In practice, this was flexible, particularly where Chairs were concerned. Chair One, who chaired two of the panels in the study and served as 'chair of chairs' for the borough, had a long-standing relationship with Borough One, but had never lived there. Chair Four worked in Priory, but also had never lived there. However, both were highly regarded and there was no question raised as to their legitimacy as panel chairs.

To avoid any impression of panel members being imposed by the police, the guidance suggests that new members be nominated publicly and approved by the panel. Such formal nominations were rare in Borough One, and not regarded by police officers as particularly helpful:

> "If you met someone new who asks to turn up and if they want to become part of the panel, they do this very old-fashioned thing where the chair says, "Right, we'll have a vote whether they're accepted" and this poor person's sitting there wondering whether everyone's going to put their hand up and say yes or no and then some people don't and then they know in the future they didn't vote for them." - Officer Sixteen, Brookgate.

In practice, for most panels, recruitment was more informal. Responsibility usually fell to the panel itself, particularly the Chair. In Chapel Hill, for example, the panel was open to any member of the public to attend, and advertised in the local press. The process was described by the chair as, "basically, we badger people really and get them to come along."

Resident 'ownership' of recruitment was particularly common where panels were open rather than closed. This may reflect the way that panels, as they became the centre of networks in their own right, also became increasingly autonomous. The preferences of the panel also played a role in determining whether ownership of recruitment was devolved: where the panel was happy to take on the task, officers were often content to let them do so.

Recruitment to panels was thus co-produced between the police and the panels themselves, at least in the longer-established, increasingly autonomous panels. However, this confidence and capacity could obscure potential problems; once ownership of processes such as recruitment is devolved, it may be difficult for police officers to raise or address disagreements over representativeness or participation. One officer suggested that taking back responsibility for recruitment from his panel chair would be hugely difficult and highly "political". Like confidence, autonomy cannot easily be turned around.

Participation

Low participation is a commonly reported problem for police-public meetings (Elliot and Nicholls, 1996; Harkin, 2014), as outlined in Chapter Three. Given this background, attendance at the ward panels observed appeared fairly robust

(though still a tiny proportion of the wards' population); the lowest attendance at a panel meeting I observed was 11. To some extent the formal panel system 'designs in' a stable level of participation, as members are personally invited. However, attendance was also healthy at the two panel meetings which were open to the public, suggesting more factors at play. The best attended was in Priory, a public meeting held a week or so after a smaller closed panel. Here, there were some 24 attendees along with three police officers and the Chair, who intimated that more could have been expected, had the meeting not been held on a hot summer evening in the middle of the Olympic Games. This attendance rate is similar to that found by Gasper in her study of open PACT meetings, where the attendance for wards similar in size to those in Borough One ranged from 10 to 36 (Gasper, 2012, p.130).

The very localised nature of ward panels may mean that issues are more likely to directly affect and interest residents. In the PCCGs, meant to discuss strategic issues, Elliot and Nichols (1996) found many people were only interested in local concerns. Residents interviewed for this study felt that the panels, by contrast, spoke to issues which local people were actively interested in:

> "All politics is local, all policing is local. 98% of crime and criminal activity is … and 98% of that is of the smallest possible significance really. So, you know, it's … yeah, neighbourhood policing works." - Chair Four, Chapel Hill

The location of the ward panels may also have contributed. Manning and Brown (1984) found attendance at open PCCG meetings was very variable; and that their venue seemed to matter: those held in central civic buildings, publicised by

the council, were more poorly attended than those held in local schools and community halls. Unlike council services such as housing offices, which were seen increasingly out of reach to poorer residents - "two or three buses" away (Chair Five, Priory) - the ward panels were held in the places where people lived.

Attendance could fluctuate according to the seriousness of the problems faced by local residents. Meetings called to discuss issues that were particularly emotive locally tended to get a higher attendance. Chair Three recounted calling a public meeting shortly after an attack on a resident in an area where violent crime was rare: more than 200 residents showed up. Previous research (Skogan, 2006; Bullock and Sindall, 2014) has suggested that participation can be higher in areas with high crime levels. This was reflected in Chapel Hill, attended largely by social housing tenants:

> "It'll just mainly be people from the blocks who will turn up, because they're the ones with the issues. They're the ones with the ASB, they're the ones with the drug dealing, the dealers." - Officer Seven, Chapel Hill

Those who had experienced PACT-style consultative meetings outside London, sometimes held for a wider geographical area, found the ward panels to be more purposeful and better-attended. This was ascribed in part to the panel structure, which was seen as giving residents ownership of the process and issues, and placing the police in the position of guests. Officer Four, for example, believed this encouraged participation, certainly by contrast to the PACT meetings he had experienced elsewhere:

> "It was, you know, the old sort of local curtain twitchers, lost souls and coffin dodgers turning up and … complaining about, you know, like a sort

of badly-painted railing or dog muck and that kind of thing … I think there is something better about just being up here where, rather than just people turn up, you've actually got people who are supposed to be members of that panel who will consider the problems in the wards as you tell them, or what they know about, and they will decide amongst themselves what they, as the community, want to do. " - Officer Four, Mandeville

Many respondents felt it was important that the possibility of participating existed even where attendance was low. Officers tended to believe that low attendance reflected problems with individual panels, rather than a flaw in the system. Several officers explicitly discussed the ward panels in terms of maintaining police legitimacy - reflecting a broad awareness among police officers of issues of legitimacy, confidence and policing by consent:

"Even if the ward panel itself doesn't have a notable influence or impact on the way that we police or the changes that are made, because at the end of the day sometimes necessity dictates that we're going to do things a certain way, especially when we don't have the resources at the moment, it's still important that people see that there is a procedure for them to be empowered and given a voice." - Officer Twenty, Central Ward

This supports the argument made by Jones, Newburn and Smith (1996) that attendance may be a poor metric for the value of such forums; not everyone actively wishes to participate all of the time, and policing tends only to arise as an active concern for citizens when things go wrong. When things are going

smoothly, policing is "socially invisible" (Reiner, 2010, p.64) and therefore citizens may have little interest in participating in forums set up to discuss it.

However, as well as being a contributory factor in people's sense of procedural fairness, participation in ward panels could also be seen as an outcome of it. In Mountjoy, for example, the panel had collapsed when members left in anger at the introduction of the Local Policing Model in 2013, and had since been reconstituted. Officers were keen to stress that building trust through honesty and transparency was central to their activities, and they directly connected attendance at the reconstituted panel as an outcome of improved levels of institutional trust. This suggests that participation may be connected to police legitimacy in complex and locally contingent ways.

Representativeness

Previous research has offered mixed evidence as to how representative police-public meetings are of the communities that they serve. Some have found they are dominated by the elderly, white middle classes (Elliott and Nicholls, 1996), while others have found them much less regressive (Skogan, 2006; Gasper and Davies, 2010; Bullock and Sindall, 2014).

Public officials often prioritise 'representativeness' when defining legitimate membership of participatory forums (Barnes et al, 2003). However, the MPS guidance refers not just to what it calls the "six diversity strands (Race, Age, Disability, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief)" (MPS, 2014), but also suggests that panels include residents living in both private and social housing; a reference to class that is more unusual (Barnes et al, 2003). This sub-

section will look at four areas of representativeness highlighted by respondents: class, age, ethnicity and gender.

As with the MPS guidance, social housing often appeared to be used as a proxy for class. In some areas, a lack of diversity in attendees was not regarded as a problem, due to the absence of council housing in the ward, which was interpreted as showing that the area was overwhelmingly middle class (often an accurate analysis). In others, social housing was seen as the defining division within a ward: in Chapel Hill, houses in the north of the ward were largely privately owned, but the south, from which most panel attendees were drawn, was made up of council and ex-council housing. Social housing also was strongly associated by participants with higher levels of crime, and because of this, police officers expressed concern that residents of housing estates were not sufficiently represented on some panels. Class also mattered to participants in terms of voice. Herbert (2006) found that wealthier residents had more influence in neighbourhood forums. Both residents and officers recognised the risks that middle-class residents could have their concerns disproportionately magnified by their ability to be heard:

> "I think if you're living in somewhere that's working class, it's much more difficult to get your views through, and I think the police tend to, they don't set the agenda, but they respond to it." - Chair Two, Fleetwood

A lack of younger people in the panels was also raised by participants. Particularly in areas with a large amount of social housing, age was also indicated as a marker of likely disorder: one chair described the "traditional problems of council estates" as including antisocial behaviour and "a degree of

criminality from the usual sort of 17 to 24 kind of quartile." Several participants who raised concerns about the absence of young people from the panels were resigned to the disparity, regarding it as the inevitable outcome of people's particular stages of life and the extent to which they could commit to external activities; the absence of young members was not seen as delegitimating the panel so much as reflecting residents' 'natural' interests. Moreover, in some wards, there were few state schools or other obvious ways to engage local young people in the process:

> "They're all private schools. There's a dozen of them. And people come from all over London to go to them. So it's difficult to find a focal point where you could reach out to the young people." - Officer Four, Mandeville

A lack of ethnic diversity was recognised as more of an issue, and one that challenged all local groups. Borough One's panel Chairs were predominantly white, but the membership of the panels studied was more ethnically diverse, as were the local police officers. Council Officer One, herself of African origin, recalled the struggle to get tenants from ethnic minorities to turn up to housing meetings. One of the problems was language barriers. In Priory, for example, there had been successive waves of immigration and residents had multiple mother tongues.

The solution was largely seen as raising general attendance, rather than redressing any exclusion. There were few suggestions that local ethnic communities had specific needs or issues that might require their presence at ward panels. Residents interviewed for this study instead seemed to define

security concerns geographically. One Chair expressed a discomfort with having what they regarded as 'token' members of ethnic minorities unless they were prepared to sign up to a shared philosophy of the panel as serving the interests of the entire local community:

> "Personally, I don't want to have is token people just to say that we've got them. Do you know what I mean? We had a guy from the Asian community and he made himself available and it seemed a good idea … it ended up, he was in it for himself and his friends sort of thing and he left in the end … we didn't sack him, but we said, 'Look, if you're going to work for this, it's got to be for everybody.'" - Chair Five, Chapel Hill

Gender was rarely raised as an issue by officers or residents. Gender balance was, however, recognised as contributing to representativeness. In Honeycutt, the Chair was particularly disappointed to have lost two female members of the panel who had moved away; not just because of their particular contributions, but because they had brought diversity to the panel. Disability, mental health and other identities were barely raised or not at all, something Barnes et al (2003) found was common in public forums.

At the other end of the scale, some panel members felt their panels reflected their ward perfectly adequately. In Mandeville for example, Officer Four noted that very few residents regularly attended, and they tended to be elderly ladies. However, they generally attended as representatives of community groups such as residents' associations or other neighbourhood groups. Because of this, Officer Four considered the panel to be sufficiently representative of the ward.

However, other officers - much more than residents - were deeply concerned that panels which were unrepresentative could be dangerous to confidence and legitimacy. Officer Sixteen had experience of a number of ward panels, and warned that some were completely unrepresentative of the communities that they served. He was concerned that, given the power they had to set promises and priorities, this could endanger the legitimacy of both the panels and the local police. In such situations, Officer Sixteen felt strongly that the panels needed to be steered by police officers towards decisions that reflected crime levels in the area. Thus, where panels lacked legitimacy, community direction of priorities was also seen as illegitimate, or at least less legitimate than direction by the police:

> "I'm literally talking, three or four people, average age probably 70 to 75 and they're the only four people who turn up and that's quite scary, that those four people who have no representation of the community are setting what the police do … we will as the police absolutely steer them as to where we should be concentrating our efforts, because it's too scary to leave it to people who are unrepresentative of the whole community." - Officer Sixteen, Brookgate

As Chapter One outlined, a realist position suggests that the legitimacy of the police cannot be determined a priori by following certain rules, but has to be negotiated as closely to citizens' experiences as possible. For police officers, legitimacy and confidence was a central concern and the failure of a panel to reflect its community made it not just invalid in the eyes of local police officers,

but potentially dangerous and requiring challenge, even if panel members felt themselves to be legitimate representatives of their community.

This reflects some basic tensions in police-public engagement: firstly, between the values of the police and those of communities; and secondly, between participation as an end in itself; and the recognition that participation is of interest to very few. Jones, Newburn and Smith (1997) suggest that localised forums allow other values of democratic policing to be supported, even as participation takes a back seat; thereby providing necessary structures for wider participation should legitimacy be contested. The evidence that attendance rose when residents feared local security to be under threat would seem to support this. Attendance and participation can thus be seen as both input and output, part of an ongoing process of negotiation of legitimacy and confidence; reflecting Bottoms and Tankebe's (2012) characterisation of legitimacy dynamics as dialogical. The next section explores some of the details of how this negotiation took place, looking particularly at the role of the Chairs, the processes of the meetings, and the position of local elected representatives in the ward panel system.

Panel meetings, consensus and politics

The last section highlighted that, while panels could develop a certain autonomy, this process could also expose differences between the values that the police felt important for legitimacy and the ways that community members understood their purpose. Central to this was the panel chairs. This section looks further at the processes of the meetings and the role of the chairs.

Role of chairs and volunteers

London's ward panels are usually chaired by volunteers from the local community, rather than the police themselves. This has often been seen as a desirable goal in police-public meetings (Elliot and Nicholls, 1997; Myhill, 2007; Brunger, 2011), though at times these 'community' chairs were chosen by the police and presented to the meetings for approval (Gasper and Davies, 2016). All the panels I observed in Borough One were chaired by members of the local community, though I was told of wards within Borough One where attendance was so low that police were acting as chairs "just to keep it going" (Officer Fourteen, Honeycutt).

Respondents had similar ideas of the characteristics needed to fulfil the role effectively. Chair One spoke of a 'can-do' attitude, and stressed proactivity. Chair Three saw the role of the chair as being a 'driving force'. She had led a campaign against the Local Policing Model, ultimately taking a petition to Downing Street, and had also gathered financial pledges from residents in Mandeville to fund extra police officers. Chair Five saw the role of Chair as a combination of acting as a conduit between residents and the police:

> "I mean, chairing the meetings is the least important part. I actually think just being a focus for information getting to the right place, as [Resident Four] says, and also doing all the leafleting." - Chair Five, Priory

Officers valued effective running of the meetings more highly than the residents interviewed for the study, perhaps reflecting some gratitude that they were not left with the responsibility themselves. There was also a belief that the quality of meetings affected police legitimacy. A badly run meeting could put people off

returning, and a lack of attendees could endanger the meetings' legitimacy; whereas a well-run meeting could encourage people to come back.

Both officers and Chairs believed that ward panel chairs acted as community leaders. Most chairs were active in the community beyond the panels. Chair Two came to the panel through the local Neighbourhood Watch, and Chair Four had been head of a neighbourhood association. Chair Five worked in his local ward with minority ethnic groups. Residents were reported to approach panel chairs when they weren't willing to directly approach the police. Chairs' role as mediators between the police and residents helped to direct officers and resources, and even to act as arbiters of how police resources should be shared out. In Priory, for example, officers saw Chair Five as a conduit between the police and residents over how to fairly distribute police activity: "the panel chair pretty much mediates and, yes, makes the decisions … to make sure that the police resources are spent equally around." For officers in Chapel Hill, Chair Four was the cornerstone of the whole community policing structure in the ward:

> "I'd say he's the glue that keeps it all together, to be honest … [Chair Four] as a chair keeps it all together and, you know, if someone feels like they can't go to the police for whatever reason … which a lot of people do, they might go to [Chair Four], which they do, and then [Chair Four] comes and tells us." - Officer Seven, Chapel Hill

Another officer noted that the importance of the Chair was not just in passing on intelligence but also in helping to shape attitudes towards the police in general:

> "If they have a positive attitude about the police and policing, the way we do the policing, they portray that positive attitude to the community and

you get much better feedback than if somebody who's always negative, then the community will be negative because they're the link between us and them." - Officer Five

Thus the role of volunteers, and of chairs in particular, was seen as central to the effective operation and legitimacy of the panels. Effective chairs facilitated the increasing autonomy of panels and, as later chapters will show, the capacity to actively support Safer Neighbourhood Teams in their core work. In Chapel Hill, for example, the Chair and the local housing officer were seen as vital contributors to what the panel, and by extension the police, were able to do:

> "I didn't realise how much it actually involves and how much science is involved in keeping a community together, or keeping a troubled community good. I'm not saying [Chapel Hill] is a troubled community, because I'm sure there's far worse, but in terms of keeping it good, you've got [Chair Four] and [Council Officer One] just sort of cementing it all together, and that's what's kept it at a sustained plateau level." - Officer Seven, Chapel Hill

However, there was little formal support for chairs and volunteers, and little formal provision for the sharing of best practice. Several respondents expressed a desire to see chairs further trained and supported - though others were more concerned to make sure the panels retained their autonomy. Regardless, with one sergeant overseeing the whole ward panel system across London, the MPS had very little capacity to provide this.

Consensus and dissent

The main official purpose of the panels is the determination of promises and priorities (MPS, 2014). Priorities represent an intention to focus on a particular type of crime, while promises entail a specific commitment to what is to be done and how (discussed further in Chapter Seven). Officer Twenty-Eight, the author of the MPS guidance, explained that promises needed to be concrete, and reported back to the ward panel: "Because otherwise, you're walking away with an abyss, aren't you?"

In practice, almost all respondents reported that decision-making was a process of finding consensus, not just between panel members, but between the panel and the police. In particular, there was limited evidence from observations and interviews of challenge, argument or dissent; not unusual for small participatory fora (Becher, 2010).

With well-established panels, this consensus was in part due to a common understanding of what was practicable for the Safer Neighbourhood Teams to achieve. Where dissent was reported, this was sometimes ascribed to a lack of understanding of the limits of the officers' capacity. Chairs actively negotiated this consensus, by trying to place individual concerns in a context of a more collective sense of security. Here, for example, the chair of one of the more deprived wards explains how meetings helped residents to understand both the ability of the police to respond to their issues and their relative seriousness:

> "I think some people come thinking they'll be priority, but when they hear … for instance, [local estate] are saying, 'Oh, there's big antisocial behaviour,' but when you hear that [other local Estate]'s got class A drugs and weapon sweeps … I think they realise.'" - Chair Five, Priory

In Central Ward, officers described tensions between collective security concerns that affected many residents of the ward, and private concerns that affected only a few. Central Ward had a very high proportion of Borough One's licensed premises and a large night-time economy. This led to very localised noise and disorder issues that had to be balanced with the limited resources of the Safer Neighbourhoods Team and the wider issues affecting the whole ward:

> "The ward panel is a chance for some of our more aggrieved residents to turn up and air their problems and it's for us and for the panel chair to ensure that the issues that are aired and that we decide to take on are that of the ward and not of someone who suffers … when people air their issues, on a number of them I have pushed back and said, 'I appreciate that's an issue. It's something we can discuss later. It's something I'm happy to work on with you, but I don't think it's going to fall into a ward promise here.'" - Officer Twenty, Central Ward

The high value placed on consensus raises the possibility that the ward panels had become a 'box ticking' exercise - the appearance of consultation without any real engagement. Research into the post-Scarman PCCGs suggested that they were dominated by police (Elliott and Nicholls, 1996); while Herbert (2006) found 90% of the outcomes of neighbourhood forums in Seattle were police-generated. A handful of officers offered a similarly cynical take on the value of the ward panels. However, this was not the understanding of residents in their wards, who believed that they were very much setting the agenda for the police.

In practice, the police retained some responsibility for identifying which local security issues 'mattered' enough to be addressed, even in the more autonomous

panels. In some of the more 'traditional' panels, the use of crime statistics led to priorities and promises being heavily guided, if not set by the police. Tilley (2008) suggests the 'weak' community policing he champions should acknowledge the limitations of community knowledge, as police can have a superior understanding of what is happening on the ground.

At the same time, officers also thought ward panels were valuable in giving residents a say over how they were policed, in an explicit recognition of the value of the process in bolstering confidence and legitimacy. The literature on procedural justice suggests that 'voice' is an important contributory factor in perceptions of fairness (Mazerolle et al, 2013). Officers were alive to the importance of ensuring that residents felt that they were being heard and that their issues and fears were taken seriously:

> "We need to make sure that people feel that their voices can be heard, because that's the part that feeds into the policing by consent." - Officer Twenty, Central Ward

The panels which both officers and Chairs felt to be successful were those in which the relationship seemed to be one of co-production. This saw police acknowledging and valuing community input and direction, while panels respected police knowledge but were prepared to challenge their interpretations of what local priorities should be. The extent to which this took place was often dependent upon the relative experience and capability of officers and the Chair. However, there were limits to the extent to which this common interpretation of collective security was possible. One was the amount of information that police could share; updating the public could sometimes be impossible for legal reasons

(Harkin, 2015a). Other problems included different interpretations of risk and harm; what the community deemed as a problem was not always recognised as such by the police. These issues will be explored further in Chapter Seven, which looks at problem-solving and the difficulties in managing expectations.

Politics and politicians

When dissent was raised by respondents, the conversation often involved the role of elected representatives. Officer Twenty-Eight explained that he had originally decided to limit councillors' involvement, believing that they were likely to dominate meetings, and commandeer them for political gain:

> "Councillors are a professional attendee of meetings. And what we didn't want them to do was to use that forum for political value. That's what we were trying to avoid … we did find that some councillors liked to promote, "we're a Labour ward panel," type thing." - Officer Twenty-Eight

However, as time went on and the panels became embedded, councillors became more heavily involved, and the author of the original guidance underwent something of a Damascene conversion:

> "It came to a stage where I realised that they were the best representatives of the community. And so albeit I've written it into that document I wrote, which is the Ward Panel Review, at the same time, I've really slackened off on that and said, 'No, no, if there's a councillor there, you let them in. If you're happy and they're doing a good job'" - Officer Twenty-Eight

Gasper and Davies (2010) found that local councillors in PACT meetings often refused to chair meetings, preferring to identify themselves with residents in holding the police to account. This echoes the experience of Borough One, though the pressure towards consensus meant councillors were rarely this combative. While many ward panels had councillors as active members, I observed none that were chaired by councillors, though in Cowden and Halliburton, councillors were reported to chair meetings in the absence of other volunteers.

Several chairs and officers praised the role of councillors and believed their involvement brought advantages. In Chapel Hill, a very open and networked panel, councillors' capacity to resolve issues for residents was seen as a crucial part of the wider network of ties that the panel maintained:

> "[Chair Four] does have a relationship with our ward councillors. That's quite key as well. Because you have to remember that for me, I get information from [Chair Four]. I get information from the councillors. I get information from the police, information from the residents themselves. So it's quite important that that network, we keep each other informed and we work together." - Council Officer One, Chapel Hill

However, other respondents recounted times when councillors had 'overstepped' their role. One example highlighted by several participants involved a councillor who insisted on a particular issue becoming a promise, despite a majority view that the issue concerned could not be addressed by the local team within their limited working hours. The Chair interpreted this, and the councillor's intransigence on the issue, as a result of political considerations:

"The anti-social behaviour was mainly happening late at night, and the team, the latest they ever work is ten o'clock at night. But the councillor would not accept that, and my view was that he was using it as a sort of political tool, that he wanted to be able to say to people at election time, well, I got the local safer neighbourhood team to do so as a promise. And when I said, well, no, we can't do that, he became quite aggressive." - Chair Two, Fleetwood

Eventually, Chair Two raised the issue with the 'chair of chairs' who referred to the original panel guidance excluding councillors from voting. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Chair Two had a fairly jaded assessment of the capacity of councillors to make a positive contribution.

Several participants expressed concern that meetings where councillors were dominant could be politicised. This entailed politicians seeking to co-opt the work of the panels for campaigning purposes, especially around election time. Beliefs about the proper role of councillors in ward panels were held particularly strongly by police officers:

"This is about the ward panel and about them making sure that their area is being looked after and the priorities are being set correctly for that area, not for what the best political argument is going to be or the best political gain. Easy wins for say Councillor so and so, I did this, I influenced the police to change this and look, it went down by 20%. It shouldn't be about that. Politics should not play a part within policing at all." - Officer Five

For some of the officers in the study, discussion of politics was almost regarded as 'out of bounds'. This applied even to decisions that directly affected the daily lives of officers, such as the announcement by Mayor Sadiq Khan that all wards in London would have at least two Dedicated Ward Officers.

Only a handful of participants addressed the role - or absence - of representative democracy within the ward panel system, and the fact that elected local councillors were the only panel attendees with any democratic mandate. There was no concern that the bypassing of democratic structures outlined in Chapter Two damaged the perceived legitimacy of the system. If anything, the experience of Borough One suggested that the legitimacy of the ward panels rested in their detachment from wider ideological and political considerations, and their grounding in pragmatic and local concerns. Critical engagement with issues of power and justice, that might have required the articulation of a wider political position, were absent from the panels studied during this fieldwork - but not from all ward panels, as participants who had worked elsewhere in London made clear.

This may be a function of the relative effectiveness of the ward panel system in Borough One. The ability of councillors to be a voice for residents on issues of collective security is perhaps less urgent where members of that community already have access to structures by which issues can be brought to the attention of police and the council. The next section examines community engagement beyond the meetings, undertaken both by police, and by the panels themselves.

Engaging the community beyond meetings

This final section will describe the different types of engagement that SNTs in Borough One demonstrated in practice, and the relationship between this work

and the priority-setting of the ward panels. It will also look at the wider work that panels themselves undertook. It also explores how Borough One officers communicated with residents, and vice versa.

Methods of engagement

Ward panels were always envisaged as just one aspect of community engagement. Capacity for engagement activities shrank after the reduction in DWO numbers under the LPM; nevertheless, engagement in the wider community remains a central part of SNT activity. Officers regarded this work as crucial, particularly to redress deficits in participation and representativeness with regard to the panels. Engagement was seen as a long-term commitment, particularly in wards with pockets of high deprivation:

> "We've got some of the poorest there, they're the ones who are, supposedly, more likely to be affected by the issues that we have and the ones who we can't seem to get interested … So, we have to work harder to engage those people. They need to trust us, but how we do that and then convince them to come along to raise their voice at a meeting, that's a battle that takes place over months and years, rather than in the space of one panel." - Officer Twenty, Central Ward

Officers rarely drew boundaries between formal community engagement activities and the ordinary interactions of daily police work. Part of the purpose of these activities was to identify problems that could be taken back to the panels (see Chapter Seven). It was also aimed at reaching sections of the community that might not attend panels:

"We do school talks. We do crime prevention talks. We do anti-bullying talks. We do cyberbullying talks. We've been to the Scouts and done a talk. We've gone to [local] Hospital and we've been to the unit, the mental health for young persons. We go to the local mosque. We liaise with the imam." - PCSO Three, Brookgate

Engagement was part of the warp and weft of neighbourhood policing work; for PCSOs, for example, a large part of their job was simply being present and engaging with the community. As O'Neill (2014) found, their major 'tool' was communication:

"Yes, so, more often than not I'm speaking to people, I'm literally speaking to people and finding out what their concerns are … nine times out of ten, they're telling you about the football, the weather, the road works that are taking place. Their interests. Whatever. And one time out of the ten they might go, oh, by the way, such and such a thing has happened over that way, and it just might be worth directing a patrol over there and checking it out. And that's it. That's the job." - PCSO Two, Fleetwood

The wider community engagement work undertaken by Safer Neighbourhood Teams was also a crucial part of enhancing police visibility (see the next section for more on this). Residents interviewed for the study wanted to see police at community events, being proactive in their engagement, "walking around with your big hat on," as Officer Four described it. In Fleetwood, for example, the deputy chair was insistent that foot patrol and ward meetings alone were not

sufficient for the public to register that the police were available to them to discuss problems:

> "They do occasionally have so called open ward meeting whereby they hold it at the community centre or they hold it down by the church for [Mandeville] whereby the public can come up and talk to them. I said, "It's no good you being hidden away in the community centre, have a bloody marquee and be out there and proactive and then the public will see you've got a marquee and will actually come and say hello."" - Deputy One, Fleetwood

The value of different engagement activities was not universally agreed. One officer described work such as street briefings and drop-in surgeries as "almost worthless" in his relatively wealthy and low-crime ward. Rather, one-to-one encounters were, for him, by far the most effective way of engaging with the public:

> "Number one, knocking people's doors saying, "Hello, this is me, this is what's going on." So when we did our communicating after a burglary, you do X many houses around the property that's been burgled, you'll introduce yourself and say what's happened, you'll give some crime prevention advice and exchange confidential information. Good, excellent. Or if they're not in, I'm quite a big fan of writing letters." - Officer Four, Mandeville

The revitalisation of Neighbourhood Watch at the time of fieldwork was welcomed by respondents. Neighbourhood Watch schemes have historically been beneficial to confidence, while less effective at actually reducing crime or fear of

crime (Fleming, 2005). The ambition in Borough One was to have at least one Neighbourhood Watch contact signed up in every street; and Officer Seven in Chapel Hill was confident that he had already hit that target for the ward. The 'new' Neighbourhood Watch was seen as a way of engaging people without forcing them to physically attend panel meetings:

> "I think this is going to be very, very important because it should give people a feel of being included without the sinking feeling that says, "I've got to go and sit in a draughty church hall on a cold February evening and listen to a load of police teams sort of saying, well, on the whole, things are not too bad except for the burglary in number 32." - Chair Four, Chapel Hill

Despite all this activity, panel meetings remained central to SNT activities. Residents and officers often took advantage of the meetings to speak to each other informally before and after the formal discussions. In Chapel Hill, for example, attendees arrived well before the official start time, and were discussing matters relevant to the meeting long before it was brought to order; while at almost every ward panel meeting I observed, officers lingered afterwards to talk to residents. Several respondents considered this to be one of the most important parts of the meeting itself - a period where residents could raise issues with officers that they might not have been willing to share publicly:

> "They [only] need to pull us to the side, if they don't want to say it in front of everyone they'll pull us aside at the end, because generally after the meeting we have a chit chat in general, you know? It could be for ten or 15 minutes and then somebody might want to pass us a bit of

information over that they didn't want to disclose to everybody. Yes it's very, very valuable." - Officer Nineteen, Priory

These meeting 'edges' were also times when residents could talk to other official representatives more comfortably. Council Officer One in Chapel Hill explained that residents regularly waited behind for conversations with her and other council representatives. These sorts of conversations can be seen as 'linking capital' in action (Szreter and Woolcock, 2004).

Face-to-face engagement was still seen as the most important and valuable method available to officers even in wards that relied heavily on technology. In Cowden, for example, one officer explained that public meetings permitted participants to weigh each others' authenticity; for residents, this might be a matter of accountability, judging whether their concerns are being taken seriously, while for officers it might be trying to judge how important a resident considered an issue:

> "You can tell a lot meeting someone face to face. Whereas if it's by email or the phone it's very hard to judge how authentic someone is." - Officer Twenty-Four, Cowden

However, there was a recognition that residents also needed to be aware of the activity the police were undertaking. This was particularly the case in wealthier wards, where foot patrol, for example, was relatively invisible to residents (Chapter Six explores this further).

Giving out information

Primarily, police in Borough One communicated in a 'broadcasting' mode; sharing information rather than interacting with residents. As Chapter Three outlined, this is not uncommon; police organisations tend to use social media conservatively (Bullock, 2018a). Some respondents expressed concern that giving out too much information could raise people's awareness of crime and thus add to people's concerns about it. However, most regarded transparency of communication as vital to confidence and legitimacy. Respondents also suggested that anxiety about crime could stem from police limiting the information they gave out:

> "Because then it's what are you hiding, why are you hiding it, and then the fear of crime just increases because what exactly is going on, and it's the fear of the unknown." Chair One, Mountjoy and Brookgate

The source of information was felt to affect the extent to which residents were reassured by it. Chairs felt that knowledge given by the police themselves rather than by the press gave local inhabitants a greater sense of safety, but this seemed to be less about reliability so much as residents' expectations over the kind of information they had the right to expect:

> "You won't frighten the community if you tell them crime has happened. They will be more frightened if they find out about it through the press and they know you and you've said nothing." - Chair One, Mountjoy and Brookgate

The ward panel system therefore appeared to help build trust between residents and police officers, but also created certain expectations around the sharing of information (Chapter Seven explores these expectations further). Effective

communication could enhance people's confidence in the police and make them feel safer in their neighbourhoods. However, failing to meet these expectations could potentially lead to a loss of confidence, and an increase in subjective insecurity and fear.

Officers felt strongly that sharing information was important, and that the MPS (and policing in general) was poor at letting residents know what they were doing. One way this was done in Borough One was through the production of glossy leaflets. As discussed in Chapter Three, there is evidence that this broadcasting mode of communication can enhance public confidence. However, it can also damage trust and confidence if it does not appear to reflect residents' real concerns (Stanko and Dawson, 2016). Thus newsletters can act as a multiplier, but may not be able to replace face-to-face engagement. In Borough One, there were also practical issues around printed newsletters as a method of communication. The MPS had arranged the production of the leaflets, but their delivery had not been included in work plans:

> "Someone's piloted these leaflets… A great idea, a fantastic idea, cost effective, no. We got sent out these boxes and boxes of leaflets to deliver to every single resident, which is quite a few, there is like thousands and thousands. We went, you are joking aren't you and the Chief Inspector said, no, but I might be able to find some money for this. He was overruled by saying no I want the boots on the ground. We went to meetings after to hear that some teams had been taken off … stopped all their proper duties for a week and a half just to deliver these bits." - Officer Three, Fleetwood

While occasionally some officers and PCSOs had managed to deliver their allocation during the course of their normal work, others had either found ways around the problem ("we ended up leaving a load in banks") or had simply never taken them out of the boxes; I saw several boxes of undelivered leaflets.

In other areas, where resources had been more generous in the past, officers were evangelical about the potential value of newsletters, particularly when very locally focused:

> "We ended up doing a newsletter just for that block. So if you lived in [local] block, you'd get, this is your neighbourhood news for [local] block. And they loved it. Most of them. And that was at times a very disengaged community on the [estate]. They all read it because it was so local … Properly resource intensive, though. But we only got positive feedback." - Officer Ten

However, this was very resource-intensive work, involving the production and delivery of a large number of different leaflets for a single ward. Stanko and Dawson (2016) note that the dissemination of newsletters had "waxed and waned" according to financial resources and changes in leadership commitment. Clearly there is also an issue if delivery takes officers away from the engagement work that the newsletters are intended to multiply.

By contrast, sending out emails was very cost-effective, so long as officers were able to maintain a comprehensive and up-to-date email database. This was largely not the case for most wards, and it seems likely these low penetration rates will have shrunk further following the introduction of GDPR legislation in 2018. Cowden was the only ward which had focused on email as the prime method of

communicating and engagement. The team's email list numbered some 3,000 households. Officers felt that the penetration they had with email was in effect the death of the ward panel meetings, quoting panel members as saying there was little point in attending if all the information available was available by email. However, the same officers also noted the lack of attendance from other agencies and the advanced age of panel attendees, suggesting more factors involved in Cowden's dwindling participation than the effectiveness of their email bulletins.

Officer Four in Mandeville was widely praised for his engaging and effective ways of communicating with residents through email newsletters, with a more limited database:

> "My predecessor said one of the biggest problems that the Met has is it doesn't talk to people enough, so I took that and one of my biggest things that I try to do is increase the knowledge that we give to people, so I try and tell them, "Well, this is what's happening, this is how it happened, and this is what you can do to prevent it," and we seem to be doing the job, for the most part." - Officer Four, Mandeville

Officer Four found that his broadcasting mode of engagement was very effective in his relatively wealthy ward; in fact, he felt that this was more appreciated and welcomed than his attempts to engage in a more interactive manner. He recounted trying to set up a street briefing in one area, delivering over 200 leaflets, and getting no response. This was largely, he felt, because the residents of the area did not believe themselves to have any pressing problems.[10] However,

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[10] This might also support the arguments outlined in earlier chapters that attendance is a poor metric for the success of public engagement activities; those who actively

they did appreciate being regularly contacted, and thus 'kept in the loop' of local security issues:

> "If you reach out to them and say, "Even if you've not got a problem, this is what's happening and this is me," you'd be quite surprised at how receptive people are to that and how pleased they are that you've actually taken the effort to try and communicate with them." - Officer Four, Mandeville

One of the advantages of these email newsletters was that they could multiply themselves. Well-crafted communications from officers were shared through social media and forwarded through residents' own networks, potentially reaching many times more residents than those on the original contact list. This raises familiar concerns around the inclusion of those not part of existing networks; either due to residential churn or membership of 'hard to reach' groups (including, in this context, the elderly). Nevertheless, good communication with those already engaged was still recognised as an effective way of building local confidence:

> "If you've got someone who's doing things and broadcasting them … telling them when there's both good and bad news, it can just have a massive impact. Because the community will organically share that with each other. And before you know it, you've reached out to sometimes thousands of people in your community through one piece of

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want the police to address a problem might well attend such events, but for those relatively content with levels of crime and disorder in their area, the accessibility of police officers might be sufficient to maintain confidence and legitimacy.

communication, rather than hundreds of really good little pieces of work, but towards individuals." - Officer One, Mountjoy

Interactive communication

Despite the dominance of the broadcasting mode, many officers recognised the need for more interactive communication, and were using social media to try to expand their reach. Many SNTs had Twitter accounts, though these were largely used for broadcasting - for example, of the routes taken by officers on patrol (after the fact). Twitter was also used to advertise meetings, although to limited effect; even the more successful Twitter accounts had follower numbers in the low hundreds. Similarly, the Facebook pages of most SNTs had fewer than 100 followers. Moreover, as one officer pointed out, those engaging with the police on social media were by definition unlikely to be 'hard to reach' groups:

> "Everyone talks about social media and it's important. Yes, it definitely has a place because it's fast and it's interactive and you can pump out little nuggets here and there and everywhere, great … My biggest concern with social media is that we're not reaching the hardest to reach. Because if they bothered to follow MPS [Borough One], to a degree they're already engaged, aren't they? … I'm more bothered about the people who really dislike the police or have no interest at all. Or are a little bit sceptical, a little bit distrusting. They're the ones for me we should be really nailing into, the hardest to reach groups. And they're not going to follow [Borough One] Police on Twitter" - Officer Ten

The interactivity that technology offered still appeared to respondents to have promise. Chair One for example cited the value of 'virtual ward panels' in bringing problems to officers' attention. Virtual panels, which involved regular email surveys to ask about issues of concern, were originally envisaged as allowing a wider range of community input to feed into the decisions made by the panels themselves:

> "This does have quite a powerful effect, because one, people's confidence that it's being addressed; two, the fact that they can, you know, report anonymously and they won't be sort of seen to be grassing up their neighbours; and three, that, you know, they will see increased presence at funny times of the evening that they didn't see before." - Chair Four, Chapel Hill

However, Chair Four was an exception. In practice, virtual ward panels were not very interactive, and so were poor at allowing officers to explore issues in depth, or to respond. As such, they tended either to displace the decision-making role of the physical panels, by bolstering the police ability to 'own' the knowledge of what was 'really' a problem; or, in the majority of cases, had not been fully developed. In Fleetwood, for example, local officers were wary of using their email contacts to set up virtual panel as they were concerned that this would offend those who attended meetings:

> "I don't want to upset the one we've got by saying really, can we just look at maybe a virtual ward panel or go into the ward panel … I don't want to put their nose out." - Officer Three, Fleetwood

Resource limitations also affected how much interactive communication officers could undertake. Even emails considerably increased demand. Officer One in Mountjoy felt that, were he to try to meet residents' expectations, he would be unable to actually do his job:

> "It surprises me sometimes what level [of] communication people expect, bearing in mind I don't know the exact number of residents we have in [Mountjoy], but obviously it's well up in the thousands and thousands … I've found that people expect you to have the time to communicate solely with them whenever it suits them, and whenever they want to speak to you." - Officer One, Mountjoy

Data protection issues also limited the extent to which officers could share information (what Harkin (2014) describes as the 'form' of policing restricting democratic responsiveness), and this could damage trust:

> "If we've caught someone, or there's a suspect in an area or something, they want real specifics. And things like data protection, confidentiality, and the Official Secrets Act, things like that mean we have to be limited, and sometimes lack of detail means lack of trust, or not certainty that we really know what we're doing." - Officer One, Mountjoy

Panel community engagement

Panel members saw their role as facilitating communication and engagement. This was seen as part of the central purpose of the SNTs and therefore the ward panels:

> "The whole point of Safer Neighbourhoods, in my view, is that the public talk to the police and the police talk to the public. My job in the middle is to try and facilitate that." - Chair Five, Priory

However, in several cases in Borough One, the activities of the panels and their Chairs went well beyond facilitation. Chairs in particular saw themselves s conduits between police and residents, and they took this role very seriously:

> "We have our own little patches, people come to us, we contact them. We don't wait every two months to tell [the police] about something, we email them or phone them up or have emergency meetings about this problem here or there, like a conduit." - Chair Seven, Honeycutt

In Priory ward, the Chair undertook to deliver leaflets to every estate in order to ensure that all areas of the ward were aware of upcoming meetings. Given that there are some 6,000 households in Priory Ward in total, this was a considerable undertaking. Speaking of an earlier meeting, he explained:

> "We emailed or sent letters to 140 people and I leafleted, because there's been some issues around [local street] and the open space. As [Officer Eleven] says, the hardest thing to police is open spaces. So, there's been some antisocial behaviour. So, I thought, "Well, I'll leaflet them" and I was really pleased that two or three people I'd never met before actually came. So, they're now on the email, so they'll get the email and they're engaged."

In Mandeville (which bordered Fleetwood ward), the chair ran a local Facebook page, 'I Love Fleetwood'. Local SNT officers acknowledged that the reach of the

page (some 2-3,000 followers at the time of fieldwork) was considerably greater than any engagement activities they could undertake. Chair Three in Mandeville also maintained her own database of some 2,000 email addresses.

Panel members also felt that this was work that was better undertaken by volunteers than by officers or PCSOs. In some wards, panels meetings were seen as one element in a wider community network that explicitly aimed to connect people with the police in areas where demographics could otherwise make this difficult:

> "It's very easy to meet a few isolated people in the community, but to connect those dots in the community is not easy, because this area is so diverse." - Resident Five, Priory

It was evident that much of the interaction regarded as most important by residents interviewed for this study took place before and after the formal meetings. These conversations could have taken place by email, which would have given the participants more privacy, but did not. This suggests that personal contact with officers works to build trust and bonds - reassuring each party of the other's authenticity - in a way that other methods of communication fail to do.

The drive for consensus explored earlier in the chapter also suggests that there is a legitimacy that can be derived from decisions on priorities made at such meetings that is not available from the tallying of survey responses from virtual ward panels. This may be because such decisions become an expression of collective rather than individual security, and involve an element of co-production between the police and residents. It seems likely, therefore, that

community meetings are and will remain a central element in maintaining public confidence in the police.

Discussion and conclusion

The ward panel system appeared to encourage the creation of a local community identity that took priority over other group identities. Though the latter were recognised as legitimate and members of those groups considered to be 'representative,' consensus and a common idea of security took precedence. Dissent was present: some residents and local councillors tried to negotiate particular outcomes to gain what were seen as individual benefits. However, these efforts were seen as less legitimate in the ward panel context than problems that affected the whole ward; and part of the task of Chairs was to lead the negotiation of what counted as a collective issue.

The extent to which most panel members valued consensus raised the possibility that the panels were simply 'box ticking' exercises. This is probably too cynical an assessment. While the police remained primarily responsible for the meetings, and for local security, many officers believed themselves to be 'guests' of the panels, who nevertheless had to temper community demands by focusing attention on the pragmatic limits of what SNTs could actually deliver. Chairs, too, would take on the role not just of arbitrating the ward's collective interests, but of negotiating what it was reasonable to expect of the police (explored further in Chapter Seven).

The autonomy of the panels expressed itself in other ways as well. The panels operated as powerful ways of connecting residents with public service representatives, not just the police. Panel attendees often used the edges of

meetings to make personal connections with housing officers and local councillors as well as with police officers. For most panels, members' roles extended into their local communities. These activities, alongside the engagement activities of SNTs, seemed to actively contribute towards the strengthening of local communities' social capital and collective efficacy.

However, there were dangers in this autonomy, particularly in terms of the devolution of responsibility for recruitment. Police officers generally had a much more acute sense of the importance of representativeness for legitimacy than did panel members. Yet with recruitment devolved, there was a risk that new panel members would be recruited from existing networks, and from groups within the community who were already engaged. Officers were alert for signals that the panels were failing to reflect their own understanding of residents' general experiences and concerns.

This tension, between the democratic values of representativeness and equity, and the rights of communities to define and represent themselves, has been noted in previous research (Barnes et al, 2003). However, Barnes and colleagues found that it was public officials who were trying to privilege the notion of a general public interest, and marginalise 'counter-publics', whereas in Borough One this seemed to be undertaken by the ward panels themselves. Moreover, one of the counter-publics thus marginalised were local elected representatives. The negotiation of the legitimacy of the panels and the police themselves was thus complex, and not entirely under police direction or control.

Much police engagement activity outside the panels was dedicated to 'hard-to-reach' groups; attempting in part to ensure that any lack of representativeness in

the panels was redressed. However, resource constraints limited what could be attempted, beyond the normal daily work of policing the wards. Officers - and panels - remained reliant on the meetings to provide a dedicated space for face-to-face engagement that communication could multiply, but not replace. This was the case even in those wards where the adoption of social media as a means of communication had been most enthusiastic; underlining that technology is not able to replace face-to-face engagement as a legitimating tool.

In the most autonomous wards, the panels themselves were able to undertake both engagement and communication work and thus support and even share the confidence-supporting work of the SNTs. This autonomous work was not limited to community engagement. The next chapter looks further at the activities of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams beyond the panel meetings, by examining the second of the mechanisms expected to help maintain confidence: that of visibility; and the role of the panels in supporting this.

Chapter Six - A visible, familiar and reassuring presence

Introduction

Visibility, accessibility and familiarity were central to Reassurance Policing and one of the core 'mechanisms' through which Neighbourhood Policing was to deliver confidence. HMIC's report, Open All Hours (Povey, 2001) outlined visibility, accessibility and familiarity (VAF) as the three crucial elements of public reassurance. Visibility was defined as "the level, profile and impact of police resources deployed within local communities;" accessibility, "the ease with which the public can obtain appropriate police information, access services or make contact with staff;" and familiarity, "the extent to which police personnel both know and are known by the local community" (pp.23-24). By the time the NRPP had given way to the Neighbourhood Policing programme, the three requirements were community engagement, visibility, and problem-solving, with visibility used as something of a catch-all term for the different aspects of reassurance.

Innes (2004a) argues that there were four connected purposes and techniques behind the introduction of Reassurance policing (see Chapter Three). Firstly, to reduce what Loader (2006, p.205) describes as the "social distance" between police and public; which visibility and familiarity could be said to contribute to. Secondly, to meet public needs and expectations by identifying the problems that mattered to them and responding to them (the subject of the next chapter);

thirdly, to create an extended police family; and fourth, to assemble a "total policing philosophy" to enhance neighbourhood security. Reassurance was an output rather than a method; based on the belief that "pursuing crime and disorder reduction through a policing style that is visible, accessible and familiar has the best chance of delivering reassurance." (Herrington and Millie, 2006, p.150). Security remained the 'master concept' (ibid, p.151). This 'total policing philosophy' was adapted to form the founding philosophy of Neighbourhood Policing. This prioritised the local community's role in determining the issues that mattered most to them, regardless of their 'seriousness' (Quinton and Morris, 2008a).

This chapter explores how visibility, accessibility and familiarity contributed to confidence and legitimacy in the Borough. It looks in particular at the symbolic weight that participating panel members placed on having visible, accessible and familiar policing, and how this could sometimes come into conflict with the values of the police organisation, especially under conditions of austerity. However, it also underlines the multiple value systems operating within policing, and the way that neighbourhood work encouraged the development of a distinct identity and understanding of what policing should be for.

The first section focuses on visibility and accessibility, looking in particular at the symbolic resonance of foot patrol and police stations in Borough One, outlined in Chapter Three. The second section then explores familiarity and continuity, and notes how these contributed to the development of a particular neighbourhood policing identity, which shared values in common with the community rather than the 'traditional' response orientation. It also outlines how the ward panel

system in Borough One not only supported the work of Safer Neighbourhood Teams, but at times was able to take on some of the work of ensuring continuity of local knowledge, a sometimes under-explored facet of familiarity in policing.

The final section of the chapter contextualises this in a wider understanding of the purposes of neighbourhood policing: how visibility, accessibility and familiarity were part of a wider reassurance 'style' of policing (Millie, 2010). This was centred around an embedded presence in communities, but was also internalised in many officers' occupational identities. This can on occasion expose value conflicts: between officers and community members, as the relative importance and legitimacy of certain police activities and purposes are negotiated and contested (as outlined in Chapter One); and between the value sets associated with different modes of policing; of particular importance as the reassurance 'style' comes under sustained pressure from the politically determined resource limitations outlined in Chapter Two.

Visibility and accessibility

Police visibility is one of the three consistent 'delivery mechanisms' of confidence across the National Reassurance Policing Programme and the Neighbourhood Policing Programme (Quinton and Morris, 2008a, p.iv) As noted in the introduction, the term 'visibility' can encompass a multitude of activities. This section looks at both visibility and accessibility; to look at how residents experienced visible policing, but also the extent to which they felt they could approach the police or make contact with them.

Foot patrol

Panel members had a high regard for the symbolic value of a visible police presence, reflecting Loader's "consensus, community and order" (Loader, 1997, p.15). Visible policing signalled order and safety (Manning, 1997; Wakefield, 2007) and the bond between the police and the community. For Chair Seven, for example, the visibility of local police officers was a way of demonstrating the integration of the police and the local community. A safe and happy community was one in which the police took a full part, observing and being observed. Visibility was not just about deterring crime, but about telling residents that their lives were secure:

> "You want to see them in the grain of life walking up the street or in the side streets by the schools, so mums and their kids will see the copper around looking at things. It's good." - Chair Seven, Honeycutt

An affective attachment to local police officers (Loader, 1997) was common. The decrease in the number of Dedicated Ward officers (DWOs) under the Local Policing Model introduced in 2013 was experienced as an inconsolable loss of relationships (the next section explores familiarity in more depth). In prosperous wards like Mandeville, the Chair felt their local officers belonged to them - just as Girling, Loader and Sparks (2000) found in Macclesfield in the 1990s - and they valued their visible presence as reinforcing their sense of the security of their world:

> "These were our bobbies on the beat, and the community responded to them, they would stop them in the street because it was a familiar face, they would chat to them, and there was a real rapport built up between the community and our bobbies" - Chair Three, Mandeville

Foot patrol was rarely associated with crime. Just as Clark and Hough (1984) estimated that a London police officer might encounter a burglary in progress once every eight years,[11] so officers noted the rarity of their encounters with crime (one PCSO said he had encountered a crime taking place twice in seven years). However, officers recognised the symbolic value of visibility and championed foot patrol as a way of establishing credibility and legitimacy. Central Ward's sergeant had refused to allow his officers to drive any vehicles for the first 12 months he was in post: "You cannot police from inside a metal box." He believed that as soon as officers were behind walls, or in cars, or even in formal situations such public meetings, a core element of accessibility was lost, as there would always be people who could not make it past those barriers. Legitimacy had to be based on an authentic presence in communities:

> "I think that we try to formalise and set SOPs and procedures and policies to make everyone do things a certain way, when realistically the human contact, you can't quantify and the best way of getting the feedback, getting legitimacy and getting the consent is by just being there. The second people moved in the 1950s into panda cars off of foot patrols, you put a glass screen between everyone else, you lost it." - Officer Twenty-Two, Central Ward

Visibility was not just a matter of being seen. Some kinds of visible policing, such as response vehicles, could increase residents' concerns, as they signalled that something dangerous had taken place. The Audit Commission's (1996) study, Streetwise, found that respondents believed officers in cars were going to a crime

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[11] Sutton and Hodgson (2013) question the premises of this particular claim.

that had already taken place, rather than being available to prevent crimes. Residents interviewed for this study also assumed that response vehicles meant that serious crime was happening. Dedicated ward officers by contrast were usually on foot or on bikes and were seen as a symbol of a more reliable and locally embedded police presence:

> "People do say that, you know, if they see a police car drive down their road or, you know, a police car parked outside, they feel a bit worried, but if they know it's us, the local police, then, "Oh, that's fine." You know, they feel reassured by us." - Officer Four, Mandeville

However, limited resources were a frustration for officers. Fleming and Grabosky (2009) suggested that the demand for police services is insatiable, and it was certainly the case in Borough One that officers were unable to provide the level of visible policing that some residents yearned for. Visibility, however, did not have to be provided by police officers. In Borough One, the local council funded community wardens and housing officers, both of whom undertook patrols. Rowland and Coupe (2012) found that, though police officers on patrol had by far the highest standing among the public in terms of eliciting feelings of safety and security, other types of uniformed patrol officers could also provide reassurance. Officers in Borough One welcomed the extra patrol presence as "more uniforms" at times when police officers simply weren't available.

Officers' frustration with constrained resources sometimes found expression in the rejection of residents' desire for foot patrol as 'unrealistic'. Some officers described residents' feelings about foot patrol as a nostalgia for a golden age which bore little connection to reality. This was placed in contrast to the more

grounded and experience-based knowledge that officers had of 'real' demands and 'real' policing. Officers' rejection of community demands for foot patrol as unrealistic can be seen as a privileging of police knowledge; but it could also be seen as a way of distancing officers from a demand that could no longer be met:

> "Everyone wants to go back to the old days, bobby on the beat, copper on every corner, kind of thing. Which never really existed. But that's what they want to see." - Officer Four, Mandeville

Police stations

Police stations mattered to respondents. They affected both residents' subjective sense of safety and officers' practical ability to be visible and accessible. As elsewhere in London, Borough One had seen a reduction in the number of police officers since 2010. Fleetwood police station was closed in 2013 and sold off; Kingsdene was closed at the same time. Three main police stations remained at the time of fieldwork: in Easthurst (close to Mandeville, Fleetwood and Mountjoy); Honeycutt; and Brookgate; though Easthurst has no front desk for public access, and at the time of writing, Brookgate was also under threat of closure (McLennan, 2017). Neighbourhood police bases had also been closed in Chapel Hill, Easthurst, Honeycutt and Mountjoy.

Police stations were recognised by Povey (2001, p.98, para 5.1) as having a central role to play in reassurance: "The police station, with its traditional blue lamp, is an enduring image of British policing that has almost as much symbolic importance as the uniformed bobby. In terms of public reassurance, it represents access to police services and, in emergency, a place of sanctuary." The Audit

Commission (1999) also described police stations as second only to foot patrol in symbolic importance. However, as Chapter Three outlined, the role of police stations in public confidence is under-explored, and neighbourhood policing guidance makes little or no reference to the role of permanent urban police stations in maintaining confidence.

As with foot patrol, the presence of police stations was highly symbolic. In areas such as Fleetwood and neighbouring Mandeville, the existence of a station was felt to signal the kind of place - safe, prosperous - these areas were. The reduction in the numbers of DWOs under the Local Policing Model, together with the closure of the Fleetwood police station, seemed to some respondents to indicate this was no longer the case. The strength of feeling around the closure of police stations in Borough One was substantial, and particularly vocal as the Fleetwood station served communities which had considerable capacity and articulacy to protest its disappearance. The Chair of Mandeville located this closure as one of the main sources of a perceived surge in crime that followed:

> "We'd had our police station for 100 years, and we knew, given that we'd had that luxury, if you like, as soon as it wasn't there, we'd have crime. And we didn't know what kind of crime, we just knew we would have more crime. It was a feeling and a fear, and that fear was borne out, because as soon as it was trumpeted that they'd closed the station – which they eventually did – we had a huge spike in crime of a type we'd never seen here before."- Chair Three, Mandeville

The loss was permanent, as the building was sold to another government department. However, the closure had generated such outrage that the wealthy

local community had begun enquiries as to whether it might be possible for residents to buy a neighbouring building and gift it to the MPS as a base for neighbourhood officers.

At times, the outrage expressed was seen by officers as reflecting the way in which privileged communities sought to establish and reinforce their sense of ownership over the local police. This could elicit some resentment. For example, one officer described a resident as believing that, before the closure of the local station, they could "click their fingers" and "the police would walk up the hill". This officer was vehement in underlining that residents did not own their local police, even their dedicated ward officers; an extreme example of the tension that could develop between the community direction of policing enshrined in the original vision for neighbourhood policing, and on the other hand, officers' sense of themselves as self-directed professionals exercising their discretion (Goldstein, 1977; Waddington, 1999; Bronitt and Stenning, 2011).

The closure of police stations also had practical consequences for the visibility and accessibility of neighbourhood policing. One PCSO described how the closure of the local station in his ward had made it much harder to do his job. With no transport, he would leave from the main station in his uniform at the beginning of his shift, but the time taken to walk to the ward for which he was responsible could significantly eat into the time available for foot patrol when he got there. The reason for this was that he found himself engaged in conversations on the way, and felt that he could not always disengage from residents or explain that he was not responsible for their problems. Thus the absence of a base in or near his ward meant that it indirectly ended up with less of a service:

"One or two people will come to stop you and tell you about other things that have taken place. You cannot say to them, I'm sorry, I can't talk to you, I don't work on that ward. I can't deal with that because I'm not the ward officer. So if you get caught up, the journey could take an hour. An hour and a half. I've had a walk on to the ward which has taken three hours because there was an issue which had evolved on the [local high street]." - PCSO, Fleetwood

Closure thus affected officers in an immediate practical sense. It was much harder for neighbourhood officers to deliver a service when they were based a considerable distance from the residents they were meant to be reassuring. A lack of transport affected officers' ability to do their jobs, but more than that, it exaggerated the effect that stations had on police visibility as officers (and cars) fanned out from them; outlying areas with no stations had to wait for a police presence until someone could get there (often on foot). In a purely practical sense, areas where stations had closed experienced a lower visible police presence and became 'outlying,' regardless of their geographical location or crime levels.

Barriers

Both panel members and police officers expressed concerns that the police were not seen as sufficiently visible and that lack of visibility could damage confidence in the police. There was considerable nostalgia and affection for the officers who had been responsible for wards in the days when teams were bigger. The decrease in police numbers was the single biggest complaint from residents. However, visibility was highly subjective, and could be affected by demographic

factors. Some residents were more alert to the presence of police officers than others; while in some wards, according to officers, police patrols were simply less visible. For example, Officer Four in Mandeville worked in a prosperous ward where many residents had very large houses, set back from the road:

> "That's probably one of the biggest issues with the reassurance gap in that they feel they don't see the police enough. Which isn't helped by the fact that, you know, living in these lovely houses, behind hedges and fences, and barbed wire and armed guards and whatever, so when I do wander past, they don't see me." - Officer Four, Mandeville

Officers had tried to find technological solutions. The last chapter discussed the way that communication could multiply community engagement work, and several SNT teams also tried to use it to multiply visibility, by tweeting out their patrol routes after the fact to demonstrate that they had been present in the area.

Some felt there was an institutional failure to educate and engage residents with the realities of how much police work took place behind the scenes. Senior officers spoke of changes to demand affecting the way that they could deploy officers: with increasing risk coming from cyber-crime, exploitation and radicalisation, visible policing was less effective in deterring crime (though as noted in Chapter Three, its capacity to do this has long been known to be limited). They acknowledged that the public largely failed to understand this, but still felt that residents' subjective sense of safety could not be prioritised over police assessments of these 'hidden' forms of risk and harm (see Chapter Seven for more on this):

> "That's not going to be policed by your neighbourhood officer, just by having six extra cops walking up and down the road isn't going to bring you that degree of safety … I think there's a level of maturity and realism that's required." - Senior Officer Six

Panels

As noted above, some participants believed that panels contributed little to visibility, due to limited attendance and the formality of the structures. However, others felt that ward panels were crucial elements in the accessibility of the police and other agencies, especially in more open ward panels, where residents could simply turn up with problems and discuss them with the officials responsible for resolving them. This was of particular importance given the lack of police stations in many wards. The ward panels became the only venue where residents could be sure of finding a police officer with whom they could have a face-to-face conversation.

In Chapel Hill, the local DWO felt that ward panels were one of the few occasions where officers could talk to members of the public in a non-confrontational way, and build familiarity and trust. He thought this particularly important in the context of this very mixed ward where many residents were cautious of talking to the police and might have had unpleasant encounters with them in the past:

> "I try and get to as many new people who's there, because it makes you seem like … because it is a uniform at the end of the day, isn't it, and some people might be scared of uniforms from past experiences, past

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family experiences, or as a child of whatever, left, right and centre. I mean, we don't turn up to nice situations. We always turn up to bad situations, and that's what people make associations with, and that's what you've got … the ward panel meeting tries and breaks down in the sense of, "Hello, I'm actually quite nice. I'm just a human being like you." You know, sort of like, opens that door a little bit, and once you've got your foot in it, I think a lot of the time it's a lot easier to get in. So yeah, I think it is vitally important." - Officer Seven, Chapel Hill

The ward panel system did appear to support the visibility and accessibility of the police, and sometimes were the only means by which local residents could be guaranteed a chance to speak to an officer face-to-face without leaving their local area. Ward panels - especially the more open ones - were a unique arena, in which officers were immediately accessible to residents for the specific purpose of addressing their problems, or engaging other agencies to do so. Thus ward panels, as seen in the last chapter, appeared to support neighbourhood policing in ways that went beyond their original mission of acting as a site for community engagement and the setting of priorities. None of these factors - visibility, accessibility and familiarity - are separate. Accessibility grew as residents began to recognise and to trust their local officers. The next section explores this familiarity, and brings in a fourth, closely related factor, continuity, which emerged regularly in both policy documents (Home Office, 2006) and fieldwork.

Familiarity and continuity

Familiarity was the third element of the 'VAF' trinity cited by Povey (2001). The way familiarity is described in policy documents is not just "the extent to which

police personnel both know and are known by the local community" (Povey, 2001, pp.23-24); but also the time that they spent in post, and the broader knowledge of the area they maintained. Continuity in post is separated in this section to emphasise the local knowledge that officers require, which involves more agency than the rather passive idea of familiarity can express. Thus this section looks at both familiarity and continuity as aspects of this 'mechanism' of confidence.

The section begins by examining the way that familiarity, like the other mechanisms, retained its value to participants a decade on from the launch of the Neighbourhood Policing model; and how continuity in post was both highly regarded, and constantly under threat. This was partly due to the nature of policing in London - the 'Beast of the Met'. Finally, the section looks at how the 'Beast of the Met' could to some extent be countered by the ward panel system, with its extensive networks allowing it to hold local knowledge and support continuity in neighbourhood policing.

Getting to know a place

Neighbourhood work was about relationships, which could only be built up through consistent contact, within a small geographical locality, by officers who were around long enough to do so. Officer One in Mountjoy explained the difference between SNTs and response teams:

> "They're not dedicated like we are, and they're not in continual
>
> communication with the residents like we are. So we fulfil that role. It's

entirely community engagement, local knowledge and continuity, basically." - Officer One, Mountjoy

Familiarity was a means by which trust could be engendered, even without residents knowing an officer's name. In a project aimed at exploring residents' willingness to intervene in neighbourhood disorder, Kleinhans and Bolt (2014) found that informal social control rested in part on a concept they termed public familiarity. This describes the everyday social interactions and the weak relationships that develop from these. Neighbours in their study location didn't necessarily want to "have coffee with each other"; rather, they gained enough information from these limited encounters to recognise and categorise each other. Similarly, Officer Thirteen describes the benefits of being a familiar face in local policing:

> "They get to see you, but they also get to see the same face. Whereas a response officer would only come if you called them under a 999 response, whereas we are always patrolling, whether it be just in a café like this, or an estate. And they look out of the window where they're doing their washing-up, oh, there's that PC again. What's he around here for? But it gives them the encouragement, next time I see him, I want to have a word with him about such and such. So it gives them encouragement to say, that's a face that knows the area, he's somebody I'd like to speak to about a youth on the estate or a situation where they didn't want to call the police, but now that I'm here, great to have a quick word with me." - Officer Thirteen, Brookgate

This preference for familiarity could be organisationally troublesome. The Local Policing Model (LPM) was based around neighbourhood teams being able to 'flex'; so a single ward might have fewer dedicated ward officers, but a cluster of wards would have more officers able to deploy to demand. The LPM was excoriated by almost all resident respondents; while officers who discussed it praised the flexibility of deployment that it allowed them. As Officer Ten put it, "in the old world, when John and Steve were on rest days, you got nobody. Nobody came into your ward apart from the response teams zipping in and out. You had no presence in your ward. Whereas now, if the crime demands it, you could have people in there, earlies, lates, and overnight, every single day." Nevertheless, Officer Ten admitted, residents preferred the familiarity of knowing which officers were going to be present on the wards: "they like that familiarity of seeing who they get. And the ward panels have a few gripes, and one of them is always continuity." - Officer Ten

Continuity

Unsurprisingly, perhaps, residents interviewed for this study assigned a high value to having officers assigned for the longer term. This is consistent with research evidence on the value given by the public to 'bobbies on the beat', and the ownership that residents feel towards their local officers (Girling, Loader and Sparks, 2000). Continuity and familiarity are tied in to local knowledge; the ability of a neighbourhood officer to have a deep understanding of the local neighbourhood and the community within it. In Borough One, as noted in the last section, many respondents located their own golden age as being in the late 2000s, just after the introduction of the neighbourhood policing system in

London, when the programme was still relatively well-resourced. Residents interviewed for this study often described an emotional attachment to individual officers (Loader, 2006); and felt their moving on to new roles as a personal as well as community loss. One chair continued to meet his former local sergeant for coffee years after the officer had been reassigned elsewhere. While respondents were generally very complimentary about the neighbourhood officers assigned to their wards, these 'lost' officers took with them a well of goodwill and local knowledge that could only be partially passed on to their successors:

> "We lose all the good ones. I don't know where they go to, but we lose them all" - Deputy One, Fleetwood

High turnover is recognised as a problem nationally in maintaining the kind of continuity needed for effective neighbourhood work (Higgins, 2018a). Borough One experienced considerable turnover in officers, and breaks in continuity were constant and common. Turnover of officers in Borough One at all levels was sufficiently rapid that, between the start of fieldwork and the completion of the initial writing-up of the findings, there were three separate Borough Commanders (four, if temporary replacements are included). The turnover of officers directly affected the fieldwork for this study, as in some wards it was difficult to find a named officer who had been in post long enough to offer any knowledge of the ward. New officers were particularly difficult to make contact with, and sometimes felt unable to contribute constructively to the study due to their lack of experience.

In other wards there was greater continuity, but panel members interviewed for the study still struggled with the rapid pace of change and were at times incredulous at the rate of transfers. One Chair estimated that their ward had had five changes of sergeant in an eight-year period. Some respondents felt the only explanation for the rapid turnover in officers was a lack of understanding at higher levels of the value of continuity and familiarity in neighbourhood policing:

> "I think the further up the police you go, the less it is understood that community officers need to be around a long time, because you keep chopping and changing them, but you need to have certain skills that, let's be honest, not all officers have." Chair Five, Priory

In fact, at Inspector level and above, the problems were clearly understood. Senior Officer Six acknowledged that continuity had an effect on confidence in its own right, and stated that in the longer term, he'd like to see neighbourhood roles set at a minimum of five years. Another officer said that the high turnover of officers was one the biggest complaints he heard at borough-wide chairs' meetings. He himself had been at Borough One for 12 years, which he suspected made him one of the longest serving officers in the borough. However, the rapid turnover of officers in neighbourhood roles was seen as part of the unavoidable character of life in a major metropolitan force:

> "That is a fair comment you know. The thing about neighbourhood policing is it's about knowing your neighbourhood and if you've got that constant change then it's difficult for them officers to get that continuity, as well as the members of the public knowing who their local bobbies are,

you know, so I can completely appreciate that. But that is the beast of the
Met as well; people move around all the time." - Officer Five

In many wards, PCSOs were crucial to continuity and the maintenance of local
knowledge as they had often been working in the same place for a considerable
period of time. Unlike PCs, they were less likely to be transferred, and unless
they had become PCSOs in order to ultimately join the police (Cosgrove, 2011;
De Camargo, 2019), they were likely to remain in their post. One long-serving
PCSO with ten years on the job was described as the "fountain of knowledge" for
her ward. PCSOs could offer a level of visibility, familiarity and continuity
central to the philosophy of neighbourhood policing which could otherwise have
been lost. This is of course part of the purpose of PCSOs (CoP, 2017d); however,
their role was originally envisaged as one of support for neighbourhood officers,
rather than as taking over the confidence-maintenance role from warranted
officers entirely - a shift that Higgins (2018a) found to be taking place nationally.
However, in other wards, the turnover of PCSOs appeared to be as much of an
issue as that of constables and sergeants.

Ward panels and continuity

Ward panels did not appear to suffer the same issues of continuity, despite the
high turnover of neighbourhood officers. In fact, many of the panels appeared to
operate effectively (meeting regularly and setting priorities) regardless of the
length of time that officers had been in place. The resilience of the panels seemed
to rest on their having developed (as noted in previous chapters), a certain
amount of autonomy and self-direction, and their connection to wider community
networks.

The panels acted as sites for the development of 'linking capital' (Szreter and Woolcock, 2004) between residents and authorities, as the last chapter explored. Local knowledge of community safety issues such as disorder was not confined to residents or to police officers, but was held across a network of actors, each of whom could act as a repository of local knowledge when turnover of police officers was high. Chapel Hill offered a particularly good example of how this could work. Here, Chair Four in Chapel Hill locates the continuities of the panel as central to a long-term problem-solving approach:

> "I mean, the fact is that, you know, yeah, we do address things, and if people do complain, you know, somebody will go and see them or the police will go and see them in plain clothes or whatever it is, or our [council officer] will go and talk to them. So, you know, I think that's probably the continuities of the existence of the panel, community knowledge, there is such a thing as the panel and that things do get addressed and eventually do get salami'd away." - Chair Four, Chapel Hill

As elsewhere, the turnover of officers was high in Chapel Hill. However, counterbalancing this was the continuous presence since the inception of the panel of Chair Four and other attendees. As noted in Chapter Five, most of the ward panels I observed brought in participants from organisations beyond the police, particularly the local council. Councillors in Borough One are elected for four-year periods, meaning that their presence could in itself offer some continuity. In many wards, local council officers also attended, many of whom had been in post far longer than either the police officers or the local councillors.

For example, Council Officer One's association with Chapel Hill began in 2002, when her own children were at the local nursery school and she asked to be transferred to the ward. That long-term association with the area allowed Council Officer One to develop a deep knowledge of local issues and local residents that actively contributed to the maintenance of local order:

> "What helps with this role as well because I've worked in [Chapel Hill] for so many years, it makes it a lot easier, in the sense that I've got my contacts there. I've known the children from when they were growing up. I can still recognise like today I go to the police station, I just looked at the image, say that's [person], they say 'we've all been struggling for weeks trying to say that'. Because I'm around them, I see them all the time." - Council Officer One, Chapel Hill

Chapel Hill had one more dedicated ward officer than was the norm in Borough One. This extra resource was due to the nature of the ward and its particular crime and disorder. Unusually, members of the response team also regularly attended meetings, as noted in the last chapter, rather than just the DWOs. All of this contributed to the Chapel Hill panel being a particularly strong 'connector' - but also to its ability to maintain some continuity even when there was rapid turnover of DWOs:

> "What we had with my predecessor before is that I worked alongside him, and when we knew he was going, I worked very closely with him. That's knowing all the nominals, all the houses, where the problem areas are, getting to know [Chair Four], council members, you know, and I've built very close relationships along with that. And it's the same with my

successor. I've tried to do exactly the same thing to build up continuity, and not everyone has that." - Officer Seven

The value of long service as a chair varied among respondents. For many, the Chair represented continuity and effectively personified the panel. Officer Two, for example, said of Chairs: "That's the only consistency". However, for others, long service could present dangers to the core purposes of the panels and needed to be taken on a case by case basis. A long-standing chair who spent little time talking to the wider community could lose touch with collective concerns and start using the panel and the contacts with the police to address their individual concerns. A police officer with a particularly strong relationship with their chair could end up prioritising their interpretation.

Others also thought that there was a risk that some officers could bypass the hard work of getting to know an area, by seeking only the approval of local chairs. Some felt this power was potentially dangerous in that some long-term chairs could build relationships with officers in which neither was subject to any real challenge - similar to fears about the evolving relationship between PCCs and Chief Constables (Lister, 2013). Board Member One, with extensive experience with ward panels, was particularly wary of the dangers of relationships becoming too close, as was Councillor Seven:

> "In some instances, I've seen the police officers have got a very strong relationship with their chair and as a consequence they are maybe not on the ball on some of the issues that the community see as a priority." - Councillor Seven

This could have dangerous ramifications for police legitimacy, if the priorities and promises were then determined largely through negotiation with the chair alone. This was, again a particular risk given the pressure on resources and the lack of time the small teams had to reach out beyond the panels. Of course, networks of local knowledge are prey to the same risks as individuals. The 'institutional memory' of ward panels is in particular danger if Chairs leave and knowledge is not passed on through deputies or the wider network. Nevertheless, the ward panel system appeared to have the capacity to support neighbourhood policing in ways that ordinary public meetings called by officers might not.

The experience of Borough One therefore suggests that volunteers and partners can share the weight of building community security - though as the last chapter suggested, they may need police support to build the networks that allow such resilience. This suggests that familiarity, accessibility, and familiarity cannot be replaced in neighbourhood policing, but can perhaps be co-produced, with the responsibility for holding the knowledge and the networks shared among many rather than held only by increasingly thinly spread local officers. The next section contextualises this by taking a broader look at what reassurance meant to participants, and how continuity and familiarity in particular helped shape officers' occupational identities as neighbourhood police.

Reassurance as a style

This chapter has so far discussed the symbolic importance of a visible police presence; and the way this signalled order and safety and a social bond between the police and the public. It has also explored the value of a kind of policing that is long-term and embedded in the local area. This section explores how visibility,

accessibility, continuity and familiarity contributed to officers' occupational identity as neighbourhood officers and how this in turn affected how they dealt with tension between police expertise and community direction. This is important in the context of looking at how the police can demonstrate shared values and priorities with residents.

This section then examines the extent to which Borough One was able to maintain a 'total' or 'reassurance style' of policing - its own neighbourhood policing identity - and what limited its capacity to do so, and what this tells us about how neighbourhood policing contributed to confidence and legitimacy.

Reassurance as an occupational identity

Continuity in neighbourhood roles affected the way that officers thought about their occupational identity and the values associated with it. The pressure of austerity has forced police forces to question their core purpose, and to strip away activities that seem peripheral to that, while largely attempting to preserve 'front-line' activity (Millie, 2014). Higgins (2018a) found that many forces had 'repurposed' neighbourhood policing, de-prioritising its confidence-maintenance functions and focusing instead on the "harm prevention mission" (p.31). However, he found this was less the case in London than elsewhere, and that was reflected in officers' attitudes in Borough One.

One early trial of neighbourhood policing in the 1980s was believed to have failed largely because of internal rebellion among officers themselves (Irving et al, 1989); officers resisted the community policing philosophy and regarded these roles as low-status. This fits with other early literature on community policing

that records significant cultural resistance to community policing (Myhill, 2006). However, Bullock and Leeney (2013) found that their participants had a strong commitment to the job, and by the time of Higgins' (2018a) study, one of the identified problems of neighbourhood policing nationally was that it was so beneficial for officers' promotion prospects that many officers would enthusiastically take it up for a year or so before moving on.

The officers in this study were broadly positive in their accounts of their role, and there was little evidence of the negative attitudes found in earlier research. However, there was evidence of adaptations of some of the distinctive features of police occupational culture identified by Reiner (2000) and Loftus (2010). For example, Loftus (2009) notes that an exaggerated sense of mission towards the police role has traditionally formed part of police occupational culture. Gasper and Davies (2010) found their neighbourhood officers to be drawing on traditional 'action man' identities to underline their contribution to communities. Like Loftus' participants, those in Borough One were fiercely proud of what they did. However, unlike those in Gasper and Davies' study, in Borough One, officers took joy in the minutiae of the neighbourhood role, feeling that the work was both distinctive and meaningful:

> "I thoroughly enjoy going to those meetings from poo on the floor to drug dealers, drug dealing and all that sort of stuff, which I think it's just amazing, to be honest with you. People can come there and they will be listened. If they want to be heard they will be listened." - Officer Seven, Chapel Hill

Those residents interviewed for this study - Chairs and panel members - were very aware of the distinction between response and neighbourhood officers, and of organisational changes that might not have been noticed by less engaged residents. The changes instigated by the Local Policing Model had made the boundaries between response and neighbourhood policing more porous. Neighbourhood Policing Teams now encompassed both local officers dedicated to the ward, and those who could be abstracted across the borough. The intention was that the new model would allow more flexible deployments. In practice, the role of these non-dedicated officers was somewhat ambiguous. Only in one ward, Chapel Hill, did I observe the wider NPT take part in ward panel meetings. Elsewhere, they were largely invisible to residents. As one respondent put it, response teams put out the fires, and the ashes were left for the NPT. "The NPT is basically doing a kind of amphibious job, basically. Just an amphibian." - Officer Six, Mountjoy

By contrast, the role of the DWOs was about connections. Relationship-building was seen as central, and it broached the 'separateness' of the police by involving them in the ordinary life of the ward. This was regarded as the bedrock of the trust and confidence that neighbourhood work was intended to build.

> "We're there in the good times. We're there to build up a rapport with people during the good times so that when something does go wrong they're comfortable enough to speak with us." - PCSO Two, Fleetwood

Following Reiner (1978) and Loftus (2009), there were differences in individual orientations, with some officers, particularly those who had served on response

("kicking down doors at four in the morning"), finding the community work notably different from their previous roles:

> "I'd been response team, crime, surveillance, you name it, I'd done it. It wasn't a career move I fancied, but when I landed it, it looked good for my final few years in the policing service. So I thought, hang on a minute, this could be really good. I've sort of really enjoyed dealing with communities and being the face of the police." - Officer Three, Fleetwood.

Despite this, certain types of neighbourhoods were presented as more interesting places to work than others. The more attractive neighbourhoods were the more deprived ones as they were likely to deal with what police officers considered to be genuine and 'valid' concerns, rather than low level disorder that even neighbourhood officers struggled to see as police business. Davies and Thomas (2008) discuss the way that community policing was reframed by officers to fit into traditional ideas of what 'real policing' looked like; though Higgins (2018a, p.59) found that, as neighbourhood policing had developed, it was increasingly identified as 'real' police work. In Borough One, the notion of 'real policing' emerged as one that could definitely be encompassed within neighbourhood policing work; but involved dealing with crime and disorder rather than simply responding to people's subjective fears:

> "[Officer Twelve] once said to me, 'You're lucky in [Priory], because officers want to go there, because it's real policing,' as opposed to [Fleetwood], which is … paraphrase; stuck up people thinking they're the world's most deprived." - Chair Five, Priory

This is important in the context of neighbourhood policing given that its original philosophy was rooted deeply in responding to these subjective assessments. However, a close examination of Borough One shows that this philosophy was still embedded in the way that respondents thought about neighbourhood work.

Signal crimes

Both Reassurance and Neighbourhood Policing rested on the insights of the signal crimes perspective: certain crimes seen as important in one area may not be seen in the same way by residents in another: for example, graffiti might barely register in a deprived area, but in an affluent area its "high dissonance" may mean it acts as an indicator for other problems (Innes and Fielding, 2002, para 5.6). Police, therefore, should try to find ways of determining the signals that influence the way particular communities construct their sense of security (their "fear triggers") in order to effectively reassure them (ibid, paras 8.6-8.7). These 'signal crimes' can then be countered by 'control signals' that demonstrate to the public that these particular concerns are being addressed.

It was clear that different crimes affected communities in Borough One in different ways. In Priory, where many residents lived on former council estates, residents' concerns were often related to the density of living circumstances. Officers reported that residents were particularly concerned with domestic-related disorder - whether domestic abuse overheard by neighbours, or disputes between neighbours themselves. In Mandeville, a very wealthy ward, houses were often detached, and had space and high fences or hedges between them, and were sometimes gated or set back from the road. The crimes that sent the strongest 'insecurity' signals here appeared to be those that directly affected respondents'

sense of personal safety. A handful of high-profile muggings and robberies had spread significant fear, despite overall crime levels remaining very low:

> "Women would be parked, getting their children out to take them to school, and be mugged, and it wasn't quite like the Bronx, but we'd never had this kind of stuff before, and the frequency, the increasing frequency with which I was getting emails on which this crime was happening, was very worrying." - Chair Three, Mandeville

Some low-level signs of disorder also seemed to be of greater concern in Mandeville and its neighbouring wards than in those that were more deprived - the 'dissonance' that Innes describes (2004b). For example, in Mandeville, the Chair's definition of anti-social behaviour included the presence of beggars and the homeless. Moore (2008) found that the punitive tendencies of middle-class residents towards the homeless over-rode the more lenient instincts of local officers. Officers in Borough One had a much more complex take on these concerns than panel members, acknowledging that this was a local concern, but also that they felt unable to move on beggars for various reasons, including the futility of doing so, and the belief that the local council saw this as a welfare issue rather than one of community safety. Here, the values of panel members were in conflict with those of a partner organisation to which the police assigned a greater right to determine the values by which the police should exercise their discretion.

The limits of reassurance

The pressure of resource limitations had two main consequences for this style of policing. Firstly, it practically limited the ability of officers to respond to the kind of quality of life issues that neighbourhood policing was designed to deal with. Secondly, it forced officers to prioritise demands and to strip back activities viewed as peripheral to its core purpose. This led to some difficult decisions as to what that core purpose was, and the relative weight that should be given to residents' subjective assessments of their own security - which formed a central plank of the original idea of reassurance.

One officer, for example, drew a distinction between crimes that happened behind closed doors and those that were public and visible. From this perspective, residents were unable to judge the relative seriousness of crime and disorder because they were only aware of certain types of crime and disorder. Police, by contrast, had a privileged perspective and saw the full range of crime. This allowed them to make more informed judgements of the relative seriousness of incidents, while the general public remained only partially aware and thus only concerned with fairly minor issues (from a police perspective) which took place in the public arena:

> "If you were to stop everybody in the street in [Chapel Hill] and say,
> "What are the things you would most like to see changing, you know, sort
> of community safety aspects in [Chapel Hill]?" people would say, "Dog
> poo and people cycling on the pavement." - Chair Four, Chapel Hill

Some officers felt that the role of neighbourhood officers was to deal with precisely these kinds of issues. For many officers the philosophy of

neighbourhood policing entailed that every problem in the ward was of interest to the police, even if it wasn't ultimately their responsibility to resolve it:

> "If it's not a crime, per se, it's antisocial behaviour, but it does need to be followed up, because you can't just ignore it because that's not the whole idea of neighbourhood policing, which is we don't ignore anything." - Officer Nine, Brookgate

Other attendees of meetings such as council officials generally had sympathy for the position of police in dealing with 'quality of life' issues and having to make judgements about risk and harm that did not necessarily tally with those of residents, especially given increased constraint on resources. Some reported being faced with similar dilemmas to those described by police.[12] Several Chairs tried to get the panel to act as filters for some of these issues, determining what concerns counted as appropriate to bring to the police. This could work in several ways: firstly, by making sure that representatives of other agencies were present at the panel meetings, and could pick up on issues that were raised that could be more appropriately dealt with elsewhere (for example, by the council). Secondly, the panel meetings themselves acted as forums where the relative weight of issues was

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[12] One housing officer recounted a story of a complaint about a highly aggressive local cat (named after a fictional television 'hard man'), which was terrorising other local cats, and the expectation of residents that the council would deal with it:
> "I got this really serious email about a gentleman explaining to me that this other cat in the area called [Hard Man], so we still joke about it, is terrorising all the cats in the area. Cats is terrorising cats … so what do they expect me to do with these cats. See you are laughing. We were killing ourselves laughing. That was a very long, serious email. [Council Officer One], you've got to help, this [Hard Man] is attacking my cat." - Council Officer One

Admirably, the housing officers took the complaint sufficiently seriously that they spoke to the owner regarding the aggression. It was not clear whether the issue was ever resolved.

measured and judged, and priorities chosen. Finally, the Chairs themselves had the power to give different issues a different relative weight, for example, by determining where they should be placed on the agenda. This latter strategy was not always successful in limiting the airing of what Chairs regarded as 'trivial' issues:

> "Somebody came to one of our meetings about a year ago and said, "Oh, God, it's horrible over at [Priory] Vale" and I thought, "That's strange," because I'd been asking people. I have a few contacts. [So, we put it first on the agenda], when it came to community response to the police and I was thinking, "Oh, my God. How come I've missed this?" and it was five-year-old kids playing football, kicking them up against the wall." - Chair Five, Priory

This could be seen as a process of incorporation such as Barnes, Newman and Sullivan (2004, p.276) identified, whereby citizens heavily engaged in participatory forums are drawn into the organisation's discourses and practices. Sometimes, this could lead to a dominant chair insisting on priorities that did not reflect local concerns. Drawing from the last chapter, it may be that this is part of the process of negotiating a common understanding of what the community values: not everyone can have their concerns made a priority. However, if confidence and legitimacy rests on the negotiation and the demonstration of shared values, a desire on the part of the chair to filter out resident concerns, for whatever reasons, has potentially damaging consequences.

Police officers generally identified strongly and positively with the neighbourhood role. London may be unusual in this respect, in that the style of neighbourhood policing under the Met has remained so close to the original

philosophy by contrast to other police forces (Higgins, 2018a). However, the experience of Borough One does suggest that the total philosophy of policing espoused by the early proponents of Reassurance Policing was one that had traction at ground level, and retains continued value as a framework for neighbourhood work that builds confidence and legitimacy in the police.

Discussion and conclusion

Visible policing had a symbolic value as a signal of order, safety, and a bond between the police and the public. Officers sometimes ascribed this to nostalgia, perhaps for a vision of Britain (and of policing) that may never have really existed. This may be a way of casting the demands of the public - which cannot always be met - as unrealistic and rooted in fantasy. The failure of the police to live up to this ideal image is then a failure of the public, not of the police themselves. By contrast, officers offered a more professional, 'realistic' understanding of how the world 'really' works.

Residents interviewed for this study, however, did not see their demands as nostalgic. Rather, they described wanting to see the police better integrated with the community, rather than existing distantly or separately. There was a strong desire for this visible, symbolic presence, not to deter criminals; but rather to give active reassurance that the 'grain of life' was secure. Girling, Loader and Sparks (2000, p.124) describe this as a desire for a figure who is "integrated into the social life of local communities, and thus able to exercise pastoral care over it". Visible policing of this sort was a 'control signal' of order and safety. There was no sense that changes in demand towards more 'hidden harms', as reported by senior police officers, had affected residents' desire for visible policing:

respondents wanted to see the police, and be known by them, in order to understand their community as safe and ordered. It thus seems unlikely that 'educating' residents about 'real' risk and harm, as suggested by some senior officers, will change the way that confidence is constructed and maintained.

There was some evidence of changing demand. Findings that suggest an insatiable desire for foot patrol often go together with a demand for the general regulation of young people found by Girling, Loader and Sparks (2000) in Macclesfield. However, this was less the case in Borough One. This might be as a result of the particular characteristics of the area where the research took place. Areas with a higher population of young people also had more serious crime and disorder issues that perhaps took priority in respondents' concerns. It might also reflect general changes in crime and disorder, such as the fall in 'volume crime' since the 1990s that includes highly visible 'outside' crime such as vandalism (ONS, 2018). However, as noted above, this did not seem to have altered respondents' belief that visible policing was needed to keep them feeling safe and secure. Crime and disorder may be changing, but these changes may not be having as much of an effect on the mechanisms of confidence as senior officers might hope.

The accessibility and familiarity of officers was also seen both in practical and symbolic terms. In practical terms, the accessibility of officers allowed the development of trust and relationships, particularly between Chairs and DWOs. As noted in the last chapter, this could have a 'multiplier' effect, especially in the more open, 'connector' panels, where the panels were at the centre of organisational and local networks. The practical benefits of local police stations

were also clear, particularly in terms how far officers had to travel. Unless decisions on which stations to retain are set by local demand (and there is no indication that this is the case), this means that some wards experience much less visible policing than others simply because of their location. Accessibility also had symbolic value: the presence of a station contributed to the local identity that the ward panels supported; made respondents feel secure; and their closure appeared to magnify respondents' local sense of risk. Decisions around where to locate police stations may therefore have important effects on local confidence, an area that is relatively neglected in the literature.

Familiarity also fed into officers' understanding of local order; a complex web of knowledge of spaces and people (Wood et al, 2014). High turnover of officers in Borough One and London as a whole threatened this. Again, there was a symbolic, affective element to this as well as the practical problem of local knowledge being lost; those residents most engaged with policing bonded with their local officers. High turnover was experienced as a loss not simply of an authority figure, but of an important and central member of the community. Given the limited numbers involved in ward panels, it is not clear to what extent high turnover would affect the wider community; again, it might be interesting to explore to what extent continuity in post affects local confidence as a whole.

These mechanisms of confidence were therefore under threat from both expected and unexpected sources. The predictable sources of threat were related to the reduction in resources, which has affected neighbourhood policing nationally (Higgins, 2018a). London has retained much of its original structure (ibid), but the numbers of DWOs in each ward has reduced. This loss of dedicated resource

has inevitably reduced the capacity for officers to patrol in a visible and accessible manner. However, visible, accessible and familiar policing is also threatened by some less obvious sources. These include elements entirely out of police control, such as the local architecture, which can limit the extent to which patrolling is visible; to unforeseen consequences of internal police decisions, such as station closures marginalising areas that become distant from remaining bases; or the increased status of neighbourhood work meaning that officers find it easier to be promoted away from such work.

There is, however, some support for the traditional mechanisms of neighbourhood work. A particular form of neighbourhood policing in London been supported by political decisions; in particular, the decision to retain a universal focus with DWOs in every ward. This contrasts with a move towards more targeted neighbourhood policing in many other forces (Higgins, 2008a). This universalism has allowed the retention of local connections and local knowledge, even if these are now considerably stretched. The other source of support for these mechanisms is the ward panels themselves. These actively helped to raise police visibility and accessibility, particularly in areas with no local police station. They also contributed to the continuity of local knowledge. By linking their networks with the neighbourhood officers, the panels were able to mitigate the lack of sustained familiarity caused by high turnover.

However, reliance on the autonomy of the panels could bring its own dangers. As Chapter One insists, values conflict - and this could happen between residents or between police and residents. The danger of giving autonomous ward panels control over their own recruitment was mentioned in the last chapter. Relying on

them for networks of local knowledge brings similar dangers of who chooses those networks and who filters that knowledge. If confidence (as Chapter One suggests) rests on a police ability to understand and reflect the values of the community, officers need to be alive to the risks that some residents may present themselves as more equal than others.

However, that is not to say that priorities should therefore be imposed by police. The experience of Borough One again shows that the pressure of austerity and changing demand is contributing to senior officers in particular prioritising 'hidden' harms and vulnerability, and devaluing locally expressed fears as being based on a lack of understanding. This was not the case for all officers - indeed, there was a clear internalisation of neighbourhood policing 'values' among officers working on the ground - but even among these officers, the preference of police culture(s) for work that reflected police-generated assessments of risk and harm was present. This means that priorities set by local officers in order to avoid the filtering effect of a dominant panel or chair risk being just as inaccurate a reflection of local concerns, and thus just as dangerous to the negotiation of police legitimacy.

Priorities and values remain locally contingent. The way that the signal crime perspective still retained resonance in Borough One is testament to this: what mattered in Mandeville was very different to what mattered in Brookgate or Priory. Confidence can be supported by visible, accessible and familiar policing, but, as the early trials established, these mechanisms cannot work alone. They must be supported by the kind of engagement and problem-solving that allows

local values and priorities to be established and negotiated with police. It is to problems, and solving them, that this thesis turns next.

Chapter Seven - Problems and solving them

Introduction

This chapter examines the third of the mechanisms outlined in Chapter Three, that of problem-solving. Problem-solving in neighbourhood policing has been defined as "action that prevents a specific type of crime or disorder in a specific place. [It] aims to ensure that fewer crimes occur, and that the problem does not reappear." (Ashby and Chainey, 2012). Collaborative problem-solving was considered to be a crucial element in neighbourhood policing (ACPO, 2006), but it was an area in which both the early trials (Quinton and Morris, 2008a) and later inspections (HMIC, 2008) pinpointed weaknesses. Many failures in problem-solving have revolved around poor implementation and a lack of systematic analysis, as well as problems being defined very broadly (Bullock and Tilley, 2009). Other areas of difficulty include managing the expectations of the public; an area that has not always been specifically considered in the context of problem-solving's contribution to confidence and legitimacy. This is particularly important given the importance of the demonstration of shared values in building trust and confidence, as outlined in Chapter One.

The chapter begins by exploring how problem-solving as a process was undertaken in Borough One, the role of the public in that, and the barriers. Collaborative partnership-working was an essential aspect of problem-solving in the original vision of neighbourhood policing (ACPO, 2006) and this chapter

explains the role of partnership working in Borough One, identifies three separate routes through which partnership working could take place, and the contribution the ward panels made. Finally, the chapter examines how expectations were managed in the context of problem-solving, and trust between residents and the police maintained - and the tensions that could arise when different weight was given to community versus police expertise in identifying and resolving problems.

There were several important barriers to effective problem-solving in Borough One, in particular a perceived lack of resources. Problem-solving as a process appeared particularly exposed to reductions in resources as it requires a long-term commitment; meaning its contribution to confidence and legitimacy was also highly susceptible to reductions in budgets or changes to political focus. The chapter concludes that a lack of resources not only undermined problem-solving capacity, but exposed pre-existing value differences in a way that made it increasingly difficult to negotiate a common understanding, and in the long term, risked endangering public confidence in the police.

The problem-solving process

The evaluation of the NRPP suggested that targeted problem-solving had a beneficial effect on public confidence (Tuffin, Morris and Poole, 2006). Collaborative problem-solving was integrated into Neighbourhood Policing and described as a critical success factor (ACPO, 2006). However, the evaluations of neighbourhood policing repeatedly flagged problem-solving as a weakness. In particular, partners and community members were rarely trained in problem-

solving processes, and the results of such exercises were not always adequately evaluated or fed back to communities.

Borough One historically had a strong reputation for problem-solving and partnership working, with some of its partnership working having been nationally recognised. However, this was prior to the deep budget cuts to policing and local government after 2010. This section looks at the extent to which problem-solving remained central to the work of the Safer Neighbourhoods Teams and how systematic the process was; the extent that officers involved the public in the process; the strategies officers used to tackle problems; and the barriers they encountered. It concludes that two related issues had a direct effect on problem-solving capacities: values-based disagreements over what counted as a problem and who had the right to determine this; and a lack of financial resources limiting the capacity of officers to undertake problem-solving activities.

Centrality of problem-solving

Officer Seven, like others, saw the job of a police officer as resolving issues that residents could not resolve themselves. This general sense of policing as 'sorting things out' has echoes of Bittner's (1974/2005) definition: responding to "something-that-ought-not-to-be-happening-and-about-which-someone-had-better-do-something-now!" (2005, p.161). 'Problem-solving' was more specific, and a job for neighbourhood officers.

Neighbourhood officers thought response officers regarded residents in an instrumental fashion; as sources of crime, or of information. They did not build relationships in an area or have the occupational capacity to take a long-term

view of problems they encountered. Neighbourhood teams by contrast, were embedded within the community. They saw the flow of information as two-way, and regarded the resolution of issues as something that had to take place with residents rather than separately to them. Many of the 'problems' that were brought to neighbourhood officers' attention were low-level crime or non-crime. In the absence of neighbourhood policing, these sorts of issues were likely to be rejected by response police officers as not within the remit of their jobs:

> "Things that really affect [residents] at a level where maybe the organisation doesn't classify as immediate response. But it does grate upon the individual who is having to report the youth continuously standing in the doorway of the community store smoking cannabis, being intimidating and that sort of stuff. That's where we come in." Officer Nine, Brookgate

However, there was little explicit mention of systematic approaches. Problem-solving was one of the identified weaknesses of the pilots of both NRPP and NP (Quinton and Morris, 2008a). This was consistent with other studies that found that the establishment and maintenance of systematic problem-solving mechanisms was difficult. The principles of problem solving - including an expectation of integral partnership working (HMIC, 2008) - were evident in officers' activities. However, few officers referred to these elements by name,[13] and some indicated that they had never been formally trained in problem-solving as it applied to neighbourhood work:

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[13] The interview schedule did not include a specific question on problem-solving models

"I've got a good idea, I can talk to people, I can listen to people, I can

come up with some potential solutions, but no-one's ever said to me,

here's a box of tools, this is how you sort out A, B, C and D." - Officer

Three, Fleetwood

Several officers in this study had passed through the graduate training scheme,

Police Now, where they had been taught problem-solving models such as SARA.

However, these were the exception. The absence of regular training in running

ward panels and problem-solving within neighbourhood work was a concern for

Officer Twenty-Eight, who oversaw the ward panels, and was exacerbated by the

high turnover of neighbourhood officers and the limited police resources

available to administer the ward panel system. This reflects early findings that

forces had few processes in place for training partners and community members

in problem-solving processes (HMIC, 2008).

Involving the public

Early neighbourhood policing guidance underlined the importance of involving

the public in problem-solving at every stage: "Collaborative problem solving

where the community is involved in problem definition, analysis and delivery of

solutions." (ACPO, 2006, p.13). In Borough One, residents were central in

bringing 'problems' to police attention. The historical strengths of Borough One's

problem-solving capacity may have influenced the extent to which public

involvement was embedded in police activities even when, as observed above,

few officers were able to refer to specific models. For example, in Brookgate,

officers regularly undertook Environmental Visual Audits (EVAs) with local

council officers, 'scanning' for potential issues (the first element in the SARA

model). This might involve spotting problems obviously within of the remit of the police, such as antisocial behaviour; but also concerns that were less obvious, such as street sleeping or poor lighting. Officer Six explained that many issues raised at ward panels were already on officers' radar:

> "Normally you know what the problems are before you even get there, because there would have been letters coming in, speaking to people in the community." - Officer Six, Mountjoy

Crime mapping and statistics were used to negotiate with panel members about what problems existed and where, and what should therefore be the priority of the local team. Barker (2016) commented on the way that crime mapping can be used at different stages of an engagement continuum; from an 'information tool' to something that can empower the public to participate. In some wards, crime maps appeared to be used purely as a means to inform panel members of what the police were already doing. In others, crime maps were used to illustrate and engage panel members in understanding a problem and deciding what the police ought to be doing about it (though the latter was very much police-guided). However, in line with Barker's findings and those of Quinton (2011), there was little evidence of panel members using crime maps to hold the police to account.

Panel meetings were valued as a means of identifying low-level problems that officers might not have otherwise flagged as issues for residents. In this way, they gave value and status to community knowledge. Officer Six noted that without this intensive engagement with local residents, officers would assume that community concerns mirrored their own:

"I think a ward panel kind of holds the police accountable, in a way, because it's all well and good I say, "Right, these are, you know, what we think are the problems of the community," but that's from my point of view, because I'm looking at crime figures. Well, what about other issues that may be affecting the community that I don't necessarily know about, or that I don't feel are that important? Like, when I was at [Borough Five], one of the issues there was 'wanton and furious riding on the pavement'. I can assure you the police didn't think that was the community's problem." - Officer Six, Mountjoy

For residents interviewed for this study, panels allowed them to bring issues to officers' attention and have them discussed, rather than rejected as non-problems; and for officers, they made it easier to assess whether a problem was one that affected many residents or was an individual complaint. In this way, the panels allowed concerns that posed minimal 'objective' risk to be reconstituted as collective security issues to which the police could then legitimately dedicate resources. On the other hand, a failure by a resident to make the case that their concern was a collective one could mean their issue was invalidated. Here, for example, Officer Three describes how the police pushed back against one individual who wanted an ASB issue prioritised:

"I basically said look, you're saying it's a problem, but we've got no phone calls in the last year to the police complaining about it and the council haven't got any records of any people complaining about noise, so why is it a problem. It's not a problem." - Officer Three, Fleetwood

At other times, the meetings were much more discursive, and the designation of 'problems' co-produced between officers and residents. In Mandeville, Officer Four spoke warmly of panel members' willingness to negotiate over the relative importance of particular problems, and to come to the table with suggested strategies to solve problems, regardless of whether they had originally been brought to the panel's attention by residents or the police:

> "We can come to them with things that we believe or they might not have known before, and try and get … to work out a plan between us." - Officer Four, Mandeville

Problem-solving was also regarded as a way that residents could participate in 'policing' their own neighbourhoods. Chair Four noted that, for residents, having their concerns acknowledged was important to build trust in the police. Problems needed to be acknowledged and addressed, even if they couldn't, ultimately, be entirely resolved:

> "People are hopefully more confident that policing does take place, that their concerns do get registered, that there are places they can go to talk about their concerns, and that, you know, the police will address it." - Chair Four, Chapel Hill

Solving problems

Officers had become adept at coming up with creative, low-resource responses to problems. Officer Six described ongoing complaints of noise and antisocial behaviour by young people congregating by a local community centre. Resolving the problem centred around regular patrols in concert with partners from the local

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council, which also acted as an opportunity to engage residents and to pinpoint other potential issues that could easily be addressed. These 'quick wins' were seen by Officer Six as beneficial not just in the instrumental sense of resolving the problem, but also as a direct way of building trust and confidence:

> "One of the ways we dealt with that was [PCSO One]'s on his bike and he's there every day. Every day that we're on duty, [PCSO One] goes there just to show face, and then we used to patrol that area with the council wardens … So we're always out and about, and you get to speak to people, you ask them, you know, "How do you feel walking down maybe an alleyway?" and they go, "Yeah, it's alright, but maybe I think, you know, the trees need to be cut a bit." "Oh, okay," then we get in touch with the council and before you know it, the trees are gone and the place is all well-lit." - Officer Six, Mountjoy

Other methods of resolving issues including trying to share resources with neighbouring boroughs, especially if they had capacity unavailable in Borough One. For example, neighbouring Borough Four had much greater freedom to issue Community Protection Notices, aimed at dealing with behaviour seen as "having a detrimental effect, of a persistent or continuing nature, on the quality of life of those in the locality" (Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, s.43(1)(a)). While any "authorised person" can issue a CPN, officers intimated that the Notices were largely issued for areas of antisocial behaviour that fell more in the remit of the local council, such as noise and litter, than for more serious ASB which was dealt with by other legislation. As such, it was an area where police worked closely with local Borough Councils, some of which

were more keen on issuing CPNs than others. These preferences appeared to be related to the political control of the councils concerned, suggesting that differences in the values held by partner agencies were directly affecting the range of options open to the local police - a risk raised by Thacher (2001). The net effect was problems were displaced rather than deterred, moving across borough boundaries. To resolve this, neighbouring ward teams were planning joint police surgeries for residents from both boroughs, and joint uniform and undercover work.

Barriers to problem-solving

The barriers to the problem-solving process fell into two main categories. The first was related to competing values and the second to the lack of available resources. These categories were related: reduced resources exposed differences in values that might not have been as visible under different circumstances.

Differences could arise at various points in the process over who was entitled to determine whether an issue was a problem and how it should be solved. In some areas, such as Mandeville, Chairs were adamant that residents knew what was required to deal with local problems (a visible police presence, regular patrols). Chair Five in Priory, however, felt that residents were entitled to tell police what needed to be done, but not how to do it, and that it was down to the police to determine how a particular issue should be tackled.

> "My view is, the community doesn't have a right to tell the police how to
> do their job. What we tell them is, what the job is … The public don't

mind how you do it, they want their problem sorted out." - Chair Five, Priory

There were also disagreements over the relative weight given to community and police knowledge. The capacity of panels to act as places where residents could have their voices heard could be undermined by the dominance of police expertise. There are consistent findings (Morgan and Maggs, 1984, 1985) that the post-Scarman consultative panels suffered from police dominating the agenda. In Borough One, officers were aware of the risk - and the temptation - to exercise their expertise in a similar way; for example, to use systematic crime analysis to lead panels to decisions they might not have otherwise made:

> "Whilst the panel sets the promises, it can very much be swayed by the police, if we want to. So, the panel come with really very little knowledge of a crime picture and they might have an idea of what they want the police to do, but if you're a sergeant or a PC on a ward ... if you've got something you want to concentrate on, as your team, you can present a crime picture with analysis and hot spots and say how awful a burglary problem is in a certain area ... you can lead it very much by presenting a crime picture to them." - Officer Sixteen, Brookgate

This temptation to 'lead' panels could be exacerbated by frustration that panels did not fully grasp the limitations of police resources, or wanted officers to deal with issues that officers felt were minor (see also Bullock and Leeney, 2013). During one panel meeting I observed, the local PCSO spent a considerable amount of time explaining the officers' shift patterns and the way this meant there was often nobody available within the dedicated team overnight. At the

same meeting, one resident asked if the police could address the excess noise of police sirens and helicopters in the neighbourhood of the local station by warning residents in advance.

In some cases resource limitations prevented the local teams from doing anything to resolve particular problems. In Mandeville, the dedicated officer explained that motor vehicle crime tended to happen overnight - but he was rarely able to work night shifts, and there were no other officers available to mount operations. In Brookgate, a set of patrols promised to help deter drug-dealing had been cancelled due to the abstraction of the officers concerned. In Fleetwood, officers were happy to set up directed patrols in response to resident concerns, but pointed out that they were only three officers and the effectiveness and range of such patrols were therefore limited. The importance to residents and officers of managing expectations and keeping promises is explored further later in the chapter.

Some of these tensions may have roots in the different conceptual foundations of neighbourhood policing versus problem-oriented policing mentioned in Chapter Three. Bullock (2010) argues that neighbourhood policing became the solution to a problem of a poor relationship between policing and the community, whereas problem-oriented policing is focused on the identification of problems that cause harm to a community. A focus on identifying problems that cause harm does not require community engagement, except for instrumental reasons; and Goldstein's (1990) Problem-Oriented Policing model prioritises systematic analysis over community involvement. A focus on building relationships between police and the community requires those relationships to be curated, and encourages the

involvement of the public at every stage of problem-solving. However, a receding political emphasis on confidence in favour of harm-focused approaches may create an environment in which police expertise has the advantage.

This final issue, resource limitations, was a problem for all SNTs and panels. While many teams were able to use creative and low-resource responses to problems, these were not appropriate to all types of problems, and issues around drugs in particular were raised as an area where a lack of resource seriously limited what officers could achieve. In some panels, residents were vocal not just about what concerned them but how these problems should be dealt with, and officers' difficulties arose in managing these expectations and trying to ensure that residents fully understood the limitations of their capacity. Just as originally envisaged (Quinton and Morris, 2008a), many of the issues raised needed partnership work, especially with the local council, to resolve - an aspect explored further in the next section.

Partnership working

As Chapter Two set out, partnership working was actively encouraged by the Labour government in the belief that joint working could improve public service delivery and contribute to developing communities' own capacities (Home Office, 2004a, 2004b). The neighbourhood policing model explicitly encouraged the development of strong partnerships between police and relevant agencies as part of collaborative problem-solving (ACPO, 2006).

This section outlines three broad types of partnership working identifiable in Borough One. The most common was police-instigated; usually with the local council, but also with local businesses and other agencies. Secondly, ward panel

meetings themselves also drove partnership working, through the presence of a range of agencies alongside the police and residents. Finally, panels also drove partnership working outside these meetings, made possible by the autonomy of the panels and the relationships developed over many years.

The ward panel system therefore allowed the development of a more complex network of relationships between residents, police and other agencies than might otherwise have been possible. While police-centred work remained dominant, especially in response to certain types of crime-related problems, the meetings and the panels themselves had taken on considerable responsibility for lower-level, non-crime issues, and in some cases, removed them from police workflows entirely. Partnership working in Borough One still faced significant challenges, however, and was doubly susceptible to resource constraints (on the part of the police, and their partners) - reiterating the overall weaknesses of the problem-solving mechanism under conditions of austerity.

Police-driven partnership work

Police-driven partnership is common: Read and Tilley (2000) found that in just 5% of the problem-solving initiatives in their study were the police the junior partners. The most common partner in Borough One was the local council, a large unitary authority with responsibility for many areas that overlapped with police concerns.

Officers actively worked in partnership with council-funded wardens and patrol officers - what Crawford and Lister (2004) call "public auxiliaries". Borough One Council funded a number of community wardens with whom police worked

closely, and even mounted joint operations, such as the patrols mentioned in the last section. Borough One also funded a number of housing patrol officers who acted as community wardens for areas with large amounts of council housing. The housing patrol officers were also able to patrol late at night and to attend low-level incidents such as anti-social behaviour. Police valued the ability of such officers to provide extra 'guardianship' on the streets (Loader, 1997) and to undertake low level order maintenance, as well as acting as reliable sources of evidence when more serious issues arose:

> "The housing patrol can come knock on the door, can come say to the neighbour look your noise is excessive for this time of the day … they're also an additional resource for evidence, independent witnesses. Because at times we find that residents are too scared to give evidence. But if a patrol officer witnesses it they're duty bound as an officer of the council … which is just far more reliable than using a neighbour." - Council Officer One, Chapel Hill

In some wards, police and council officers also undertook joint visits to residents. The ability of councils (and housing associations) to evict tenants if their behaviour was persistently troublesome was valued, especially in dealing with long-term antisocial behaviour, where the criminal justice system was seen as less effective in resolving issues than the powers of the landlord. One officer described a joint visit to persuade a council tenant that throwing his furniture out of the window was unlikely to get him happily rehoused.

Police testified to speaking to council officers by phone or face to face on at least a weekly basis. The relationships that were described by officers were strong,

though some suggested that this was not the case in every ward. For the most part, however, it appeared that the partnership work for which Borough One had been commended remained a strength:

> "We rely on them really quite a lot, actually, the council. If there's an issue taken place with someone who may need support at the council office, then we're straight on the phone to them. So the lines of communication are always open with them … We're just dealing with something right at the minute, and they're brilliant. We've got two main contacts there, and they're very handy. They're always responding to emails. They pick up the phone for issues." - PCSO Two, Fleetwood

Officers also called on other partners. Local businesses were seen as partners rather than being simply consumers of police services. In Honeycutt, there was a persistent problem with the theft of meat from supermarkets, where entire meat counters were emptied by shoplifters between 9am and 11am when security staff came on duty. Police treated this as a problem that could only be resolved in partnership with the businesses concerned. The Met's 'Design Out Crime' team was working with the businesses to try to find solutions to the problem, and local police officers were also finding ways to work with the shops; for example, by scanning CCTV along with security guards to identify persistent offenders. Other partners mentioned included youth workers, local schools, universities and colleges, and local hospitals, some of which had their own security employees. Like other 'auxiliaries', security guards at hospitals and shops were treated as partners (albeit junior ones) by officers:

"Obviously their knowledge is very valuable to us … they're like our eyes and ears as well." - PCSO Three, Brookgate

Meeting-driven partnership work

Many panels included representatives from partner agencies. How this worked depended upon the structure of the ward panel. In the less open panels, as noted in Chapter Five, attendees often had to be specifically invited. For some panels, such as Brookgate, this was very effective. Officers and the Chair had encouraged a range of partners to attend, like the local 'youth detached worker' who was working with young people on local estates. In others, however, those links had not been established, and officers regretted the absence of other agencies. Respondents from these wards (such as Cowden) explained that the lack of such attendance had limited their capacity to resolve certain types of problems.

In the meetings I observed, however, the presence of other agencies was common. For example, Borough One contains large parts of several London parks. These are policed by a separate constabulary overseen by the City of London and with powers to levy fines under local park bylaws. Parks officers attended relevant ward panel meetings to pick up concerns that fell within their remit, and thus remove them from SNT workloads.

The attendance of council officers was seen as particularly helpful, and in some meetings, there could be attendance from a number of representatives from the council. For example, at the Chapel Hill meeting I observed, there were several councillors, a community safety officer, and local housing wardens present.

When a meeting had these specialist council attendees, much of the work that might otherwise have had to be led by the police could be resolved then and there:

> "Most of it could be cancelled, because they'll come to us about noise or they'll come to us about littering. And we'll say, 'Right, well,' and then we'll have somebody from the council in and then they speak up. And then they'll say, 'Oh I'll address that one, I'll address that one, I'll address that one'. So they could come with 20 problems and 19 could be cancelled." - Officer Nineteen, Priory

The most common and perhaps the most welcomed set of external attendees was councillors; ironic perhaps, given the limits placed on councillor participation. Their status and local knowledge allowed the police to pass on the responsibility for resolving certain types of problems entirely; particularly useful in situations where the responsibility for a given issue wasn't clear. The regular presence of councillors was seen a shortcut to getting things done:

> "The two [councillors] who attend quite often, when they hear of something that falls more in the council remit than police, and I think panel members and the community do get confused as to where the lines are, for that, quite often they'll say, well actually, we can help with this, and they do. And they deliver. And quite often, a few days after the meeting I'll get an email along with the panel and the police: Right, this is what we've done, this is what's happening." - Chair One, Mountjoy and Brookgate

Thus the panel meetings themselves became a form of partnership working in which responsibility for resolving problems was allocated, and the processes for accountability at future panel meetings made clear. This removed certain low-level and non-crime problems from police responsibility entirely in a way that would not have been possible without the meetings; while still allowing residents to raise their concerns and feel heard by the agencies with the capacity to help them. The involvement of partners allowed panels to more easily discuss low-level or non-crime; having councillors and council officers present allowed residents to legitimately raise issues only tangentially related to the police remit As noted earlier, this was one of the reasons that the partnership element of problem-solving had been emphasised during the original rollout of neighbourhood policing (Innes, 2005a). The ward panel system therefore allowed residents greater voice while potentially boosting assessments of the effectiveness of both police and local councils - as Jackson and Bradford (2010) note, people rarely differentiate.

Panel-driven partnership working

The third type of partnership working was driven by the panels themselves outside of the meetings. As noted earlier, Chairs were often central to inviting partners to meetings, and in building relationships. However, some panel chairs also took on problems to resolve themselves, through their own partnership-working capacity. Chapel Hill offers a good example of this.

Like many Chairs, Chair Four was deeply committed to his ward and the panel system, and had chaired the local panel since its inception in 2006. Chapel Hill also benefited from the regular attendance of a local council officer, who had

been a community safety officer for a similar length of time. In Chapel Hill, the Chair also acted as a direct conduit from residents to councillors and council officers, effectively bypassing the police and sometimes the meetings on issues that required a lead from partners:

> "The chair is important because the chair is available all the time, never stops talking, is able to phone up, you know, on first name terms … you know, at least 20 really key council officers. Not to badger them, but just to sort of, if I've got a problem, put it before them and ask for help, if they've got any ideas of how to solve it." - Chair Four, Chapel Hill

Similarly, as noted earlier, Chair Four was able to reach out to local councillors, both to get things done and to put pressure on various officers within the council's myriad structure if issues were not being resolved quickly enough. Participants in Chapel Hill's panel thus felt themselves to be at the centre of an extended network in which the police were only one agency among many, each of which could help to resolve issues, which themselves could be brought to the attention of the panel from a variety of different sources.

These networks, and particularly the value added by having two people at the centre who were very well known in the ward, were highly regarded by police officers. This was partly because of the way that the networks allowed problems to be channelled directly from residents via the panel members to the police:

> "I've got [Chair Four] and [Council Officer One] who are at the Council, who are probably, you would say, the two figureheads in [Chapel Hill] who people go to … So having those two people, and the amount of information they give, because they've been on it for so long, it's

priceless. Because to be honest with you, if I didn't have them, I wouldn't get 90% of the information that I receive. Probably even more, 95%." - Officer Seven

The sheer length of time that the ward panel in Chapel Hill had been constituted with the same chair had contributed to the building of these relationships, coupled with the stability of the area in terms of its inhabitants. Other networks that were connected to the ward panel included the local market's community association, and (as elsewhere) residents' and tenants' associations. The ward panel was viewed as playing a central role in tying the police into these networks:

> "I think … first of all it gives the police the opportunity to know people more … some key reps in the area. It's mostly the same, key reps, in the area of the council. The police have a wider network of community leaders to work with. Also the community leaders can also feed back to their own people and their own estates and say we need to discuss this as a panel." - Council Officer One

Though Chapel Hill was one of the clearest examples of this in action, it was not the only area where such direct relationships had been built. In Mandeville, Chair Three was very proactive in seeking resolutions to problems outside the structure of the panel meetings and was prepared to approach very senior officials; for her, the police were only one of many agencies able to deal with problems that residents raised. Chair Five in Priory, too, was well-known for his relationships and connections within and outside the local community. Where panels had started to take on autonomous roles in problem-solving, this rested on long-term relationships built over several years with long-term partners. As seen in the last

chapter, a lack of continuity among neighbourhood police officers was thereby ameliorated through the autonomous ability of the panels and their chairs to work directly with partners.

The most striking element of partnership work in Borough One was the extent to which the police-initiated structures of the ward panel meetings had, in some cases, created a set of networks and relationships that allowed some low-level or non-crime issues to be removed entirely from the police workflow. Some panels, especially the 'connectors', worked directly with other agencies to deal with problems, at times bypassing the police and the meetings entirely. This reflects the hopes for community empowerment and collective efficacy that formed the heart of the policies upon which neighbourhood policing was built, as outlined in Chapter Two. This phenomenon was not universal in Borough One, however; it rested on long-term relationships built between panel members, partner agencies and police officers. As noted in the last chapter, and by Higgins and Hale (2017), these are the kinds of relationships that can be easily damaged by abstraction of police to other duties or to high turnover, the latter of which is an increasing issue as budget cuts lead to council restructuring as well as reductions in police numbers.

Challenges to partnership working

Partnership work was limited by resource constraints on both sides. Chair Seven, for example, described with some nostalgia the way a former local officer could use his links with the council to address long-term ASB issues on a local estate, a capacity he believed had been lost in recent years. In some areas it was difficult to persuade council officers to attend evening meetings. In others, local council

restructuring had reduced the number of council officers available to pick up on issues that fell within their remit. Council budget cuts also had secondary effects: as funding was cut to housing and social services, this workload increasingly fell to the police, reducing their capacity to deal with other issues:

> "A lot of it is council issues, and I do feel sometimes that police take on a lot of the council issues and a lot of the mental health issues when we shouldn't be." - Officer Seven, Chapel Hill

Officers also spoke of inherent problems in the management of partnership work. There came a point at which police officers no longer had ownership of non-crime problems as they had been passed to partners - yet residents still expected police to be accountable for the problems' resolution. Brunger (2011, p.113) found that the dominance of the police at PACT meetings in Northern Ireland meant that "security solutions" were offered for minor issues of disorder, and wondered if partnership policing was really being constructed or whether the police were simply "'owning' more issues". Officers in Borough One acknowledged that partnership work often left officers holding the responsibility for ultimate outcomes:

> "You get a new report of something, you will naturally research it, patrol it, do what you can and then you quite quickly get to the point where you've done all you can do and you're passing it on to another agency perhaps, and that's then when the ball tends to stop rolling, and then you're kind of left with this problem of, "Oh, I've done everything I can and I'm not getting any assistance from anywhere else." The residents

think the police aren't doing anything, even though we've actually done

everything that we can do." - Officer Two, Fleetwood

There were also dangers attached both to effective partnership working and to the autonomous capacity. Inviting a wider range of issues to be raised might be beneficial to confidence; but only if partners, and the police, are able to resolve those problems. Moreover, the autonomous work of the panels was based on relationships that were not subject to any real accountability, and as noted in Chapter Five, the panel members and chairs rarely held any wider democratic legitimacy. It was not always clear, therefore, who took the ultimate responsibility for the outcomes of issues raised through the ward panel system where resolution was not the job of the police, and who might be held accountable if issues were not resolved. Managing these public expectations is the subject of the next section.

Expectations and demand

Despite the embedded nature of partnership working in Borough One, and the semi-autonomous nature of some of the ward panels, the responsibility for resolving problems remained largely with the police - and responsibility for crime-related issues always fell to officers. Residents had different expectations of the police, both in terms of police powers (what the police are allowed to do) and of police capacity (what they are able to do), and these were not always accurate. There was also a notable variation in expectations of the police in different areas.

Meeting these expectations - or, when this was not possible, managing them - was a recurrent theme in interviews with officers. Respondents felt strongly that

keeping the promises made to residents was crucial to building and maintaining trust and confidence, and that these could be damaged if promises were broken. Panels were seen as one way of keeping the police accountable to residents.

However, demand and resources put extra pressure on tensions that already existed between the police and the public. The most obvious of these was the differing interpretations, mentioned elsewhere, of risk and harm. Police often had different perceptions of danger to residents, and this in turn exposed fractures over how to allocate scarce resources, and the relative value of communities determining their own security versus the worth of police expertise. These can be seen as fundamental differences in values: for example, of interpretations of distributional justice; or of participatory democratic values versus the value of expertise. Pressure on resources thus exposed and exacerbated pre-existing tensions, particularly regarding the ownership of security, and the benefits (and constraints) of local determination of policing priorities. These resource constraints also highlight the weaknesses of problem-solving as a mechanism for neighbourhood policing to build and maintain public confidence in policing under conditions of austerity.

Promises, accountability and trust

The model of promises and priorities set through the ward panels was intended to ensure that police were accountable to residents for problem-solving. While priorities could be broad (such as 'car crime'), promises were actions that officers could report back to their panels, demonstrating achievements, and offering immediate accountability. Officers underlined the importance to them of keeping the promises they had made to residents and the value of building trust between

residents and police. Officer One in Mountjoy - a graduate from the Police Now programme - was explicit that problem-solving and keeping promises to residents was linked directly to confidence in the police and policing by consent:

> "I think it's so important because obviously we don't police by enforcement in the UK, we police by consent, and therefore to have that consent and so much of what we do revolves around co-operation from the public, for them to tell us what's happening, and they need to have the confidence that if they tell us, we'll do something about it." - Officer One, Mountjoy

The fear of damaging relationships with local residents was reflected by events. Chair Three in Mandeville spoke of the damage caused to residents' trust in the police due to a failure of senior officers to keep promises they had made not to sell a local police station. One former chair in Mountjoy was said (by several respondents) to have lost so much trust in the police as an institution due to this and to the changes to the Safer Neighbourhood Team structure that meetings ground to a halt, and the panel itself had needed to be reconstituted.

However, the capacity to keep promises was limited by outside constraints. The danger of local priorities being 'trumped' by competing performance measures to which forces had to answer was identified by Herrington and Millie (2006). In Brookgate ward, as mentioned earlier, one of the major problems was drug dealing - for the panel members, something that went well beyond anti-social behaviour, but which they felt it had been difficult to get the police to prioritise. At the time of fieldwork, the Mayor's Office for Police and Crime (MOPAC) had seven priorities, known as the MOPAC Seven, which drove Borough-level and

London-wide priorities; these did not include drug-dealing. This was a source of considerable frustration in panel meetings:

> "With this ward, this ward at the moment everyone's got a particular bee in their bonnet about drugs, drugs, drugs, drugs, drugs, to a point where normally we set three promises to our ward, but in my last ward panel meeting, the only issue anyone at that table wanted to talk about was drugs. So, we could only really get one promise out of that and we were at a point where we were saying, "Is there anything else anyone wants us to make as a promise?" and, no, all they wanted to talk about was drugs." - Officer Seventeen

Despite this preoccupation, officers found themselves unable to tackle the problem, given their limited team numbers, without extra resources from elsewhere. However, because drugs were not a priority under the MOPAC Seven, not only could no extra resources be found, but the means that local officers did have at their disposal were being actively limited:

> "The community are setting, for example, drugs problems in the [local area], want to see results, will be holding the sergeant to account about what has been achieved, when in contrast the Met and the commissioner are saying, "You will reduce the number of drug searches. Drugs are not a priority. We have other priorities." So, you have a real conflict and there's no recognition, particularly, of this huge conflict." - Officer Sixteen, Brookgate

The knowledge that broken promises could damage confidence in the police as a whole led officers to actively try to manage what commitments they made to

residents. While officers tried to be open with residents about the limitations of

the dedicated ward team, this fought with an equally strong desire to be able to

respond to citizens' needs, and to avoid suggesting that the police could no longer

respond to crime. Officer Six in Mountjoy argued that residents needed to be

brought to understand the limitations of police capacity, and the time that officers

could spend in the ward; that the team was under intense pressure, and that they

could not always fulfil residents' expectations:

> "It's not something that anyone would want to hear as a citizen, that we
>
> can't deal with your problems because there aren't enough of us. So we
>
> try and not make promises we can't keep, but also be realistic about how
>
> things are going to be responded to. Something I learnt very quickly is
>
> never make promises that you don't actually know whether you're going
>
> to be able to fulfil." - Officer One, Mountjoy

Officer Ten, with oversight responsibilities, suggested that many neighbourhood

teams got this balance wrong, offering to resolve issues raised by residents that

the small neighbourhood team was simply unable to deal with:

> "They always fall into this trap of setting promises that are too big.
>
> Prostitution around [Kendall Ward]. You know, that is a massive piece of
>
> work. And in the end, they end up with the same promise month after
>
> month after month after month after month, and they can't really show
>
> any progress. What it should be is, there's one prostitute, we know who
>
> she is. She's homeless, she's drug dependent and she's basically at the
>
> bottom of the social pile. We promise to target her and sort her out. And

get her into housing, employment, or whatever, and bring some partners

in." - Officer Ten

Expectations

This mismatch between what residents might want officers to achieve in relation to problems and what they could actually do was common. In general, police officers felt the public believed them to be much more powerful than they actually were. As Officer One in Mountjoy said, "They think that the police exist, this is a problem, they should deal with it." One officer mentioned a resident's desire to see the police 'stake out' an area of persistent dog poo.

A recurrent set of issues was neighbour disputes and noise. One officer gave the example of being phoned by a resident complaining that her upstairs neighbour was watering her plants too carelessly and the water was falling onto her balcony. More seriously, at least for the residents concerned, were noise complaints. Residents often expected that police would be able to take action on excessive noise. In fact, noise complaints involve complex assessments of what is 'reasonable', and are largely the responsibility of the council's Environmental Health Team. Officers regularly had to explain the limitations of police powers to residents expecting a forceful and immediate response.

Another disparity in expectations was over the extent to which foot patrol could prevent and deter crime. Concerns were raised by some officers that panel members had expectations about the benefits of foot patrol that were unlikely to be met. This came to particular prominence in discussions about the desire of Chair Four in Mandeville to crowd-source funding for extra local policing. Chair Four felt strongly that the visible presence of the police had a demonstrable effect

on crime levels. Officers, however, though sometimes supportive (one expressed the sentiment that more police officers were always better than fewer), were concerned that expectations of those officers would not reflect their capacity to prevent and deter crime, and that the police would be held accountable:

> "What's the guarantee that that cop will be on that corner when that lady got violently robbed of her jewellery, we can't guarantee it. There are structures in place for policing 24/7 and patrolling. It would increase the chance of that person being caught but you couldn't guarantee it. All it would need for her to suddenly say, we've crowd sourced these six PCs, and they weren't there. The system's a failure." - Officer Three, Fleetwood

This particular example also highlighted the variability within Borough One - and London as a whole - in terms of expectations. Officer Ten had worked in other boroughs, and believed that higher levels of crime in places like Borough Eleven, as well as different historical relationships between the police and local communities, led to entirely different expectations of the police. In some ways, he felt, Borough Eleven residents were much less likely to take police to task over victimisation than in Borough One:

> "In [Borough Eleven] - and, I mean, this is not my view - but I'd definitely pick up the feeling that they expected a lot less from the cops. Almost as if, well, we live in [Borough Eleven]. We know that sooner or later we're going to encounter criminality, i.e., we're going to get burgled or we're going to find some problems walking back from the station, or

someone we know is going to be harmed. Because we live in [Borough Eleven]." - Officer Ten

This could also mean a different idea of 'fairness'. Jackson et al (2019) found that neighbourhoods differed in the strength of the social norm to co-operate with the police, and that questions of legitimacy only really had salience in those neighbourhoods where the norm to co-operate was weak. This is perhaps reflected in the reported differences between Borough One, a borough with very wealthy areas in which co-operation with the police appeared high, and Borough Eleven, where the relationship between the police and the public had historically been much more fraught. Officer Ten argued that in Borough Eleven, priorities were less about the effectiveness of local policing in terms of reducing crime, and much more about the procedural and distributive fairness of what police officers were doing:

> "They wouldn't care where we were going to send our cops or, really, what the local priorities were, as long as they were fair and just, almost, you know. Because we ended up with things like, as ward priorities, we had prostitution, vehicle crime, antisocial behaviour. All the sort of usual stuff. But whenever we were talking about the efforts we'd made, it was about, you know, what ethnicity are the prostitutes? What ethnicity are the punters?" - Officer Ten

Gasper and Davies (2010) found that participants in PACT meetings in disadvantaged communities were more concerned for distributive justice than procedural. However, there was no clear distinction by levels of disadvantage in Borough One. If anything, the more wealthy wards were more openly concerned

to see resources 'fairly' distributed. Fairness, in this case, was ensuring the 'universal' distribution of police resources, rather than seeing them withdrawn from wealthier areas to target areas of higher crime:

> "I'm not trying to detract from the terrible crime that happens anywhere else, but they have policing that deals with those. We have crime up here too, and we need to address the crime that is here." - Chair Three, Mandeville

Risk and harm

Officers often believed that residents were too concerned about issues that had little effect on their safety, and not concerned enough about serious threats. This affected the way that officers dealt with the problems that panel members raised. The disparity was sometimes attributed to a disproportionate fear of crime, or of consequences for reporting crime - for example, one officer spoke of struggling to understand a resident's concern that there might be reprisals for anonymously reporting the presence of drug dealers. Even for officers most sympathetic to residents' concerns, there was a tension between this and their wider knowledge of crime across Borough One. This appeared inherent to the nature of police work, where the sheer exposure to a wide range of problems of varying levels of seriousness seemed to affect officers' perceptions of risk and harm:

> "You know, we see all kinds of things every day. After a while, you know, the extraordinary becomes ordinary and we get a bit of, like, compassion fatigue, so if you live next to a nightmare who is, you know, banging doors and making noise and making life a misery, to you that's the biggest

thing in the world, but to me, who's investigating all the crimes and, like, you know, bits of people that jump under trains as well as all the cool stuff, it's like, "This isn't really a big deal, you know, in the grand scheme of things." - Officer Four, Mandeville

Another example of these different perceptions of danger came in a story told by one officer about a convicted paedophile who had been released into the community. Local residents knew the offender, and had been promised a warning of his release, but this had not been forthcoming. A public meeting was called to discuss the issue and the breakdown in communication. Officer Ten explained that despite this, some residents refused to attend the meeting because of the danger they perceived in the release of the offender, a danger that Officer Ten - who was sympathetic to their fears - still found hard to comprehend:

"Before the meeting, people were emailing saying … we're not going to come because we're afraid to leave our children. Even with a babysitter. Because we know there's a paedophile on our street. And you think, he's not going to break into your house and club the babysitter over the head and carry your children away." - Officer Ten

This tension was particularly felt by those at the rank of Sergeant and above, who felt responsible for managing it. Dedicated Ward Officers (PCs and PCSOs) largely felt responsible to the community to which they were assigned; for sergeants and inspectors, there was a need to consider more than one ward, and the demands of response as well as of neighbourhoods. This wider perspective led to some frustration on occasion with the very local understanding of security that the ward-based neighbourhood policing system in London encouraged:

"Where is the risk of harm to our communities? Where's the risk of violence and injury and all that sort of thing? You have to have a bit of an honest conversation. "Our risk, I'm afraid, is in this estate" and you have to point to a crime picture and talk people out of saying, "Yes, we're patrolling your area, because you've turned up to a panel meeting and we're going to listen to you." We're not necessarily going to do that." - Officer Sixteen, Brookgate

Neighbourhood policing in its early incarnation acted as a counterweight to police 'expertise' and the weight of their privileged knowledge of crime and disorder, by attempting to accord a higher value to the subjective experiences of local communities. This had its own problems, outlined in earlier chapters. However, more recently, the focus on hidden harms and vulnerability prioritises police-led assessments of risk and harm as objective and 'real' by contrast to community-driven issues. This assessment is then bolstered by the requirement to reassess the distribution of police resources under the pressure of shrinking budgets. Austerity, by forcing police to re-examine their core purposes, reveals differences that were much less stark in times of plenty. Moreover, these value differences mean it is impossible for the police to *a priori* determine a way of allocating resources that would be interpreted as fair by every community. As noted earlier, London has retained a universal ethos of neighbourhood policing (Higgins, 2018a), including universal engagement and problem-solving. One of the dangers for those forces that have shifted to a more targeted approach is that they may no longer have a mechanism for determining when communities feel that policing is unfair - with all the dangers for public confidence that implies.

Discussion and conclusions

Problem-solving activity was regarded as unique to neighbourhood policing, partly because of the extent of public involvement needed, and partly because of this long-term commitment required on the part of officers. This is different to visibility, or even community engagement, both of which could in theory be undertaken by other officers. Indeed, Giacomantonio et al (2015) showed how mounted units could contribute to visibility and confidence. However likeable horses may be, they are poor at problem-solving.

Problem-solving was embedded in neighbourhood policing in Borough One. Despite this, there was little evidence of systematic processes in operation - a finding that was also common in the early years of neighbourhood policing (HMIC, 2008). However, elements of a problem-oriented policing approach were evident in officers' activities. For example, neighbourhood officers actively 'scanned' for issues, and attempted to distinguish 'problems' affecting communities from individual issues that residents might raise. Officers also took a long-term and partnership-focused route to solving these.

Problem-solving contributed to confidence and legitimacy in several different ways. The practice and processes of problem-solving were valued in their own right, regardless of whether the problems themselves were resolved. Problem-solving was seen by participants as a way that residents could be given a voice, to be heard by the agencies that could help them, and to some extent to allow them to co-produce their own security. Resolving problems was also beneficial to confidence and legitimacy; not just for instrumental reasons of demonstrating police effectiveness, but also because this represented the police keeping

promises to residents, thus building relationships, and ultimately trust. The involvement of partners enabled this 'voice' to be extended to low-level and non-crime problems, and put residents directly in touch with representatives of agencies that could resolve their issues.

However, because problem-solving was so tied to neighbourhood work, it appeared uniquely fragile. Effective problem-solving required the involvement of the community, and a long-term commitment. These in turn were dependent upon local knowledge and continuity. Many activities needed to resolve problems required a greater investment of time and resource than the local teams could provide - but this was dependent on organisational priorities.

The involvement of partners, crucial to resolving many problems that residents raised, required relationships to be built, and for officers to be available for meetings. Higgins and Hales (2017) noted how partnership working could be undermined by abstraction, making police less reliable as partners, and damaging relationships. In this, the SNT system had an advantage in that DWOs were largely safe from abstraction for other duties. However, their limited numbers meant that individual officers were carrying a significant burden. The ward panel system provided resilience in this sense; the meetings were set and regular, a police officer had to attend, and the panel offered a fall-back for communication and liaison.

The ward panel system was also an integral part of the way that problem-solving contributed to confidence and legitimacy. Not only did panels facilitate the process of co-producing solutions to problems, they could and did help co-produce a definition of what a solvable problem might be, negotiating the

boundaries of what it was reasonable to expect the police to achieve. The meetings were unsurprisingly a locus for the identification of problems, and the place where officers and residents could negotiate what 'counted' as a problem, and even how a problem might be resolved. But it was in partnership working that the panels offered the most notable benefits. Partner agencies routinely attended panels and took on many low-level or non-crime issues. Though there were some issues with police retaining ultimate responsibility for these problems, it undoubtedly reduced direct demand on the neighbourhood teams.

Even more striking than this, however, was the capacity of some panels to undertake problem-solving work autonomously, outside the meetings themselves. Partner agencies worked directly with panel members and Chairs to resolve some problems that were reported by residents to panel members rather than the police. This essentially triaged problems and diverted them from even arising at the meetings themselves. Not every panel had this autonomous capacity, but where it existed, it clearly demonstrated the potential for ward panels to not only support the problem-solving capacity of the police but to begin to boost the collective efficacy of the wider community.

However, this autonomy was not unproblematic. There was only limited accountability regarding problems dealt with outside the panels and bypassing the police, while partnership work in general could see the police left with ultimate responsibility for problems that they had no power to resolve. This endless demand contributed to the several linked value-based tensions that were observable in problem-solving in Borough One.

The first of these was the identification of what counted as a problem, how serious it was, and what the police might be able to do in response. Residents interviewed for this study had high expectations of the police, and some problems that were reported to the police had no relation to crime. Rather, they seemed to rest on respondents' sense of the correct order of things (Loader, 2006) and their belief that the police existed to restore and maintain that order. The level of order that the police were expected to maintain, however, appeared to vary, perhaps reflecting the signal crime thesis (Innes, 2004b) and the level of 'dissonance' that some kinds of problems elicited, as outlined in the last chapter.

These differences in expectations were also related to differences in how fairness and equity were defined. In line with a political realist perspective, we should expect to find sometimes fundamental disagreements about values like this. Some respondents believed that fairness required all wards to have a certain minimum of visible and dedicated policing, regardless of other demands elsewhere in the Borough. An understanding of fairness based on equality of outcome might demand a very different distribution of resources. Similarly, officers reported that in other Boroughs, distributive fairness in terms of the ethnicity of those policed took priority over effectiveness in resolving problems. A police force that failed to distinguish between and respond to these different ideas of fairness might easily damage confidence and legitimacy.

This also flags up another tension, between community co-production of security, and the police urge to manage demand and ration police resources, which in turn rested in part on the value given to police expertise. The higher value set on police knowledge of crime and risk undermined the rationale for public

involvement in problem-solving, and could lead to officers succumbing to the temptation to 'lead' panels to a particular set of problems and priorities that tallied with their own interpretation of risk.

Most DWOs distanced themselves from such temptations, and presented themselves as fully on board with the community-centred ethos of neighbourhood policing. However, this was less the case with sergeants and higher-ranked officers who had to make decisions about resourcing. This has potential ramifications for the longer-term viability of neighbourhood policing, if co-production becomes something valued only at lower ranks. Previous research has shown that neighbourhood policing flourishes only when fully supported by senior officers (Lurigio and Skogan, 1994; Fielding 2009).

Once again, problem-solving is exposed to the pressures of shrinking resources. Ward panels could take on much of the weight of problem-solving for neighbourhood teams; but they cannot operate effectively if they lack commitment and support from the police themselves, which may be increasingly hard to elicit. Neighbourhood policing stands at risk of losing both its necessary resource as well as its 'cultural capital.' Though the new CoP Neighbourhood Policing guidelines (CoP, 2018a) may go some way to redressing this, it is not clear how they will fare in the context of a continued national focus on vulnerability and 'hidden harms.'

Chapter Eight - Discussion

Introduction

The first chapter of this thesis established the importance of public confidence in policing in the UK, and the role of shared values (or the perception of them) in maintaining confidence. It also underlined the dynamic, contested and negotiated nature of police legitimacy. This background suggested that a qualitative examination of neighbourhood policing could assist the understanding of how its processes contributed to building confidence and negotiating legitimacy, and particularly of the role of values in this.

Chapter Two outlined the political context for the development of neighbourhood policing in its original form, and the changes to its practices since 2010. It suggested that the original warrant for neighbourhood policing was based on several related factors, including an acknowledgement that confidence in the police was falling, and that this mattered; and a belief in the value of community participation in directing public services. Subsequent administrations brought a different set of beliefs: that policing was primarily about crime control; that community involvement in policing should be focused on holding the police to account; and that finding efficiencies should be public services' first priority. This is the context within which the fieldwork took place; and this context underlined the fragility of public confidence in policing noted in Chapter One, and the urgent need to understand the effects of austerity on neighbourhood policing.

The third chapter then examined the mechanisms by which neighbourhood policing was expected to maintain and improve confidence. It highlighted a number of areas of particular interest for fieldwork: the role and value of formal meetings between the police and the public; the extent to which social media could multiply or even replace face-to-face community engagement; the continued value of visible policing; the status of familiarity and continuity in modern neighbourhood policing; the capacity of the police to undertake effective problem-solving and partnership work; and the means by which police officers attempted to manage the expectations of the public.

All of this underlined the value of a close examination of how neighbourhood policing works in practice in conditions of austerity. The major focus of this thesis was the ward panel system, and much of the experience of neighbourhood policing, as recounted here, is filtered through them. The embedded case study approach allowed the in-depth examination of a number of wards as sub-cases, reflecting the structure by which neighbourhood policing was organised in Borough One. A case study also offered the opportunity to gain a 'thick,' descriptive understanding (Geertz, 1973) of the 'how' and 'why' of neighbourhood policing in practice (Yin, 2014), and by using wards as embedded cases I was able to compare different experiences of neighbourhood policing and its processes. This also enabled me to discern differences in the way that respondents in each ward approached the negotiation of values - something that would have been much harder to understand through a quantitative approach.

The core research question of the thesis was:

- How does neighbourhood policing, as seen through the operation of ward panels, contribute to confidence in and the legitimacy of the police?

The subsidiary questions were:

- How are the mechanisms of neighbourhood policing - community engagement; visibility, accessibility and familiarity; and problem-solving - seen as contributing towards confidence and legitimacy in Borough One, and what are their weaknesses?

- How do ward panels in particular contribute to neighbourhood policing?

- How are shared values and police legitimacy negotiated through the mechanisms of neighbourhood policing?

This final discussion chapter will take these questions in turn. The first section summarises the findings of the study. In the second section, I look at how shared values were negotiated, how they clashed, and the extent to which these differences were exacerbated and exposed by conditions of austerity. In the third, I discuss the implications of all of this. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the nature and value of confidence and legitimacy in policing, in which I argue that, if confidence still matters to the police, then the warrant for neighbourhood policing in its original form needs to be re-established, in terms of philosophy, policy and practice.

Summary of findings

This section summarises the findings of this research in turn. I begin by describing how I found the mechanisms of neighbourhood policing to work in practice in Borough One. I then turn to the weaknesses of these processes, and break these down into three broad themes: weaknesses related specifically to the ward panel system; those related to police organisational issues (including resources); and those related to the co-production of security. Following this, I explore how ward panels contribute to supporting neighbourhood policing, before summarising the implications of these findings for our understanding of public confidence and police legitimacy.

Mechanisms

- **Community engagement**

The structure of the ward panels, and the tendency for them to become self-sustaining, often led to the development of a distinct community identity. This collective identity seemed to enhance the perceived legitimacy of the decisions which emerged from the panels; so long as certain minimum standards of participation and representativeness had been reached.

Police officers did actively try to engage with the public beyond the meetings. However, other forms of engagement were frequently highly resource-intensive. Panel and public meetings therefore retained their value to officers. As well as the perceived legitimacy of decisions mentioned above, meetings were cheap, predictable, and allowed informal conversations before and after the meetings

themselves. This face-to-face contact facilitated trust and accountability for residents interviewed for this study and for officers.

There appear to be some hopes that social media can replace a universal approach to community engagement (Higgins, 2018a). The findings from Borough One suggest these hopes may be misplaced. Overall, communications work appeared to be under-resourced in practice, yet invested with promise of some future capacity to relieve officers of work. However, as Stanko and Dawson (2016) found with newsletters, social media communication relied upon having community engagement efforts to report upon. Some effective communications work was undertaken by panel members; but this was underpinned by a strong relationship between local officers and the panels. While 'virtual ward panels' could certainly enhance officers' understanding of what issues were of concern to residents as a whole, they were poor at allowing interaction, and carried a risk of undermining the legitimacy of the panels themselves.

- **Visibility**

In Borough One, visible policing was a signal of order and safety, but also that the police were part of the community, embedded in its most ordinary, day to day activities. For officers, especially senior officers with responsibility for the allocation of resources, this symbolism was understood; but the pressure of reduced budgets could lead them to cast public desire for this presence as 'unrealistic'. Reassuring the public that all was safe in their world appeared increasingly invalid as a core purpose of policing under austerity.

Budget cuts had also led to the closure of police stations, which had both direct and indirect effects on visibility. Police stations were regarded as a powerful

symbol of security by residents and their loss was felt strongly. However, there was also a knock-on effect, in that a reduced number of physical bases limited how visible neighbourhood teams could be; in effect changing the status of some wards to peripheral.

The experience of Borough One also suggests that familiarity is a crucial part of the way that local, visible policing contributes to trust and confidence. This had several facets: firstly, a kind of 'public familiarity' that allowed residents interviewed for the study to rely on the presence of a familiar officer and to consider trusting them; secondly, a sense on the part of those engaged with the police that their community identity was being recognised and validated; and thirdly, the ability on the part of officers to competently recognise and police local order. Each of these contributed to the construction of trust and legitimacy. Familiarity and continuity are therefore central to creating and maintaining confidence.

- **Problem-solving**

In Borough One, structured problem-solving processes that might previously have been in place seemed to have eroded. However, problem-solving was still central to the neighbourhood policing model. Public involvement was strong, especially in bringing issues to police attention. The problem-solving process in Borough One contributed to confidence in a number of ways: it helped 'collectivise' issues that panel members had experienced, and by doing so gave both the problems and the meetings validity (as noted above); while the recognition of those problems showed residents that they had 'voice' and that the police and other agencies were taking them seriously. This validity then justified

the dedication of resources to solving the problems, demonstrating both the effectiveness of the police (when problems were resolved), and that community values were shared by officers (even when they were not).

Partnership working was well embedded in Borough One, particularly between the police and the local council. Though this research did not focus primarily on this inter-agency work, it appeared that council officers and police officers largely shared common goals and understood each other's limitations. There were still organisational constraints, however: finding out who was responsible for an issue was sometimes difficult due to the complexity of the council's structures; while budget cuts had led to the reorganisation of several council departments. This disrupted some of the long-term relationships upon which partnership working was built.

In Borough One, managing the expectations of the public was an urgent demand. For officers, the public appetite for police services appeared to be infinite. As many of these hopes simply could not be met, the officers in this study found that negotiating expectations was an active part of their work. Expectations, however, could vary widely, and this highlighted the way that these had to be managed on a locally contingent basis. Negotiating expectations that could be met played a central role in building trust between the police and the public (just as breaking promises could profoundly damage the legitimacy of local officers and 'the police' as a whole). It was not clear that officers had been trained in managing public expectations. Given the centrality of keeping promises to the building of relationships, confidence and legitimacy, an improved and specialised training

focus on neighbourhood policing in general and problem-solving in particular might be a worthwhile future investment for the MPS and other forces.

Weaknesses

The study also exposed the ways in which neighbourhood policing in Borough One was fragile. These are divided into three themes: those related to panels; those related primarily to the police; and those related to the co-production of security.

- ### Weaknesses related to panels

As noted above, many panels had begun to develop a level of autonomy. However, this autonomy could bring problems; such as differences over the importance of representativeness for legitimacy. For police officers, the legitimacy of the decisions made by the panels was based on them reflecting the needs of the wider ward. However, this conception could challenge the sense of collective identity that panels developed. This was in essence a conflict of values, and one I explore further below. Secondly, panels had little democratic legitimacy at any time, being either self-appointed or recruited by police officers. There was therefore little or no recourse should a resident feel that they had been treated unfairly at the panels or their concerns marginalised and ignored - and for the more closed panels, none at all for those not members.

The pressure towards collective determination and consensus could be problematic in its own right. It risked the marginalisation of dissent, and the exclusion of groups and beliefs that lay outside the panel; as Sklansky (2005) warns, no 'community' is homogenous. The dislike of disagreement, and the

related antipathy towards any 'politicisation' of the panels, led to the exclusion of local councillors from the determination of priorities, which on the one hand protected the panels' close relationship to residents as a source of legitimacy, but on the other hand also excluded any critical positioning of panels with regard to questions of values such as justice or power relations. This was not the case everywhere; such questions were reported as a common concern in Borough Eleven. However, in Borough One, politics was anathema within panel discussions, and this limited the contextualisation of problems within broader concerns.

The developing autonomy of panels rested on, and was boosted by, the capacity and competence of the volunteer chairs. However, if the Chair was particularly dominant or the ward panel itself particularly weak, officers could become dependent upon their Chair, and the latter's interpretation of the problems of a ward. This could lead to the officers losing touch with the realities of residents' concerns on the ground, and potential damage to confidence and legitimacy. Even for the more open, 'connector' meetings, the development of autonomy and associated community collective efficacy had potential problems. The meetings were sites where the police could be held accountable to the public; but there is no accountability at all if meetings and the police are bypassed. There is also a risk that, in building close and cohesive community networks, that some local residents are excluded. This is one of the reasons that Tilley (2008) argues for a form of 'weak' community policing, in which the police foster numerous weak ties within and between communities and the police. Ward panels, with their 'representative' nature, might well provide a good basis for this work; but under

conditions of austerity, officers have little discretionary time for this type of work.

- **Weaknesses related to police**

The most common complaint by far from all respondents was of reductions in police numbers as a result of budget cuts. The resultant shift to the 'Local Policing Model' (LPM) in 2013 meant a reduction in the number of officers dedicated to wards from six to two. This had a number of direct consequences. It meant fewer officers able to patrol, to attend events and make 'outreach' visits, to undertake crime prevention work, write emails, and the myriad other work that fell in the remit of neighbourhood officers. Problem-solving capacity was particularly exposed, as it required long-term commitment and often extra resources, both of which were limited under the new system. Added to this was the effect of cuts on key partners such as the council. A lack of resources also directly affected the amount of training and support available, both to officers undertaking neighbourhood roles, and to the panels and Chairs. It also exacerbated problems associated with high turnover; fewer officers dedicated to wards meant that it was much harder to ensure continuity of local knowledge, and put much greater workload pressure on the officers remaining. The direct effects of limited resources thus had a damaging effect on almost every aspect of the mechanisms by which neighbourhood policing worked.

However, the indirect effects were also crucial, as they undermined the rationale for neighbourhood policing. For senior officers, organisational restructures such as the Local Policing Model were intended to allow more flexibility in the deployment of officers at the (acknowledged) cost of local continuity. This

reorganisation did retain an element of universalism in neighbourhood policing unusual elsewhere (Higgins, 2018a). However, these exercises were undertaken in the context of a re-examination of the core priorities of the police, which resulted in the reprioritising of general police work around harm and risk. This was married with a general national understanding (NPCC, 2017) that demand had changed, and that the greatest vulnerabilities now lay around hidden harms rather than visible ones. This undermined the value of subjective understandings of security, the signal crimes perspective, and therefore the motivation to actively engage with the community rather than just broadcast and 'educate' the public on what the police were doing.

- **Weaknesses related to co-production**

The process of determining promises and priorities helped develop this collective, pragmatic and local identity. This involved weighing individual or local concerns, and negotiating with police and with other panel attendees over what counted as an issue that affected the whole ward or a significant part of it. This co-production at best saw a mutual respect between officers and panel attendees; but rested on the capacity of the Chairs and the local officers, and was very dependent, therefore, on individuals.

Partnership working in Borough One appeared to be embedded and effective. However, accountability often remained with the police. As already noted, management of expectations became a major part of the problem-solving process, particularly when officers' capacity were limited by constraints such as resources or competing organisational priorities such as the MOPAC Seven list of London-wide priorities.

However, there were also specific weaknesses in problem-solving processes. Some of these were common in the literature: for example, the involvement of the public was a resource-intensive process; and involvement often dropped off after the initial identification of problems. Others were value-related: disputes over the identification of problems could expose divisions over the relative value of community and police expertise, an issue I explore further below.

A failure to meet expectations could seriously damage trust and confidence. However, these expectations were variable, and officers needed to be embedded within their wards to understand what residents expected of them and what 'fairness' meant to them. What officers, especially senior officers, understood by a 'fair' distribution of police resources could be very different to the understandings of local residents interviewed for the study. This disparity often rested on very different understandings of risk and harm, a value clash to which I return in a later section.

Contribution of ward panels

Ward panel meetings supported neighbourhood policing in several ways; here I discuss the way that panels supported officers' accessibility; giving voice to community concerns; partnership working, and continuity of local knowledge.

- **Accessibility**

Ward panels, especially those that were open to the public, supported officers' accessibility to the public. This was of particular benefit in wards without police stations, where there was otherwise no way for residents to speak to officers face-to-face. The regularity of the meetings allowed officers to become a familiar,

named presence among residents who might not otherwise have encountered them.

When the members of the panel were representatives of wider groups, this ensured a wider range of residents had a route to bring concerns to the police. Bringing people together with the agencies that could help them could build bridging and linking capital (Szreter and Woolcock, 2002) and potentially contribute to the development of collective efficacy.

- **Voice**

The meetings therefore gave attendees a voice in the way that they were policed, and allowed the police to demonstrate their engagement with the issues that concerned people, all of which contribute to confidence and legitimacy. As noted above, the discursive nature of the meetings and the requirement to set priorities also contributed to the development of a collective sense of security and a local identity, which in turn could validate the allocation of police resources to deal with problems.

- **Partnership working**

The meetings - through the presence of other agencies - allowed some of these problems to be taken on by agencies better suited to deal with them. Ward panel meetings were therefore very useful in supporting neighbourhood policing in general ways, and many of the benefits outlined above could also apply to other forms of police-public meetings, underlining the continued potential value of these to the police.

However, where the ward panels really stood out was where they had begun to take on some autonomy. Many of the panels in this study had begun to take on responsibilities beyond those that were originally envisaged, including the responsibility for recruiting new members and ensuring participation. Many panel members (as noted above) considered themselves as conduits between their own networks and the panel; some chairs became a key link between residents and the police. Panels could also take on a significant role in communicating the activities of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams, with Chair Three in particular demonstrating the power of resident-managed social media to link the police to a wider community of interest.

- **Continuity**

While even the most autonomous panels could do little to multiply the visibility of the police, some could contribute significantly to ensuring a level of continuity of local knowledge, an important facet of familiarity. Some panels had built significant networks among the community and acted almost as repositories of local knowledge, able to support neighbourhood police officers with information and connections. This was reported by police as an undoubted benefit of a stable and autonomous ward panel, particularly at times of personnel changes. Finally, the autonomous ward panels could take on some problem-solving work of their own, without recourse to police support and sometimes without needing the panel meetings to mediate. This removed certain issues entirely from police responsibility and workflow.

Values and negotiating legitimacy

One of the merits of a political realist approach to questions of confidence and legitimacy is its focus on the conditions of disagreement under which any discussion of shared values must take place. While, as noted earlier, much of the scholarship on police legitimacy is rooted in the work of realist thinkers such as Beetham (2013), this is not the case with scholarship on democratic policing. Nor is it the case with the development of policing policy, which means that assumptions about democracy tend to go unchallenged. But assumptions about values, and particularly assumptions about the extent to which we share those values, can lead to dangerous situations with regard to police legitimacy; for example, assuming that residents prioritise order over justice, or vice versa.

A realist approach instead encourages a focus on the areas in which we disagree, and in particular, those in which we may be basing our disagreements on moralist ideas about each other's values. Identifying those assumptions lets us step back from them. A political realist approach allows us to identify where police or policy-makers are assuming a 'correct', value-based way for the police to behave, that may not be reflected in residents' own accounts of their values and priorities. The findings of this research have identified a number of areas in which this might be the case.

This section identifies four areas of value conflict drawn from the findings of this research. These are firstly between individual and collective ideas of local security; secondly, between the value of 'representativeness' in participatory fora, and the more self-selecting concept of 'active citizens'; thirdly, between community and police expertise, and fourthly, between different ideas of justice

and fairness. I argue that these tensions in some cases stem from, and in all cases are exacerbated by, the tension between the law enforcement purpose of policing and the need to legitimate it. This brings the discussion of confidence and legitimacy full circle: from the broadest idea that state power must be legitimated; to the very local example of legitimating coercive state power through neighbourhood policing; and finally locating the tensions in this process as a result of its roots in the legitimation of the state's coercive force.

Individual versus collective security

The first tension observable is the that between an individual idea of security, and a collective, negotiated one. Community in policing been described as "the embodiment, or potential embodiment, of collective sentiments" (Johnston, 1997, p.195). There are tensions between this and certain democratic principles: the demand, on the one hand, that democratic policing should be accessible to all, and everyone should be entitled to ask for it (Marenin, 1998); also expressed by Loader and Walker's (2007) idea of 'recognition' that all citizens should be seen as full members of society. On the other hand, the demand for 'public reason' (ibid) necessitates some forum in which this deliberation can take place and a collectivity to which choices can be assigned. Jones, Newburn and Smith (1996) suggest that the sustenance of democratic values such as delivery of service, information and redress are reliant on the establishment of highly localised fora. However, the discussion and selection of priorities at such fora encourages the development of a collective sense of security, and a localised group identity - which by its nature has exclusionary potential.

The experience of Borough One reflects this in the way that individual concerns could be invalidated and rejected by the police as legitimate issues. Yet at the same time, one of the key virtues of the panels was the extent to which residents were given voice and were heard by the police. The process of the panels often saw individual issues reframed to become incorporated as 'problems' that affected a wider section of the ward; to some extent reconciling these tensions. However, at other times, the tension remained unresolved. This was clearest on the rare occasions where open dissent was visible: the panels and the police appeared to come together to reject concerns that were believed to be based on an agenda that was not collective; and it was this 'agenda' that drove the vehemence of the response rather than the objective validity of the concern raised.

Thus even in the pressure for consensus, fundamental value disagreements and tensions can be discerned. This is not an obviously reconcilable issue: voice contributes to legitimacy, but the practicalities of neighbourhood policing mean that not all concerns can be responded to, and not all problems can be resolved. As with almost all the value conflicts outlined here, this issue is exacerbated by resource constraints that limit the amount of issues that can be dealt with, making disagreements over choices more likely.

Representativeness versus 'active citizens'

A related issue is the tension between community self-definition and representativeness in participative fora. Representativeness within a policing forum has consequences for the equitable allocation of police services (Jones, Newburn and Smith, 1996), as well as the idea that the police should be 'responsive' to the widest range of citizens (ibid). This tension over who should

determine participation has been highlighted in particular by Barnes et al (2003), who show how 'the public' are constituted by public sector officials in ways that can exclude.

In Borough One, the police were notably more concerned for issues of representativeness and participation than panel members themselves, though Chairs did raise the value of having a range of voices. As Chapter Two discussed, the later New Labour years saw a focus on 'active citizens' - a tacit recognition perhaps that participation is not appealing to everyone. For police officers, representativeness was crucial for legitimacy, and there was a real fear that unrepresentative panels could delegitimise the decisions made there and endanger confidence in policing.

This particular tension also has practical ramifications, discussed earlier in the chapter; bypassing the panels to ascertain a wider range of opinion risked delegitimising them. Officers therefore had to manage these tensions, encouraging more and wider participation without undermining the validity of the existing panels. Again, this is a tension inherent in the determination of local priorities; well-recognised in the literature, as outlined in Chapter Three, and one which cannot be completely resolved. Not everyone wants to participate, and as Arendt (1963) has argued, 'freedom from politics' is also a democratic value. However, managing the recruitment of panel members is difficult to justify as an operational priority for officers unless legitimacy is imminently endangered, and this again was exacerbated by the limited numbers of DWOs.

Community versus police expertise

The third tension this research highlights is that between community determinations of security and police expertise, and particularly the differences in assessments of risk and harm. The premise of reassurance and subsequently neighbourhood policing was that any attempt to increase public confidence in the police had to be based on recognising that security was locally (and individually) subjective. This signal crimes perspective encouraged neighbourhood police officers to understand and grant validity to the subjective understandings of local communities about what constituted threat or harm, and to deal with these issues regardless of the objective risk that their professional expertise might consider them to pose.

However, there was a clear competing pressure, exacerbated by resource limitations, with police expertise and the urge to 'objectively' define risk and harm. This can also be seen on a national level, with the increasing prominence of an agenda based around vulnerability and harm. A recent NPCC paper, *Better Understanding Demand – Policing the Future*, for example speaks of risk, threat, harm and vulnerability as the service's new "performance narrative" (NPCC, 2017, p.3). The incorporation into police practices of 'evidence-based policing', and the development of tools such as the Cambridge Crime Harm Index (Sherman, Neyroud and Neyroud, 2016) can also be seen as a way of validating and legitimising a particular kind of knowledge in policing (Norman and Williams, 2017) which stands in tension not only with traditional ways of 'knowing' as police officers, but with the subjectivity upon which neighbourhood policing is based. Thus many of the developments of modern policing, under the pressures of austerity, are in direct conflict with the community-based philosophy

upon which neighbourhood policing was based, and which was identified as underpinning public confidence in the police.

Justice and fairness

The final tension I wish to emphasise is that between different conceptions of justice and fairness. Manning (2010), for example, bases his outline of democratic policing principles on a Rawlsian theory of justice, one which deliberately excludes the sociological realities of individuals' socially and culturally embedded existences, and assumes a particular mode of rationality. Under this, inequalities are only permissible if they are to the greatest benefit to the least advantaged members of an imagined society (the difference principle) (Rawls, 1999). However, there are other interpretations of justice, and dissent in these first principles can manifest itself in different beliefs about fair ways of allocating police resources.

This tension manifested itself in several different ways in Borough One. Firstly, there were clear differences, related to the objective versus subjective definitions of risk and harm mentioned above, over the distribution of police resources. Officers, particularly those more senior, defined fairness as the distribution of police resources to the areas with the highest levels of crime and disorder, and tended to minimise the concerns of residents in areas with lower levels of risk. Residents in these areas, however, demanded the universal provision of a minimum level of police resources, on the basis that every locality was entitled - by their subjective definition of fairness - to the maintenance of existing levels of security and the reassuring presence of the public police. These two competing definitions could be broadly resolved with a generous allocation of

neighbourhood policing resources, but were increasingly irreconcilable under conditions of austerity.

Another reported difference was in how principles of justice should affect the focus of police attention and the distribution of resources on lines of ethnicity. Residents in Borough Eleven were reported as having very different priorities in terms of the justice and fairness of police work than those in Borough One. In the latter, residents wanted to hear that their local officers had addressed their local problems, and the identity of those being policed was of little interest. In Borough Eleven, the ethnicity of those being policed was reported as central to residents' sense that the police were acting fairly. Legitimacy in Borough Eleven might require the police to reflect these concerns in a way that was not demanded of them in Borough One. In Borough Eleven, therefore, a Rawlsian approach might fail to recognise the importance of identity to judgements of justice and fairness.

The identification of different interpretations of fairness is not something that can be done at force level. Nor do many conceptions of democratic policing contribute, particularly, to reconciling these issues. Indeed, as outlined in Chapter One, some interpretations would exclude certain understandings of fairness (and presumably those who hold them) as morally wrong. A political realist perspective, however, underlines the inevitability of such disagreements, and allows an understanding of 'democratic' policing as one where the meanings of ideas such as justice can be negotiated more locally. This is crucial if, as the literature argues, confidence in policing rests on the demonstration that community values are shared by police.

Competing purposes

Many of these conflicts have something in common. They are based on, or exacerbated by, the tension between the law enforcement purpose of policing, and the equally strong need to legitimate that coercive force. As Chapter One explored, confidence and legitimacy in the police is not based on the effectiveness of police in enforcing the law - though that plays a part - but on the ability of the police to demonstrate that they are doing so in broad moral alignment with the communities they serve. This is always a conflict: policing by consensus is never complete; there is always someone being policed (Reiner, 2010).

But this is exposed and exacerbated in conditions of austerity because of the requirement, imposed by reduced police numbers, to refine policing to its 'core' purposes and activities. The risk is that what remains is coercion with no legitimation. This can, perhaps, be seen in contemporary debates over the role of 'Stop and Search' in tackling the spike in knife crime (Deuchar, Miller and Densley, 2019). Austerity therefore has direct practical ramifications for the principles by which police resources are allocated, as well as the amount of those resources available, a question I return to in the next section.

Implications

Community engagement

The findings of this research suggest that attempts to shut down formal engagement mechanisms in favour of reaching out beyond them risk throwing out the proverbial baby with the bathwater. Despite their weaknesses, formal

meetings offer neighbourhood policing a reliable, accountable forum in which residents and police can build one-to-one relationships and trust. Reaching out beyond meetings - for example, to groups which are unlikely to attend them - seems a sensible approach. Abandoning formal meetings entirely cuts off the clearest route to community engagement, and makes the police less accessible, less familiar, and potentially less trustworthy.

Communication and the use of social media can enhance police community engagement work, and has great potential to do so if properly supported and resourced. However, technology cannot replace face-to-face interaction. Moves to use email and social media alone to provide a 'presence,' without a base in face-to-face engagement, are likely to risk damaging confidence and undermining any residual relationships with residents, as the value of their contribution is undermined.

Visibility

The symbolic value of visible and accessible policing cannot be easily replaced. The long-term outcome of police station closures on confidence is poorly understood; however, if there are indirect effects on the visibility of officers, confidence in these areas may be particularly fragile.

The continued importance of familiarity means that local policing structures that, for reasons of efficiency, loosen or remove these very local bonds, are likely undermining one of the key ways that confidence is constructed. Geographical bonds - local 'beats' - are important and need to be preserved if neighbourhood policing is to support confidence effectively. Moreover, high turnover in

neighbourhood roles needs to be considered as a structural problem in need of resolution, rather than an inevitable part of the life of big-city policing.

Problem-solving

Embedding some kind of formal problem-solving process such as public meetings in neighbourhood policing seems vital. As noted above, other forms of community engagement are possible; but few alternative methods of involving the community in problem-solving processes have been suggested. The face-to-face police-public meeting, in whatever shape, appears to be a crucial element in the contribution that problem-solving can make to confidence.

The panel system was very supportive of partnership working; the presence of agencies such as the council at meetings meant that some jobs could be handed over immediately, while Chairs and panels in several cases built autonomous networks which included council officers and other agencies, allowing low-level and non-crime issues to be passed on directly, and relieving police of responsibility entirely. The panels also facilitated a relationship with councillors that might have otherwise been harder to construct, due to the antipathy of officers to the 'politicisation' of their work. This signals once again the usefulness of a formal system of police-public meetings. It also underlines the value of long-term relationships and the importance of ring-fencing the work of neighbourhood officers to allow them to be reliable contributors to these relationships.

General implications

The political context of austerity has direct effects on the legitimation of the police. A governing philosophy that priorities the values of participation, community involvement and 'soft' policing has substantively different outcomes to one that instead prioritises formal accountability and efficiency and believes that the policing mission is too wide. The post-austerity landscape is full of political commitments to neighbourhood policing; but without the anchoring of a political philosophy that prioritises its working mechanisms, 'neighbourhood policing' risks becoming a label that loses all real meaning, and works simply as a legitimation of existing practices that no longer support confidence at all.

The dangers have been recognised by HMICFRS. Successive reports (2017, 2018) have highlighted the parlous state of neighbourhood policing in many forces and have prompted the new Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines prepared by the College of Policing (CoP, 2018a). As outlined in Chapter Two, the new guidelines attempt to retain the core practices of neighbourhood policing while recognising the unavoidable pressures that austerity has imposed. However, there is a clear if subtle shift within the guidelines to recognising existing practice and the changes that neighbourhood policing has already undergone; a greater emphasis on targeted over universal work, and a concomitant reprioritisation in which public confidence is no longer the central purpose of neighbourhood policing, but merely one of several.

All of the processes of neighbourhood policing were endangered both by resource limitations and the changes to police priorities that this had encouraged. The move away from confidence as a priority for the police, and towards vulnerability and risk, is one that is difficult to counter. Expanding police

numbers and New Labour's policy priorities protected forces from some of these choices for many years. However, public confidence in the police is not based on 'objective' renderings of risk, but on expressive concerns about social cohesion, local order, and the belief that the police share a moral alignment and community values. As resource constraints tempt senior officers to prioritise police-centred assessments of risk and harm and to legitimise policing on the basis of effectiveness, there is a serious risk that confidence in policing will be increasingly undermined.

The practical implications of this are as follows. If confidence matters, and this itself is a political decision, then the original mechanisms of neighbourhood policing have to be supported, and require investment and resources. This has to include a commitment at national and force level to some element of universalism, and the acknowledgement that reassurance and community engagement are valid and necessary activities. It also requires a reiteration of the principles of community participation in policing to underpin the above.

One way of multiplying the effects of the above, particularly given that rebuilding neighbourhood policing will be a long-term project at best, might be to encourage autonomous volunteer-based public networks along the lines of the ward panel system in London. This has the advantage of flexibility to different local needs. However, this firstly needs to be supported by geographically-based neighbourhood policing structures to enable long-term relationships and partnerships to be built; and secondly, needs a systematic training programme which includes an understanding of the potential tensions and pitfalls of such a system and how officers might negotiate these.

Neighbourhood policing cannot simply be a label that reflects convenient force-level practices in local policing, and which focuses on harm and vulnerability. It must be a genuinely local system that supports the mechanisms of community engagement, visibility and problem-solving, and allows the local negotiation and resolution of the inevitable value-based conflicts inherent in community participation in policing.

Conclusion

Confidence and legitimacy in practice

This study contributes to the discussion on confidence and legitimacy in three ways. It shows that judgements of procedural fairness, and thus legitimacy, are locally and situationally contingent; it suggests that the mechanisms of confidence embedded in the Neighbourhood Policing Programme in 2005 remain valid, but the exact content of neighbourhood policing activity must, again, be locally determined; and it underlines the complexity both of modern society and of police culture, and the importance of this heterogeneity to understanding the processes of moral alignment between the police and the public upon which legitimacy and confidence appear to rest.

The procedural justice scholarship led by Tyler (2004, 2006) argues that judgements of police legitimacy are based on how the public assesses the fairness with which the police act. Scholars such as Tankebe have challenged the audience-based nature of some of these models, and argued that assessments of legitimacy are dialogic and contingent. Thus Tankebe (2013) maintains that in a liberal democracy, normative expectations will include distributive fairness,

procedural fairness, and effectiveness. This has the benefit of allowing effectiveness to be included as a value in itself - a belief in the role of the police - and also for cultural variability. More importantly for this thesis, Bottoms and Tankebe insist on the reciprocal nature of legitimacy in which power-holders' claims to legitimacy are affected by audiences' responses. Radburn and Stott (2018) go further: they insist that legitimacy is also situationally contingent; assessments of legitimacy can change in the course of a single public order event.

This research has focused on just one area in which claims to legitimacy are made, but it is perhaps one of the most important. As Chapter Two explained, the roots of community policing lie in the need to legitimise the coercive, law enforcement element of policing. Neighbourhood policing is therefore one of the most important areas through which to study the processes of legitimacy and confidence in the police, and there are very few studies which have explicitly done so. This study has also shown that the value of 'fairness' is itself locally contingent - it is not sufficient to consider distributive or procedural justice as antecedent to legitimacy without concern as to the content of those values.

Legitimacy may be both an outcome and an antecedent of confidence. If we consider confidence as institutional, motive-based trust, then again, the idea of shared values is central. There is evidence to suggest that confidence is based on expressive rather than instrumental concerns (Jackson and Bradford, 2009): that is, policing is assessed as a social institution that gives meaning to social life, reinforces a sense of social cohesion, and defends the norm-based social order. This has consequences for the activities that may improve public confidence in the police, but also for how we determine them. If social cohesion and local order

are central to confidence, then activities such as high-visibility foot patrol, community engagement and collaborative problem-solving are all likely to contribute. Again, however, the content of this activity needs to be locally determined.

The experience of Borough One has reinforced the importance of a locally contingent understanding of the factors that can improve confidence. This thesis has demonstrated the local variability of residents' concerns and the priorities that they had, as well as their different understanding of what fairness might look like. The norm-based social order looked different in different wards, even within a single London borough. The consequences of this understanding are that it is not sufficient for neighbourhood policing simply to proceed according to a predetermined set of principles - to "consistently get the right things done" (Higgins, 2018b) and assume that confidence will follow. Processes to work with residents to determine the 'right things' must be in place. Moreover, this work must be continual; legitimacy is contextual and situationally contingent. This study also suggests that the processes that were embedded in Neighbourhood Policing at its 2005 launch are still valid, and valued, notwithstanding changes to demand.

Finally, there is a need to reincorporate what we know about the complexity of both society and the police into our understandings of confidence and legitimacy. Radburn and Stott (2018) argue that the police need to be regarded as having a separate group identity rather than being regarded as representing, unproblematically, a political community to which citizens belong, and to which police treatment of them signal their level of belonging. In fact, neither the

political community nor the police are that homogenous. If the Brexit vote has underlined the extent to which we are, in the UK, more than one political tribe, so too have recent debates over police professionalism underlined our understanding of the police as having more than one culture. Legitimacy and confidence both appear to rest on a belief on the part of citizens that the police share their values: residents want to know that the police are doing the right things for the right reason. But what are the right things?

This research has shown that the police carry their own set of values and beliefs, which often differs from those of residents, and which in turn is rooted in the particular and conflicting purposes of policing. However, it has also shown that police occupational culture is heterogeneous and that even within a single BCU, values can change according to role - and immediate responsibility for dealing with the pressure of resources. Resource-based pressures affect confidence in policing in a multitude of ways, both practical and in terms of organisational support. This latter is perhaps the more invidious and difficult to challenge without an understanding of the importance of values in driving police policy and practice.

Limitations of study

There are a number of limitations to this study. The prime limitation is that this thesis focuses on ward panels and what can be learned about neighbourhood policing through the experience of their participants. A broader study could have focused more on the wider operation of neighbourhood policing.

One of the merits of a case study analysis is the chance to explore a location or a number of locations in great depth; in this case, to look at the mechanisms of neighbourhood policing in their context (Vincent and O'Mahoney, 2018). This study has particular value because of the residual universality of neighbourhood policing in London, and the demographic variability of Borough One. However, this specificity also limits the extent from which such a study can be generalised, and it is possible that neighbourhood policing works in different ways elsewhere in the country, or even in London. Some of the reported differences in this research suggest that further quantitative or qualitative research along these lines might be worthwhile.

Similarly, Borough One may have a distinctive ward panel system for the very reasons that it was an interesting site for study: its demographic variation, and its long-standing and well-embedded systems of community oversight. In particular, there were reported differences in resident priorities in other Boroughs in London and this might be a fruitful subject of research (see below).

The limitations of access and of the scope of the thesis meant that resident respondents were overwhelmingly members of the public already engaged with neighbourhood policing; largely Chairs of panels and other regular panel attendees. This is a particular limitation given that one of the focuses of this study was on the differences in values held by residents; this thesis can only speak to those values claimed by residents who already have considerable knowledge and experience of the police. A wider sample of residents or even of panel members might have uncovered a different range of values and priorities, as well as

different attitudes to the police in general and the mechanisms of neighbourhood policing in particular.

There were some areas in which in retrospect I would have liked to inquire more deeply; in particular, I did not include a question on problem-solving models in the interview schedule and this limited my ability to understand how officers thought about problem-solving and the processes they used. The study also suffered from my own limitations as a part-time researcher; limiting my inquiry to observations and interviews undoubtedly meant that I missed some of the context that could have been gained from a more in-depth, fully ethnographic approach.

Finally, this study could only be a snapshot of neighbourhood policing at a particular moment, even allowing for the relatively long data collection period. This means that some changes in local policing were not incorporated (such as the move to the One Met Model of merging borough BCUs), while in other cases I could only look for reactions to the announcement of changes rather than their implementation (such as the doubling in the number of Dedicated Ward Officers). Again, a longer-term, ethnographic study could have explored the consequences of these changes and provided a richer insight into neighbourhood policing in Borough One.

Further research

The limitations of case study research, along with several other issues that arose during the course of this research, suggest a number of further avenues of exploration. Firstly, this thesis has proceeded on the assumption that the

mechanisms of neighbourhood policing are in fact still supportive of confidence, and rests its conclusions on findings from Borough One that respondents certainly believe them to be central. However, given the ongoing national arguments as to changes in demand, a focused piece of research similar to the early trials of the NRPP and the NPP would be a worthwhile exercise. This would have the advantage of distinguishing whether the argued benefits of the mechanisms are concrete or merely reflecting participants' defence of a system they in many ways 'own'.

Innes (2010, pp.127-128) invokes Rahm Emmanuel's directive, "never allow a good crisis to go to waste." The current 'perfect storm' of low police numbers and changes to demand suggests a number of research openings around the workings of the 'mechanisms' of neighbourhood policing. There has been little research on the extent to which supporting public confidence requires a universal rather than a targeted approach. This is particularly pertinent given the focus on targeted foot patrol for example in the new neighbourhood policing guidelines. Could community engagement and problem-solving also be targeted to neighbourhoods where confidence is lowest? Recent research (Jackson et al, 2019) suggesting that police legitimacy is less salient where the norm to co-operate is already high suggests that such targeting might be possible without damage to confidence. This thesis suggests that it would not; that confidence relies on the active presence of police even in more advantaged communities. Both may be true; further research could explore whether neighbourhood policing has the same effect on confidence in the police (as distinct from legitimacy) in neighbourhoods with different levels of pre-existing trust. Several other specific aspects of these mechanisms might also usefully be explored, such

as how the presence of police stations can support confidence in the police, or to what extent communications can multiply the effects of community engagement. All of these were beyond the scope of this thesis.

One final oddity that this research has thrown up is the curious and sometimes anomalous relationship between police, panels and local elected representatives. This may also be worth further exploration. Local councillors populate Police and Crime Panels and are likely candidates for future PCCs. Secondly, as this thesis has demonstrated, policing is embedded in politics in its broadest sense, from governing philosophy, through policy, to the negotiation of priorities in a ward panel on a wet Tuesday night. A closer focus on these ground-level relationships might generate important insights, not just to neighbourhood policing, but the future of policing as a whole.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Details of interviews and observations

Ward pseudonym	Observation undertaken	Hours observed	Respondents interviewed	Rank	Gender	Ethnicity
Mountjoy	Yes	1.5	Officer One	PC	Male	White
			PCSO One	PCSO	Male	White
			Chair One	n/a	Female	White
			Officer Six*	Sergeant	Male	BAME
Fleetwood	Yes	1.5	Chair Two	n/a	Female	White
			Officer Three	PC	Male	White
			Officer Two	Sergeant	Female	White
			Deputy One	n/a	Female	BAME (check)
			PCSO Two	PCSO	Male	BAME
Mandeville	No	n/a	Officer Four	PC	Male	White
			Chair Three	n/a	Female	BAME
Brookgate	Yes	1.5	Officer Sixteen*	Inspector	Male	White
			Officer Seventeen*	Sergeant	Female	White
			PCSO Three	PCSO	Female	White
			Officer Eighteen	PC	Female	White
			Officer Thirteen	PC	Male	White
Priory	Yes	2	PCSO Five	PCSO	Male	BAME
			Officer Nineteen	PC	Male	White
			Chair Five	n/a	Male	White
			Resident Four	n/a	Female	White
			Resident Five	n/a	Male	BAME
Chapel Hill	Yes	2	Officer Six*	Sergeant	Male	BAME
			Chair Four	n/a	Male	White

			Officer Seven	PC	Male	White
			Council Officer One	n/a	Female	BAME
Honeycutt	No	n/a	Officer Fourteen	PC	Male	White
			Chair Seven	n/a	Male	White
Central Ward	No	n/a	Officer Twenty	PC	Male	White
			Officer Twenty-One	PC	Female	White
			Officer Twenty-Two	Sergeant	Male	White
Cowden	No	n/a	Officer Twenty-Three	Sergeant	Male	White
			Officer Twenty-Four	PC	Male	White
Halliburton	No	n/a	Officer Twenty-Five	Sergeant	Male	White
			Officer Twenty-Six	PC	Male	White
			Officer Twenty-Seven	PC	Male	BAME
Not associated with a ward			MOPAC Rep One	n/a	Male	White
			Senior Officer Six	Commander	Male	BAME
			Officer Five	Acting Inspector	Male	White
			Officer Nine	Chief Inspector	Male	BAME
			Officer Ten	Acting Chief Inspector	Male	White
			Councillor Seven	n/a	Male	White
			Council Officer Five	n/a	Male	White
			Officer Twenty-Eight	Sergeant	Male	White
Kingsdene**	No	n/a	None		n/a	n/a
Easthurst**	No	n/a	None		n/a	n/a
Borough One	Yes	3				

*indicates a police officer with responsibility for more than one ward

**mentioned in text, but no observations/interviews undertaken

Solid border indicates a joint interview

Missing pseudonyms (e.g. Resident One) are those who were mentioned in interviews or took part in observations, and were therefore assigned pseudonyms, but not included in the final version of the thesis.

Appendix B

Example of interview schedule – interview schedule police V5 senior officers

BACKGROUND

Can you tell me a bit about yourself, how long you've been involved with ward panels and neighbourhood policing?

PROCESS

How important is the role of chair?

Are there ever differences of opinion over the priorities and promises? How do you resolve them?

Who guides the choice of the priorities, is it mostly police or mostly residents?

WIDER STRUCTURE

Are you familiar with the Met guidance on ward panels?

How do the panels fit with the wider community safety structure?

Do the panels work well with the council? How about councillors?

REPRESENTATION

How are the panel members recruited, do you know?

Do you think they're representative of the ward as a whole?

Do you think that the ward panel system is a fair one? Does everyone get a fair say?

EXPECTATIONS

Do residents always have the same expectations from the meetings?

Do you think the expectations that residents have are the same as police expectations?

Do you think police are able to take quality of life issues as seriously as residents want them to?

Do you think the community has more power through these meetings?

COMMUNICATIONS

How important is communication in your experience?

Are there times when police can't be as responsive as residents would like?

Are there particular types of communication that work better than others?

POLICE WORKING

How do you think the priorities and promises affect what you do?

Do you receive important information at these meetings?

RESOURCES

Do resource constraints affect the way that you can respond to the issues raised at the panel?

Do you think residents are fully aware and have a good understanding of those issues?

Can there be difficulties when the police have competing priorities elsewhere?

PURPOSE

What do you think is the most important task that police in general have? How about SNTs?

What do you think is the main aim of the ward panels? Do they succeed?

How do the panels affect the relationship between police and the public?

CONCLUSION

The panels are very local in focus. Is that a helpful thing?

Is there any sort of issue that the ward panel system is particularly good at? Examples?

Are there ways that the ward panel system could be improved?

Is there anything else that I should have asked that I haven't?

Is there anyone else you think I should definitely talk to?

Appendix C

Ethics clearance

RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION FORM (STAGE 1)

> **AFTER YOU HAVE COMPLETED THIS FORM WOULD THE SUPERVISOR PLEASE INDICATE HERE WHICH RISK CATEGORY THE RESEARCH FALLS INTO.**
> **FOR STAFF RESEARCH, CAN THE RESEARCHER COMPLETE THIS.**
> **Please delete as applicable:**
> **GREEN / AMBER / RED INTERNAL / RED EXTERNAL**

More information on ethics procedures can be found on your faculty website. You must read the **Question Specific Advice for Stage 1 Research Ethics Approval** form.

All research carried out by students and staff at Anglia Ruskin University and all students at our Franchise Associate Colleges, must comply with **Anglia Ruskin University's Research Ethics Policy** (students at other types of Associate College need to check requirements).

There is no distinction between undergraduate, taught masters, research degree students and staff research.

All research projects, including pilot studies, must receive research ethical approval prior to approaching participants and/or commencing data collection. Completion of this Research Ethics Application Form (Stage 1) is mandatory for all research applications*. It should be completed by the Principal Investigator in consultation with any co-researchers on the project, or the student in consultation with his/her research project supervisor.

*For research only involving animals please complete the **Animal Ethics Review Checklist** instead of this form.*

All researchers should:

- Ensure they comply with any laws and associated Codes of Practice that may be applicable to their area of research.
- Ensure their study meets with relevant Professional Codes of Conduct.
- Complete the relevant compulsory research ethics training.
- Refer to the **Question Specific Advice for the Stage 1 Research Ethics Approval.**
- Consult the **Code of Practice for Applying for Ethical Approval at Anglia Ruskin University.**

If you are still uncertain about the answer to any question please speak to your Dissertation Supervisor/Supervisor, **Faculty Research Ethics Panel (FREP) Chair** or the **Departmental Research Ethics Panel (DREP) Chair.**

Section 1: RESEARCHER AND PROJECT DETAILS

Researcher details:	
Name(s):	**Carina O'Reilly**

Department:	**Humanities and Social Sciences**				
Faculty:	**Art, Law and Social Sciences**				
Anglia Ruskin email address:	**carina.oreilly@student.anglia.ac.uk**				
Status:					
Undergraduate		Taught Postgraduate		Postgraduate Research	x
Staff					

If this is a student project:	
SID:	**1137164**
Course title:	**PhD**
Supervisor/tutor name	**David Skinner (First Supervisor)**

Project details:	
Project title (*not* module title):	Neighbourhood Policing: Legitimacy and Accountability in Community Engagement through Public Meetings
Data collection start date: (note **must** be prospective)	October 2015
Expected project completion date:	**July 2017**
Is the project externally funded?	**No**
Licence number (if applicable):	

CONFIRMATION STATEMENTS – please tick the box to confirm you understand these requirements	
The project has a direct benefit to society and/or improves knowledge and understanding.	**x**
All researchers involved have completed relevant training in research ethics, and consulted the Code of Practice for Applying for Ethical Approval at Anglia Ruskin University.	**x**
The risks participants, colleagues or the researchers may be exposed to have been considered and appropriate steps to reduce any risks identified taken (risk assessment(s) must be completed if applicable, available at: **http://rm.anglia.ac.uk/extlogin.asp**) or the equivalent for Associate Colleges.	**x**
My research will comply with the Data Protection Act (1998) and/or data protection laws of the country I am carrying the research out in, as applicable. For further advice please refer to the **Question Specific Advice for the Stage 1 Research Ethics Approval.**	**x**

Project summary (maximum 500 words):
Please outline rationale for the research, the project aim, the research questions, research procedure and details of the participant population and how they will be recruited.
My doctoral research will look at the way neighbourhood police use public meetings to discuss local policing priorities.

The rationale of the research is to examine the way that the legitimacy of neighbourhood policing might be negotiated through these contacts, with a view to learning more about the way that police officers and PCSOs construct their own legitimacy and what role public accountability might have in that process.

Research questions include – how is self-legitimacy constructed in policing? What is the police perspective on their own legitimacy? What role does accountability have in police legitimacy, and in particular, what role does public accountability play in self-legitimacy?

Subsidiary questions include:
How do police officers' and PCSOs' sense of group membership affect their attitudes to and perceptions of public meetings?
Is there a distinction between the way that PCSOs approach these compared to PCs?
Do officers believe that public meetings are an important part of community policing?
Do officers believe that public meetings are a source of legitimacy?
Do public meetings contribute, in officers' opinions, to public support of and co-operation with the police?

The process of public accountability is seen as increasingly important. However, the relationship between public accountability and legitimacy in policing is under-examined. Moreover, though much work on organisational justice and police culture has taken an ethnographical approach, much of the work on procedural justice and legitimacy has taken the form of survey analysis.

My research will take a case study approach based on observation of public meetings at both ward level and borough level, and semi-structured interviews with police officers and PCSOs, which will contribute a rich and more textured exploration of legitimacy than is possible through a survey analysis. Participants will be serving police officers working in neighbourhood policing in a single borough, preferably Borough One, which has a well-entrenched structure of public meetings. Participants will be serving officers and PCSOs recruited through the formal channels of the Metropolitan Police.

Is your research ONLY a desk-based or library-based study that requires no direct or indirect contact with human participants; and which also is likely to have no impact on the environment?
Desk-based (or secondary) research involves the summary, collation and/or synthesis of existing research. For further information, see
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secondary_research

 Yes/No If Yes, proceed to the Declaration in Section 5 and from there to the green channel.

Section 2: RESEARCH ETHICS CHECKLIST - please answer YES or NO to ALL of the questions below.

WILL YOUR RESEARCH STUDY?	YES	NO

1	Involve any external organisation for which separate research ethics clearance is required (e.g. NHS, Social Services, Ministry of Justice) *For NHS research involving just staff that requires NHS R&D Management Approval only and Social Care research please check with your FREP Chair whether this will be regarded as equivalent to Anglia Ruskin University's ethical approval.*		x
2	Involve individuals aged 16 years of age and over who lack capacity to consent and will therefore fall under the Mental Capacity Act (2005)?		x
3	Collect, use or store any human tissue/DNA including but not limited to serum, plasma, organs, saliva, urine, hairs and nails? Contact matt.bristow@anglia.ac.uk		x
4	Involve medical research with humans, including clinical trials?		x
5	Administer drugs, placebos or other substances (e.g. food substances, vitamins) to human participants?		x
6	Cause (or could cause) pain, physical or psychological harm or negative consequences to human participants?		x
7	Involve the researchers and/or participants in the potential disclosure of any information relating to illegal activities; or observation/handling/storage of material which may be illegal?		x
8	With respect to human participants or stakeholders, involve any deliberate deception, covert data collection or data collection without informed consent?		x
9	Involve interventions with children and young people under 16 years of age?		x
10	Relate to military sites, personnel, equipment, or the defence industry?		x
11	Risk damage or disturbance to culturally, spiritually or historically significant artefacts or places, or human remains?		x
12	Involve genetic modification, or use of genetically modified organisms above that of routine class one activities? Contact FST-Biologicalsafety.GMO@anglia.ac.uk (All class one activities must be described in Section 4).		x
13	Contain elements you (or members of your team) are not trained to conduct?		x
14	Potentially reveal incidental findings related to human participant health status?		x
15	Present a risk of compromising the anonymity or confidentiality of personal, sensitive or confidential information provided by human participants and/or organisations?	x	
16	Involve colleagues, students, employees, business contacts or other individuals whose response may be influenced by your power or relationship with them?		x
17	Require the co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the human participants (e.g. pupils/students, self-help groups, nursing home residents, business, charity, museum, government department, international agency)?	x	
18	Offer financial or other incentives to human participants?		x

19	Take place outside of the country in which your campus is located, in full or in part?		x
20	Cause a negative impact on the environment (over and above that of normal daily activity)?		x
21	Involve direct and/or indirect contact with human participants?	x	
22	Raise any other ethical concerns not covered in this checklist?		x

Section 3: APPROVAL PROCESS

Section 4: ETHICAL RISK (Risk category 2 projects only)

Management of Ethical Risk (Q14-22)
For each question 14-22 ticked 'yes', please outline how you will manage the ethical risk posed by your study.

15. Compromise of anonymity or confidentiality – it is possible that the participants will be identifiable to their colleagues at least as the case study is intended to be of a single borough in London, which is a relatively small community in terms of serving police officers. In order to minimise these risks, all data will be kept confidentially and will be anonymised as far as possible. All participants will be informed of the risk that statements may be identifiable given the geographical limits of the sample size. The original list of participants will be held by the researcher only. No sensitive information pertaining to individuals who are not participants in the research will be used in the report. As a researcher, I am conscious also of the potential risks of passing on information from other participants and will work to ensure that confidentiality is maintained between participants as well.

17. Require the co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the human participants – I have contacted the research department of the Metropolitan Police for permission and guidance through the research, and have begun the process of formally applying to undertake research with serving police officers, which will include being assigned a Metropolitan Police research sponsor. This is necessary for permission to undertake research within the Metropolitan Police, though there are of course potential issues here around having a police sponsor and the potential restriction in how participants feel free to speak out about controversial issues or police policy. I will work to mitigate this by ensuring confidentiality is maintained and participants are reassured of this.

21. Involve direct and/or indirect contact with human participants – consent will be collected in written form, with information sheets making it clear what consent comprises. Participants will be approached well in advance of any interviews, with sufficient time allowed for those approached to make a considered decision on whether to take part or not. Permission will be sought from the Chair for observations and/or recording of public meetings as a matter of courtesy (though members of the public may by definition attend these, I feel it is more transparent and ethical to notify attendees that I may be observing and taking notes).

All participants will be recruited on a voluntary basis and informed that they can withdraw at any time. The formal methods of permission and the likelihood of being assigned a departmental sponsor could mean a sense of informal coercion, in that potential participants may feel obligated to take part, and it is the responsibility of

the doctoral researcher to ensure that officers understand the voluntary nature of any participation and their freedom to withdraw consent.

Section 5: Declaration

*Student/Staff Declaration

By sending this form from My Anglia e-mail account I confirm that I will undertake this project as detailed above. I understand that I must abide by the terms of this approval and that I may not substantially amend the project without further approval.

**Supervisor Declaration

By sending this form from My Anglia e-mail account I confirm that I will undertake to supervise this project as detailed above.

*Students to forward completed form to their Dissertation Supervisor/Supervisor.

** Dissertation Supervisor/Supervisor to forward the completed form to the relevant ethics committee.

Date: 10 March 2015
Version 5.5

Appendix D

Participant information and consent forms

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

The research project

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research project. Your participation is invaluable and I greatly appreciate it. Please take the time to read the information below: this outlines the purpose of the research and how any data will be used.

My name is Carina O'Reilly. I am a researcher at Anglia Ruskin University, working on a doctoral research project about policing and community engagement through ward panels and public meetings. I am talking to a number of participants in police-public meetings.

The research is being organised by Anglia Ruskin University with the permission and co-operation of the Metropolitan Police. The project is being supervised by Prof. Bill Tupman and Dr David Skinner of Anglia Ruskin University, and is expected to be completed by early 2017.

About the research

The purpose of this research is to explore the way that police use ward panels, public meetings and other forms of community engagement to discuss local policing priorities, and how these interactions might contribute to police legitimacy.

I am inviting you to participate as you have direct experience of these meetings. By agreeing to participate you are consenting to take part in an interview which will be recorded and transcribed. You can withdraw from the research at any time.

About the data

All data will be kept in the strictest confidence, and held in a password-protected file. The interviews will be transcribed, but all identifying data removed. No names will be included in any of the final reports, and all individuals, police stations and geographical areas will similarly be anonymised. Data will be destroyed within five years of completion.

The only identifiers used in the final reports will be gender, rank (if appropriate) and years of experience (if relevant).

The results of the study will be shared with the Metropolitan Police and with participants. Data will primarily be used to support the publication of the PhD thesis, but may also be used for a feedback report for the Metropolitan Police and briefing seminars and publications arising from the research.

No funding for this project is being provided by outside bodies.

If you need further information, please contact the lead researcher, Carina O'Reilly, on carinaoreilly@gmail.com, or 07791 227953.

CONSENT FORM

You have been invited to take part in this research project as you have been an organisational participant in neighbourhood police-public meetings.

Participation in this research project is voluntary - you do not have to take part, and you can withdraw from the research at any time. You do not have to give a reason for your withdrawal.

If you want to withdraw your participation, just contact the researcher, Carina O'Reilly on carinaoreilly@gmail.com, or 07791 227953, or you can write to Carina O'Reilly, c/o ALSS Faculty Office, Anglia Ruskin University, East Road**, Cambridge, CB1 1PT.

Name of participant:

Title of the project:
Neighbourhood Policing: Legitimacy and Accountability in Community Engagement through Public Meetings

1. I agree to take part in the above research. I have read the Participant Information Sheet which is attached to this form. I understand what my role will be in this research, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I have been provided with a copy of this information and this form.

2. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the research **at any time**. I understand that I do not have to give any reason for my withdrawal.

3. I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded.

4. I am free to ask any questions at any time before and during the study.

5. I consent to being recorded by way of audio or video recording and/or by hand-written note-taking.

Data Protection: I agree to the research team processing personal data which I have supplied. I agree to the processing of such data for any purposes connected with the research project as outlined to me.

Name of participant:

Signature: Date:

Name of primary researcher: Carina O'Reilly

Signature: Date:

Appendix E

MPS Guidance on Ward Panels

Note: this guidance includes its own appendices, including a draft constitution.

Protective Marking	N
Suitable for Publication Scheme?	Y
FOIA Exemption	N
Title & Version	Ward Panel Review
Purpose	Guidance for officers and ward panel members
Relevant to	Officers and ward panel members
Authors	PS [Officer Twenty-Eight] Capability & Business Support ESB
Date created	May 2014
Review Date	May 2018

Safer Neighbourhoods Ward Panels review - May 2014

Guidance for maintaining effective Ward Panels

What are Ward Panels?

Ward panel focus
As Safer Neighbourhood (SN) teams engage with communities, through various methods such as meetings or contact points, the teams will gain an insight into the local community's crime and disorder concerns. In order to ensure that the work of each SN team is focussed on resolving these problems, each SN team will require a process to involve local people to decide promises for them to work on.

Establishing a panel
This process will be based on a seven-stage model that is summarised at **Appendix A**. The 5th stage in this process, public choices, is where decisions are made. At this stage each SN Team must establish a panel in every ward. This panel should be made up of local people whose role is to assess the local concerns, identified through community engagement and analysis, and establish priorities for policing in the SN area. The panel gives direction and local advice to the SNs team, although some priorities will require partners to take the lead.

Panel function
The Ward Panel will decide the promises for the area by examining the results of community consultation and research by police and partners. This will include taking account of results from public events and meetings where the community have voiced concerns. In addition to promise setting the panel should also be fully involved in deciding

what type of action should be taken on their concerns and have an input to the problem solving approach.

Making the panel aware of police commitments
Ward Panels should be made aware of the full remit of the SN teams and that they have additional police responsibilities such as Offender Management and victim visits. This arrangement will be available for all wards to assist in targeted problem solving activities but may reduce ward police resources on occasions. However, each SN ward team will continue to have a prominent presence on their ward and will engage with their communities in the normal way.

Who should be the members of a Ward Panel?

Panel make-up
The panel should be made up of local people who live and/or work in the area and have a close connection with the area.

Diversity
Where appropriate to the demographics of a ward, every effort should be made to ensure that people are recruited from within the six diversity strands (Race, Age, Disability, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Belief.) These people could be identified through consultation activities carried out on the ward i.e. public meetings, 'have a say events' or questionnaires. Each SN team will need to attract a wide range of people to ensure that the group is representative of the community. Some local 'leaders' will be useful however SN teams should not give the impression that they are just listening to the usual people who attend every meeting. Nominations might be made at public meetings/events to avoid any impression that the panel has been imposed or selected by the police. This will also ensure that a wide range of people can take part in prioritising and resolving local issues. An ideal size for the group would be about 10-12 people, too many could make it hard to reach agreement.

Structure
As with many community groups some members will request a formal arrangement, others will prefer a less structured approach. Whatever the system chosen for the panel meetings the participants must agree on how decisions will be made to prevent bias or personal opinions influencing the priorities selected by the group. Setting ground rules will be an essential part of the first meeting and must be shared with new members.

Administration
Record keeping should include minutes of the meeting with sufficient notes of the promises agreed and the reasons for decisions (**Record keeping and Constitution see appendix B**). It should be clear to the community who the ward panel members are and how long the panel will be asked to serve the community. Members should aim to be involved for a year with an agreed tenure of 2/3 years maximum. A record should be kept of panel membership, including changes of panel members. After establishing the panel it must be clear to members, and the community, how changes to panel membership will be made.

Chair and members
The chair of the group should be a community member with the SN representative in attendance at all meetings. As well as local people a local authority representative or other significant partner (youth worker or housing provider) should be involved to bring local knowledge and useful contacts to the panel.

Councillors
The ward panel may also benefit from the involvement of the local ward councillor who can observe the process and contribute their local knowledge of problems, but they

should not be party to any 'voting' around the selection of promises. This is to ensure that priorities are selected by communities and free from any criticism that they are politically driven. It is also recommended that Councillors do not 'chair' these meetings for the same reasons.

Youth involvement
To increase participation of young people there should be more use of innovative engagement methods and better use of social media. For example: rather than expecting young people to take part in formal ward panels or SN Board meetings, targeted community police engagement events can be held for young people, these may include regular 'Question Time' sessions where young people have the opportunity to directly question senior MPS officers. Should a young person be elected to the panel an appropriate risk assessment must be completed and written parental permission sought if the person is under the age of 18 years old. Transport to and from the venue must also be considered.

Core members
Each ward is different and each SN team should decide on the best people to be on the panel. However, some groups/individuals are crucial to the work of panels and therefore all teams should be required to have these groups/individuals involved. There may be the need to review and make changes to members on occasions for which the format is listed below.

Listed below are people who would ideally make up the core of a ward panel to best serve the wider community.

Recommended Core Membership

- Councilors (no voting rights)
- Educational representatives; (If there is a school in the ward)
- Small and Medium Enterprises and local traders;
- Representatives from large industrial estates; (If appropriate to the ward)
- Voluntary Sector Council;
- Housing representatives: (If the ward has public housing)
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Local Authority officers such as the Anti-Social Behaviour/Crime Prevention Officer
- Tenant and Resident Associations (If appropriate to the ward)
- Health professionals
- Young people
- Representatives from significant demographic groups

How should panel members be chosen?

Panel inception
It may be useful for some existing community leaders to form an interim panel, possibly with a well known community leader taking the lead as chairperson. This should be a short-term arrangement until further community members volunteer. As more community members become involved the panel may develop by a process of nominations. If this approach is taken interim members should be kept involved once they leave the panel i.e. by inclusion in the ongoing community consultation and engagement process.

Chair person and panel members

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The panel chair and panel members should be people who have the respect of the community and are trusted to voice their concerns. The panel members need to understand community concerns from a variety of perspectives and must be able to feedback the results of police/partner activity and the reasons for priorities being set. The panel should be a mixed group of men and women of various ages and be drawn from all parts of the neighbourhood to prevent focus on one area at the exclusion of others. Representation should be sought from significant race or faith groups in the area and people from different sections of the community i.e. those living in private dwellings and people from social housing. Consideration should also be given to the panel having a representative from any group forming a large section of the community such as students, young people, lesbians or gay men. Each team must also make plans to involve people with disabilities in community engagement and make the panel accessible to this section of the community.

New members
If there are insufficient panel members, new members can be generated by an advert in local publications, housing association newsletters or supermarket notice boards. Alternatively consider an open invitation to specific groups or random invitations made in person at other community events or venues.

Organisation representatives
It would be reasonable to give more weight to those individuals who represent an organisation or a group rather than those who were not. This would also ensure that *'single issue'* or non-inclusive members do not dominate panel meetings.

Meetings
Panel meetings could be held at different times of the day, on different days and at different locations in the ward to encourage attendance by a wide range of people. Neighbourhood representatives or panel members equally may find cost effective locations for meetings, however, the location must be agreed by all as being suitable and some meetings open to the public (at least half of the scheduled annual meetings would benefit by being open to the public).

Review
Ward Panel membership should be reviewed annually.

Ward Panel Responsibilities

Panel responsibilities
The purpose of the ward panel is to agree a realistic and achievable course of action to address the issues raised by the community. To enable true problem solving activities to be effective there should ideally be only one to a maximum of three promises that the SN team deal with. The ward panel need to meet regularly, about every two to three months. The panel will assess the information collected by police and other sources and consider how to prioritise the concerns of the community.

Data share
As part of the process of involving communities in setting promises, the panel may be given access to data and information. The crime mapping information is obtained from the MPS internet site (Met Police.uk) This sharing of information does not require any information sharing protocol or agreement with panel members as long as the information does not identify any person as a victim offender or witness or contain private details about any person. (Advice can be found from the centre, C&S ESB)

Tasking

Tasks are agreed with feedback being given at the next meeting. A communication strategy will also be required to keep the whole community informed of the promises and the outcome of problem solving work. Police should ensure that the promises are achievable within available resources, and set a timescale for achievement or feedback to the community. Partners may need to agree the level of their involvement but should take responsibility should something fall within their jurisdiction.

Reviewing promises, (problem solving)
The panel will review a promise that had been agreed at previous meetings and monitor the progress. When a promise has been resolved a new one will be agreed. The panel will also adopt a problem solving approach and encourage local action and multi agency work. Problem solving training can be given to panel members at a local level to help them understand how the community can become involved in solving problems. (The central SN unit does have a training package available PS [Officer Twenty-Eight])

Mapping promises
The panel should set the promises for the SN Team with limited police influence. Police will always deal with policing issues irrespective of whether they are a specific promise. Once the community have been consulted through all the various forms of engagement activities (Natural Neighbourhoods, virtual ward panels, street briefings, public meetings, KINs etc) regarding problems in their area, the evidence should be presented to the ward panel who must decide based on the information provided which issues are the most important and what they would like the SN team to achieve. The work of the panel will be made easier if the issues and concerns of the community are presented to them with some analysis. This may be as simple as a map showing the occurrences of a problem, or a ranking of the frequency of issues being raised. The tactics used to achieve the objective of the promise will always remain with the police.

Analytic support
The BIU may be able to assist SN teams in providing additional analysis in addition to what they can obtain for themselves through Plan Web and the MPS crime mapping data publicly available on the internet. Decisions may follow a simple process of discussion to reach consensus. If agreement is not reached a vote may be taken or an extra promise agreed.

Balanced opinions
SN teams need to consider how they balance the opinions of panel members. Panel membership can include individuals who do not represent organisations or groups and panel members who do. It may be fair to give additional weight to the opinions of individuals who are representing an organisation or a group rather than those who are not.

Work capacity control
In agreeing local promises the SN Sergeants should be open and honest as to the true capacity of work they can undertake. SN Sergeants should be aware of the limits on their staffing levels compared to the promises set and must be pro-active in professionally controlling a balance of the two. Any areas of controversy should be referred to the next line manager for a decision.

Feedback
Providing feedback and providing key messages is vitally important in reassuring that the local police understand and deal with the issues that matter to local people and is a key principle of the MPCA Community Engagement Commitment. Feedback should be a key item for the panel agenda.
Panel members should also provide feedback to their contacts and groups.

Neighbourhood/Cluster panels and Safer Neighbourhood Boards (SNBs)

SN Teams now serve a neighbourhood or cluster of wards and a neighbourhood or cluster level mechanism should exist to engage at that level. Membership would be made up of the ward panel chairs from the wards making up that neighbourhood or cluster. Neighbourhood or cluster panel meetings will be attended by the neighbourhood inspector and the purpose will be to set and deliver 'priorities'. Whereas the 'promises' agreed at the ward panel would address issues at a very local level, the priorities agreed at the neighbourhood or cluster panel would address issues that may be more serious, cross ward boundaries and can call upon the wider resources of the SN Team.

LPM suggests quarterly meetings for neighbourhood/cluster panels but this should be something that is agreed with the membership.

Safer Neighbourhood Boards (SNBs) are the borough level mechanism to provide oversight and engagement with police services. Membership of most SNB boards will include representatives from neighbourhood/cluster panels. This collection of ward, neighbourhood (or cluster) and borough level meetings allows issues to be addressed at the most appropriate level.
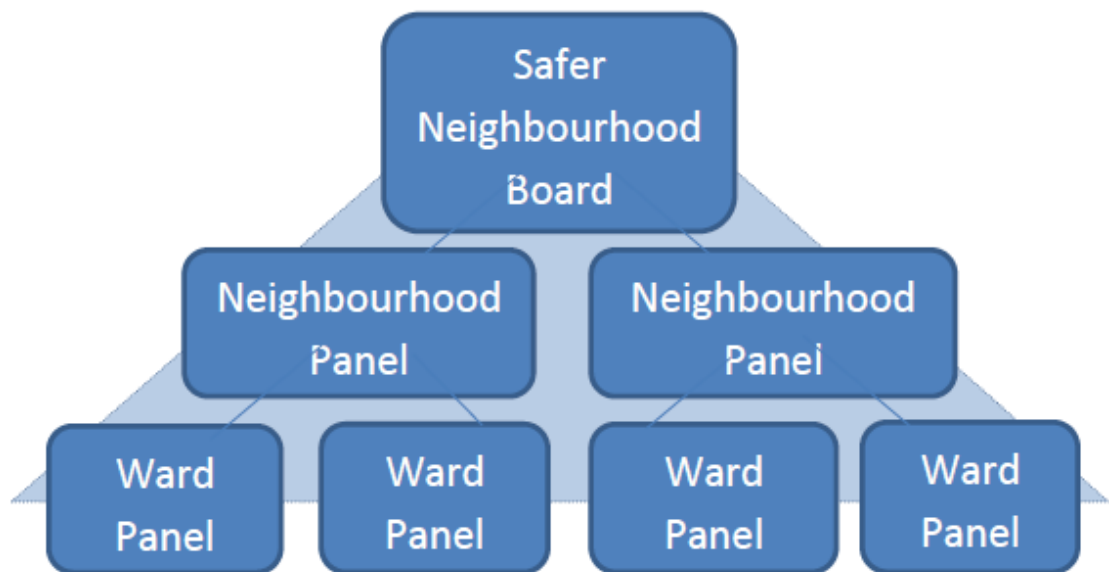
Requirements to make changes to ward panel membership.

Quality assurance
Where it is apparent that current panel membership in whole or in part is no longer synonymous with the good of the wider community, it may be necessary to restructure or dissolve and reconstitute a panel. This may mean removing one or more members and must be done with the following protocols in mind:
a. The SN Sergeant must document and bring any issues to the attention of their line manager and the ward panel chair if appropriate. A meeting with both should be arranged where jointly they may agree that one or more of the panel must leave and be replaced with more appropriately suited members.
b. Should the issues not be resolved at that meeting, the SN Sergeant must document the reasons for further consideration by the line manager and submission to their second line manager.
(BOCU SN Lead)

c. Any final decision to either remove a member or dissolve a panel, where the chair is not in agreement or willing to take action, the final decision must be signed off by the area commander.
(C/I SN Lead or Ward Inspector if they agree to take the responsibility)
d. Police retain the right to stop using a failing panel at any time but should consult the central unit for advice before any such action is taken.
e. The Central SN Unit at ESB can offer advice and guidance as required. (Tel 78 3706)

Key Individual Networks (KIN) Lists

Useful contacts
In addition to developing memberships that better reflect the ward, SN Teams should maintain a range of individual contacts, a list of key individuals who may have some influence within their community. This will be a list of key individuals who can keep them abreast of local concerns and could include:

- Publicans
- Newsagents
- Concierge staff
- Security staff
- Religious leaders
- Garage staff
- Café and restaurants
- Taxi and private hire
- Local business community

KIN lists should be regularly reviewed in order to ensure that they are up to date and remain relevant to the needs of the ward. PCSOs are best suited to update these during patrol or a bi-annual drive to recruit and update would be of value.

Virtual ward panels

Public surveys
The Central SN Unit advises that each borough considers the use of the virtual ward panel system. In short, this is a community engagement tool which targets those people who can not physically or are less inclined to attend formal meetings, to have a voice and get involved in the decision making process. People are being asked to select from a list of recurring issues within their ward which they feel should be a promise for the SNT to deal with. Responses to the survey feed into the Ward Panel and information compliments the other forms of community intelligence provided. Training to use the virtual ward panel system is available from the SN Centre ([Officer Twenty-Eight] Tel: 78 3706)

Social Media

Public communication
Safer Neighbourhood Teams must use all existing local communication mechanisms to share information with the wider public.
- Make better use of community websites, consider using neighbourhood link to share information on the work of Safer Neighbourhoods teams and panel meetings.
- Including information in local free magazines that are delivered door to door.
- Placing information in public spaces which are used/visited by the wider public, such as transport hubs, supermarkets, local coffee shops, local post offices, doctor surgeries/clinics and shopping centres.

Improving information provision will improve community police engagement. More publicity and information on the work of panels can also 'enhance confidence in the MPS'

<u>**Appendix A**</u>

7 Steps to Community Engagement – The Role of the Ward Panel

SN 7 Steps	The role for Ward Panel
1. **Research**	Contribute any local knowledge or information about the community, such as contact details or organisations that may wish to be involved
2. **Engage**	Ward panel members can assist with meetings or activities by arranging them or helping with communication and publicity
3. **Public Preferences**	As above panel members can take an active role in gathering information on the issues that concern local people
4. **Investigational and Analysis**	Panel members can take part in visual audits of the neighbourhood and collate information from environmental surveys. At this stage the different community concerns are assessed and analysed by police and partners.
5. **Public Choices**	This is the key role for the ward panel. The panel assess the different concerns raised by the community at public meetings or other consultation and decide which should be promises. These should be choices that are informed by research and analysis from step 4
6. **Plan and action**	Panel members may be involved in some activity. Non-enforcement activity, such as communication with the community may be carried out by the panel to help publicise what is happening
7. **Review**	The panel should be part of the review process and agree when a promise has been completed or requires further work

This is cyclic process, return to step 1 after the first round of activity

CONSTITUTION

1.   **NAME**
     The name of the Panel shall be the _____ **Ward Panel,**
     hereinafter referred to as _____ WP

2.   **AIMS**
     The aims of the _____WP shall be as follows:

a)   In agreement with the Metropolitan Police, there will be police officers
     dedicated to _____ ward in the London Borough of _____,
     which shall be known as the _____ SNs Team, (hereinafter referred
     to as _____NT). The _____WP shall identify and set local
     priorities for this team, and monitor its work in accordance with the Terms of
     Reference agreed in Appendix 1.

b)   To represent all communities and groups, including individuals in
     _____ ward in the above pursuit, in an equal partnership with this
     community, _____ Council, and the Police.

c)   To uphold equal opportunities and foster good relations amongst all members of
     the community.

3.   **MEMBERSHIP**
a)   The structure of the __WP shall be that of a democratic assembly of
     community representatives. Full (voting) membership shall be open to all
     community representatives (or their substitutes – see (h) below) who live,
     work or learn in _____ ward (the area covered by the __WP).

b). The area covered by the __WP shall be within the boundaries of
     _____ ward
     in the London Borough of _____.

c). The size of the __WP shall be no more than _____ members.

d)   Admission to full membership may be considered at any meeting, when it
     will be decided by a simple majority vote of existing members who are
     satisfied that the new member:

     1. supports the aims of the __WP and agrees with the Terms of Reference
        in Appendix 1

     2. Demonstrates that he or she has been democratically elected by an
        identifiable group of people, who shall be regularly consulted/involved in
        determining the decisions and priorities of the __WP.

     3. Evidence to support the above criteria may include formal minutes of
        AGMs and other meetings, a list of elected officers, membership lists,
        constitution and procedures for calling and advertising meetings. It may
        also include a description of the function of the group/network, times of
        regular activities, copies of newsletters/notices and references from
        community, voluntary or statutory organisations who work with the
        group/network. Evidence of how the representative was elected, who
        was involved and how he or she will consult/report back to the
        group/network may also be sought.

4. An application shall be made to the secretary of the __WP on the appropriate application form, satisfying at least one of the requirements in 3.d.3, above. In order to maintain diversity (all seven strands), memberships must be renewed every 12 months. They will lapse 18 months from the previous application if not renewed.

e) Individuals may be admitted to the __WP as members with full voting rights if existing members are satisfied a particular area, or the community in that area, is not represented on the Panel.

f) A member may resign at any time by informing the Chair in writing.

g) If a member does not attend (three) consecutive meetings without giving an apology to the satisfaction of the __WP, the Panel will have the right to remove that member from the __WP by a two third majority vote of members present in a meeting. Please see de-selection criteria in Appendix 1.

h) A member may provide a substitute, provided that substitute adheres to the Terms of Reference as agreed in Appendix 1.

i) Councillors representing _____ward shall be invited to send one member to attend the meetings to assist and advise the __WP, but they shall have no voting rights.

j) Council, and other statutory service providers and agencies, may from time to time be invited to the meetings to assist and advice the __WP

4. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS (if the panel feel appropriate)

a) The first AGM of the __WP shall be held no later than eighteen months after the inaugural meeting and once in each calendar year thereafter, but not more then fifteen months after the holding of the preceding AGM.

b) The __WP shall call an Annual General Meeting for the purposes of receiving the Annual Report of the Panel and the statement of accounts; of accepting the resignations of the Officers; of electing Officers for the coming year; of making recommendations to the Officers and voting where necessary to amend the Constitution.

c) At least 14 clear days' notice shall be given in writing by the secretary to each member.

d) Officers of the __WP shall be: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer, nominated and elected from the membership, in accordance with the requirements of Appendix 2.

e) The quorum for the AGM shall be not less then 10 members.

5. QUORUM

a) In the case of the AGM, if there is no quorum, the meeting will wait for up to half an hour of the scheduled start time to allow a quorum to be reached. If a quorum is still not reached, the AGM will be postponed to the date of the next Ordinary Meeting.

b) All other meetings may proceed even if there is no quorum, however all decisions are subject to ratification by the next meeting in quorum.

6. ORDINARY MEETINGS

a) The frequency of ordinary meetings shall be at least bi-monthly, or as determined by the __WP Chair.

b)   Not less than (14 clear days') notice shall be given to all members of an Ordinary Meeting.

c)   The quorum for ordinary meetings shall be not less then 6 members.

7. Special General Meetings

a) A member may at any time call a Special General Meeting of the Panel, either for the purpose of altering the Constitution or for considering any matters which the officers may decide should be referred to the members in general. A Special General Meeting shall be called at the written request to the member, countersigned by not less than 5 other members who must give reasons for this request. Any matters received by the Secretary 14 clear days before the Special General Meeting shall be discussed at the meeting.

b) Not less than 14 days notice of the Special General Meeting shall be given to all members.

c) The quorum for Special General Meetings shall be not less then 8 members.

8. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

a) Offensive behaviour, including racist, sexist or inflammatory remarks, shall not be permitted at any meeting, and shall constitute a breach of reasonable behaviour. If the unreasonable behaviour persists then, following a vote, the member or members responsible shall be excluded from the remainder of the meeting. Also see Code of Conduct in Appendix 4.

b) All meetings shall be open to members of the general public for whom the opportunity to speak shall be at the discretion of the Chair. This will be subject to a "part two" section of the agenda as per the Terms of Reference of the __WP relating to confidentiality, as referred to in Appendix 1.

c) Members may not use their position on the Panel for party-political purposes either during meetings or as a representative of the __WP outside meetings.

d) At all meetings except those dealing with alterations to the Constitution, decisions shall be taken by a simple majority of those members present and voting. Any alteration to the Constitution shall be taken by the approval of a 2/3rds majority of members present and voting.

e) Except for AGM business, the Chair shall have a second casting vote in the eventuality of a tie vote at any meeting. The Chair shall also have a representative role of the __WP entering in to correspondence with councillors, council and other statutory service providers and agencies, and members of the public. The Chair shall also be responsible for setting the agendas of meetings.

f) The Secretary shall be responsible for:

- ♦ Issuing the appropriate notices for all meetings

- ♦ Either delegating or personally preparing and despatching agendas, minutes of all meetings, and all other relevant paperwork subject to the approval of the Chair, and within the appropriate notice periods.

- ♦ The reporting of all correspondence to meetings of the __WP, subject to the prior approval of the Chair.

- ♦ Reporting to the __WP any new membership applications to fill vacancies and verifying the criteria requirements of potential applicants, ensuring membership criteria is reported to the __WP, maintained and followed

- ♦ Maintaining an appropriate filing system for all the above.

11. DISSOLUTION

a) If the Panel, by a simple majority, decides at any time to dissolve itself, it shall give at least 21 days' notice of a meeting to all members.

b) If such a decision is confirmed by a simple majority of those present and voting at the meeting, the __WP shall have the power to dispose of any assets it holds.

This Constitution was adopted as the Constitution of _____
Ward Panel at a public meeting held at _____ on _____

Signed... (Chair)

Signed... (Secretary)

Date …………………………………………..

a) disclose it. Having declared an interest, it will be up to the __WP to determine on a case by case basis, whether or not that member should withdraw from that part of the meeting.

b) The opportunity to declare an interest will be given at the start of each meeting. However, members can declare an interest at any point during a meeting when it becomes apparent that they have one.

c) Members should at all times avoid any occasion for suspicion and any appearance of improper conduct. They should not allow the impression to be created that they are, or may be, using their position to promote a private or personal interest, rather then forwarding the general public interest. They should always be aware of public perceptions, knowing all the facts of the situation, would the public reasonably think that a member might be influenced by it.

d) Members who may have doubt about disclosing an interest should disclose it anyway and seek the advice of the _____WP on whether they should continue to take part in the business under consideration.

2) De-selection Criteria

a) All Panel members shall agree to abide by the Code of Conduct in Appendix 4. De-selection of a member shall require a two third majority of those present and voting. One or more of the following to be used by the _____WP for the de-selection of any member:

b) Failure to fulfil designated actions or prepare for meetings

c) The member's representation, skills and expertise are unnecessarily duplicated on the _____WP

d) The member no longer demonstrably represents their community and/or has their respect

e) The member has failed to attend three consecutive meetings of the _____WP without giving an apology to their satisfaction

f) The representative's membership would undermine the credibility and legitimacy of the _____WP or fundamentally weaken aspects of its work; and

g) The member has broken the Code of Conduct or the conditions of these "terms of reference"

h) Panel members shall have a right to a hearing against any decisions to deselect. In this instance the _____WP shall hear the appeal in a special meeting and its decision will be final.

3) Gifts and Hospitality

a) Each member is personally responsible for treating with caution any offer or gift, favour or hospitality that may be made, in the knowledge that the member is on the panel of the _____WP. The person or organisation making the offer may be doing so to obtain information or trying to influence a decision.

b) Members are personally responsible for all decisions connected with the acceptance or offer of gifts or hospitality and for avoiding the risk of damage to the public confidence in the _____WP

All members are required to sign the disclosure below that they will abide by the conditions set out above

Signed …………..……………… Name ……..……………..…… Date ………………..

Organisation ………………………………………………………………………….

Appendix 2

_____ **Ward Panel: Standing Orders for the AGM**

1) Nominations for positions of chair, vice-chair, secretary and treasurer.

2) These officers will be elected from any of the members present at the AGM. They must be nominated by one member and seconded by another. Members cannot nominate themselves.

3) Except for the inaugural AGM, nominations must be received 10 days before the AGM. Nominees are encouraged to make a short written statement about themselves and their interest in the position. These should be attached to the nominations.

4) These nominees' written statements will be circulated to voting members 7 days before the AGM.

5) At the AGM, nominees for position of chair, vice-chair, secretary and treasure will have the opportunity to speak for a few minutes to introduce themselves and their interest in the position.

6) An independent overseer will facilitate the initial part of the meeting until a chair is elected.

7) Voting members:

   a) Each voting member shall have one vote. In the case of voting organisations, the named representative or a named substitute will cast the vote on behalf of their organisation. (Please check the Voting Members List to ensure that your group is listed and that details for the named delegate to _____WP and his/her substitute is correct.)

8) Voting:

   a. There will be one round of voting for chairperson, vice-chair, secretary and treasurer. One ballot sheet will ask reps to vote for their choice chair, vice-chair, secretary and treasurer.

   b. It will be possible for the same individual to be nominated for several positions.

   c. Votes will then be counted by two independent people and the outcome announced.

   d. Two eventualities may produce an unclear result:

      1. A tie for a position

      2. The same candidate being successful for two positions.

   e. In the case of a tie, a postal ballot of all voting members will be held. Votes must be returned within 10 days of the AGM. This postal ballot will include the views of all voting members including those unable to attend in person.

   f. If there is still a tie or if all voting members are present at the AGM making a postal ballot of no extra significance, then the outcome remains a tie and the position is rotated, e.g. co-chairs.

   g. In the case of the same candidate being nominated for, and being successful in, two positions, e.g. gets most votes as secretary and treasurer:

   h. The candidate will be given the position which comes first in the following order: chairperson, vice-chair, secretary, treasurer.

i. They will be eliminated from consideration for the second position and the nominee who comes second gets the position.

APPENDIX 3

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

An Informal Chat

Most complaints may easily be resolved by talking the problem over with the person involved. An informal chat may resolve the problem or clear up any misunderstanding. If this action is inappropriate or if after a chat you are still not satisfied with the way that your complaint has been handled please follow the procedure outlined below.

Making a Formal Complaint
NB: All complaints must be put in writing. Anonymous complaints and, unless there is a special reason, complaints not in writing will be disregarded.

Stage 1

Send your complaint in writing to the _____WP Chair. If the complaint is against the Chair, then send it to the Secretary.

Upon receipt of the complaint the Chair/Secretary will:
- send an acknowledgement (within five days) that the complaint has been received
- Investigate your complaint and reply, in writing, within 28 days of receipt of your complaint.
- (As part of her/his investigation, the Chair/Secretary may arrange to hold a meeting with you [and, where appropriate, the person against whom the complaint has been made] in an effort to resolve the issue.) (The SN Centre at ESB can assist in giving advice if requested)

Stage 2

If you are still not happy after receiving the Chair's/Secretary's response, you can ask that your complaint is referred to the _____WP. Such a request should be made in writing to the Chair and be received within 21 days of the written reply to Stage 1.

You will be invited to attend the meeting of the _____WP at which your complaint is to be considered and will be entitled to bring a friend or companion with you if you wish.

The decision of the Panel will be given to you in writing within seven days of its meeting, and will be final as far as the _____WP is concerned.

At all stages the time limits can be altered by mutual consent.

APPENDIX 4
CODE OF CONDUCT
This code of conduct applies to all panel members of the _____WP, including invited guests, and those in attendance at meetings. Any breach of this code of conduct shall be dealt with under Paragraph 11 of the Terms of Reference of the _____WP.

1. If a panel member experiences any concern or dissatisfaction with another panel member, this should be dealt with under procedures in Appendix 3.

2. Panel members and workers should not denigrate colleagues in the presence of third parties, nor adversely criticise a colleague in the presence of others save in the context of the appropriate procedures.

3. Panel members and the _____WT should not impose on each other excessive and unreasonable amounts of work of any kind, and the _____WP should not impose work on _____SNT outside the remit of their job.

4. Panel members should not seek to undermine, outside constitutional procedures, agreed policy of the _____WP, nor work against the interests of the _____WP, nor seek to bring the _____WP, its officers, its members into disrepute.

5. Panel members should not harass, discriminate against or oppress any group or individual by reference to their religion, race, gender, sexuality, disability, age, health, political beliefs, or any other grounds.

6. Panel members should be committed to providing services to its members that do not discriminate on the above grounds, and to providing services that will positively contribute to the elimination of discrimination.

7. In the event of any proven breach of this code of practice by a Panel member, the _____WP reserves their right under clause 11 (f) of the Constitution to terminate the membership of the member who has breached this policy. Under clause 11 (g) any such accused member will have the right to a hearing by the Panel before any decision to expel is taken.

Author: MPS Police Sergeant [Officer Twenty-Eight]

TP Capability & Business Support

ESB

Tel: 0207 161 3706

2nd May 2014

Appendix F

Introduction
Several new Chairs have said it would be helpful to have some background guidelines on running panels. This document and attachments have been compiled to try and assist with these requests. Please do not feel daunted by the number of criteria contained in these documents! This is just an effort to be as comprehensive as possible. It is more important that structured meetings take place as advertised using these guidelines.

Ward panel focus
As Safer Neighbourhood (SN) teams engage with communities, through various methods such as meetings, the teams will gain an insight into the local community's crime and disorder concerns. In order to ensure that the work of each SN team is focussed on resolving these problems, each SN team requires a process to involve local people to decide promises for them to work on.

Panel function
The panel is the forum for members to raise and discuss ward crime trend concerns; [individual incidents should always be reported at the time via 999 or 101]. The Panel set the priorities (known as Promises) for the Safer Neighbourhood Team. The Panel will decide on the Promises for the area by examining the results of community consultation, taking on board feedback from panel members and examining current crime statistics. This will include taking account of results from public events and meetings where the community has voiced concerns, as well as the results of Virtual Ward Panels where a survey has been done. In addition to promise setting, the panel should also be fully involved in deciding what type of action should be taken on their concerns and have an input to the problem solving approach.

Ward Promises address local community issues to which police are capable of providing a response without the need for long-term activity or requiring little if any partnership working. Examples include: dealing with minor disorder caused by youths congregating; high police visibility in a specified area, or speaking with partners to remedy issues caused by lack of attention.

Three Ward Promises should be set every panel meeting and will be used to inform the neighbourhood priorities set by the Cluster Group for the area. Progress on promises will be considered at each panel meeting and charted on the [Borough One] Police webpage.

At least one public meeting should be held each year.

Membership
- The panel should aim to be broadly representative and inclusive of the community it serves in terms of a mix of residents, businesses, ethnic minorities, gender and age.
- Members will either have good community contacts and be able to represent a number of views, including Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators, or bring skillsets that will benefit the Panel and the local community.

- Panel members are encouraged to suggest possible new panel members to the Chair.
- Full voting membership will be limited to the community representatives.
- Councillors of the ward may also be members of the panel but have no voting rights.
- An ideal attendance size is around 12 -15 attendees; it is likely that membership will need to be higher to factor in the likelihood of apologies at every meeting.
- The Council and other statutory service providers and agencies may also be invited to meetings to assist and advise.

Chair and Vice Chair(s)
- The panel will be led by a Chair, elected by panel members.
- Also elected by panel members, the Vice Chair deputises for the Chair. Several Vice Chairs may be elected if this is felt to be helpful for the panel.
- Chairs and Vice Chairs also attend the following meetings:
  - Cluster Meetings for their area with the Cluster Inspector. The Cluster Meetings agree 3 Cluster Priorities at each meeting. Priorities involve more complex solutions requiring medium to long-term and/or partnership approach to problem solving. Progress will be monitored at each Cluster Meeting and tracked on the [Borough One] Police webpage.
  - Chairs and Vice Chairs Meetings with the Senior Leadership Team (2x per year)
- Changes to the Chair and Vice Chair(s) should be notified to Alison McWhinnie so the new postholders can be included in circulations.
- Meeting dates for the year should also be sent to Alison McWhinnie so they can go on the Borough's Meeting Dates spreadsheet (devised to help reduce the number of meeting date clashes in the Borough).
- Alison McWhinnie is the Chair of the Chairs' Group and has the Safer Neighbourhood Panel Portfolio on the Safer Neighbourhood Board to ensure that all wards on the Borough have an operational ward panel. This is intended as a supportive role and Chairs, particularly those new to the role, are welcome to contact Alison by email Alison.mcwhinnie@gmail.com. Alison is happy to meet with Chairs individually for a coffee to discuss any concerns they may have.

Councillors
The ward panel may also benefit from the involvement of the local ward councillor who can observe the process and contribute their local knowledge of problems, but they should not be party to any 'voting' around the selection of promises. This is to ensure that priorities are selected by communities and free from any criticism that they are politically driven. It is also recommended that Councillors do not 'chair' these meetings for the same reasons.

Recommended Core Membership
- Councillors (no voting rights)
- Educational representatives; (If there is a school in the ward)
- Small and Medium Enterprises and local traders;
- BID representatives (where appropriate)
- Representatives from large industrial estates; (If appropriate to the ward)
- Voluntary Sector Council;
- Housing representatives: (If the ward has public housing)
- Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators
- Local Authority officers such as the Anti-Social Behaviour/Crime Prevention Officer

- Tenant and Resident Associations (If appropriate to the ward)
- Health professionals
- Young people
- Representatives from significant demographic groups

New members

If there are insufficient panel members, new members can be generated through the following methods:

- Messages on Airspace
- Invitations to apply at public meetings
- SN team suggesting new members to the Chair from the contacts they come across in their daily work
- Panel members suggesting new members to the Chair
- Monthly MPS newsletter
- Social media
- Housing association newsletters
- Notice boards eg in supermarkets, libraries.

Review

Ward Panel membership should be reviewed annually.

Administration

Record keeping should include minutes of the meeting with sufficient notes of the promises agreed and the reasons for decisions. A record should be kept of current panel membership and minutes on the S drive together with copies of information relating to any contentious issues.

Removal from Panel

The panel will have the right to remove a member if they:

- Consistently fail to attend meetings
- Display offensive or unruly behaviour at meetings, including but not limited to, making racist, sexist or inflammatory remarks
- Bring the reputation of the panel and/or the police into disrepute

The Sgt or Chair may propose to the group that any member may be removed for any of the above reasons.

Resignation

A member may resign at any time by informing the Chair in writing.

Conduct of Business

1. Dates for the full calendar year will be set and notified to members by the beginning of that year, if not earlier.
2. Agendas will be circulated two weeks in advance of meetings, and minutes circulated within one week after meetings.
3. Offensive/unruly behaviour will not be permitted.
4. Members may not use their position on the panel for party political purposes either during meetings or as a representative of the panel outside of meetings.

5. Decisions will taken on a simple majority vote. The Chair has the casting vote, if necessary.
6. The Chair has a representative role of the panel where necessary. This may involve writing to councillors, the council and other statutory service providers or agencies as well as members of the public.
7. Any complaints about the operation of the panel should be directed to the Chair.
8. The Chair and Sgt will set the agendas for meetings. However, any member may ask for an item to go on an agenda by emailing the Chair.
9. Consider taking questions in threes.
10. Consider aiming to keep the duration of the panel meeting to one hour.
11. AGMs are optional.
12. A journalist can be invited to attend the panel as an observer, if it is felt that this would be helpful. They have no voting rights. It is advisable to obtain the consent of the panel members before doing so. Revisit the decision if subsequent articles prove to be unhelpful for the panel.