Masters thesis

From national development to local delivery: how neighbourhood policing policy and guidance has informed the understanding of communities and engagement practice at a local level

Ashman, D.

From National Development to Local Delivery: How neighbourhood policing policy and guidance has informed the understanding of communities and engagement practice at a local level.

Douglas James Ashman

M00472003

Middlesex University

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to critically analyse the impact on community engagement practice and policy as a result of the creation of the neighbourhood policing guidelines, published by the College of Policing in 2018. This research was undertaken using qualitative methods, including a case study and Braun & Clarke's thematic analysis. Thematic analysis was applied to interviews with key policy actors, a focus group with practitioners, and the review of national and local policy documents. Such an approach informed understanding of the policy development and implementation journey. The theoretical background of this study is based in Kingdon's (2011) concepts of policy streams and policy entrepreneurs as well as Lipsky's (2010) theory of street level bureaucrats. The findings of this research show that these underpinning theories and concepts were present throughout the policy journey, along with Tepstra & Fyfe's (2015) identification of the 'implementation gap' also evident. Policy development and implementation were enabled by policy entrepreneurs but met with blockers at a more local level. Street level bureaucrats were far less aware of policy and the policy message lost in translation, in what could be argued was Atun's (2003) identification of the difference in language spoken between managers and practitioners. The policy was translated coherently from the national to the force level but appears to have struggled to translate effectively at the operational level. This research offers two new concepts building upon existing theories, that of an 'entrepreneurial gap' and the need for 'street level entrepreneurs', that is policy entrepreneurs who can speak the language of both strategic leaders and the frontline and able to bridge the implementation gap at practice level.

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List of abbreviations

ACC	Assistant Chief Constable
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
APCC	Association of Police and Crime Commissioners
ASB	Anti-social Behaviour
BAME	Black and Minority Ethnic
BCS	British Crime Survey
BCU	Basic Command Unit
CADA	Crime and Disorder Act 1998
CAPS	Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy
CC	Chief Constable
CCE	Child Criminal Exploitation
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIM	Critical Incident Manager
CoP	College of Policing
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
DCC	Deputy Chief Constable
FIM	Force Incident Manager
GRT	Gypsy, Roma, Traveller
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies

HMICFRS	His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans
MOPAC	Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime
NHW	Neighbourhood Watch
NHP	Neighbourhood Policing
NICE	National Institute for Clinical Excellence
NPCC	National Police Chiefs Council
NPIA	National Police Improvement Agency
NPT	Neighbourhood Policing Team
NRPP	National Reassurance Policing Programme
NSO	Neighbourhood Specialist Officer
PCC	Police and Crime Commissioner
PCDA	Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
PIN	Policing in our Neighbourhoods
PPAF	Police Performance Assessment Framework
REA	Rapid Evidence Assessment
SNT	Safer Neighbourhood Team
SOC	Serious and Organised Crime

VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
YEO	Youth Engagement Officer

Chapter 1: Introduction and background context

In this chapter I will set out the background and context to this study, what the research aims, and objectives are, and why I believe this study was required. I will set out why a refreshed neighbourhood policing policy was introduced and how this study will contribute to existing knowledge in police policy implementation. I will introduce the underpinning theories that informed this research, the landscape of policing and the national bodies involved in and influencing neighbourhood policing policy development.

Background

When the New Labour administration came into power in 1997, they embarked on establishing a programme of reform within policing to deliver greater community engagement and empowerment (Fleming & McLaughlin, 2012). The 2001 white paper 'Policing a New Century – A Blueprint for Reform' set the wheels in motion for a programme of re-invigorating neighbourhood policing (Home Office, 2001), which led to the National Reassurance Policing Programme (NRPP). The NRPP was the last iteration of neighbourhood policing policy set centrally prior to the publication of the Neighbourhood Policing guidelines in 2018 (College of Policing, 2018) that this study focused on. This history will be explored in greater detail within the literature review later in this thesis to fully understand the drivers for a refreshed neighbourhood policing policy approach in 2018. Suffice it to say, following the policy reinvigoration in the 2000's, by 2013 policy commentators were starting to suggest the policy direction for neighbourhood policing from the NRPP was already being eroded (Higgins 2018: HMIC 2017). Based on the 2017

observations of this erosion by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies (HMIC, 2017) the development of the policy this study will focus on began.

Aims and objectives of the study

The aim of this research is to contribute to knowledge in the academic exploration of how a national policing policy has translated into activity at a local level, and how local innovation can subsequently impact upon national neighbourhood policy development. The 2018 iteration of the national neighbourhood policing policy was the first time an evidence-based guideline approach (College of Policing, 2018) was undertaken in developing policing policy. The chosen method being (was) derived from the approach used by the National Institute for Heath and Care Excellence (NICE). This afforded a unique opportunity to fill an identified research gap in how national neighbourhood policing policy is translated to local delivery.

This research study has focused on the ways in which national policing strategy, policy and guidance has specifically informed how community engagement is approached at the policy level, and how this is then delivered operationally at the local level. As the formation of evidence-based policy is predicated on evidence-based practice, this study critically evaluates how the feedback loop is closed. That is, in its simplest form how the practice informed by the neighbourhood policing policy then transitions to the practice informing the ongoing policy development. Wood et al (2018, p.12) observed that 'greater emphasis needs to be placed on the role officers can play in developing, embedding and applying police knowledge in practice'. They also

point out that more needs to be done around developing policies based on what works This is not just about research informing policies but about how policing needs to be more attuned to the context in which the policy will be delivered, and the importance of individual agency and discretion of practitioners. Wood et al's observations link directly to the aims of this research. I wanted to explore how the operating context of the policy has been considered and how involving practitioners in the neighbourhood policing policy journey may have gone some way to achieving this.

My overall objective of this study is to add to existing knowledge in implementing policing policy, with a hope that the findings of this research will help inform policy makers and those implementing future policing policy. Academic research, insightful as it is, has often failed to be understood by operational police leaders due to academics' use of an argot that can alienate the intended audience. This is a view supported by Heaton & Tong (2016, p.61) who describe this as a significant barrier to applying research in practice.

To understand this policy journey, there are four key research questions:

1) How have national guidelines for neighbourhood policing informed community engagement at a force level?

2) To what extent has national neighbourhood policing policy translated into community engagement at a neighbourhood level?

3) How is the effectiveness of community engagement captured and measured?

4) Is there evidence of promising practice at a local level informing police force and national policy development?

Key concepts

There are two separate but interdependent elements that underpin this research, firstly, from a policy perspective, the theories of policy translation, implementation and adaption, in a public service context. Secondly, in relation to the background theories that support community engagement as part of a neighbourhood policing delivery model.

Policy concepts

Dolowitz and Marsh (1996, p.344) introduced the concept of 'policy transfer' describing a dualistic approach that could be both 'voluntary' and 'coercive'. Benson and Jordan (2011) explained this in terms of the latter being a case of where government bodies, regulators or 'supra-national institutions' will force other departments or subservient organisations to take on policy innovation. Indeed, Benson and Jordan (2011) describe Dolowitz and Marsh's 1996 work as a 'stocktake' of policy transfer literature and the first time policy translation has been theorised. In relation to this research, their observations are particularly relevant, as adaption of neighbourhood policing could be seen as voluntary. That is to say that whilst guidelines are produced, there is no direct regulatory framework or statutory requirement for forces to adopt them.

Ultimately, as evidenced in the interview with the incoming National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) neighbourhood policing lead, the decision to follow guidelines or what extent to do so, remains a decision for individual Chief Constables. With the refreshed policy for neighbourhood policing called

‘guidelines’ this itself suggests they are merely considerations, that can be operated outside of, and not a diktat. However, with a scrutiny regime from the policing inspectorate based upon the guidelines, it could be argued this is much more of a coercive relationship.

Regarding policy implementation, Sausman et al (2016, p.564) observed ‘there remains a gap in an understanding of the dynamic and iterative nature of implementation, as central policy is enacted in practice’. The observations of Sausman et al are of particular relevance to this research, as the policy development and implementation of the College of Policing’s 2018 Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines provided an opportunity to fill this gap in understanding. Indeed, I was able to observe through this study the very gaps that Sausman et al observed

The theoretical framework of this study is based upon Kingdon’s (2011) work on policy streams and Lipsky’s (2010) concept of the street level bureaucrat. Kingdon refers to the concepts of policy networks and policy communities. Atkinson and Coleman (1992) suggest a policy network loosely describes the relationship between organisations and individuals who are in regular contact, sharing a common interest within a particular policy field. A policy community, he opines is more than just a meeting of networks, this brings together actors with a commonly understood system of beliefs. Rhodes (1986) characterised the policy community as having stable relationships, interdependence and an insulation from other external influence such as other organisations or networks. For the purpose of this study, the descriptors used by academics in the field (Kingdon 2011; Rhodes 1986; Atkinson & Coleman 1992) support the view that the key actors interviewed at strategic level within this study formed

part of a policy community, a community I was and remain a member of. The neighbourhood policing policy community was formed as a stable group cutting across existing 'policy networks' drawing in representation from senior leaders of the national policing bodies (His Majesty's Inspectorate of Policing, The College of Policing and National Police Chiefs' Council), academics and frontline practitioners. Indeed, many of the policy community formed part of a guideline committee that created the refreshed policy (College of Policing, 2018). Existing policy networks that did not share the closer working relationship of the 'policy community' were however key in supporting policy translation as I will discuss later in this thesis.

Community engagement in a policing context

Community engagement is a key concept relevant to this study, and one needs to appreciate the key theories of community engagement in order to understand the policy development and implementation process, and importantly to observe if these theories are then evident in practice. There is a clear link between an active programme of community engagement and how such activity supports the legitimacy of policing, and of building trust and confidence. Lister et al (2016, p.1) supported this assertion and described community engagement as 'a central component of democratic policing'.

In 1994, David Wilcox published the guide to effective citizen participation, in which he sought to explore theory, and from this derive practical advice to those seeking to work in partnership with the public. His framework drew upon Sherry Arnstein's 1969 Ladder of Participation. This represented the levels of

citizen participation as eight rungs of a ladder, from no participation at the lowest level, to full citizen control at the highest level. Arnstein described her typology as a simplification, but one that illustrates that there are 'significant graduations of citizen participation'. (Arnstein 1969, p. 217). One could argue there is synergy between Arnstein's observations and contemporary police community engagement, where it could be said that the higher levels of partnership, delegated power and citizen control are rarely observed. Arnstein (1969, p.216) argues that 'there is a critical difference between going through the empty ritual of participation and having the real power needed to affect the outcome of the process'. In the context of this study, the refreshed engagement policy (College of Policing, 2018) highlights the importance of active community participation. Furthermore, this is evident in policy detailing the importance of local policing teams understanding the make-up of their communities and working with key community stakeholders to deliver collaborative approaches, community ownership and empowerment.

Chanan (1999) created a handbook for good practice in local community involvement. Looking at the limitation that Arnstein observed, Chanan's work takes a practical perspective on community involvement in local regeneration. His work sought to clarify what a community is and what community involvement actually means. Interestingly, this work sets out a multi-level approach as part of a strategy for improvement, including understanding the present level of activity, the will for participation within the community, the cohesiveness of existing community structures and the development of identified groups and the representation of these from within the community. (Chanan 1999, p.16). Chanan provides operational level advice for

practitioners, including the profiling of local groups and organisations, and understanding community concerns through surveys and 'dialogue with professionals working on social issues in the locality' (Chanan 1999, p.31). Such language has a clear resonance with the concept of community mapping as a precursor to any engagement activity, one of the neighbourhood policing policy areas laid out within the Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines (College of Policing, 2018). Chanan's participatory pyramid reminds us that we need an active community involvement for effective police and community partnerships. One can further derive from Chanan's observations that local policing teams need to understand their communities, who is active within them, and how they can achieve interoperability between different community members, organisations, and their representatives. This study explored how both Arnstein's ladder and Chanan's pyramid manifest though the creation of refreshed community engagement policy and how this translated to operational activity within a case study area.

Context

The Inspectorate, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) undertake an inspection programme of police efficiency, effectiveness, and legitimacy (PEEL) across all 43 territorial police forces in England Wales. As part of this inspection programme forces are graded in how they engage with and treat the public. (HMICFRS, 2022)

The complexity of the relationship between the strategic bodies responsible for policy development within policing and the autonomy of the 43 territorial police

forces across England and Wales requires both exploration and explanation. Interestingly, in 2006, the police found they were subject to a debate over the effectiveness of the existing structure, with the then Labour government exploring an agenda of reducing the number of police forces across England and Wales in the creation of strategic forces, citing, in part, blockers to effectiveness policy translation (Jones and Van Sluis, 2009). Ultimately the reduction in the number of police forces proved to be unsuccessful, but it did lead to the creation of several regional collaborations across policing organisations, many of which still exist today. Surrey and Sussex Police have joint operations departments (Sussex Police, 2022); Thames Valley and Hampshire share a similar relationship with operational capability in roads policing, firearms and even Human Resources and IT functions. (Hampshire PCC, 2022). Policing policy comes from a variety of sources and the governance and oversight of policing has neither a simple nor a straightforward structure.

At the National level of policing strategy, there are four relevant organisations including The Home Office, The College of Policing, The National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMRCFRS). The Home Office has become more distant in direct policy setting for policing since the creation of both the College of Policing in 2013 and National Police Chief's Council in 2015. The Home Office remains the voice of central government in matters of policing and ultimately responsible for police funding and with direct influence and control over the College of Policing, albeit as an arm's length body. The College of Policing is the professional body for policing, responsible for evidence-based

policy, standards, and curriculum development. The NPCC is formed of Chief Officers (Assistant Chief Constable, Commander and above or Police Staff equivalents) that each hold portfolio areas to lead across policing. While the College will undertake research to set the standards, the NPCC are then responsible for the operationalising of policy and guidance. The two organisations do however work closely together and much guidance within policing is jointly authored. HMICFRS, as the inspectorate review and report upon the effectiveness of police activity at the force level, publishing both overarching and thematic reports. Relevant to the research documented in this MPhil study, they are responsible for assessing how well forces have implemented the national neighbourhood policing policy in relation to community engagement.

At a local level, the 43 forces across England and Wales are accountable to either a directly elected Police and Crime Commissioner or an elected Mayor. They are responsible for setting budgets and strategy through delivery of a Police and Crime Plan, but not for operational delivery, which remains the responsibility of the force's Chief Constable. As such, a patchwork quilt approach to operational policing delivery exists across the country, something many Chief Officers will state makes them more responsive to local need and demand (detailed in my interview with the incoming NPCC lead). From a policy perspective, this makes for a challenging landscape for the national bodies to deliver across consistently. A structure chart is shown at Appendix 12.

Rationale for this study

As a serving police officer, I have been involved at both strategic level, developing and implementing policy, and working in operational roles engaging with communities. It is through my experience that I believe police community engagement has arguably been superficial, consultative rather than collaborative and done to, rather than done with, the communities most in need of a voice. I would agree with Young's (1991, p.146) observation, from a left realist perspective, that crime disproportionately affects the poorer in society. It could be argued that little is done to build the social capital of the communities that are most affected by crime and disorder. Equally, little is done to truly understand the make-up and needs of those communities. It is this very issue that motivated me to undertake this study.

Structure of this MPhil thesis

In the second chapter, I will position this study within the existing literature on both the development of community engagement policy in policing and existing studies of policy implementation. Chapter 3 will set out the research methodology, the analytical approach and ethical considerations of this study. Chapters 4 and 5 critically analyse the data gathered during my fieldwork. In the final chapter I will discuss the findings from the analysis, what this informs us regarding the research questions and implications for future policy and potential research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this chapter I will position this study within the existing literature. This will explore the reasons a refreshed neighbourhood policing policy was required, exploring the history of community engagement as a fundamental pillar of the neighbourhood policing model. I will go on to explore the literature from a policy perspective, the theories of policy translation, implementation, and policy adaptation, drawing upon those set in a public service context.

The need for a refreshed policy on community engagement in policing

In 2016, in their annual report on the state of policing, the Inspectorate (then Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies), reported on an 'erosion' of the traditional neighbourhood policing model.

> *'Last year HMIC warned that neighbourhood policing was being eroded. This year, there is even more evidence of this, and this is likely to negatively affect forces' ability to undertake the vital proactive and preventative aspects of fighting crime'.* (HMIC 2017, p.13)

The Police Foundation, an independent think tank, undertook a review of neighbourhood policing and sought to understand the differences between the National Neighbourhood Policing pilot between 2005 and 2008 and the ambitions of the National Police Chiefs Council's vision of policing in 2025. In this document produced in 2016, the NPCC set out five priorities for reform, the first of which is specifically related to neighbourhood policing. The NPCC highlighted a key challenge for local policing:

> *'Police need to develop a proactive and sophisticated understanding of community needs to keep people safe, particularly as communities*

become more diverse and complex. To these ends, we have invested in neighbourhood policing using uniformed police officers, community engagement officers and police community support officers to help solve local problems, tackle anti-social behaviour and build trust and legitimacy in communities.' (NPCC 2016, p.7)

The Future of Neighbourhood Policing (Higgins, 2018) supports the assertion of the inspectorate that the traditional neighbourhood policing model was eroding. The report was the result of a mixed methods qualitative study undertaken analysing workforce data documents, conducting interviews and focus groups with practitioners. This was supported by 31 of the 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales. This represents just under three quarters of all forces and as such is a significant sample size from which to draw the conclusion of the erosion of neighbourhood policing.

Higgins (2018, p.14) points to the impact of austerity and financial cuts to policing on the ability of forces to deliver against the 2008 blueprint neighbourhood policing model. Community engagement is a key component of the neighbourhood policing model, actively involving communities in tackling local crime and disorder issues. There is causality between an active programme of community engagement and how such activity supports the legitimacy of policing, and of building trust and confidence. Lister et al (2016, p.1) undertook a qualitative study of community engagement in Leeds, conducting interviews with police employees and members of the community. Through this work they supported this assertion describing community engagement as 'a central component of democratic policing'.

Community involvement in policing can take many forms, from structured official volunteering roles, through to communities holding their policing teams to account by attending local neighbourhood meetings, or simply providing police with information about what is happening within their community (Colover and Quinton, 2018). All of these functions depend upon the core principle of the policing model being one which is built upon trust, co-operation, and consent. This section of the review of the literature will therefore explore how community engagement within a neighbourhood policing context has developed over time.

Scholars have explored in depth the principles of community policing programmes and citizen participation in policing. (Tuffin et al 2006; Connell et al 2008; Skogan & Steiner 2004; Gill et al 2014; Myhill 2006): Indeed, Simmonds (2015, p.5) suggests that there is extensive material available on engagement and believed that some may question the need for further guidance on neighbourhood policing and engagement specifically; however, as Myhill (2006, p.51) points out, much of this is theoretical and there is a lack of empirical evidence in a UK context - 'there is a major gap in the evidence, regarding community perceptions of the process'. With engagement being identified as part of the key democratic process, it is only right that such activity is built on what works from a community perspective, not just what policing itself sees as effective.

Putting the policy in context – the literature on community engagement

Community engagement and participation in policing activity can be traced back to feudal systems of Anglo-Saxon Britain. All citizens were expected to take responsibility for the safety of their communities, be that through

formalised rotas of ‘watchmen’ or undertaking their obligations not to shelter a thief, as laid out in the Statute of Winchester (1285). ‘Policing’, however, became more professionalised over time with a movement of the responsibility increasingly falling to appointed officials as opposed to the community in general (Rawlings 2003, p.42).

A pivotal influence on the emergence of a democratic policing ideal was the thinking of Jeremy Bentham in the late 18th and early 19th century, who sought that those responsible for the maintenance of law and order must at all times command the approval of the public. It is this thinking that one could opine has transitioned to the modern concept of public trust and community confidence. (Grieve 2015, p.17)

However, the birth of modern day policing in 1829 is attributed to Sir Robert Peel, who is broadly credited with setting out nine principles of policing. The ‘Peelian principles’ detail the early stages of what could now be described as legitimacy in policing, that policing depends upon public approval and requires the principal of policing by consent. (The Independent Police Commission, 2018)

Interestingly, the way in which Peel’s vision of a publicly accountable democratic police service came about perhaps should be partially attributed to the French. At the time policing in Britain was looking to adopt a formal framework, the structured approach in France was militaristic, to the extent the police were a branch of their armed forces. As such they relied on ruling by fear, and force was used to execute their approach (Reiner, 2016). It could be said that concepts such as trust, legitimacy and accountability were most certainly not part of their thinking. As such, when Britain sought to provide a

formalised policing structure in 1829, it was not surprising that the approach adopted was a polar opposite than that utilised by the national foe. Reiner (2016, p.82) summarised the 'widespread opposition' to the formalisation of the police - 'many feared that the police would be a partisan tool of government oppression. Working-class leaders and Radicals in particular saw the new police as a thoroughly political military and spy agency'.

The extent to which the Peelian principles remain current can best be evidenced through how often reference is made to them within modern writing. Pertinently, they are still published as part of the College of Policing's (2018) Code of Ethics supporting material. Indeed, academics (Reiner 2016; Newburn 2015; Myhill 2006) have commented on how the Peelian principles continue to be referred to in contemporary policing literature. Furthermore, this can be observed through the principles continuing to be cited by police organisations in support of strategic priorities and as fundamental drivers of public trust and confidence.

Wakefield (2006) undertook a review of research on the effectiveness of foot patrol. She explained that the police service transitioned and grew throughout the twentieth century to form the structure that we would recognise today. The 43 Home Office Police forces of England and Wales have existed in their current format since 1945, however until the late 1960s this was built around a distinct geographical beat structure where officers retained responsibility for a small geographic area that was largely patrolled on foot. However, with technological developments, and in particular the prevalence of cars, the telephone and the police personal radio, calls for service increased, and more policing was carried out in car as opposed to traditional foot patrols. A new

approach was needed to be able to respond to increasing demand. In 1967 the Home Office published a circular, based on research, that encouraged forces to reduce the number of officers on foot patrol and put them on mobile patrols in vehicles. This approach was known as 'Unit Beat Policing' (Gregory, 1968). It was envisaged that the ability to provide a 24/7 immediate response over a much larger geographic area would lead to an increase in police-community relations. The outcome, however, was the exact opposite (Newburn 2003, p.85) and this is what could be argued as the start in a breakdown in relationships between the community and policing which existed throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

During the 1970's and 1980's, policing was predominantly reactive, and the focus was around responding to calls for service, an approach that Fielding (1996) described as an 'enforcement' model. The reality of this approach was that community engagement in any measurable form completely disappeared. Participation opportunities were limited and this led to a complete breakdown of relationships with socially marginalised groups and in particular, minority communities.

This breakdown manifested itself in large scale disorder in a number of cities across the UK in the 1980s. Between April and July 1981 large scale public disorder took place in London, Birmingham, Leeds and Liverpool (Mohdin, 2021). Each of these areas had a similar demographic profile of inner city deprivation, a diverse ethnic population and broader socio-political issues of racial tension and distrust in authority and in particular policing. Policing methods were confrontational, and the governance of many policing tactics

was arguably non-existent (Jefferson, 2012). This was an era of pre PACE (Police and Criminal Evidence Act (1984)), the statutory instrument that since enactment in 1986 has governed the use of many policing powers. One of the most controversial powers used by policing throughout modern history is that of stop and search. Before PACE was enacted, police officers relied on provisions under the Vagrancy Act (1824) that were known as 'sus laws' (Police Foundation 2012, p.1); these basically allowed anyone to be stopped and searched based only on a suspicion that an offence had been or may be committed. The rather vague nature of the definition was open to abuse, and the use of these powers was unarguably disproportionately targeted towards black and ethnic minority communities (Hall et al, 2009). Indeed, reflecting on the policing style of the time Frost and Phillips (2012, p.61) quoted John Murphy, a previous Chief Constable of Merseyside, who in 1981 was a member of their Operational Support Division – 'if we had built better relationships with the communities, rather than just police them in a particular way, this might not have happened. So right from the outset there is a recognition we need to change'.

As a result, in 1981, a public enquiry was led by Lord Scarman. The enquiry was commissioned to enquire into the riots. Scarman (1981) described the cause as 'complex political, social and economic factors' that he suggested were caused by a 'disposition towards violent protest'. He suggested that the disorder was a spontaneous outburst of resentment within particular communities in response to a number of incidents. Scarman did find irrefutable evidence of policing tactics being used indiscriminately and disproportionately towards black people, with particular reference to stop and

search. He also observed a complete breakdown in trust between the police and the black community, citing the collapse of arrangements for engagement between the public, police and local authority (Longstaff et al 2017, p.10).

Scarman made clear recommendations that the police must consult with local communities, 'I recommend the establishment of statutory liaison committees or other appropriate consultative machinery' (Scarman, 1981). At the same time, Lord Scarman stressed the importance of the part the community play and highlighted the two-way process of engagement, requesting that the community must take up the opportunities to participate. He did not however, suggest that racism within policing was an issue.

While the report led to the creation of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE), this was not enacted until 1986. This did provide a regulatory framework for the use of policing powers, and the introduction of a burden of proof set at reasonable belief as opposed to suspicion for stop and search activity in particular. While tighter regulation over the use of police powers was viewed to have a positive impact on police-community relations, regrettably, nothing really changed as a result. It can be reasonably argued that the Thatcher government did little to address the broader underlying issues that existed within society and policing to improve community relations. Indeed, Neal (2003, p.4) who undertook a media discourse analysis of both the Scarman and subsequent Macpherson enquiries, stated that 'Thatcher paid little heed' to his recommendations.

The 1993 racist murder of black teenager Stephen Lawrence highlighted the lack of progress since Scarman's report. In 1997, the Macpherson (1999) report, commissioned by the then New Labour Home Secretary, Jack Straw, made 70 recommendations largely relating to the need to increase openness, accountability and trust in policing, with a particular focus on the relationship with minority ethnic communities (Macpherson, 1999). Interestingly, the time between Stephen's murder in 1993 and the commissioning of a public enquiry some four years later, perhaps point to the underlying lack of understanding of the UK government of the impact this had on minority communities. The public enquiry was not the result of government needing to understand answers in the wake of a tragedy, more the result of tireless campaigning by Stephen's parents, Doreen and Neville Lawrence.

In relation to the importance of community engagement and promoting participation in policing, Macpherson understood a need to examine issues from a community perspective: 'The police must deliver a service which recognises the different experiences, perceptions and needs of a diverse society'. (Macpherson 1999, p.364). This cannot be achieved by the police in isolation and requires a relationship between the police, the community and other key public service providers.

> '*There must be a change so that there is genuine partnership between the police and all sections of the community. This cannot be achieved by the police alone. The onus is upon them to start the process. All other agencies, particularly those in the field of education and housing must be involved'*. (Macpherson 1999, p.373)

By suggesting these recommendations, he linked them to the new legislation of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, placing a statutory obligation on key community safety partners to work together to tackle crime and disorder issues:

> *'There is a striking and inescapable need to demonstrate fairness, not just by Police Services, but across the criminal justice system as a whole, in order to generate trust and confidence within minority ethnic communities, who undoubtedly perceive themselves to be discriminated against by "the system"'*. (Macpherson 1999, p.369)

Any review of Macpherson's findings cannot ignore the fundamental issue raised of 'institutional racism'. However, this is a much misunderstood concept. The police service, it could be argued, became defensive in relation to this at both an individual and organisational level (Holdaway & O'Neill, 2006). Macpherson (1999, p. 369) described this as

> '*the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness, and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people'*. (Macpherson 1999, p. 369)

The issue relating to the above statement is one of unwitting prejudice, not overt racist policing beliefs, actions, strategies or tactics. But what this truly required was pro-active, rather than reactive community involvement to

challenge such activities and participation in the development of a deeper contextual understanding from a community perspective.

Hall et al (2009, p.90) provided commentary on the legacy of Lawrence, speaking of the birth of the Independent Advisory Group within policing. This had a focus on strategic level decision making and involvement in critical incident management. Many UK police forces to this day have established advisory groups both at strategic and tactical levels. At force level, this would translate to advising on policy and strategy development; with more localised groups often used to advise on policing operations and tactics and providing independent scrutiny over the use of controversial enforcement tactics and stop and search. They also provide a valuable community perspective to inform community engagement and participation activity (Hall et al, 2009). Independent Advisory Groups have developed to look across a range of protected characteristic groups identified under the Equalities Act 2010. Many forces now have bespoke community consultative groups covering race, religion, sexual orientation and gender identity. Aplin (2022) provides support of this in her qualitative study of Independent Advisory Groups, where participants specifically advise around cultural issues of forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

The case for neighbourhood policing action and reform

Whilst clearly making significant steps forward with a legislative programme through the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, partnership work in the community engagement space continued to be fairly disparate with individual agencies largely undertaking engagement activity within their silos. Indeed, it could be

argued that in more recent times and a world of partnership working, independent advice and community tension monitoring programmes, this has still failed in some high profile endeavours. This approach did not properly identify significant tensions within communities in future disorder in both 2001 and 2011. In 2001 in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham Asian youths took to the streets to protest against the discrimination they saw against working class Asians (Amin, 2003). In 2011 following the fatal police shooting of Mark Duggan widespread disorder in London spread to other cities across the UK. (Lammy, 2012)

Community Engagement and Neighbourhood Policing are inextricably linked. In the late 1990s and throughout the 2000s, the New Labour administration focused heavily on the importance of local relationships between the police and the community. 'New Labour would continue much of the civic renewal rhetoric of 'empowerment' and 'engagement' (Fleming & McLaughlin 2012 p.283). The New Labour administration's flagship legislation was the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act. This placed a statutory obligation on government agencies working in the community safety space to work together. This highlighted the need for crime and disorder issues to be considered across local authority activity, such as planning and urban regeneration. This also provided a legal framework for partnership activity and information sharing across agencies. The Act further referred to the importance of such sharing in relation to community engagement. Fleming and McLaughlin (2012, p.284) observed that 'the legislation required the police and local authorities to work together on localised crime reduction strategies that would be premised on in-depth neighbourhood crime audits and public consultation.'

In 2001, the Home Office, under the newly appointed Home Secretary, David Blunkett, introduced their White Paper, 'Policing a New Century – A Blueprint for Reform' (Home Office, 2001). The document set out the reform agenda for policing and introduced the need to be able to both improve and measure public confidence – for example the British Crime Survey would include questions relating to public confidence. There was a significant focus on the visibility of not only local policing, but additionally the concept of community safety accreditation was introduced. This was delivered through the designation of policing powers to local authority wardens and private security company via discrete powers to tackle low level crime and disorder. The paper also established the role of the Police Community Support Officer (PCSO), intending it to be a uniformed policing presence, highly visible in communities, again designated with specific policing powers to tackle anti-social behaviour. These new community focused roles would become known as the 'wider police family' and undertake roles with a remit of engaging with communities and improving public confidence. This introduction was met with some scepticism with PCSOs commonly being referred to in the media as 'Blunkett's Bobbies' or 'Plastic Police' (Rojas, 2012).

The White Paper also led to the creation of the 'Police Standards Unit' within the Home Office. They would have a broad responsibility across policing but in particular, they were charged with working 'with the police to identify Policing Priority Areas where the machinery for engaging the local community needs to be developed' (Home Office 2001, p.7). The Police Standards Unit collected statistical data from forces and provided the performance measurement

function remotely for the Home Office (College of Policing, 2018). As such, their role was to identify areas through statistical data, largely from the British Crime Survey and the newly developed Policing Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF) public confidence data.

The New Labour reform agenda was furthered with the 2003 Green Paper, 'Policing: Building Safer Communities Together' and the subsequent 2004 White Paper, 'Building Communities, Beating Crime'. The agenda was set for the neighbourhood policing programme, encouraging 'the spread of neighbourhood policing for the 21st century to every community with improved police responsiveness and customer service'. (Home Office, 2004, p.6). The document went on to state 'neighbourhood policing is at its most effective when it is a shared undertaking with the local community. People, and in particular victims and witnesses, will only engage with their local police if they have confidence that when they make contact they will be treated well and that their concerns will be listened to and acted on effectively'. (Home Office, 2004, p.7)

An ambitious programme of local participation, priority setting, and accountability was put forward, concentrating on the importance of local empowerment with central government support, very much a third way approach. The language was cemented around the concept of the power and control passing from the politicians and civil servants of Westminster and Whitehall to a localism agenda.

A number of commitments were laid out to support this, including:

- *'all households receiving relevant information about local policing issues*

- *clearer, stronger arrangements for holding the police and other responsible agencies to account for their performance in tackling crime, anti-social behaviour and ensuring community safety*
- *a requirement on the police and other agencies to work directly with local people to identify the problems that are most important to them – giving people real opportunities to have a say in local policing priorities'.* (Home Office, 2004, p.24)

Evidence from research and learning from pilot locations contained within 'Building Communities, Beating Crime' was used to encourage 'engagement with communities, using a range of methods appropriate to the communities concerned;

> *'a focus on public involvement not only in identifying problems but in prioritising action and shaping and participating in solutions, along with police and partners; and mechanisms in place to target resources at local priorities and to hold police and partners to account for tackling neighbourhood problems'*. (Home Office 2004, p.49)

The White paper laid out specific foundations that the New Labour government believed effective engagement was built upon. This included the police understanding the demographics of local engagement, tailoring engagement to meet their diverse needs, updating the public with what is being done to tackle local issues and importantly, to understand that engagement should not be seen as a 'bolt on' activity. (Home Office, 2004, p.67)

To deliver this new vision of policing at a neighbourhood level, the National Reassurance Policing Programme (NRPP) was launched. This covered 16 local authority ward level pilot sites across 8 police forces in England and Wales and ran between 2003 and 2005. The Home Office conducted a two year evaluation of the implementation across the pilot areas. The main aim of the study was to fill an identified gap at the time, in research into the impact and effectiveness of local policing activity (Tuffin et al, 2006).

For the purpose of this research, the NRPP is a pivotal point in terms of understanding the existing literature. This was arguably the first time that an extensive synthesis of literature around neighbourhood policing in its various guises had taken place in a UK context. Specifically, there was a focus on community engagement, and the notion of it as a fundamental component underpinning neighbourhood policing.

The NRPP was built on the concept of reassurance policing, a theory that was developed in a partnership between Surrey Police and Surrey University. The purpose was to address a 'reassurance gap' between the perceived levels of crime by the community and the actual recorded crime levels. Additionally, this drew on the work of Innes, around 'signal crimes'. (Tuffin et al 2006, p.x). Innes' theory was that certain types of crime and disorder had a greater impact on the community and as such, these crime types required targeting by police in order to increase the public's perception of their safety (Innes, 2004). The NRPP did not seek to reduce crime, its purpose was built around addressing confidence, satisfaction, fear of crime and an increase in social capacity.

Further drawing on Innes 'signal crimes' theory, this also drew on the model of community policing that Skogan (1999) observed in his research on the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy 'CAPS' between 1993 and 1995. CAPS was described as 'a community-based policing strategy that was field-tested in five experimental districts in Chicago. In the CAPS program, officers in all districts and on all beats were instructed to work with neighbourhood residents to identify chronic local crime problems and to devise solutions for them. The views of the local residents were expressed through district-level advisory committees and monthly public meetings' (Howell, 2018).

Skogan and Hartnett (1999) evaluated the programme, undertaking qualitative research across a number of beats within the pilot districts, undertaking observations, interviews, surveys and focus groups with residents and officers. They observed that community policing was most effective when policing activity was targeted towards the crime and disorder that mattered most to communities, that the community were involved in both the identification and the resolution of local priorities, and that local authority figures, with a particular focus on police officers were visible and well known to them. Their research design was a randomised control trial, with random sampling within the trial areas and five matched control areas. As such, strong conclusions can be drawn from their findings and these strategies are all about the ability to effectively undertake targeted community engagement.

Drawing on this research, the NRPP began in October 2003, supported with innovation funding to 'stimulate activity in the trial sites' (Tuffin et al 2006, p.3). The programme was supported with a national governance structure through

the then Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), further supported with an independent academic advisory group. Supporting this approach, the NRPP cited several academic studies that supported key features of neighbourhood policing. Of these specific to community engagement were a number of studies that focused on the requirement for dedicated neighbourhood policing resources, responsible for developing community relationships (Skogan & Hartnett 1999; Singer 2004; Crawford et al 2003; Irving et al 1989), and further academic studies that drew on the process of community engagement and the active participation of communities in identifying and solving local problems (Weisburd and Eck 2004; Dalgleish and Myhill 2004 and Sherman et al 2002). The NRPP evaluation identified some key challenges in measuring the effectiveness of a reassurance policing programme, with outcomes of confidence and social capacity in particular offering unique hurdles to overcome in understanding success criteria.

Myhill (2006, p.51) pointed out that 'evidence to support community engagement in policing does exist. However, it is not consistent in relation to most of the potential theoretical benefits. There is a lack of empirical evidence in a UK context and a major gap in the evidence regarding community perceptions of processes'. Myhill's commentary was made in 2006 as part of a literature review of community engagement in policing on behalf of the then NPIA (National Police Improvement Agency); it was further published again in 2012 by the NPIA's successor the College of Policing, and again within the supporting evidence of the 2018 Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines.

The New Labour administration as part of the ‘Tough on Crime, Tough on the Causes of Crime’ mantra (Blair, 1993) sought to focus on local policing, partnerships and community engagement, through increased accessibility and accountability of the police to communities. Jones and Van Sluis (2009, p.134) described their ambitions with regard to community engagement as ‘an opportunity to exert influence over policing priorities in their neighbourhood, facilitate the effective development and implementation of joint action to reduce crime and disorder with key partners and the public, and to provide clear accountability and feedback to local people about what is being done in their area’. These were fundamental building blocks of the first iteration of the neighbourhood policing programme (Quinton and Morris, 2008).

It must be recognised that some work has been done within broader public services to understand the challenge in providing an evidence base to engagement. Indeed, in 2011, the Welsh Government commissioned work to develop a practical guide on community mapping and tension monitoring. The purpose of this was outlined as being ‘an important first step for any partnership setting out with the intention of promoting community cohesion is to understand the communities living in their local area’ (Eadson et al, 2011, p.3). This was laid out as professional guidance for those working within local authorities. This is not an academic text, and it fundamentally lacks supporting evidence.

In 2018, the College of Policing published guidelines on Neighbourhood Policing (College of Policing, 2018); the first of the seven guidelines is ‘Engaging Communities’. To support the development of what the College describe as ‘*evidence based’* guidelines, the College of Policing conducted a

rapid evidence assessment of contemporary literature relating to neighbourhood policing. This focused on two key research questions, 'what constitutes effective neighbourhood policing?' and 'what acts as a facilitator or barrier to the successful implementation of neighbourhood policing?' (College of Policing, 2018). The inclusion criteria for their REA were research related to western liberal democracies, however most studies were US based and there remains a lack of academic commentary and empirical evidence of what constitutes effective community engagement, both in theory and practice from a United Kingdom perspective. One must recognise the cultural differences when viewed both through a community and a policing lens. If comparing the UK and US, caution should be applied in respect of translating findings from the US directly to a UK setting.

The 2018 Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines (College of Policing 2018) set out a number of essential criteria for effective community engagement. The critical elements of the policy include having a targeted visible presence in communities, a clearly defined purpose for engagement, regular updates to the community, partnership working, tailoring engagement to local need, the community identifying their priorities and local team providing updates on activity to tackle these, engagement providing the opportunity for a two way dialogue and the need for policing teams to understand the threats, risks and needs of their local communities. The engagement guideline is underpinned by the statutory requirement (Section 34 Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011) to provide the opportunity for the community to meet their local policing team and for the community to be provided with information about crime and disorder in their area (College of Policing 2018, p.1).

Theoretical framework: policy implementation, translation and key actors

In this section we will explore the existing literature relevant to this study on policy implementation, translation and the role of key actors in the policy journey.

In Benson and Jordan's 2011 paper entitled, 'What we learned from policy transfer research', they opine that research within this field has grown from the original state centred approach identified by Dolowitz and Marsh (1996; 2000) to be much broader involving a range of approaches and actors. They explain the principle of policy transfer in the context of different countries using policy approaches from others and how policies implemented in one country will be applied in another. In relation to this study, this includes the transfer of policy development from one policy area to another. In this case, policy approaches from the health sector being adopted within policing. Dolowitz & March (2000) also identify that research within the field increased significantly between 1990 and 2000. Indeed, the increase in research within policy transfer has led to the field now being something that can be subject to research in its own right (Marsh and Sharman, 2009). Whilst there is now an extensive bank of academic writing in relation to the broad concepts of policy transfer and analysis, the citing of such research within a policing perspective is limited.

Sausman et al (2016, p.566) in their qualitative study within a healthcare setting sought to add to existing knowledge. They make a point that resonates with the intentions of this research: 'there are gaps in the study of how guidelines are 'rolled out' with need for attention to how local infrastructure is ingrained in the implementation process'. Their work identified how local structures and actors' impact upon the success of policy

implementation, drawing on the importance of the role that local actors can play, something Lipsky (2010) defined as the impact of 'street level bureaucrats'. We will go on to explore this in more detail later in the chapter. Sausman et al's observations are also seen in the work of Balen and Leyton (2016) in their critical analysis of other policy academics analysis of the movement of ideas between multiple actors (Latour 2005; Callon 1986; Star 2010: Marres 2013).

Matland (1995) highlighted the importance of local networks in the successful implementation of policy. This is particularly relevant to this research, as the neighbourhood policing guideline development process was built bottom up, but implemented top down, therefore the interplay of networks and the role of individual actors will be of particular interest.

Sausman et al (2016, p.1) also identify a gap in the existing policy research in relation to the 'dynamic and iterative nature of implementation'. They suggest that more understanding is needed of a top down and bottom up approach suggesting that the overall policy approach has been neglected in existing studies. Relevant to the final research question around how practice as a result of policy implementation could influence further policy, Sausman (2016, p.8) pointed out that while existing studies have contributed significant knowledge, they have failed to understand the 'recursive nature' of the process. Timmermans and Berg's (1997) concept of 'local universality' is considered in Sausman et al's study, that there will be a uniqueness in how policy is implemented at a local level, even with what could be seen as a standardised approach. This uniqueness was seen as an asset in the policy implementation process and how this led to innovation and learning.

Sausman et al (2016) suggest two key contributions to the policy literature, that one must look beyond the role of central and local actors by taking account of wider actor networks in policy implementation. Secondly, that innovation and adaption at a local level can help develop and reshape the policy content. Considering Sausman et al's (2016, p.31) conclusions, they suggest that more understanding of how evidence based practice is used to inform policy learning and performance management. This study therefore seeks to add to existing learning within this domain by analysing the implementation of neighbourhood policing policy.

As such, Sausman et al's work is the most pertinent to this study. In their study of the implementation of evidence based guidelines using the NICE model, Sausman et al (2015, p.4) observed that 'healthcare policy implementation literature has addressed specific concerns with the adoption and promotion of evidence-based guidelines into healthcare policy and practice'. While not set within in a policing context, it looks at policy transfer in the approach that the neighbourhood policing guideline development took.

The theoretical themes identified are now explored in more depth. As the refreshed neighbourhood policing policy adopted the evidence based approach used within the health sector, it is important to understand how this process is viewed by scholars. Chidgey et al (2007, p.453) analysed the implementation of NICE guidelines and saw them as an essential mechanism for improving everyday practice and keeping staff up to date with new information and that this is an effective method of putting policy in the context of practice. While the commentary from academics is largely positive with regards to evidence based practice models, Cairney (2016, p.1) suggests

evidence based practice is a ‘vague and aspirational’ description and does not accurately reflect the policy process.

The Street Level Bureaucrat

The 1980 work of Lipsky and his analysis of a wide range of public services in how they enact policy at the practitioner level, titled ‘The Street Level Bureaucrat’, Lipsky (2010) has resonance for my research and its explanation of the way neighbourhood policing policy is intended to operate across police forces and among individual officers. Lipsky (2010) describes two fundamental issues that need to be recognised within policy implementation in public services; firstly, the public service workers who have day to day engagement with the public, ‘the street level bureaucrat’ (Lipsky, 2010, p.3) and the organisations who employ a significant volume of street level bureaucrats, which Lipsky (2010, p.3) describes as ‘street level bureaucracies’. In the context of policy implementation, Lipsky (2010, p.8) opines that street level bureaucrats ‘engender controversy’ as they must be involved where a policy is to deliver change. The challenge, as Lipsky describes, is in the context of dealing with individual actors who have a high degree of discretion in their role. Controlling such a high degree of autonomy in decision making is a significant challenge for those seeking to make policy changes. Indeed, Lipsky (2010, p.15) cites an example of policing where the landscape is far too complex and wide ranging to provide precise description of what should be done in the form of policy or guidance.

It could also be argued that Lipsky has taken a left realist perspective in his assertion that street level bureaucrats have a greater influence over the poorer in society, as street level bureaucracies will tend to work more with those

reliant on state services. As a proponent of left realism, Young (1991, p.46) suggests that crime and disorder disproportionately affect the poorer in society.

Lipsky suggests that policy analysts often assume workers on the front line will largely conform to what is expected of them. The observation of organisational theorists is that there is almost always a break down in the message of leaders about the required task, usually down to communication challenges. However, Lipsky suggests that one should look at the differences between front line staff and leaders, that they do not share the same outlook or perceptions. While they may accept the legitimacy of the intended outcome, there may well be a marked difference in opinion in how one should reach the ultimate goal (Lipsky 2010, p.17). Significant workloads, lack of budget and staffing constraints also play a significant role in how a street level bureaucrat can deliver the goals set to them by their leaders (2010, p.29). This is also true in relation to how an individual street level bureaucrat's performance is measured. Lipsky (2010, p.168) describes quite bluntly that 'actual performance is virtually impossible to measure'. Performance targets within policing are much more complex than simple measures of crime commission and solved rates. Referring back to the Peelian principles of policing, the police should be judged on the absence of crime, not the ability to solve it. (Independent Police Commission, 2018). But how does one measure prevention, how does one measure 'softer' policing activities of community engagement? Lipsky's suggestion that public service goals can be idealised, confusing and complex (2010, p.40) is ringing true within the neighbourhood policing policy setting.

Lipsky makes an interesting observation in the context of inequality of service delivery and four key themes that impact on this. Firstly, bureaucracies need to be able to respond flexibly to individual need. Secondly, street level bureaucrats gain job satisfaction from making a difference. Thirdly, not everyone is entitled to the same degree to receive public services, and bureaucracies create their own qualifying criteria to 'triage' activity. These three then lead to the fourth, that is that the street level bureaucrat will use criteria to manage their workloads and may use intrinsically unfair selection methods to deliver 'bureaucratic success criteria' (Lipsky, 2010, pp. 104-107). Translating Lipsky's theoretical viewpoint into contemporary community engagement in policing, one could argue that this can be seen in going after what Newburn (2011, p.96) describes as 'low hanging fruit'. That is, rather than investing in breaking down barriers to engage with socially marginalised groups, policing, it could be argued, has taken the easier alternative of engaging with those that want to be engaged with, rather than those that need to be engaged with.

Lipsky (2010, p.159) discusses the implications of a fiscal crisis on public services, a theme that would resonate with the global financial crisis of the 2020s. While the financial challenges in contemporary Britain may be different to those Lipsky refers to in the United States of the 1980's, parallels can still be drawn to the impact on public services. Where budgets for bureaucracies reduce, by their very nature and by the large proportion of their budget being people, the number of street level bureaucrats will reduce, thus increasing the impact of reduced resources and budgets on those left.

Lipsky (2010, p.193) does advocate for the street level bureaucrat to be more involved in reform processes. In order to improve street level practice, street level bureaucrats should be more 'effective proponents of change'. Lipsky's approach is therefore a fundamental part of the theoretical framework for this research.

The Policy Streams

Kingdon's 1984 research was focused on policy development in the field of health in the late 1970s in the United States. Kingdon (2011, p.18) highlighted three key components of policy generation – 'problem recognition, policy generation and politics'. The problem stream refers to which issues become recognised as important for policy attention. The policy stream refers to the proposals for change developed by policy makers based on their interest in particular issues. The political stream relates to the wider political context including elections, changes in public opinion, changes in ministers and lobbying of interest groups. Kingdon's overall theory was that for a policy to emerge these three streams must converge for a policy window to open.

He sought to distinguish between the participants and the process. Kingdon looked through a wide lens at participants, how those outside policy formulation impact upon the process. Lobbyists, interest groups and other key actors outside of government can set the agenda (Kingdon, 2011, p.69). This was not just about those within the policy community. For Kingdon (2011, p. 118), 'the forces that drive the political stream and the forces that drive the policy stream are quite different'. He observed that the work of policy makers continues regardless of external influence, while political drivers will be

influenced much more heavily by public opinion and the presence of a problem that requires solving.

Kingdon's description of the political stream resonates with this research, he observed that swings of national mood, organised political forces and events within government all influence the development of the political agenda (Kingdon 2011, p.153). In the context of neighbourhood policing this could be seen in the New Labour policing policy agenda of the late 1990s and 2000's. The landslide victory of New Labour in 1997 was predicated on a mantra of 'tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime' (Blair, 1993). The proliferation of new statutory instruments seen to combat crime was paired with a relentless policy approach to support accountability of the police to their local community. As we have already observed through the review of the neighbourhood policing literature, this manifested itself in the NRPP in the late 2000's. Both Tuffin (2006) and Myhill (2006) reviewing the neighbourhood policing literature provide an insight into the problems, the political stream, and the policy stream combining at that time. This supports the assertions of Kingdon's theory of the three streams converging to create the 'policy window' (Kingdon 2011, p.165).

Policy windows only open rarely and for a very short period of time. Kingdon suggests that major changes in US public policy have been as a result of these (Kingdon 2011, p.166). Citing this in the context of this research, a problem of reducing confidence in policing (HMIC, 2016), the Inspectorate's observation of an erosion of neighbourhood policing (HMIC 2017), the policy community's observations of neighbourhood policing (Higgins 2018) and the involvement of the policing minister as a policy entrepreneur (Home Office 2018) combined to

create a policy window for a refreshed Neighbourhood Policing Policy (College of Policing, 2018) to emerge.

The Policy Entrepreneur

An important theory for this research is the involvement of those Kingdon described as advocates for policy change, those that can drive activity through a set of defining characteristics similar to those seen in the business community. These are the people willing to invest their time, energy and reputation and Kingdon describes these actors as 'policy entrepreneurs' (Kingdon 2011, p.122). These actors are not necessarily those who drive the activity either politically or through presence within a specific policy community but can come from outside such as special interest groups or researchers. What they do all share is that common theme of seeking some sort of return for themselves in response to giving their time and resources to drive a particular agenda. Kingdon sought to understand the drivers for people who become policy entrepreneurs. Ultimately their reasons can be broad, from having a vested interest over job security, a personal or professional affiliation with the subject or simply because they are 'policy groupies' (Kingdon 2011, p.123), that like being near to power or they simply enjoy being a part of the policy community and the policy process.

Policy entrepreneurs play an important role in what Kingdon (2011, p. 143) describes as a lengthy process of 'softening up' the public, specialist groups and the policy community itself. Without this process, the proposed policy will not be formulated. Kingdon suggests three qualities that a policy entrepreneur must have, firstly the claim to be heard and the background to legitimate their right to be listened to. Secondly, they must have the right connections

combined with technical expertise in the subject area. Thirdly, tenacity, they must be persistent and not willing to take no for an answer (Kingdon 2011, pp 180-181).

Policy implementation literature in a policing context

In their 2016 study, Lumsden and Goode (2016) considered the rise of evidence based practice as a dominant discourse in the policing policy agenda. This was a qualitative study drawing in the views of police officers and staff in England. They referred to existing ethnographies and the role of 'insiders' within policing research. This is something relevant to my research that I will discuss in more depth within the research methods section of this thesis. Lumsden and Goode (2016, p.3) discuss the rise of the evidence based policing movement within medicine and social care, citing Sherman's (2013) description of using 'what works' to inform policy development. There was, however, caution exercised in an over reliance on the 'what works' agenda, and that such an approach risks 'de-legitimising forms of sociological and criminological research' (Lumsden & Goode, 2016, p.26).

Terpstra & Fyfe (2015) undertook a document analysis of police reform in Scotland and the Netherlands. This study sought to understand what could be learned from significant restructuring to national policing bodies. In their review of the literature on policy implementation they refer to the 'Implementation gap' (2015, p.531). They cited the work of various authors (Ham and Hill, 1986; Hill and Hupe, 2009; Hupe, 2014; Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973) in support of their argument that there is always a gap between the promises of implementation and the reality of delivery. Terpstra & Fyfe (2015) support this assertion, and this will be a critical element to consider

in answering my research questions in relation to the understanding of policy at the operational level.

Fielding and Innes (2007) described the challenges of performance measures in relation to community policing, describing the ambiguity of what community policing means and how traditional police performance regimes based on quantitative data fail to give broader understanding. They discuss the need for policing to better understand what qualitative measures may look like, and that policing needs to consider more 'subtle and sophisticated analysis' (Field & Innes, 2007, p.131). This will be particularly relevant when considering how the third research question of understanding what works and what good practice looks like can be understood.

What is clear from the existing literature, is that the lack of empirical evidence identified by Myhill (2006) in relation to studies of engagement remain to this day. Furthermore, in the context of policy development and implementation, the evidence is weak in relation to policy transfer in policing. While the studies above have sought to understand policy implementation in policing, there is no available study to date on policy implementation within neighbourhood policing since Quinton & Morris (2008) undertook their impact review of the NRPP implementation.

In reviewing the existing literature on policy development, there is a unique opportunity in this study to observe the role of existing theories on policy agendas, policy entrepreneurs and street level bureaucrats in the policy journey of the Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines. Additionally, as the first time the NICE policy model has been used in policing, we can seek to add to

the existing knowledge and build upon Sausman et al's (2015) policy translation through localisation work.

In the next chapter, I will discuss my research design and methodology and outline how the research questions will be approached methodologically.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

In this chapter I introduce the overall research design, explaining why the methods used were chosen and deployed within this study. I will look in detail at why a qualitative approach was undertaken, exploring the arguments for using a case study, semi structured interviews, focus group and documentary analysis. I will explain how thematic analysis was utilised to identify core themes emerging from the data obtained. This chapter will also discuss the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on this research and explore the wider ethical issues and explore the concepts of insiderness and the participant observer.

This research provided a unique opportunity to study the path of neighbourhood policing policy from national development, through roll out and to implementation at the local level. The refreshed neighbourhood policing policy followed the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) evidence based guideline approach. An evidence-based policy, in its purest form, is where the evidence should define the policy, and the subsequent evidence informs the subsequent policy development (NICE, 2021). Gustavsen (2001, p.17) suggests that 'theory alone has little power to create change and there is a need for a more complex interplay between theory and practice'. This research allowed for exploration of how well that interplay occurred, does the theory inform the practice, and does practice then inform developments in the policy and theory.

Overall research design

As a serving police officer with direct access to research subjects, in order to conduct this study, I undertook a participatory approach to a qualitative inquiry, employing a case study and undertaking thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews, a focus group and documentary analysis.

Teherani et al (2015, p.669) describe qualitative research as a 'systematic enquiry into social phenomena in natural settings.' Their description of qualitative methods aligns with the intention of this study, that is to better understand how organisations function, the experiences of groups and individuals within this and the impact of events on them. Flick (2022, p4) supports this view that qualitative methods allow social researchers to understand the specific relevance of social relations. It could be argued that the introduction of a new neighbourhood policing policy framework will be dependent on the social relations between key policy actors. This has synergy with the underpinning theories of Kingdon and Lipsky who observed that policy implementation is built upon the relationships between key actors, be those policy makers, policy advocates or frontline practitioners enacting them. Flick (2022) also suggests the main reason for choosing qualitative methods is that the research question requires the use of qualitative methods and not a different one. I would argue that in line with Flick's observation the research questions cannot be answered by quantitative methods. Statistical analysis on its own does not allow one to build a picture of the social factors within communities or organisations, nor appreciate the cultural challenges from both an organisational and public perspective (Neuman, 2013). Relevant to my approach to this study and my close relationship with the subject matter, I feel

a resonance with Denzil and Lincoln (2000, p.10), who explain that researchers seek to stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and the subject and how situational constraints shape qualitative inquiry. Freeman et al (2007, p.25) describe the strengths of qualitative studies as open and supple, describing how its value is in how it incorporates a wide range of philosophies, theories, research designs and methods.

To understand how national policy development has translated to actual activity undertaken at a local level, the chosen research design recognises the different methods needed to accomplish this. These methods recognise the diverse approaches required to explore policy development, translation, and implementation. This effectively breaks down to two levels, National (the policy level) and Local (the force and community level):

National level:

1. Documentary analysis (national)
2. Semi Structured Interviews with three key national policy actors

Local level:

A Case Study force

1. Documentary analysis (local)
2. Semi Structured Interviews with force leaders (one strategic and one operational)
3. Focus group with front line staff

Summary of research methods applied to this study

The table below provides a summary of the qualitative methods used:

Methods	Research documents/participants
Document analysis	Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines (2018)
	Rapid Evidence Assessment (Colover & Quinton, 2018)
	Initial force readiness assessment (Hope et al, 2018)
	Mid-project assessment (Hope et al, 2019)
	Concluding project report (Miles et al, 2021)
	Knowledge Hub (2022)
	HMICFRS PEEL Inspection (HMICFRS, 2022)
	East Division Engagement Strategy
	Riverside Engagement Plan
Qualitative interviews	Outgoing NPCC lead
	Incoming NPCC lead
	College of Policing lead
	Case Study force strategic lead
	Riverside Inspector
Focus group	One focus group with: Police Sergeant Police Constable Police Community Support Officer
Case study	Case study force and selected local Neighbourhood team within it as a convenience sample
Field Notes & Diary	Details of the primary research activity undertaken and my personal observations on the research process.

Setting the Scene

To help understand my role within the policy journey, the case study area and those involved in the research, this section provides an overview of the geography of the case study area and the key actors involved in the research. To protect the anonymity of the case study area and participants within it, pseudonyms were used. The case study area within this study is referred to as 'Riverside' to preserve confidentiality.

My role within the research

During this study, I have worked for two different forces and was seconded to the College of Policing as the Neighbourhood Policing Adviser. It is through this role that I gained access to research participants and documents that would otherwise have been difficult for others to gain access to. One of the key actors interviewed, the policy lead for the College of Policing, was my line manager for the first year of my secondment to them.

At the start of this research in 2016, I was the tactical lead for Neighbourhood Policing in a different force area. During this time, I supported the College of Policing with the Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) that informed the national policy development this research is about in the summer of 2017. In November 2017, I joined the College on secondment. My role at the College of Policing was specifically created to support the development and implementation of the Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines (College of Policing, 2018). In February 2020, I left the College of Policing and began a role as a Duty Inspector, managing response teams within the case study force. While in this role, I conducted interviews with the College lead, both NPCC leads and the case

study force strategic lead. During my fieldwork, my day to day role within the organisation changed, I took over a force level role as a Temporary Chief Inspector within the case study force's Public Protection department. It was during my time in this role that I conducted the interview with the Riverside Inspector and the focus group with the front line team.

The Case Study force

The case study force is a county police force bordering London and it is the force I am employed by. It is an affluent, semi-rural county with several large towns, with many people commuting into the capital every day. While it is home to some of the most expensive properties in the UK, it also has areas of poverty that feature quite highly on the indices of multiple depravation. (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2019). The force is structured into three divisions or Basic Command Units (BCU); North, East and West. Each division is then made up of Boroughs, these are co-terminus with local authority boundaries. Within the case study force, we will be focusing on the Riverside Borough.

Riverside borough borders the Metropolitan Police Service area and up until the year 2000, policing services for the borough were provided by the Metropolitan Police. Whilst largely affluent, there are two significant areas of deprivation that are among the most deprived in the force area. Focus group participants, through their own local knowledge, provided background information around the demographic make-up of the area, including a large Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) community and how the closeness to the capital brings issues around county lines drugs markets and associated drug related harm.

Applying methods to answering the research questions

The chosen methods apply to the research questions as below:

1) How have national guidelines for neighbourhood policing informed community engagement at a force strategic level?

   This was achieved through documentary analysis of policy documents, the national delivery plan, reviews of policy implementation and conclusion, and through three semi-structured interviews with national leads from NPCC and the College of Policing. The National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) neighbourhood policing portfolio lead changed during this study, so both the outgoing lead and incoming lead were interviewed.

2) To what extent has national policy translated into delivery of community engagement at the tactical level?

   Research was conducted with staff working at the force level, at the strategic, tactical, and operational level. There was a documentary analysis of force engagement plans, compared to force strategic and national policy; interviews conducted with the force strategic and operational leaders (2 interviews). Additionally, a focus group held at local level (with participants at Sergeant, Constable, and Police Community Support Officer level).

3) How is community engagement captured and measured?

   Interviews were conducted with key actors at the national policy level, force level and through the focus group. Additionally, thorough documentary analyses of local plans, systems data, performance data, and processes that are used to capture and disseminate promising practice was undertaken, supported by review of published Inspectorate findings.

4) Is there evidence of promising practice at a local level informing force and national policy development?

   Interviews were conducted with the key actors at policy and operational level and informed by the focus group. Documentary analysis was undertaken of local plans, the national Knowledge Hub, and local libraries of practice and ‘what works’ repositories.

Documentary Analysis

National and local level documentary analysis was undertaken to understand content, development and dissemination planning of the Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines (College of Policing, 2018). Researching documentary evidence aids in the understanding of the relevance as to ‘why’ particular approaches are chosen (Dalglish et al 2020). This directly involves policy documentation, delivery plans and relevant local profile information and relevant data sets held by partner agencies to which local policing teams have access - specifically, where data sources have informed community engagement plans, through the undertaking of community mapping exercises.

MacDonald (2008, p.286) points out that ‘documentary research has an affinity with ethnography and fieldwork’. Central to this approach is developing an understanding of governance structures, both formal and informal, the interplay of policy and practice and what Sausman et al (2016, p.564) refer to as ‘the current drive for ‘evidence based policy’’ development.

In relation to documentary analysis, Scott (1990) introduces four criteria for assessing the quality of social research evidence in terms of authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning. Each of the documents chosen were assessed against the below criteria:

Authenticity – The provenance of the research material is key, as is the selection of research documents and why they have been chosen. Authenticity refers to how genuine the document is and ‘whether it is actually what it purports to be’ (Scott, 1990, p. 19). As the documents within this study are from national policing bodies these can be viewed as ‘authentic’.

Credibility – Scott (1990, p.7) explains that the research material must be ‘free from error or evasion’. Indeed, even with official documents from government, one must be sighted on the potential bias that may exist from the author and recognise the factors and influence of both the political and operating landscapes in place at the time.

Representativeness –This relates to how representative the documents analysed are of all those available. Fortunately, my insider role provided access to protectively marked documents that the outsider researcher would not have had access. I have been unable to include these documents within this thesis to comply with the handling restrictions of government protected assets. This broad access allowed me to include a wide sample of documents

for analysis. The positioning of these documents within the wider context of the subject matter was explored within the literature review chapter. This demonstrates how this study positions itself in relation to existing research and how this will make a new contribution to the field, whilst recognising the strength of evidence of existing approaches.

Meaning – The clarity of the evidence available and the ability to draw meaningful conclusions from them. Scott (1990, p.34) points out that 'texts must be studied as socially situated products'. In analysing the meaning of documents in this study, this was about understanding the relationship between the documents and how they are positioned in the wider context of the policy development. The emerging themes from these documents supported contextual understanding of the operating landscape, the political dimensions, the impact of austerity on public services and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The documents were subject to further detailed examination after interviews were transcribed to improve greater understanding of their 'meaning'.

At a national level the documents include the published policy documents, and their supporting material. That is, the neighbourhood policing guidelines, supporting material for senior leaders, supporting material for supervisors, and supporting material for frontline staff (College of Policing, 2018). In addition, the impact and implementation document, authored by the College of Policing researchers, which details the rapid evidence assessment informing the development of the neighbourhood policing guidelines (Colover & Quinton, 2018). The national policy documents and supporting material were chosen as these contain both the context and content of the policy. It was important to

understand the baseline, that is to understand the core themes the policy is seeking to address, and the methods identified for senior leaders and practitioners alike to use to put the policy into action at a force and local level.

Policy implementation documents were also analysed, these included the reports on progress undertaken by the national implementation team, made up of the National Police Chiefs Council and the College of Policing. Three reports were produced throughout the policy implementation journey: the initial force readiness assessment, a pre implementation analysis in 2018 at the start of the process (Hope et al, 2018); a project mid-point assessment in 2019 (Hope et al, 2019) and the concluding report in 2020 (Miles et al, 2021). The mid-point assessment and concluding report were based on a peer review process undertaken by forces, where paired forces provided an independent viewpoint on how they were integrating the new neighbourhood policing guidelines.

I chose these documents as these critically reviewed the policy implementation journey, providing a high level commentary on how successful policy implementation was. The reports highlighted facilitators and blockers to implementation, which were key to developing a deep contextual understanding of emerging themes and issues.

The findings of the Inspectorate through their Police efficiency, effectiveness, and legitimacy (PEEL) inspection were also reviewed for the case study force. PEEL assessments are conducted by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services on all 43 territorial forces in England and Wales (HMICFRS, 2022). The PEEL report for the case study force was published in June 2022. This document was chosen as it provided

an independent view of the case study force's ability to engage with their communities and to deliver an effective neighbourhood policing function.

At a case study level, neighbourhood policing policy documents were chosen, specifically engagement strategies and plans, at a force and local level. I chose these documents as these would help to understand if there is a link between the areas of focus from national policy documents and to see if these are evidenced as being delivered at a more local level. The case study force's use of a local platform for sharing practice and the national Knowledge Hub product were also analysed for evidence of emerging and promising practice being shared. It was through permission of my Chief Constable, who was also the neighbourhood policing NPCC lead at the time, that I gained access to the documents for analysis. I have been unable to include these as appendices due to their protective marking and sensitive nature. These documents were stored within the Police National Network IT structure to maintain confidentiality. A full list of the documents analysed can be seen in Appendix 10.

Semi-structured interviews

Holstein and Gubrium (2011, p. 157) argue, 'interviews are useful tools for systematic social enquiry because of their special capacity to incite the production of narratives that address issues relating to particular research concerns'. Semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to respond to both the positivist argument in support of the science of structured interview, and the emotionalist view of the unstructured approach. While the benefit of a less rigid structure is the ability to elicit more authentic responses (Miller and Glassner 2011, p.132), the application of structure allows a direction of the

enquiry, as Yin (2014, p.110) alluded to when he stated that interviews 'resemble guided conversations rather than structured queries'. The ethnographic benefit to using the interview as a research method is that 'they allow the researcher to explore in depth some aspect of the respondent's feelings, motives, meanings and attitudes'. (Francis 2000, p.61). Within this study, this allowed me to explore the differing views of the policy process, looking to see if there were similarities or differences that Francis observed. This was particularly relevant to the underpinning theories of Lipsky's (2010) 'street level bureaucrat' and Kingdon's (2011) 'policy entrepreneur'. I was interested to explore the concepts Kingdon noted on the reasons certain individuals become policy entrepreneurs (e.g., what were their motivations and drivers).

Three semi-structured interviews (see interview schedule in Appendix 4, and questions in Appendix 5) were conducted with the key policy actors at the national level and two interviews with key actors within the case study force (see interview questions in Appendix 6). Due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, none of the interviews could be conducted to face to face and all were undertaken using Skype audio conferencing. The interviews were recorded using a digital audio recorder.

Utilising my existing professional relationship with the key policy actors allowed me to make a direct approach to all participants using email. I had obtained permission from my Chief Constable to use force IT systems and my work email address to make contact. The gatekeeper letter to grant access to data and participants can be seen in Appendix 9. It was through my Chief

Constable, that I was also able to gain access to the incoming NPCC lead to approach them to participate.

Each participant within the study at the point of initial contact was provided with the participant advert for this study (see Appendix 1). This explained the background to the research and my desire to add to existing knowledge along with my hope that my findings will help to inform future policing policy development. On agreeing to take part, all participants were provided with a participant information sheet (see Appendix 2). This also included signed consent to participate, these were signed electronically since all interviews and the focus group were conducted remotely. Participants were all aware that their involvement was completely voluntary and that their consent could be removed at any time.

In addition, at the start of each interview and at the beginning of the focus group, the participant information sheet was read out to all those taking part and their verbal consent also obtained before proceeding. During the process of obtaining participants' informed consent, they were advised that their contributions would be anonymised and that individuals would be referred to by role or a pseudonym used. In the case of the key policy actors at national level, they were made aware that despite the fact their names would not be included, they may be easily identifiable due to their role and are well known within the neighbourhood policing policy community. This was the case for the College Lead, both NPCC leads and the force strategic lead. In each case participants were happy to proceed, understanding their responses may be attributable to them. For the local Inspector, their name was not used, and

they were referred to as the Riverside Inspector; all focus group participants have had pseudonyms applied.

Each of the interviews and the focus groups were audio recorded using an audio recording device recording the conference call, participants were made aware of this during the obtaining of informed consent. The personal data of participants has been stored within the Police National IT Network to maintain data integrity and security. None of the participants were offered any inducements for taking part, financial or otherwise.

I have received no financial support in the completion of this research. I have however been afforded limited time during my working hours by my employer during this study to undertake field work and to write up.

The College Lead

I elected to interview the portfolio holder for Local Policing within the College of Policing, who had responsibility for the overarching policy development, he will be referred to as the College Lead throughout this study. He was directly recruited by me; I had an existing relationship with him, as he was my line manager while I was seconded to the College of Policing from 2017 to 2018 and again in 2019 to 2020. His role was that of Policing Standards Manager for Local Policing, a seconded Police Superintendent with policy responsibility for neighbourhood policing, response policing, roads policing and stop and search for the College. He had been in post for about a year before the guideline development, he left his role mid-way through the development phase in 2018. He returned to the same role for a further secondment in late

2019 when the role became vacant again and returned for the final stages of implementation. He was interviewed on the 21st of June 2021. His views were important to capture not only from a policy development perspective, but through their working with other key policy actors as the policy moved into the implementation phase. He was one of the key actors involved in the policy development from its inception.

Outgoing NPCC lead

The outgoing NPCC lead was interviewed. He is my own Chief Constable. I interviewed him as he held the national portfolio for neighbourhood policing for a number of years and were in post prior to the development of the neighbourhood policing guidelines and remained in that role to almost the end of the policy implementation phase. He had overall policy development responsibility nationally and was accountable to the board of the National Police Chiefs Council for delivering the recommendations for a new policy set out by the Inspectorate (HMIC, 2017). He was the Chair of the guideline committee that developed the guidelines, and he chaired the national group responsible for both policy development and implementation. He is therefore the most influential of all the policy actors interviewed with ultimate responsibility for the development and implementation of the refreshed neighbourhood policing policy. At the start of the neighbourhood policing guideline development, he was the Deputy Chief Constable of the case study force area. He was then promoted in 2019 to Chief Constable of the same force. He relinquished the NPCC neighbourhood policing portfolio in 2021, just prior to our interview, to take on a different national portfolio responsibility. He was interviewed on the 16th of June 2021. I worked closely with the outgoing

NPCC lead during my time on secondment at the College of Policing and had regular contact with him, as such I was able to recruit him through a direct approach. At the time his interview was conducted, I had left the College of Policing and had transferred forces, working as a uniform Inspector within his force.

Incoming NPCC lead

The Incoming NPCC lead is the Deputy Chief Constable of a rural Welsh police force. She took over the NPCC Neighbourhood Policing and Police Community Support Officer portfolio lead in 2021. She was a field officer for the 2008 Neighbourhood Reassurance Policing Programme (NRPP) led by the National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA), the precursor organisation to the College of Policing. The interview took place on the 18th of May 2021; at the time of the interview, she was the Temporary Chief Constable for their force. I had no existing relationship with her, as I had left my role with the College of Policing during the tenure of the outgoing NPCC lead. She was recruited through the existing connections I had with the outgoing NPCC lead who was able to make an initial approach on my behalf. I selected to interview her, as she may hold a different view on the policy journey; she now owned the portfolio at a national level and would have responsibility for any further policy development. She is also key on deciding on any future academic evaluations based on the implementation of the Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines. She is now responsible for chairing the national neighbourhood policing guidelines implementation structure that remained from the time of her predecessor.

Case Study Force Strategic Lead

To understand how the policy translated from national to force level, I interviewed the Temporary Assistant Chief Constable with portfolio responsibility for local policing across the case study force. I have known her for several years; she is my current Assistant Chief Constable and my second line manager. I worked directly with her during my time with the College of Policing during the policy implementation. At that time, she was a divisional Chief Superintendent in the case study force and held the neighbourhood policing lead role for that force. I attended Southeast regional implementation meetings for the neighbourhood policing guidelines where she represented the case study force. I was able to recruit her directly making use of my existing working relationship with her. She has a background of operational policing and described in her interview a passion for neighbourhood policing and an involvement in it for many years. The interview took place on the 18th of May 2021.

Riverside Inspector

The Borough Commander for Riverside Borough within the case study force was interviewed. He was able to provide context in how the neighbourhood policing guidelines translated within the case study force, from a force policy perspective to tactical activity and delivery on the frontline. He is an Inspector, responsible for the delivery of neighbourhood policing within their Borough, working with partners to solve local problems. He is also the direct line manager and second line manager of the focus group participants. He is an experienced police officer and have been an Inspector for about three years.

The Riverside area within the case study force was selected as a convenience sample. I was aware that two other Boroughs within the geography of the case study force could not be used as the Borough Commanders were directly involved in the national policy development work. As such, this would have provided a potentially biased viewpoint and over informed view at the local level based on their unique experiences of working at the national policy level. Three other borough areas were not selected as these were the areas I had geographic responsibility for operational policing in my day-to-day role, I therefore wanted to minimise the impact of the potential biases of my insiderness (discussed in greater depth later in this chapter). The selected case study Borough was informed through conversations with the case study force strategic lead. I have not had a direct working relationship with him, but he was recruited through a direct approach, as we both work for the same force. He was interviewed on the 21st of December 2021.

Using a case study

To facilitate understanding of the translation of policy, a case study force was used. The specific case study force was chosen due to the readiness of access this afforded and my existing relationship with both the organisation and the key actors interviewed within it. The selection of the case study force also enabled ready access to data and documents. Due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and travel restrictions in place during the time of fieldwork, this supports the choice of this case study force, that did not require travel. Yin (2014, p.11) provides supporting evidence for the use of case studies: ‘the first and most important condition for differentiating among the various research

methods is to classify the type of research question being asked...”how” and “why” questions are likely to favour using a case study, experiment, or history’. Yin (2014, p. 12) explains that a history cannot introduce ‘direct observation of the events being studied and interviews of the persons involved in the events’.

The use of a case study facilitates the identification of delivery mechanisms of the policy for further documentary analysis. Additionally, this provides the basis for further semi-structured interviews held with both strategic leaders responsible for the implementation of national policy at a force level (i.e., the Chief Officer of at least Assistant Chief Constable rank). This was supported by a semi structured interview with an operational leader at middle management level (Chief Inspector or Inspector) responsible for delivering that strategy.

In selecting the case study area, it is important to remember that ‘the first criterion should be to maximise what we can learn’. (Stake 1995, p.7). Stake opined that one should not try to choose a typical case, as one does not study one case to understand others. Therefore, the case study force selected and the local Borough within this provide an excellent opportunity to study both policy transfer and its impact upon community engagement through a force and borough area that have a breadth of geographical, cultural, and ethnic diversity.

The use of case studies has previously garnered criticism and the same applies with reference to the use of participatory approaches. Yin (2014, p.7) suggested that case study research has traditionally been considered ‘soft’ by other academics, and only useful in the ‘exploratory phase of an investigation’. Stake accepts some criticism of qualitative enquiry, in particular in relation to

argument over its subjective nature, but equally argued this to be strength of the approach. 'Subjectivity is not seen as a failing needing to be eliminated but as an essential element of understanding'. (Stake 1995, p.45). Silver (2008, p.116) reminds us that, 'if a participatory approach is to be successful, involvement needs to be real'. That is that the research subjects are central to the process, their ideas and thoughts are central to making the research meaningful. Kingdon and Lipsky's theories, as applied within this study, focus on the 'people element', how they facilitate or block policy implementation. Within this study, the key actors and their involvement in the process at all levels are key to understand the policy journey.

A key part of my research methodology was the importance of synthesising the findings of primary research activity undertaken with key actors and from various documents. My case study database recorded all data obtained as informed by Yin (2014, p123). This included my use of both Field Notes and a Field Diary. The Field Notes contain the detail of what occurred, and the diary was used to establish my feelings and involvement, offering a good opportunity to identify and capture potential biases. Upon review, this also gave scope to identify how dominant voices may have influenced groups, or where other external factors have influenced the research process. Indeed Fielding (2008, p.273) described the production of field notes as the observer's 'raison d'etre'. The use of both my field dairy and field notes was a critical part of understanding the relationships between the identified themes. Indeed, my field notes acted as a bridge between the interviews conducted and the documents analysed. My field notes contained observations on the subjects being discussed and were recorded both at the time of semi-structured

interviews taking place and on my transcription post interview. Field notes contained my observations of how certain subjects were discussed by interview participants, such as when I could hear a change in the tone of the interview subject, indicating a real passion around a particular subject. Such observations were important in providing a deeper contextual understanding of emerging themes, such as the importance of key policy actors filling the role of a policy entrepreneur. Or, in understanding the frustration that certain blockers presented to the policy journey.

My field dairy contained more personal reflections, which I will touch on in more detail when I look at personal reflections on my research journey later in this chapter. This did provide an opportunity for me to learn from the research process, such as how I did not in my early interviews probe to the depth I would have liked based on a mutual understanding of the subject between the participant and I as the researcher.

My approach to this was based on what Flick (2004, p.178) describes as the triangulation of data; that is 'the combination of data brought together from different sources, at different times, in different places or from different people'. I sought to use triangulation to both seek validity within the data obtained and to understand commonality or otherwise of the key themes identified. Such an approach has been the subject of debate by academics as a useful tool in looking across different research methods (Flick 1989; Seale 1999; Steinke 1999). The approach I took to triangulation is best described by Flick (2004, p.181) who described the 'systematic triangulation of perspectives'. Flick explains that different methods and perspectives are combined in a targeted way and can be used to bring together both subjective views and other

observational data. This fits well with my approach of using subjective data from semi-structured interviews alongside data from documents and wider observations from my own experience. Observational data covers the broad range of my operational experience of working within the policy community at the time of the policy development and early stages of translation. I was present within the guideline committee meetings that developed policy, the national and regional meetings that set the plan for the operationalising of policy and worked with the case study force, supporting them in the early stages of implementation. My field diary allowed me to record observational data, that did not form an explicit part of my original study design, but were a benefit of the case study approach. A benefit of being an 'insider insider' (Brown 1996), a discussion I will build upon later in the chapter, is understanding how key policy actors interacted with the policy. This included my presence in meetings where elements of the policy were discussed. I observed some of the blockers and facilitators of the policy journey first hand, and while not part of the primary data collection, this allowed me to explore some of these issues when undertaking field work, both in looking for similar discourse in my analysis of the documents, interviews and conducting the focus group.

The focus group

Adoption of policy at the grass roots level was tested through a focus group within the case study force, held with frontline staff delivering at the local level on the 6th of December 2021**.**

The focus group consisted of frontline staff at Sergeant, Constable, and Police Community Support Officer level (see focus group questions in Appendix 7). I had intended for a focus group to have at least five participants; however, due to operational pressures on the day, this had only three participants. I made the decision to proceed with the focus group as this contained representation at Sergeant, Constable, and Police Community Support Officer level. The local policing team is a relatively small team with only twelve officers in total. While a relatively small sample size of five was chosen, this reflects the ability to have officers on duty and able to attend a focus group. It may have been possible to arrange a time when officers who were not on duty could have also attended. I felt this impacted too heavily on the operational ability of the team and impacted on them being able to have important time away from work. I anticipated that operational issues may arise so I proceeded with the three team members who were able to attend. I was confident that I would obtain a good understanding from the three participants based on their roles, length of service and insights into the subject matter being explored. The focus group participants were very much a convenience sample based on the size of the team and availability. They were recruited on my behalf by the Riverside Inspector, their line manager, who under my instruction looked for a time and date when a breadth of experience across the team was available. I was then informed who would be attending so they could be sent participant information sheets ahead of the focus group. At the start of the process, I reiterated the contents of this, explaining my role as a researcher, the rationale for the study and covered anonymity and consent. Consideration was given to running a further focus group, but due to competing operational demands and good engagement from those present, I felt this was not required. The use of focus

groups allows the dynamics of a group situation to generate debate and thinking to further explore subject areas. Smithson (2000, p.105) defines the focus group as 'a controlled group discussion, on the basis that the group interaction generated through discussion is of prior importance to this methodology'. Smithson (2000 P.116) described the limitations of the focus group as a research method – 'the tendency for certain types of socially acceptable opinion to emerge, and for certain types of participants to dominate the research process'. That said, by utilising approaches of focus group discussion management, such impacts can be minimised. In the focus group, I ensured that every participant had an opportunity to speak, asking others to comment on issues raised, and being mindful of those who had not spoken, inviting them to comment if they wished. This allowed me to obtain data from across the breadth of experience of the participants, ensuring this study would be informed by the different views and perspectives of all involved. I was confident the participants experience emerged and this came out in the data gathered. Smithson (2000, p.116) also put forward a particular strength of the focus group: the participants are able to 'develop ideas collectively, bringing forward their own priorities and perspectives'.

Smithson (2000, p.107) warns of dominant voices and how to prevent individuals or groups from monopolising the conversation so that theirs is the only voice being heard. Smithson offers methods for preventing this from occurring, such as the use of homogenous focus groups with a similar demographic. This however will depend on the subject matter being discussed and Smithson pointed out that those seen as experts within a certain field by other group members are likely to be deferred to by others. This was less of

an issue with the focus group held, as the participants were all from the same neighbourhood policing team. However, the issue of differing levels of rank and experience within the focus group has been considered. Perhaps the most practical advice offered to me was that I focused on the importance of the researcher as moderator: that was to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to speak. Miller and Glassner (2011, p.312) did suggest however that, 'dominant discourses are totalizing only for those who view them as such'. Smithson considered the challenges in analysing data produced from a focus group and articulated that one should look at the 'collective voice' (Smithson 2000, p.109), that is looking at a point of consensus rather than individual voices. I reflected in my field diary that the dominant voice within the group was a Police Constable and not the more senior officer present. That said, all participants were able to actively contribute as a result of my approach.

Miller and Glassner (2011, p.141) suggest that 'some scholars have argued that researchers should be members of the groups they study, in order to have the subjective knowledge necessary to truly understand their life experiences'. Smithson (2000, p.111) did not agree with this viewpoint, suggesting that having the same moderator for all focus groups ensures that the same issues can be raised within each group. Smithson also cites Hurd and McIntyre (1996) to support her claim with their assertion that there is 'seduction in sameness'. This, Smithson (2011, p. 111) stated, could 'hinder a critical reflexive research'.

I had no existing working relationship with any of the focus group participants; however, they were all aware of my role as a senior police officer within their organisation. To minimise the impact of my rank on those more junior during

the focus group, I did not wear uniform. Whilst this was conducted remotely utilising video conferencing, I was visible to the group, so I dressed casually wearing a hoody. At the start of the focus group, I explained to participants that my rank and position within policing was not relevant to the study, that I was there in my role as a university student, undertaking a research project. I was also mindful of the fact that within the focus group were a cross section of ranks. I was confident that this less formal approach allowed participants to relax and be candid with their responses. All members of the group actively participated, and I felt were honest in their responses. They spoke about the very real challenges of delivery at a local level and around gaps in knowledge of the policy. Reflecting on the focus group, some of the formality of rank remained, with participants addressing me as sir, during the process. Overall, I believe I gained a rich and detailed picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the policy implementation at the grass roots level, which is exactly what I sought to achieve.

The focus group participants:

Sergeant Dave

One of two team leaders of the frontline staff in Riverside Borough. He has been a Sergeant for 2 years and are experienced in Neighbourhood Policing.

PC Sarah

A Police Constable known as a Neighbourhood Specialist Officer (NSO). She has been on the team for many years and an experienced police officer.

PCSO April

A Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) who is relatively new in role, she described her role in interview as the ‘visible face of policing’.

Thematic Analysis of the Data

In this section we will explore how Braun & Clarke's model of thematic analysis was applied to the data gathered. Thematic analysis is described by Braun and Clarke (2006, p.2) as offering an 'accessible and theoretically-flexible approach to analysing qualitative data'. Thematic analysis allows the synthesis of several methodological approaches, such as content, contextual and discourse analysis that will complement documentary analysis, highlighting key themes within the research material. Alhojailan (2012) critically reviewed thematic analysis and pointed out the strengths of this approach to qualitative data analysis where one is seeking to approach the data systematically and allowing to identify frequency of themes and to understand the potential of issues identified within a broader context (Marks & Yardely 2004; Namey et al 2008). Alhojailan (2012) further identified that thematic analysis is an appropriate process to study the role of an individual and the impact of how they can influence process through their particular point of view. This approach to data analysis has synergy with the underpinning theories of Lipsky's street level bureaucrat and Kingdon's policy entrepreneur regarding policy translation and role of individuals.

Thematic analysis provides a much richer interpretation of the data than conversation analysis that Wilkinson (2011, p.171) describes as 'simply entails inspection of the data for recurrent instances of some kind'. This follows Braun and Clarke (2006) six phases of thematic analysis:

Phase 1 – familiarity with the data, reading and re-reading data and transcription of interviews.

Phase 2 – Coding, Identifying the key themes within the data that may be relevant to answering the research questions and generating succinct labels.

Phase 3 – Searching for themes, gather all data relevant to each identified theme.

Phase 4 – Reviewing the themes; checking the themes against the gathered data to determine if they accurately describe the data and are answering the research questions and generate a thematic map.

Phase 5 – Define and name themes; developing an in-depth analysis of each theme identified and defining them. What is the overall story of the analysis?

Phase 6 – Producing the report; bringing together the analytical narrative, contextualise the analysis in regard to existing literature.

The first consideration was in relation to the identified themes and the need to explore the underlying meanings of them as Boyatzis (1998) describes at the latent or interpretive level. Through my transcription of the interviews and focus groups, I gained an understanding of what the data was saying and was able to identify specific themes early. These themes translated across from the policy implementation review documents analysed (Hope et al 2019; Miles et al 2021).

These identified themes relate to the policy development and translation, influenced by those operating at the national (macro) and those that could be described as relating to policy impact (monitoring and measuring engagement), which occurs at the local (micro) level.

The second phase of generating initial codes followed and produced the findings that can be seen in the table in Appendix 11. At this stage I found it

helpful to refer again to the documents to identify if themes from the interviews were also present within the documents and vice versa. The initial policy documents, including the Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines and the supporting material documents contained less synergy than the more reflective reviews of the progress of implementation. Specifically, the summary of the readiness assessments (Hope et al, 2018) at the start of implementation in 2018, the midway peer review (Hope et al, 2019) and the concluding report and peer review (Miles at al, 2021). It is these documents that provided far greater insight into the journey of policy implementation.

Having reviewed the list of codes, these were grouped into the key themes which proved to be a data-driven rather than theory-driven exercise, meaning the themes were initially drawn from the issues arising within the collected data rather than grouped according to the relevant underpinning theories, that came later. These broad themes helped to cover several similar subjects that resulted from the coding. A degree of flexibility was undertaken in grouping the themes, especially when looking at the more practitioner level who do not use the same ‘corporate language’ as their senior colleagues. This was certainly facilitated by my own understanding of both the strategic and tactical levels of policing, along with familiarity of the subject of the research. In short, the vernacular of operational ‘cops’ is somewhat different to policy makers and leaders. Interestingly the challenge of language between managers and the workforce is something that Atun (2003, p.655) highlights as a contributory factor in a ‘them and us’ culture, describing the different tiers of management as having their own unique ‘highly codified tribal dialects’. While Atun was writing from an observation of the National Health Service, the key concept is

easily transferable to other public services. While the proposed solution in the health context was to provide doctors with managerial training to help understand the language, perhaps it could be argued that simply translating policy into plain English for all to understand would be much easier. This proved something that the outgoing NPCC lead was keen to make clear during their interview, as one of the key reasons for the high level of support for the policy across policing.

In any event, and to work around the challenges of language, it was key to establish the key principles identified in the national policy document analysed (College of Policing, 2018), that the identified concepts of community mapping, targeted activity and asset-based community development were understood by all involved, rather than the specific name or title of a particular piece of policy or direction was being used.

Documentary analysis of the Inspectorate report (HMIC, 2021), the Knowledge Hub (Knowledge Hub, 2022) and the concluding report (Miles et al, 2021) provided evidence linking directly to the last two research questions around policy impact. This provided support to the themes emerging from the focus group around the challenges of monitoring and measuring performance in a neighbourhood policing context and how promising practice was not being captured or shared in a meaningful form.

Both my field notes and diary provided a valuable contribution to my deeper contextual understanding of the themes. I was able to use this to map themes across from interviews, the focus group, and documents. It was my views and feelings captured in my field diary in relation to the key actors interviewed that shaped my understanding of them as ‘policy entrepreneurs’. My field notes

contained a number of adjectives used to describe key policy actors, including ‘passionate’, ‘motivated’, ‘driven’, ‘bought in’, ‘supportive’ and ‘influential’. This supported research participants descriptions of key neighbourhood policing policy advocates, and those identified in the documents (HMIC 2021; Hope et al 2019; Miles et al 2021).

The impact of Covid-19

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on this research is significant. The original methodology I had developed required review and adaption to ensure that selected research methods provided a safe research environment for participants. The pandemic had a direct impact on the ability to conduct face to face interviews and focus groups. While social distancing could be always adhered to, national, and regional lockdown measures impacted on my ability to use these methods.

The biggest impact was that all research moved online, and all interviews were undertaken using MS Teams, and Skype video conferencing technology. In all interviews, audio recording was used, participants were advised, and their agreement obtained before the interview commenced. Having never conducted primary research interviews face to face, I cannot comment on the differences to traditional face to face methods. I did find the ability to record the interviews helpful for picking up on non-verbal communication that a researcher may miss while taking notes in person. The use of technological solutions does make meetings easier to arrange and reduces travel time, and I

found that accessibility to senior leaders in policing was easier during this period as a result.

There is a challenge to managing a focus group online; giving all participants the opportunity to contribute is far harder online and where participants in person can pick up on social cues as to when to interject, this is not always possible online. I had the feeling some key discussion elements of a focus group dynamic were lost as a result. Reflecting on my own role within the process, referring to my field notes, I was guilty of talking over participants on occasion, and I must recognise that I may have lost valuable contributions as a result. With only one focus group used in this research, I was unable to use this learning within the context of this study. A key consideration for research in this climate is that modern technological meeting etiquette simply does not work in a focus group environment; the ability to add to or challenge other remarks is lost if you are waiting for a virtual hand to go up.

Interestingly, the pandemic may also have altered public perceptions of policing. While the policing approach throughout the pandemic has been one of engage, explain and educate before enforcement, known as the 4 E's (NPCC, 2020), the addition of further policing powers and stories in the media of police checking on people shopping in supermarkets and potentially breaking up family Christmas dinners may have a negative impact on public perceptions. Even more impactful was the murder of Sarah Everard by a serving Metropolitan Police Officer. In this disturbing case, it is believed the off- duty officer used the premise of Covid-19 legislation to entice his victim into his vehicle. The Sarah Everard case, along with recent issues of misogyny and violence against women and girls (VAWG) have led to what

could be argued is a national crisis in police confidence (Topping, 2021). This was considered when selecting primary research methods and considered in relation to the limitations of public facing engagement that policing teams can undertake during a pandemic. This did however present a unique opportunity for research in this field.

Anonymity, Police hierarchy and Data Protection

Anonymity

The issue of anonymity was particularly relevant to this study as despite the use of pseudonyms or simply referring to key actors by role, there remains a significant possibility that they could readily be identified. This is relevant to participants working at the national level as key policy actors, as those working within the field would potentially be able to identify them. As such I took particular care to ensure that these research participants were aware of the very real possibility of their identification through taking part in the study, through the arrangements I have detailed earlier. For those working within the case study force, identification was far less likely, although this remained a possibility. The Inspector of the case study Borough interviewed, and the frontline officers and staff taking part in the focus group were all given pseudonyms. In their case, individual identification is highly unlikely, however they too were asked to give their informed consent, since it was possible that they too could be identified.

Hierarchy

The research undertaken involved my interviewing colleagues within policing more senior to me, colleagues at a commensurate level and those more junior to me. This presented some unique ethical challenges and considerations

around potential bias. My chosen research methodology has sought to minimise these impacts. Due to my professional role, I was well known to the key policy actors interviewed, whilst they held significantly more senior positions than me, I enjoyed positive working relationships with each of them. Whilst insiderness is of great advantage in gaining access to research subjects and material, I found that this also came with a challenge of assumption on both their and my part around the subject matter of the interviews. I will cover the issue of insiderness in greater depth in the next section of this chapter. I commented within my field diary of the candour of key actors, who were open to talk about the challenges they faced and the impact of certain political dimensions. The existing relationship I had with the research participants and my role within policing was beneficial to achieve such openness. Conversely though, this also resulted in participants not describing certain things in the depth that would have added greater understanding. I felt they due to my position and experience, they believed I was well versed in the background context and detail of what I was asking about. To some extent of course, this is the case. Something I picked up on within my field diary following the transcription of early interviews and afforded me the opportunity to probe for this narrative further with those interviewed later in the process.

Data Protection

Through this study I was fortunate to have access to sensitive and protectively marked documents for analysis. As such the management of these and

disclosure of their contents required a robust mechanism to be in place. In addition, I was managing the personal information of research participants. Ethics consent was gained from Middlesex University Ethics Committee and can be seen in Appendix 3.

Data held by the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) neighbourhood policing portfolio relating to UK police force contacts leading on the implementation of Neighbourhood Policing; data of readiness assessment and implementation progress of UK police forces in the roll out of the Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines and the Neighbourhood Policing Guideline development material; the documents relating to the roll out of policy were all provided with the agreement of the NPCC portfolio lead. The access to this is available under appendix 9. Data relating to the case study force has been made available under authority of their Chief Constable and can also be seen in Appendix 9. Data from His Majesties Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services reports on the performance of UK Police Forces is open source data and freely available on their website to anyone wishing to view.

Storage of force and national policy documents required the use of my current force IT systems to comply with data protection governance as the nature of the protective marking of these documents required that they remain within the Police PNN network. Non sensitive and non-protectively marked data was also stored within the Middlesex University one drive. Hard copy protectively marked assets gathered during this study were stored within a locked cabinet within a police station and for only as long as was necessary. All personal data was only stored by me as the researcher and has not formed part of the

final thesis. Participants were invited to review all information relating to them prior to completion. This information was only accessible to me as the researcher. The data collected was stored securely for as long as was necessary to process as part of this study, and once this has concluded, it will be deleted.

Insiderness and the participant observer

Brown's (1996) typology of police insider and outsider researchers provides a framework for understanding the different perspectives in conducting police research. Browns typology identifies four types of police researchers:

> *'Insider insiders: police officers who effectively conduct 'in house' research. This type of research is narrowly focused on management requirements, such as collating statistics and producing time-and-motion studies. Research is conducted for internal purposes.*
>
> *Outsider insiders: police officers conducting research outside the organisation. This might include former officers who have decided to move towards academia, or serving officers seconded as researchers in other organisations (e.g. universities)*
>
> *Inside outsiders: qualified civilian researchers working in the police. These might include researchers who are hired by the police on a consultancy basis to research a particular area of policing.*

Outsider outsiders: external researchers with no affiliation to the police, studying the police or policing. This would typically include university researchers, as well as other researchers in other organisations such as consultancies and NGOs.'

(Brown, 1996 cited in Davies 2016)

I very much sit as what Brown (1996) identifies as an inside insider. Brown (1996, p.180) cites Weatheritt (1989) who commented that much research on the police, by the police is done to legitimise some already drawn conclusions. She drew in commentary from Cannings and Hirst (1994) who were equally critical, suggesting that there is a lack of a coherent agenda, staff were inadequately trained to undertake research and that the quality is not evaluated. Brown went on to suggest that inside insider research is mostly undertaken by the 'enthusiastic amateur' and that one really can't draw meaningful conclusions from it.

Brown (1996, p.190) suggests that inside insiders have focused on 'procedural and operational issues'. I would suggest times have changed significantly since Brown made these observations, reflecting on personal experience within policing, there is a drive to understand societal drivers of not only crime and disorder, but vulnerability, threat, risk, and harm. I would argue that this is not the police researching for an internal purpose but driven to improve public service through deeper contextual knowledge. The relationship between police and academia in the 2020s is much less confrontational, and as Crawford (2016) points out, partnerships such as the N8 policing research

partnership in the north of England provide evidence of this much enhanced relationship.

Davies (2016, p. 154) argues that there has been a convergence of insider and outsider research, with the police incentivising scholars to undertake specific research. Equally with a heavy focus on evidence based policing insider research has grown significantly and provides obvious benefits around access to data and research subjects. I would agree with Davies, who argues that research is now not done on the police, but with the police (2016, p.155), a position I feel I currently occupy within the police research community. Crawford (2016) raises an interesting ethical argument, that in order to minimise suggestions of bias through external research funding or bias through insiderness that the future of police research is best served through co-produced research and rather than evidence based policing, one should seek to have 'knowledge based policing'.

In the context of this study, and agreeing with Davies view, I am what Brown would describe as an inside insider, and I would respectfully suggest that her typology in this regard could be described as overly simplistic and dismissive of the abilities of police officers researching policing. However, taking on board Brown's observations this provided an opportunity to reflect on the purpose and methods chosen to undertake my research. It was therefore important to ensure that my chosen methods stand up to scrutiny and evidence the technical skills that Brown (1996, p.180) suggests are often missing from inside insiders' research.

It is my insiderness that afforded me not only access to research material and participants, but the ability to reflect on ethnographic observation through my

day to day work that brings a unique research perspective. As previously discussed, these observations were recorded within my field diary and allowed me to gain deeper contextual understanding of the policy issues, rather than simply conducting documentary analysis and interviews in isolation.

Insiderness was a critical element of my decision making in choosing appropriate research methods. Smithson's earlier arguments in relation to focus groups resonates within this research and informed my methodological decision making, as it could be argued that I form part of the group through my role as a police officer, but with some distinct challenges that must be recognised. That is, being a serving officer of senior rank, this places me outside of the individual group dynamics, but in a position where I had to be mindful of my rank and the impact this may have had on the content of debate within the group.

Acknowledging these factors, it is important to consider the ethical issues associated with having an 'Insider Role' and one that could effectively be seen as a Participant Observer (see ethics approval form in Appendix 3).

It is important to cover the potential issues of bias through my role, not only as a serving police officer, but as someone who was intimately involved in the production and delivery of the national neighbourhood policing policy through my previous role as the Neighbourhood Policing Adviser for the College of Policing. I conducted research activity with participants who were and still are colleagues and who I have worked with in a professional capacity in the development, production, and delivery of the policy this research focuses on. It is also important to be cognisant of my rank and position of influence while I undertook research activity, as I conducted primary research with officers of a

lower rank than myself, albeit with no direct line management responsibility. It is, however, this position that afforded me the unique opportunity to conduct this research with appropriate access to important research material.

From the perspective of being a police officer, this firmly places me as an insider in the complexities, intricacies, bureaucracies, and cultures of my organisation. However, I am also an outsider, not part of the team that delivers at a local level within the case study force. Leigh (2014, p.430) describes this dichotomous state not as 'one static position' … 'rather…of a simultaneous process, oscillating between the two most extreme points on the ethnographic research continuum: insider and outsider'.

However, it is my 'insiderness' that gave me the unique access and capability to perform this research. I feel a synergy with Labaree (2002, p.98) who argued: 'I consider my insiderness as the key to delving into the hidden crevices of the organization'. I further agree with his observations that such a unique role also leaves a question regarding bias that an outsider researcher would not have. Transparency of research methods, identification and acceptance of potential bias and the thorough analysis of the data collected has, I believe, addressed these concerns. I wanted to try as far as possible to apply an 'objective analysis'.

Leigh (2014, p.438) makes an interesting point focusing on the role of the 'intimate insider' researcher, being where the research is closely aligned to day to day professional work and relationships with the research subjects. I am fortunate that while I have previously held a national role with strategic responsibility for delivery of neighbourhood policing and engagement, the role I

was performing whilst undertaking this research was distant away enough from both the strategic development and the operational delivery of neighbourhood policing to avoid many of the challenges of being the 'intimate insider'. It was interesting though, that during my interviews, I often had to ask participants to expand on their description of events. There was an assumption on their part that because I was closely involved in the policy work, they believed I already knew much of these events and the reasons behind them did not require further explanation. A lesson I learned from my first interview, and captured within my field diary, that allowed me to properly make sure I explored the subjects the research participants were talking about.

Labaree (2002, p.105) further stated that 'several authors describe the value of insiderness based upon an ability of the insider participant observer to utilise their position of insiderness to discover greater clarity of purpose and understanding of one's own work'. It is this that resonates most; reminding me why I chose this research and the distinct benefits I hope I have delivered in developing a deeper understanding of the neighbourhood policing policy implementation journey.

It was the insiderness that afforded me the ability to recruit the research participants.

Ultimately, in terms of bias, it is fair to say that I am closely associated with the policy development and implementation. This research was not about marking one's own homework, but rather an opportunity to seek to learn from a policy process in a field I am passionate about. In the interests and pursuance of public service, it is only right that we always seek to learn from experience and use this to improve for the future.

Reflections

I reflect on the views of Brown's (1996) typology of insider insiders, whom she describes as often an inexperienced amateur. I feel that one could argue Brown's views and experiences are now somewhat dated. Since the time of her work, there have been many insightful academic studies on policing, by those in policing. Taking this viewpoint onboard, from a personal perspective, this research journey has undoubtedly improved my own development both as a researcher and professionally.

Firstly, my use of a field diary was of great benefit in understanding my own development journey as a researcher through undertaking this study. I reflected earlier within this chapter how my own knowledge and work within the policy development and implementation impacted on my earlier interviews. Within those early interviews, I reflected how my understanding and the participant's understanding of my knowledge resulted in my not exploring some areas to the depth I would have liked. Having only conducted one focus group within this study, I was unable to take the learning from this process to improve my moderation skills. I considered at some length whether it would be beneficial to conduct a further focus group; however, the operational challenges in achieving this, and gaining access to other participants within the case study area was not practical. This highlighted the very real challenges of conducting research with front line staff, where operational demand proved to be restrictive. While unable to utilise this learning within an academic context, this is something I have been able to translate into my professional practice in conducting focus groups

I found the use of field notes a great asset when undertaking thematic analysis; key notes recorded during both my interviews and reviewing documents facilitated the identification of early themes, and as I described earlier in the chapter this truly was a bridge between the documents and the interviews. It also allowed me to explore these themes further in later interviews. I would certainly agree with Fielding's (2008, p.273) observation that field notes are indeed the researchers 'raison d'etre'.

While a laborious process, I found the transcription of interviews a key element of understanding the themes from interviews, picking up on subtle clues around passion and enthusiasm around certain subjects and a sense of frustration around others. Listening back to how an interview was conducted was also enlightening; I picked up on my own habits and mannerisms that I was able to manage in later interviews. Indeed, Braun and Clarke (2006) describe the importance of familiarity in the data through transcription in the first of their steps for thematic analysis.

There are significant operational challenges in conducting primary research on operational policing matters. The focus group is a prime example of the difficulties faced in getting operational staff together in one place at the same time, where, quite rightly, operational demand took precedence. Conversely though, the pandemic made certain elements of this study more achievable. The use of video conferencing technology greatly assisted in being able to have access to conduct research activity with senior police leaders, and facilitated the recording of them. The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the ability of forces to undertake community engagement in the way the refreshed policy envisioned. A theme that ran throughout the findings of

my research. This will be explored in greater detail in later chapters, but from a methods approach, as previously discussed, had a significant impact.

If I was to undertake this study again in the post-Covid restriction and social distancing world, I would like to have conducted a face to face focus group where group dynamics and non-verbal communication could be more readily identified. Additional ethnographic methods such as observations and a community perspective of engagement, tested either in focus groups or interviews, would I am sure, provide a new and informing perspective on how the policy translated to the local level.

In the next two chapters we will explore in detail the data and emerging themes identified from the research activity.

Chapter 4: The development and translation of national guidelines for neighbourhood policing

Introduction

In this chapter, the development of neighbourhood policing policy through the formation of a set of guidelines (College of Policing, 2018) and the implementation journey are analysed. A description of how the guidelines were developed and implemented through a national and regional approach and how this policy has been translated and put into practice at the force level by a local policing team as evidenced in the case study is presented. The chapter will address the first two of the four research questions:

How have national guidelines for neighbourhood policing informed community engagement at a force strategic level?

To what extent has national policy translated into delivery of community engagement at the tactical level?

Firstly, I will cover the timeline of events in the policy journey. Since 2013, the Inspectorate, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) have been questioning the effectiveness of force's approach to Neighbourhood Policing (Higgins, 2018). In their 2016 review of policing (HMIC, 2017), the Inspectorate voiced their concerns as a 'continued erosion' of neighbourhood policing. As such a recommendation was made by the Inspectorate for the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC), The College of Policing and the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) to work together to produce a refreshed policy approach to Neighbourhood Policing (HMIC, 2017).

In 2017, a guideline committee was formed, led by the Outgoing NPCC lead, one of the key actors interviewed during this research. In this chapter, key actors interviewed explain how over the course of the next six months the committee reviewed academic and operational evidence of effectiveness. As a result, the College of Policing produced a set of neighbourhood policing guidelines that would become the refreshed national policy. The Neighbourhood Policing guidelines (College of Policing, 2018) were published by the College of Policing in 2018.

A Policy Implementation plan was put in place to monitor the policy landing with forces. Three key checkpoints were put in place to assess the policy journey:

1) Initial Force Readiness Assessment – a pre implementation analysis in 2018 at the start (Hope et al, 2018)

2) Project mid-point assessment in 2019 (Hope et al, 2019) and

3) A project end assessment in 2020 (Miles et al, 2021).

The project end assessment did not actually take place until 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Each of these checkpoints were reviewed by the NPCC and College of Policing and the resulting documents have been analysed as part of the research and the analysis is covered later within the identified themes in the chapter.

Policy Development and Translation Process

Interviews with national policy actors and those responsible for policy implementation at a force level provided details on the policy formulation and how this was translated into practice, as well as the problems that were faced. At a strategic level, the operating landscape and political context that led to the formulation of the neighbourhood policing guidelines was articulated by the key actors interviewed. Observing an emerging theme in my field notes, I saw a clear consensus and commonality in language in describing the external factors, linking directly to Kingdon's (2011) policy streams theory. This informs us that those problems need to merge with the political and policy agenda for policy to emerge.

Each year, the inspectorate, His Majesties Inspectorate of Police and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) produce a report of the annual assessment of policing. In the Annual Assessment of Policing in England and Wales 2016, the Inspectorate, that was then known as Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Policing (HMIC), produced a critical report stating that Neighbourhood Policing nationally had been effectively eroded and signalled a need for real change (HMIC, 2017). Sir Tom Winsor, the then head of HMIC stated within this report 'I have longstanding concerns that the bedrock of neighbourhood policing is being eroded'. (HMIC 2017, p.26). Higgins (2018, p.13) informs us those concerns about the 'health of neighbourhood policing' have been made by the inspectorate since 2013. During my interviews with the outgoing NPCC lead and the College lead, both explained that a direction was given by the Inspectorate for the College of Policing to undertake a review and come up with a new policy and for Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and Chief

Constables to implement a new approach to Neighbourhood Policing, and as key component of that, community engagement.

One of those key actors interviewed, the outgoing NPCC lead stated this new direction that was demanded by the Inspectorate put neighbourhood policing back on the agenda. The staff I interviewed provided various insights into the then ensuing policy development:

> '*This pushed Neighbourhood Policing back up the political, policing and research agenda'.* (Outgoing NPCC lead)

The outgoing NPCC lead further explained how he was able to work with the Inspectorate in the wording of the recommendation to lead this work. Also interviewed, the local policing lead for the College supported this assertion and added that following the re-invigoration of neighbourhood policing in the 1990s and 2000s, this had now fallen far down the policing agenda. Indeed, the College lead during our interview explained how he personally felt Neighbourhood Policing was now being eroded. He explained that austerity and significant challenges to policing budgets since 2010 had become a key factor. This was one of the core reasons that the neighbourhood policing approach had been forgotten about. Furthermore, contemporary challenges around serious and organised crime and vulnerability were not being considered.

The Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines (College of Policing, 2018) set the policy direction for Neighbourhood Policing. These are open-source documents publicly available on the College of Policing website, containing not only the guidelines themselves but detail of the process undertaken to create

them, the evidence base in support of their inception, and resources to support their implementation.

The Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines, supporting material documents state:

> *'Chief officers should work with Police and Crime Commissioners to deliver and support Neighbourhood Policing and must ensure it is built on effective engagement and consultation with communities.* (College of Policing 2018, p.2)

The supporting materials highlight key essential elements that forces need to put in place to deliver effective community engagement: Engagement should have a defined purpose and be targeted and provide a visible presence in communities. Engagement is made up of formal and informal contacts and this informed through a deep understanding of the make-up and needs of local communities. Engagement should be linked to local problem-solving activity, and importantly, give communities a voice in highlighting their concerns and provide updates on what is being done by the local policing team to address these concerns. Indeed, the supporting material for not only senior officers, but also for supervisors and frontline practitioners highlight the legal requirement for this to occur:

> *'This guideline is underpinned by Section 34 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 which provides a legal requirement for chief officers to make arrangements to consult with the public in each neighbourhood, provide local information about crime and policing and hold regular public meetings.'* (College of Policing 2018, p.2)

To understand the implementation of the 2018 guidelines, the NPCC along with the College of Policing created a series of questions which formed a readiness assessment for local police forces to grade themselves against each area. The data this process produced was analysed by the national policy team in Hope et al (2018). The outgoing NPCC lead was quoted in Hope et al (2018, p.2) describing this process as:

> '*a self-assessed base lining exercise in which forces were asked to judge their current local provision against the principles set out in the new guidelines, prior to their implementation'*.

This was then subject to a mid-point assessment in 2019 and a concluding assessment undertaken at the end of the policy roll out program in 2021. While the focus of the analysis has been on community engagement, the guidelines cover other areas of neighbourhood policing, such as problem solving, targeted activity, and developing and sharing learning. Analysis of these areas both through the supporting material documents (College of Policing, 2018), the mid way (Hope et al, 2019) and final assessment document (Miles et al, 2021) and though the interview with key actors directly links to answering the research questions. The commentary around these areas supported the themes emerging through my thematic analysis.

Refreshing neighbourhood policing policy: the policy process and developing policy guidelines

My research interviews facilitated an insight into the neighbourhood policing guideline development process. The following section describes the policy

creation and implementation process, bringing in the involvement and professional expertise of the key actors from the NPCC and The College of Policing. This is supported by the findings from documents analysed that chronicle that policy journey.

The Operating Landscape – macro level

In this section we will look at the identified themes of the political and financial impacts on the policy implementation, including organisational structures, and resourcing.

The incoming NPCC lead saw the strengths of a refreshed policy approach as providing a structured set of guidelines for individual police forces, describing in her interview the neighbourhood policing landscape nationally as '*a patchwork quilt'*, with some forces not engaging with it at all, but the new guidelines providing an evidence base for them to make informed decisions. The use of the term 'patchwork' resonates with the view of the inspectorate in their 2016 annual review of policing (HMIC, 2017). The Initial Force Readiness Assessment (Hope et al, 2018), undertaken by the NPCC implementation team provides supporting evidence of a lack of consistency across the country. While forces reported positively at the initial stage of having engagement processes in place, 'forces were much less likely to say they had fully developed arrangements for ensuring engagement is tailored to meet the needs and preferences of differing communities (19%)'. (Hope et al 2018, p.5)

The Process of Policy Development – meso level

The College of Policing were keen to adopt a new approach to neighbourhood policy drawn from policy implementation within the health sector. The College

followed the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) use of evidence based guidelines process, where guidelines are developed by a committee based on existing practice evidence (NICE, 2022). In the interviews, neither the NPCC nor College lead were able to explain the genesis of this approach, but the College lead suggested this may have been influenced by a much closer working relationship at a strategic level between policing and Public Health England. The key reason for choosing this approach was that as the College lead described in his interview *'in the medical profession, guidelines are followed'*.

At a similar time to the neighbourhood policing guideline work, policing and health were working closely on developing public health approaches to policing (Public Health England 2018; Christmas & Srivastiva 2019). The College of Policing (2021, p.11) describing this approach as 'taking a population approach, working in partnerships, focusing on prevention, using data and evidence to inform practice, addressing the 'causes of the causes', and evaluating implementation and impact'. The College's 2021 landscape review of public health approaches made specific mention of the neighbourhood policing guidelines when referring to a more joined up policy narrative. (College of Policing 2021, p.7)

The NICE approach was built around a guideline committee of experts considering practice and academic evidence together. The first stage was to form a committee chaired by the NPCC lead and made up of a cross section of stakeholders in policing, including front line practitioners, senior police leaders, relevant policing academics and community safety professionals. Looking back the outgoing NPCC lead reflected this was a key success to using the

NICE policy approach, that you had - '*Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) debating with university professors*.' The outgoing NPCC lead explained in his interview how the academic evidence was scrutinised by practitioners as to how this was applied and equally the practice evidence was either challenged or supported by academic study. It was this debate that led to the creation of a specific guideline that identified the need for further academic evidence and practice evaluation relating to gaps in the existing evidence base. These areas were online engagement, vulnerability and the links between neighbourhood policing and serious and organised crime and terrorism.

The College of Policing lead with responsibility for local policing and who led the College's role within the guideline work was interviewed. He detailed how the guideline development process worked with the setting up of the guideline committee and the three stage process to developing guidelines. A first meeting set the scope of the work, a second meeting got into the detail of developing the guidelines with academic and practical supporting evidence, then a third meeting finalised the guidelines. These were then subject to a public consultation. As the project manager for the process, The College lead's role was to undertake the practical organisation of the various stages, having the right resources in place to make that happen, setting milestones, then producing final products. The timeline from setting up the process to publication had to be achieved in under a year, between September 2017 and August 2018.

The process was underpinned by the College undertaking a Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA). This reviewed over 1800 studies of what made effective

neighbourhood policing, focused on western liberal democracies (Colover & Quinton, 2018). Findings were then narrowed down in a process the outgoing NPCC lead described as being - '*boiled down and pulled into a digestible format for the committee to consider*'. There were two key elements to the REA. REA1 focused on what constitutes effective neighbourhood policing, while REA2 reviewed what acts as facilitators or blockers to successful implementation of neighbourhood policing. The findings from the REAs were presented to the guideline committee by the college research team in the form of evidence tables. The committee then used the evidence to identify where there was specific strength of evidence to make recommendations, then to determine the strength of that evidence to reflect how guidelines should be worded. An example of this would be within the Guideline for Community Engagement (College of Policing 2018, p.5) which states that officers and staff **must** hold regular meetings with the public, due to the statutory requirement (Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011), as opposed to 'should' or 'advise' being used. The evidence was then used to ultimately frame the specific wording of each guideline (Colover & Quinton 2018, p.5).

Overall, the systematic review evidence has shown that neighbourhood policing reduced victimisation and had sustained impact across a range of outcomes (Tuffin et al 2006: Connell et al 2008: Skogan and Steiner 2004 cited in Colover & Quinton 2018, p.8). In relation to community engagement, the REA summarised the following findings on implementation:

> *A use of tailored methods is required. The use of different methods needs to reflect the needs of different communities.*

Need to create sustainability, the effectiveness of community engagement declines over time and will need to be re-invigorated.

Barriers to engagement. Engagement needs to be cognisant of community issues, demographics and historic and real time issues with trust and confidence in policing. Evidence suggests communities from high crime areas are less willing to actively participate.

Identify problems and setting priorities. Those areas that were successful used structured approaches and involved the community in the process. Community Ownership. The community should be involved in the planning of engagement and given opportunities to take ownership, and that dialogue must be two way.

Existing Networks and Partnerships. Effective engagement draws on existing engagement structures and existing community networks.

Informing the Public. People who are well informed about policing are more likely to hold positive opinions of police.

(Colover & Quinton 2018, pp 8-11)

This was supported by a call for practice, that was sent out by the College of Policing to all 43 England and Wales police forces, along with Police Scotland and the Police Service of Northern Ireland. This was a request sent to Chief Constables, asking them to complete a form that asked for details about particular projects, interventions or processes they had that delivered what they believed to be effective Neighbourhood Policing. This asked for details on what the process was, the resourcing requirements, costs, outcomes and whether any evaluation, formal or informal had taken place. Local authorities,

community safety organisations and others with a working relationship with local policing were also asked to respond. The call received over two hundred responses from not only police forces, but local councils, housing associations, Police and Crime Commissioners, The Mayors Officer for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and charities. Not all forces provided responses and several forces submitted multiple items. In my previous role as the Neighbourhood Policing adviser at the College, I was responsible for reviewing the practice evidence to support the guideline development process. This process involved reality testing of the examples submitted, visiting forces, and seeing these in action, evaluating their impact and effectiveness.

Both the outgoing NPCC lead, and College lead explained that through a series of workshops, the committee reviewed the academic and practice evidence and came up with six guidelines with a strong evidence base behind them:

1. *Engaging with communities*
2. *Solving problems*
3. *Targeted activity*
4. *Promoting the right culture*
5. *Building analytical capability*
6. *Developing officers, staff, and volunteers*

(College of Policing 2018, p.1)

The outgoing NPCC lead explained in his interview that the seventh guideline, 'Developing and sharing learning' (College of Policing, 2018) was built around

developing an evidence base to fill both a knowledge and practice gap in the existing evidence of neighbourhood policing's contribution to tackling serious and organised crime, terrorism, vulnerability, and online engagement, as pointed out by the College lead in his interview.

The operating context

Recognising that resourcing the implementation of neighbourhood policing is a decision for individual Chief Constables, the process had to be as the outgoing NPCC lead in his interview described: '*agnostic of resourcing'*.

There is not one resourcing model that can be applied for Neighbourhood Policing across all forces; the complexities of their individual operating landscapes regarding geographic size, demographics and staffing profiles make this impossible. The way in which individual police forces are funded is also complex, made up of a mix of central grant supported by individual Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) choices around increasing the council tax precept (the amount of council tax that goes towards policing). PCCs can make individual decisions to increase council tax to pay for policing services (Home Office, 2022). In his interview, the outgoing NPCC lead was clear that any policy that sought to make recommendations around staffing for neighbourhood teams would not be successful. This must be a decision for individual forces.

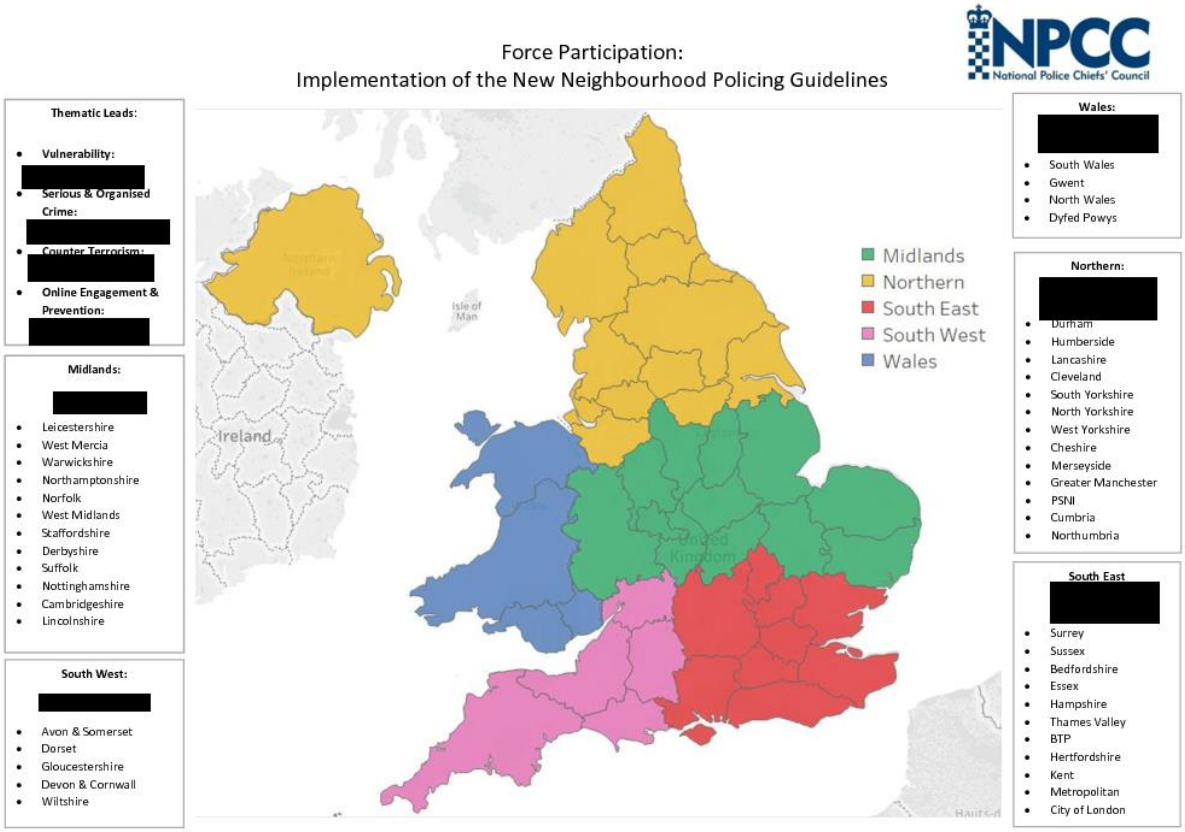
One of the greatest challenges in relation to the operating context raised by all of those interviewed was the Covid-19 pandemic. This was also subject to significant commentary in the concluding project report (Miles et al, 2021).

Policy Translation – from development to implementation

In this section I will cover the journey of the policy from the conclusion of the development phase into the implementation phase. Interviews conducted with the NPCC leads, The College lead and the case study force lead discuss the policy journey through a national and regional structure to land with individual forces. The three documents analysing the guideline implementation (Hope et al 2018, Hope et al 2019 and Miles et al 2021) help to inform our understanding of this process.

During my interview with the incoming NPCC lead, she explained they took over once implementation had started and were not involved in the guideline development or the initial implementation stages covered by the Initial readiness assessment (Hope et al, 2018) or the mid-point assessment (Hope et al, 2019). She took over the NPCC portfolio at a time the final project review (Miles et al, 2021) was being undertaken. The incoming NPCC lead provided context on the translation process of the policy to forces in her interview. The incoming NPCC lead chairs a national working group which has representation at a senior level (Assistant Chief Constable or Chief Superintendent) leading for each of the regions (Wales, Southwest, Southeast, Midlands and Northern). Each region has its own individual meeting structure across its forces with mixed representation. The national group meet to understand successes and challenges and to inform good practice. National portfolio work is administered by the NPCC lead's staff officer, with colleagues from around the country supporting the thematic areas of vulnerability, serious and organised crime, terrorism, and online engagement.

The adoption of a regional structure to implement policy



Source: NPCC implementation structure (Knowledge Hub 2019)

This map shows the regional and thematic structure for the policy implementation put in place by the NPCC. Implementation was split into five regions, Northern, Midlands, Southeast, Southwest and Wales. This structure was based on the split of forces in the original twenty early adopters. Each region appointed a lead, usually a Chief Officer, and they along with the College of Policing, APCC, and Home Office formed a national working group chaired by the NPCC lead. In the interviews, all three national leads described that this approach was reliant on the work of the NPCC lead's staff officer, the

resources the college were putting in and the voluntary effort of those within forces.

The Outgoing NPCC lead explained in some detail that this was at odds to the national roll out of the Neighbourhood Policing policy in 2008, where over five million pounds was earmarked to support the implementation. That said, in the interview with the outgoing NPCC lead, he pointed out that the drive and enthusiasm of the regional leads would be a critical element, highlighting the Northern regional lead as '*keen as mustard'* – I noted in my field notes that they were a potential Kingdonian policy entrepreneur. Both the incoming and outgoing NPCC lead had significant involvement in the Neighbourhood Policing Policy roll out of 2008, where substantial funding, resources and the central government agenda all facilitated a roll out programme.

There was consensus across all three national leads interviewed, that a thematic approach to key areas of neighbourhood policing business added true value and supported the regional approach. National leads were appointed to lead on emerging areas of business, including counterterrorism, serious and organised crime, vulnerability, and online engagement. Each was charged with developing toolkits to support frontline staff in forces in implementing the guidelines and reporting back to a national meeting structure chaired by the NPCC lead.

Furthermore, all three national leads stressed that people were key, the case study force lead in her interview highlighted the importance of:

> *'having keen, influential and energetic regional leaders, ACCs driving activity and local Neighbourhood Inspectors who know their business'*.

The outgoing NPCC lead pointed out:

> *'Having supportive key leaders was important and there was a good relationship with the College Chief Executive.'*

This theme of key actors driving policy implementation links directly to Kingdon's theory of the importance of the policy entrepreneur. However, there was a blur between the College and the NPCC thinking, particularly around the learning and development component. We will explore this in more detail later in this chapter when we look at the role of the College in the policy implementation.

While the purpose of this study is not to critique the difference in approaches in the regional groups, it must be recognised from the evidence gained through the interviews there was a clear difference in leadership styles and approaches resulting in differing levels of participation in the policy roll out agenda across the regions.

Considering the policy approach from a force perspective, the strategic lead for neighbourhood policing in the case study force was interviewed. The force lead confirmed the regional approach highlighted by both NPCC leads. When the guidelines were implemented, the force took part in the Southeast Regional Group, which met regularly in London prior to the COVID pandemic. Post-pandemic, this moved to virtual meetings. In our interview, the force lead spoke positively about the regional structure, how this was supported by a Chief Officer lead from a local force, and how their passion and enthusiasm drove this forward. Linking back to the theoretical framework of this study,

once again the theme of the policy entrepreneur is clearly coming through as a major policy facilitator.

Existing policy networks and political support

In addition to the role of key actors as policy entrepreneurs, Kingdon (2011) observed that policy change comes about when three streams converge, those of policies, problems and politics. We have already identified the problem as an erosion of neighbourhood policing (HMIC, 2017), but what political will and drivers existed? In the interviews, the NPCC and college leads unanimously described the implementation of the guidelines as being driven by the NPCC and supported by Chief's Council. The approach was that a select group of early adopter forces would shape the initial implementation and a letter was sent to Chief Constables inviting them to take part.

In my interview with the outgoing NPCC lead, he expected to get about six forces to become early adopters and help shape the implementation for other forces. He was surprised by the interest and twenty forces showed a willingness to drive the implementation of the guidelines. This very quickly grew to be almost all forces, with 39 of the 43 requesting to be involved, after political influence at ministerial level. The then policing minister, Nick Hurd, wrote to all Chief Constables and encouraged forces to participate in the roll out. It could therefore be argued that the Policing Minister themselves then became a policy entrepreneur. The outgoing NPCC lead believed the buy-in secured, while assisted by political drive, was also because the guidelines were straight forward and deliberately drafted in '*plain English'*. Existing policy networks also facilitated implementation. In interview the outgoing NPCC lead highlighted the existing relationship between the NPCC and HMIC. The

inspectorate's thematic lead for Neighbourhood Policing, also happened to be the Lead Inspector for the outgoing NPCC lead's force. It would be fair to say that the existing relationships between key actors at the national policy level was a significant factor and arguably links to both Kingdon's (2011) multiple streams approach and Sausman et al's (2015) findings on policy implementation.

In the interviews, the incoming NPCC lead, and the College lead suggested that other significant national workstreams facilitated the implementation. The partnership between public health and policing in the development national health consensus (Christmas & Srivastava, 2019) leading to the Public Health Approaches to Policing (College of Policing, 2019) helped add traction. Additionally, the Police Now programme was recruiting graduates direct into neighbourhood policing roles. Police Now is a graduate entry programme whereby graduates were recruited directly into problem solving roles within neighbourhood teams for a two year fixed period (Police Now, 2022). It was not always positive however, and the outgoing NPCC lead described a feeling of being in competition with the national work on Problem Solving; but this did aid the implementation, using transformation funding to support a project manager and analysis of the policy implementation through the initial readiness assessment (Hope et al, 2018) and mid-project assessment (Hope et al, 2019). These important documents analysing policy implementation would not have been created without this.

Drawing in other policing portfolios to neighbourhood policing also helped. For example, the College Lead in his interview explained that:

‘*those drawn in from counterterrorism and serious and organised crime were telling the story of how important neighbourhood policing is* ‘.

Similarly, the Outgoing NPCC lead also suggested that the influential actors in these areas were important:

‘*Being supported by big players from within the crime side of the business, such as then Chief Constable Andy Cooke of Merseyside, who led the SOC portfolio, assisted in selling the benefits of neighbourhood policing’* (Outgoing NPCC lead).

This demonstrated that it was not just about the policy actors within neighbourhood policing, but the importance of having involvement of key actors who were seen as policy entrepreneurs in other areas of policing.

Despite political support and making use of existing policy networks, the outgoing NPCC lead felt a blocker was the absence of a specific implementation budget. The overall implementation was challenging considering the impact of the government policy to uplift policing numbers by 20,000 nationally. (Home Office, 2019) Every strategic lead interviewed mentioned uplift and how busy the policing landscape was at the time.

The peer review process

Interviewing the incoming NPCC lead, she explained that implementation of the Guidelines is monitored through a peer review process. The initial readiness assessment (Hope et al, 2018), the mid-project assessment (Hope et al, 2019) and the concluding project report (Miles et al, 2021) provide a useful summary of this process and its development over time. The outgoing

NPCC lead, when interviewed, stated thirty six of the forty one forces taking part completed and two forces did not participate at all. At a regional level, all strategic leads explained how forces are paired with another force and they undertake an in depth review using a structured template to reality check where the force are against the guidelines.

The Concluding Report on the implementation of the 2018 Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines (Miles et al, 2021) was produced following the final round of peer inspections across forces which took place between January to March 2021. The incoming NPCC lead explained that this was due to take place in 2020, however this was delayed due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The report sought to identify key themes and assess the impact of the implementation of the guidelines. A statistical analysis between the readiness assessment of 2018 and the mid-project assessment of 2019 cannot meaningfully be undertaken as the content and questions did vary, as did, as the report alludes to, individual force approaches to responding to the questions. The report did, however, seek to analyse the qualitative feedback from forces.

The question set to which forces responded is included within this thesis (see Appendix 8). Forces were asked to give an indication of where they felt they were against each of the seven guideline areas, supported by a peer review from a partnered force to provide some independent scrutiny to inform their answers. The outgoing NPCC lead explained that while individual forces are responsible for their force return, this is informed through the peer review:

'The visiting force interview strategic and tactical leads and undertake focus groups with frontline staff. After their visit they submit findings to help the host force understand their current position through a reality check of what they have said'.

Reviewing the concluding report (Miles et al, 2021), this identified several key findings in relation to community engagement:

i) *Due to the pandemic engagement activity has moved largely online.*
ii) *Forces are in broadcast mode in relation to online engagement and need to transition to listening and engaging*
iii) *There is a confidence and training gap in relation to online engagement*
iv) *Clarity is required on why certain engagement activity continues, there is a lack of evidence of how activity is targeted and how this being used to reach under represented groups*
v) *Existence of engagement strategies was widely referenced, but tactics appear to be limited to more traditional methods, such as meetings and surgeries.*
vi) *Consideration is needed for how to report back to communities on activity taken outside of social media*

(Miles et al 2021, p.6)

In other thematic areas, these key findings are also relevant to community engagement.

Targeted Activity – There was large scale evidence of forces increasing understanding of their communities through the use of community mapping exercises. Additionally, data literacy and the use of bespoke software is increasing but a more consistent approach is needed. (Miles et al 2021, pp 7-8)

Promoting the Right Culture – Those working in Neighbourhood Policing did not feel others saw it as a specialism and it has become the 'dumping ground' for demand and neighbourhood resources are regularly drawn into the response function. (Miles et al 2021, p.9)

Developing Officers, Staff and Volunteers – A significant positive identified was the development of a training package in collaboration by the four Welsh forces and that the materials to deliver this are available to all forces through the Knowledge Hub. (Miles et al 2021, p.10)

Developing and Sharing Learning – Links with local universities have increased. Some forces have made good progress on adopting evidence based policing boards. (Miles et al 2021, p.11)

Importantly, some of the biggest impacts on the ability for forces to implement the neighbourhood policing guidelines were contained within the responses to the questions asked around their strategic approach. Miles et al (2021, p.11) identified the following findings:

i) *Impact of operation Uplift (The political drive to recruit 20,000 officers)*
ii) *Investment in training*

iii) *Early intervention and prevention departments*

iv) *There is a lack of consistency around the abstraction of neighbourhood policing resources.*

There is a clear consensus from all the national and force strategic actors interviewed that having a strategic lead and the regional structures have helped implement the guidelines from a national to force level. Additionally, both NPCC leads suggested that the support from the Local Policing Portfolio of the NPCC and direction through Chiefs Council have also been important facilitators.

Blockers to implementation

Both NPCC leads highlighted the biggest challenge to implementation is having forty-three different Chief Constables and forty-three different PCCs. Each having a different view on the importance and prioritisation of Neighbourhood Policing with other issues. The incoming NPCC lead described this in the following terms:

> '*Policing is a complex landscape with lots of risk' and Neighbourhood Policing can be seen as 'pink and fluffy'*.

The outgoing NPCC lead used very similar words to describe this, in essence that in a world of counterterrorism, serious and organised crime, modern slavery and complex cross border criminality, neighbourhood policing and in particular community engagement can be seen as less important and the first to give way, despite the importance of maintaining good community relations, as all these serious and complex things happen in a neighbourhood.

In her interview, the incoming NPCC lead had not heard of any key individuals being blockers, in fact the opposite, and it is reliant on key people at a senior level to succeed. The incoming NPCC lead was a Field Officer for the then National Police Improvement Agency (the precursor organisation to the College of Policing) in 2008 as part of the original Neighbourhood Policing Programme project covering the Southwest region. She described living the process and putting in place the policy.

> '*Some senior leaders didn't buy into it back then and the same is true now, but back in 2008 there was a much stronger political push and overarching policing performance framework. The issues were different then though, in 2008 it was about low level community issues compared to the current complexity of issues around Child Sex Exploitation, Drug Related Harm and Serious and Organised Crime'*.

Dissecting the comments of the incoming NPCC lead, with reference to low level community issues, the focus of the 2008 Neighbourhood Policing policy iteration and the then Labour government was heavily focused on quality of life issues around anti-social behaviour (Longstaff et al, 2015).

Speaking from a College of Policing perspective, in interview their lead said that successful policy implementation requires the commitment of Chief Officers in forces, that is critical to any policy being accepted. All three national leads interviewed suggested it needs their time and investment. This also required Inspectors at the operational level to take responsibility. The College lead encapsulated this point:

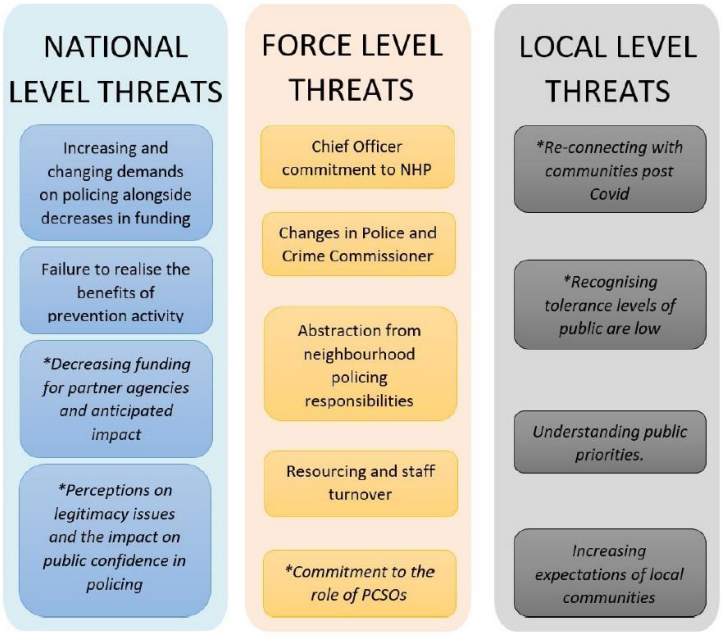
'you are dealing with busy people with their own issues, getting them to take responsibility is difficult'.

A view agreed by the NPCC lead and the case study force lead. The other challenge to recognise in dealing with policy was described by the College lead,

'*However hard you try; it can still be a bit dry'*.

This is somewhat at odds with the reflections of the outgoing NPCC lead who was more confident in the simple plain English the guidelines were written in. However, all the key national leads agreed this was the challenge of being at a time of austerity and then compounded by the pandemic.

As part of the concluding peer review process, forces were asked to consider what national, force and local threats existed to delivering the guidelines. The following themes emerged from the concluding review summary:



(Miles at al 2021, p12)

A further blocker identified through my interviews with both the College and Outgoing NPCC lead were that key individuals involved in the process had no experience of managing a similar process before. The College lead did however point out that having a guideline committee chair that is invested in the outcome of the process was seen as a key facilitator. As were other personalities involved, such as the staff officer to the national lead being described as a positive person. Again, this highlights the importance of key actors, and how several policy entrepreneurs are identified throughout the policy journey. Ultimately the guidelines gave the incoming NPCC lead what she described in her interview as a '*vehicle for change'.*

The incoming NPCC lead raised concern in her interview that this could be seen as a one size fits all. The process needs to be cognisant of the difference that exists between forces. Equally, the approach must recognise this within each force's own physical and human geography. The incoming NPCC lead summarised measuring success as a real challenge in her interview:

> *'Measuring performance is particularly challenging, consideration of what structures are available to measure effectiveness in this area of business, and where prevention and deterrence are hard to provide quantitative metrics'.*

Another part of the data that makes up this study is analysis of different documents. A recurring theme throughout the documents and summarised in Miles et al (2021) is how neighbourhood policing activity can be effectively measured. Measuring effectiveness is an important aspect of policy implementation. Within the neighbourhood policing policy, the lack of a

performance framework was highlighted (Miles et al 2021, p.13). This emphasised a development need nationally, with suggestion that a high-level framework is required, which could be tailored for local use. The next chapter will further explore the challenges of measuring the impact of the policy on Neighbourhood Policing delivery.

The role of the College of Policing

The College Lead, in his interview, explained the difference in the role of the NPCC and the College:

> *'The college set the standard but cannot mandate the guidance and implementation. This relies on a good working relationship with the NPCC. It is the NPCC who have responsibility for operationalising the guidelines.'*

The College lead explained how the College supported the NPCC in this function through use of resources and premises. A national event for Neighbourhood Policing was hosted by the College at their main site in Ryton at the start of the implementation phase to introduce the guidelines and their supporting material. The guidelines themselves being available on the College of Policing website. The NPCC lead set up a good meeting structure with regional groups and thematic leads reporting into a central national team, which the College were represented at.

The College were the primary partner in the creation of the guidelines and their supporting material, undertaking the academic rapid evidence assessment and the call for practice. College resources in media, production, product authoring

and legal were all involved in the creation of the products. To make the guidelines more interactive, video case studies were produced along with interactive PDF documents.

When the NPCC lead set up a group of early adopter forces, a baseline assessment was created in 2018 (Hope et al, 2018) to which the college contributed; this created a gap analysis of where forces were pre-implementation.

The College lead explained that during the process there was a change in project manager and other key individuals, but the College maintained good links with the NPCC throughout, hosting and participating in various meetings. The project was overseen by a Senior Responsible Officer in the College, The Uniformed Policing Faculty lead, supported by digital services, product authoring, project management and a role the College created as a Neighbourhood Policing Adviser to support the process. Internally, the project had wider governance through the College Professional Committee who oversee the work of the College at strategic level.

The College lead said a lot of thought went into how the guidelines would be produced and how they would be received by the front line, including focus groups with practitioners. As a result, different products were used at different levels, with specific supporting documents aimed at senior leaders, supervisors and front line staff. However, the College lead pointed out there was no evaluation of this approach. So, it is unclear to the College how well this has been received, or indeed how well this may be used by the front line. This will be explored later in the chapter when we look at the case study force and feedback from front line practitioners.

Both the NPCC leads, and the College lead agreed that there was no appetite from the College for curriculum development. The College lead did however point out that there was a neighbourhood policing curriculum, however this formed part of a wider package that supported the Initial Police Learning and Development modules for new police officers. There was also no standardised curriculum for new Police Community Support Officers. Reviewing the assessments (Hope et al 2018; Hope et al 2019), this demonstrates how forces filled the void in this area, developing training independently. It could be argued that this then results in a lack of consistency of approach and application. Hope et al (2018, p.6) summarised the need for a central steer on training and development for staff identifying:

> *'a lack of available training resources in this area… …Some forces remarked that guidance or support around which levels of officers and staff would benefit from which levels of training would be welcome'.*

The outgoing and incoming NPCC leads spoke of the All Wales development of a bespoke neighbourhood policing training package, that was developed by the four Welsh forces collaborating on development of content and training delivery. This work was supported by the College in so much as they provided a resource along with the NPCC to help develop the package. When completed, this work was validated by both the College and NPCC, with the then CEO of the College and outgoing NPCC lead releasing a joint letter commending the training product to forces nationally as an example of good practice. (Miles et al 2021, P.10)

In the interviews with the NPCC leads and College lead there was consensus in relation to gaps in sharing knowledge. All spoke about a product called

Knowledge Hub where practice and ideas can be shared but all those interviewed argued that this is not used as well as it should be. Additionally, the College lead was concerned the resources supplied by the College are also not being used as well as they could be.

The College undertook a 'lessons learned' exercise at the end of the development stage around June 2018 involving the various College teams involved. Through this process, the College lead identified that it would have been beneficial to involve the College's communications and digital services at a much earlier stage. This would have facilitated the production of the guideline documents themselves and given more time to react to feedback from officers and staff within forces that would ultimately refer to them.

The College lead identified an opportunity for this policy process, and their own unique experience to help future policy development. When his successor was then charged with delivering guidelines in another workstream, their learning was shared with them. Additionally, the outgoing NPCC lead was also supporting the College lead, sharing his unique experience and perspective through chairing the guideline committee.

<u>The impact of Covid-19</u>

One of the key challenges for implementation is that the guidelines were written pre Covid. The incoming NPCC lead stated in her interview:

> '*The world has changed; demand has changed and quite rightly some will question if this is still fit for purpose. Neighbourhood Policing happens in partnership and the challenges across the public sector make this a real risk'*.

Miles et al (2021, p.4) explains the impact of Covid-19 on the final assessment of the implementation process. The final review itself was delayed by almost a year, as lockdown prevented forces from being able to undertake any meaningful peer assessment process. A view in this document that was supported by the incoming NPCC lead in her interview.

All of those interviewed detailed how the Covid-19 pandemic pushed forces to do things differently in relation to community engagement. Later in this chapter, when we look at the policy impact on the case study force, this can be seen in the responses from focus group participants. In the executive summary of the concluding report (Miles et al 2021, p4) summarises succinctly that:

> '*Covid has forced increased online engagement. There is a challenge now as to how this is sustained and how it compliments face-to-face activity'*.

The incoming NPCC lead in her interview felt that a future review of the policy would be necessary to reflect on these changes. A view supported by the College lead in his interview, although he felt the evidence base was not yet sufficient in terms of practice evidence and academic evaluations to be able to undertake this yet. Covid-19 did not impact on the development process, as this was completed prior to the pandemic. Much of the implementation had also been completed by March 2020 and the greatest impact was on delivery of the policy itself at the force and local level. The pandemic did however impact on the ongoing national and regional meeting structures. The incoming NPCC lead and the case study force lead in their interviews spoke about the opportunities that the pandemic delivered in terms of technological solutions

for meetings. Both commented how traditional meetings were face to face, how these could be challenging to arrange, with the logistics of force leads meeting, even at a regional level. The use of Skype, Microsoft Teams, Zoom and other video conferencing solutions made arranging meetings easier, with both commenting on the reduction in travel time and creating greater efficiencies.

Policy Translation: a local case study force – the micro level

This section moves on to examine the data through a more localised lens, looking at the policy arriving at the case study force and how this has then landed at a practitioner level. This section is informed through interviews with the force strategic lead, an Inspector responsible for the delivery of neighbourhood policing at an operational level, a focus group with operational staff, and analysis of the force, divisional and local engagement plans. Themes emerging from observational data from the focus group and recorded within my field notes included the challenge of competing demands on local actors, the role of these key actors at the micro level, both as Kingdon's policy entrepreneurs and as Lipsky's street level bureaucrats.

As discussed in the methods chapter, the case study force is a county police force bordering London. It is an affluent, semi-rural county with several large towns, with many people commuting into the capital every day. While it is home to some of the most expensive properties in the UK, it also has areas of poverty that feature quite highly on the indices of multiple depravation. (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2019). The force is

structured into three divisions or Basic Command Units (BCU); North, East and West. Each division is then made up of a number of Boroughs, these are co-terminus with local authority boundaries. For this case study, we will be focusing on the East division and a Borough within the division I have called Riverside. Riverside borough borders the Metropolitan Police Service area and up until the year 2000, policing services for the borough were provided by the Metropolitan Police. Whilst largely affluent there are two significant areas of depravation that are among the most deprived in the force area.

At the time the guidelines were being developed, the case study force lead held the portfolio for neighbourhood policing in force, and her then Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) was the NPCC portfolio lead for neighbourhoods. Senior colleagues in the force were briefed by the DCC on the development of the Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines. The guidelines helped the case study force to see where the gaps are in terms of local policing delivery. The force had received a good grading from Her Majesties Inspectorate of Constabularies and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), but the force lead said in her interview:

> '*good is not good enough in terms of how our communities think we are delivering for them'*.

The force lead described the new Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines approach as '*a good opportunity to properly assess our delivery'*. She also explained that the force went through a change programme in 2016 that led to something known in the force as Policing In our Neighbourhoods (PIN). PIN was a force change programme because of budget constraints through austerity, and this impacted on the resources available for neighbourhood

policing. This approach significantly reduced the neighbourhood policing footprint in the force and moved significant resources into their response function.

Embedding Neighbourhood Policing

In her interview, the force lead explained what has been done in the force to implement the guidelines. To help imbed neighbourhood policing, the force lead chairs a bi-monthly Borough Commanders meeting, described by her in the interview as her '*favourite meeting'*. The eleven local Borough Commanders meet to talk about issues and share promising practice. This developed from an initial two hour meeting to a whole day event with guest speakers. Promising practice shared within this forum is shared within the force's Problem Solving Hub, an intranet site accessible by all staff. This is a web based resource accessible to all in the organisation and helps to promote a structured approach to neighbourhood policing across the organisation. The practice library covers a wide variety of neighbourhood policing initiatives, including approaches to community engagement.

The force lead explained the journey the force has been on in re-investing in neighbourhood policing and focusing on the importance of community engagement. As a result, the force pushed hard to re-engage in schools and have put in place dedicated Youth Engagement Officers (YEO) in all boroughs. They work closely with schools and other partners in increasing reach to children and young people.

The force lead also detailed in her interview that the force is currently in the process of developing a new engagement strategy and this is built upon having an increased understanding of local need and tailoring engagement to meet this. The force recently invested in obtaining ACORN data to aid community mapping activity, a process to better understand and respond to the make-up and needs of all communities across the force. ACORN is a commercial classification tool that 'segments the population into 62 different types, providing a detailed understanding of the consumer characteristics of people and places across the UK.' (ACORN, 2022)

An example was given by the force lead of a murder in Riverside borough in which the investigation identified a previously unknown Brazilian community. This identified the need for the Force Incident Manager (FIM, the Inspector in the control room) or Critical Incident Manager (CIM, a Chief Inspector responsible for force management) to have access to information relating to communities in the middle of the night when the local neighbourhood team are not about.

Each of the forces' three geographic divisions or Basic Command Units (BCU) have an engagement strategy built upon the one created for North division, but the force one is not yet complete. The force lead explained that the engagement plan will fit in with the force commitments, one of which is '*Our Communities'* and the ACORN data will aid in that regard.

In interview with both the force lead and the Riverside Inspector, they spoke about a different borough, with a diverse community make up, who are currently piloting work on a community mapping template to understand the makeup of the local community. The force lead described this as a layered

approach that starts initially at a level working with statutory partners, then goes down to a more localised level understanding the makeup of communities, third sector provision and community groups that operate within that area. It is important to get that 'rich picture' of community make-up.

The approaches highlighted by the force lead are supported by the findings of my analysis of the policy document (College of Policing, 2018). Contained within the supporting material (College of Policing 2018, p.4) this points out the need to share good practice and the need for increased community understanding. Indeed, the guidelines directly identify the need to undertake a community mapping exercise, and that engagement should be tailored to meet local needs (College of Policing 2018, p.5). In addition, the concluding report (Miles et al, 2021) speaks of a broad understanding of community make up, further supported by the clear ambitions laid out for the force at the divisional engagement strategy (East Division Engagement Plan 2021) and the local engagement plan (Riverside Engagement Plan 2021). The latter evidencing tactical activity being undertaken at the neighbourhood level within Riverside Borough. The term 'mapping' was a theme crossing over from these interviews, captured within my post interview field notes that was then observed from analysis of the policy and force level documents.

Policy Impact: How the Policy translated to Borough level

This section explores the data in relation to the policy landing at the Borough level in Riverside; this is informed by my interview with the Riverside Inspector and analysis of the Divisional engagement plan (East Division Engagement

Strategy, 2021) and the Riverside engagement plan (Riverside Engagement Plan, 2021).

The force lead in her interview described how the force is currently undertaking activity to refresh their existing community engagement strategy, as referenced in the interview with the force lead. A working group jointly chaired by the force strategic lead and head of corporate communications, are close to publishing a refreshed strategy. The current policy published internally to staff is the 2016 iteration, however each of the force's geographical divisions were sent a template engagement strategy based on one developed by one of the force's divisions in 2020.

The divisional engagement strategy is set in the context of delivering the division's three key policing priorities:

Getting it right first time – especially hate crime and domestic abuse

Pro-active mindset – gather intelligence and safeguard

Passionate Professional – Take Pride

(East Division Engagement Strategy 2021, p1)

The plan sets out the definition of engagement as per the College of Policing Approved Professional Practice (College of Policing, 2016) and refers to delivery against the 2018 Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines. The policy clearly sets out the essential elements of community engagement set out in the guidelines.

Seven strategic objectives of the engagement strategy are detailed as:

- *Understanding our communities and their diverse needs*
- *Engagement has a clearly defined purpose*
- *Engagement is tailored to meet community needs*
- *Empowering communities, building capacity*
- *Delivering our statutory responsibility for engagement*
- *A one team approach*
- *Establishing and maintaining an evidence-based approach*

(East Division Engagement Strategy 2021, p.2)

Objective one focuses on understanding community make up and working with the community and partners to understand the issues, demands and operating landscape. Objective two seeks to ensure that engagement has a purpose and how activity needs to be targeted based on evidence from the community mapping process. Objective 3 refers to tailoring the engagement to meet local need and the importance of involving the community in this process. Objective 4 talks about empowering communities to take ownership of engagement and associated problem solving, involving the community on where and when and how engagement occurs, moving away from the traditional church hall meeting model to be more reflexive of need. Objective 5 covers the statutory responsibility placed on forces to ensure they hold regular public meetings, to talk about local policing priorities and to update the community on action taken in relation to these. Objective 6 speaks about the organisation wide responsibilities including how this should not be the preserve of the neighbourhood policing team and how other

departments need to be involved in the process. Objective 7 is about learning from experience, evaluating engagement activity and ensuring learning is shared.

The strategy is delivered through the ownership and accountability of the Borough Commander, an officer of Inspector rank with responsibility for the delivery of local neighbourhood policing services across the eleven force boroughs which are co-terminus with the lower tier local authority. Borough Commanders must ensure that they have produced a local engagement plan, that they review the plan quarterly and that a community mapping process has been undertaken on their borough. They are also charged with ensuring there are qualitative and quantitative measures in place to measure their engagement activity and evaluate its effectiveness. (East Division Engagement Strategy 2021)

The Borough Commander, a uniformed Inspector, leads the Specialist Neighbourhood team in Riverside Borough, and will be known as the Riverside Inspector in this research. During his interview, he explained they became aware of the Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines in 2018 when they were published nationally. He was aware that they are available on the College of Policing Website and the areas the guidelines covered. He could not recall exactly how he became aware of them but thought this was about the time of his promotion and he would have been scanning for relevant issues at the time. The Riverside Inspector detailed how he developed an engagement plan off the back of a force instruction to review these and having a new divisional engagement strategy. Recently one of the other Borough Commanders

briefed colleagues on how they were piloting the community mapping process, mentioned earlier, to better understand communities. Borough Commanders across the force are currently awaiting the development of the pilot before this is rolled out to the other boroughs.

The Riverside Inspector spoke about the tactical activity contained within his Borough engagement plan (Riverside Engagement Plan 2021). This will be a 'living' document and drive the engagement activity of the team. However there has been significant impact as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and this has fundamentally changed the way in which engagement is done; historically engagement was done through local panel meetings compared to current online approaches. The focus group with frontline staff in Riverside Borough supported the view of their Inspector, explaining that these meetings were never well attended and were not particularly representative of the local community. Much of the engagement activity of recent times has been online, as it must be because of the restrictions of the pandemic. As we will address in the next chapter, there is a lack of measurement of whether this has improved engagement, both in terms of breadth and being more representative of the make-up of the local community.

The Riverside Engagement Plan (2021) should link directly to the East Division Engagement Strategy (2021). The document is titled as a Community Engagement Tactical Plan. This also links to the three divisional priorities detailed in the divisional plan. The document makes early reference to the 2018 Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines stating the plan will ensure a structured approach to delivering upon its principles.

Each of the seven strategic objectives contained within the divisional plan are expanded upon with tactical activity detailed below:

Understanding communities:

- *Community Mapping exercise*
- *Review of population, demographics, crime trends and deprivation*
- *Provide briefings to local teams*

Engagement has a purpose:

- *Use mapping data to identify areas of focus*
- *Identify and engage with repeat callers highlighting community concerns*

Tailored engagement:

- *Directed patrols*
- *Target areas of high crime, low confidence, and high footfall*

Empowering communities, building capacity

- *Target engagement at marginalised groups – GRT, LGBT, BAME, Youth and areas of high deprivation/poverty*

Delivering statutory responsibilities

- *Provide the community with information about crime and disorder*
- *Obtain views of the community*

A one team approach

- *Involve internal policing partners in engagement activities*

Establishing and maintaining an evidence-based approach

- *Record engagement activity*
- *Evaluate engagement activity*

(Riverside Engagement Plan 2021, pp.1-2)

Considering the responses provided by those interviewed and interrogating the engagement plans, the strategic intent at both force and local level is clearly present and reflects the ambitions of the national strategy. The guidelines (College of Policing, 2018) provided the essential elements for effective engagement. These are then clearly seen in the East Division Engagement Strategy 2021 where these translate to the objectives. A tactical plan to deliver these is then seen in Riverside Engagement Plan 2021. This is supported further through the interview with the force lead and the Riverside Inspector who specifically mention the community mapping process. The Riverside Inspector was clearly aware of the pilot that had run in the other Borough and made specific reference in the Riverside Engagement Plan (2021 p.3). The next step is to explore how this has landed at the tactical level with those charged with making it happen.

<u>Policy impact on the frontline</u>

In this next section we will explore how the policy has impacted community engagement with those working on the frontline, those that could be viewed as Lipsky's street level bureaucrats. The data included a focus group interview

with a group of front line staff working directly with communities. The focus group included a Sergeant leading the team, who reports direct to the Riverside Inspector, A Neighbourhood Specialist Police Constable (NSO) and a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO), who report direct to the Sergeant. The group contained a broad range of policing experience with a PCSO with only a years' experience to an experienced sergeant, albeit new to neighbourhood policing. Pseudonyms have been used for participants. The group spoke about their knowledge and experience of engaging with their communities. Their comments highlighted issues such as their understanding of the policy, how they currently undertake engagement and why.

Knowledge of the Policy

All the members of the focus group were aware of the guidelines but could not recall any specific communications about it. For example, Sergeant Dave became aware through his preparation for the Constable to Sergeant promotion process. All were aware they are on the College of Policing website. PC Sarah thought she became aware of supporting material for frontline teams but did not believe they came through a formal channel. The group were shown the supporting material during the focus group, but this did not prompt any awareness.

Describing her approach locally to community engagement, PC Sarah knew that the Riverside engagement plan 2021 existed but was not confident in its contents she said:

'I'm not that great with it and only refer to it ad hoc'.

How the team currently engage

PC Sarah explained that engagement was currently dominated by social media because of lockdown. Pre-COVID, the team would meet with councillors and attend their surgeries. The team choose key people in the community and use their leverage. The group were unable to expand upon what this meant, but one could argue that this is the basis of community mapping and understanding key actors within the community that have links to improve engagement. Sergeant Dave said that formal structured engagement was returning post pandemic; team do 'Meet the Streets', this is pre-planned pop-up activity in key locations like community centres and supermarkets with a high footfall.

I asked the group about what sort of activities, formal and informal, the team were doing. Several examples were provided such as engagement with schools, drop in centres, etc. The team would specifically focus on vulnerable people. For example, PCSO April goes to a regular soup kitchen, providing the opportunity to engage with a lot of vulnerable people who are not good at social media and do not have ready access to it. While they were readily able to talk about what they did, the focus group members were not easily able to explain why they did what they did. PC Sarah said much of the work of the team is around informal engagement, undertaking informal interactions such as targeted visible patrol activity, house to house following incidents and visiting local community centres. Again, this seemed to lack a clarity of purpose and was largely driven by specific events or incidents.

When considering what community engagement means to them, there was no real consensus within the focus group, but building and maintaining trust were consistent themes:

> *'this is how we build rapport, it's a vital part of our role, we need to understand the community better and to understand their issues.'* (PCSO April)

> *'It's about keeping lines of communication open, being approachable, not being a separate authoritarian entity'*. (PC Sarah)

> '*This is about getting trust back, policing currently has a bad reputation in the news, people don't trust us like they used to'.* (Sergeant Dave)

When discussing the reasons for engagement and delving into the purpose behind it, PC Sarah described this as:

> '*it's about building for the future, as you don't know when you need to go back to someone about a problem in the future'*.

PC Sarah was also keen to speak about how engagement activity has helped to promote confidence in local communities. She provided a positive example around targeted engagement with young people following high community tensions after a fatal road traffic collision two years ago.

> *'This became a yearly issue and having a bit of knowledge of the background gives a hook to discuss things. They used to be hostile to police, but things have improved so much so that they even bought the police team chocolates'*.

The purpose of engagement

The group were asked about why engagement was undertaken and if engagement focuses on the use of specific policing tactics and operations. Sergeant Dave stated that the team use social media to talk about policing operations and speak to councillors, so they understand our decisions and to help people feel safer and not stressed about something like a section 60 or dispersal order. Section 60 is a power under the Public Order Act that, with the authority of an Inspector or above, where serious disorder is occurring or believed to occur, provides a stop and search power for any person within that area) (Public Order Act 1986). Dispersal powers are granted by an Inspector where disorder is occurring or believed to occur. This allows a constable to require a person to leave a defined area subject to the authority, and not return within a 48 hour period (Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014).

None of those within the focus group were aware of any times that engagement has been used to inform local policy or strategy development. This also affirmed the view given by the Riverside Inspector.

Engagement used to set local priorities

The guidelines (College of Policing, 2018) and the Divisional Engagement Strategy (2021) both make clear the need for regular meetings with the community to hold their neighbourhood team to account for what they are doing to tackle local priorities. In order to understand how well this element of the policy has landed, the group were asked questions about this specifically. PC Sarah explained the team historically set local priorities with the

community, but now they just report to them on what the priorities are and what we are doing about them. The engagement in this regard appears to be limited and certainly evidence of community involvement was not forthcoming. Much of the discussion stemmed around updates following specific policing operations. The move away from setting priorities with the community is clearly at odds with the national policy and the local engagement plan (Riverside Engagement Plan 2021).

PCSO April suggested that it was not just about policing priorities, but wider partnership priorities discussed with Neighbourhood Watch, the local Council and Housing Associations. She said they review crime types together and come up with priorities. She stressed that: '*it's important to listen to partners'*.

This was supported by Sergeant Dave who said his team regularly meet with partners and review all the jobs that come through. The approach taken by the local team is at odds with the national policy documents, which speak about the importance of the voice of the local community in setting those priorities and the police then responding and reporting back on them. While it could be argued that the engagement events described by focus group participants are giving them information that they could use to set priorities, this would appear to fall short of the ambitions of community participation in the process laid out in the policy. Indeed, The Guidelines (Neighbourhood Policing 2018, p.7) and the Riverside Engagement Plan (2021, p.4) specifically speak of the legal requirements under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act to hold regular meetings with the community and report back on local issues. While one can argue the impact of the pandemic prevented face to face engagement

in the traditional method, the team's use of social media suggests that this could have been achievable.

While here would appear to be a lack of community involvement in the planning of engagement and in choosing the method, location, time, or content, PC Sarah stated that colleagues have involved the community in the context of problem-solving.

> '*catalytic converter thefts are a lower policing priority based on threat, harm and risk, but high on community interest, they looked at key areas to put up posters, involved parking wardens, security teams at colleges, etc. We involved partners, but not the traditional ones.*'

PCSO April supported this, adding that the force's central problem solving team worked with her to get the public interested in what they were doing. The team focused on high footfall areas. Sergeant Dave explained he used information from the public around problems for the team to be in the right place at the right time.

PC Sarah explained that years ago, the team used panel meetings and had about 16 people turn up in a wealthy area. However, in the more deprived area only 6 turned up, but they were far more engaged. There was consensus in the group that you can't judge success simply by how many people turn up -

> '*we can't just judge effectiveness by numbers'*. (PC Sarah)

PCSO April felt that joint engagements with partners were worthwhile, saying:

> '*we hold several joint engagements – they are effective as they have all the stakeholders there and they have had some good feedback'.*

Methods of engagement

To increase reach to their disabled community, the team spoke of using a talking newspaper for those with sight issues. Engagement still very much relied on traditional methods though, newsletters in wards and school newsletters. There was agreement in the group that this was often still an effective method.

> *'Knowing our audience to do it the right way is important otherwise it feels like we are telling people off'.* (PC Sarah).

The involvement of the community in engagement does appear to be limited to the context of solving specific problems, and there was no evidence to suggest that routine engagement activity such as when and where meetings at which the community can speak to the team about a wide variety of issues, is any way influenced by them.

Understanding the local community

Thinking about how the local team understand the make-up, history, demographics, social and political factors, and influences on the community, or if they believe this has been adequate, PC Sarah spoke about team activity from two years ago, where census data was used.

> *'We identified that the second most spoken language was Portuguese and through this identified a Brazilian community. They linked in with the local authority engagement officer, they had specific information about*

social media groups that existed. Faith leaders also know a lot about what's going on'.

This is an interesting example, noted earlier in my field notes, linking in with the ambitions of the mapping process identified earlier by the force strategic lead.

PC Sarah spoke about the history of the area and some of the historic challenges faced by the team. For example, there was a history of public order issues when England played Portugal at football in 2006. PC Sarah also explained that Riverside has a large Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT) community. The borough is also home to one of the four classic horse racing events which brings hundreds of thousands of people to the Borough in the summer. PCSO April spoke about some of the unique challenges of being so close to the capital and of gang affiliated issues around those travelling into and out of London. The knowledge of the demographics, socio-political issues and history of the area were all apparent within the team members, but there is a lack of how this information is captured to ensure organisational memory.

The group demonstrated an understanding of how they could use key contacts and those with influence.

'*The MP is pretty good, we have regular contact with them, usually through the Inspector but the relationship is good. There is a lady that runs the largest social media group, and her sphere of influence is massive, and we have built a good relationship with her'.* (PCSO April)

Asked specifically about Community Mapping, PC Sarah said:

'There is a document written every year by the Inspector which we all talk about openly that captures this, but it talks generally and doesn't have the names of the key people on it'.

Sergeant Dave spoke about how his team have been discussing organisational memory. Individuals tend to keep hold of the details of the contacts they have but need to find a way of better sharing this, they are redeveloping a share point site to make this available. This would tend to suggest that activities detailed in the policy are occurring at the tactical level, however there is no clear indication that this activity is because of the policy.

Commenting on whether the community feel involved in local policing activity, Sergeant Dave felt this was good through social media and that the Riverside community comment on posts a lot. Overall engagement is positive, PCSO April did suggest however that,

'*there are still a lot of people who don't trust us, and we are working at this'.*

Conclusion

In this section I will go back to the original two research questions to understand how the analysis of the data has informed them.

How have national guidelines for neighbourhood policing informed community engagement at a force strategic level?

Through the analysis of the interviews and documents, it is clearly evidenced that the Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines have translated with a clear understanding at strategic level to the case study force. This is best evidenced through the interview with the force strategic lead and the East Divisional Engagement Strategy 2021.

Taking the essential elements of the Engaging Communities element of the policy (College of Policing, 2018), one can see a direct relationship to the Objectives identified in the East Divisional Engagement Strategy 2021. Each of the essential elements link directly to the objectives and share commonality in language and intended outcomes. In interview with the force strategic lead, she articulated the need to gain a greater understanding of the force's local communities, highlighting the community mapping pilot and the use of demographic data to better inform this process. Linking to Kingdon's theory and the important role of the policy entrepreneurs; the force lead also spoke about the importance of having the right people in the right roles, particularly around the Borough Commanders, the local Inspectors that will own and drive that activity.

The College lead pointed out that the Neighbourhood Policing guidelines were the first time that a new policy approach has been taken, using the National Institute for Clinical Excellence model in a policing context. Regarding policy transfer at the strategic level, one could argue this has been successful, based on the findings in the case study force. The commentary on the development element of the policy was overwhelmingly positive; although one must consider the potential bias that this is the view of those directly involved in the process.

The relationships between policy actors at the strategic and case force level undoubtedly aided the policy translation journey. It could be argued that the policy networks nationally and at force level overlap, including the role of the case study force Chief Constable as the senior policy lead nationally. Equally his staff officer was repeatedly identified as a passionate and connected person. The regional meeting structure for policy implementation was also subject to positive commentary both from the force lead in her interview and through the analysis of the documents (Hope et al 2021).

All key actors interviewed expressed a view that the national and regional approach to implementation added value. The use of regional groups to drive through implementation and to support a peer review process between forces to understand how the policy was landing were commented on positively throughout my interviews. Again, a key theme emerged around the key actors, with interviewees highlighting individuals as being a significant reason this appeared to work well. National actors spoke of the passion and enthusiasm of the outgoing NPCC lead, and of their staff officer. Additionally regional leads, driving the implementation process and having a force strategic lead who understands the importance of neighbourhood policing. The outgoing NPCC lead in his interview, spoke about the importance of the drive coming from the policing minister; in what one could argue to be the ultimate policy entrepreneur. Through the interviews with the key policy actors, there has been no specific formal evaluation of the policy process itself, either the development or implementation phases. The concluding project report makes no specific recommendations for a review of the policy process, only to

recognise that ‘the policy will need to be reviewed and updated to reflect the evolving nature of Neighbourhood Policing Activity’ (Miles et al 2021, p.13)

To what extent has national policy translated into delivery of community engagement at the tactical level?

There is less clear evidence of the translation of the policy to the tactical level. The interview with the Riverside Inspector showed an understanding of the Neighbourhood Policing Guideline’s existence, their local engagement plan (Riverside engagement plan, 2021) evidence direct correlation to the Divisional Plan and in turn to the policy documents (College of Policing, 2018). However, both the Riverside Inspector and the neighbourhood team sergeant, Sergeant Dave, were only aware of these through their own scanning of policy documents ahead of their individual promotion processes. Interestingly, from a theoretical viewpoint the policy journey now links much more to Lipsky’s (2010) concept of street level bureaucracy, as implementation ultimately comes down to those who deliver the policy (or not) on the front line. I would argue that my findings indicate the closer to the delivery point of the policy, the weaker the level of understanding of it is. The focus group would strongly suggest this to be the case, with far less evidence of activity being driven by the contents of the policy.

The most localised policy document (Riverside Engagement Plan 2021) still shows that resonance with the national policy, however the implementation of that plan appears, based on my analysis, to be limited. A positive example of the policy would be the focus group demonstrating an understanding of the need to undertake community mapping, although none of those interviewed

appeared to have been involved in the process itself. Conversely, the absence of any of the Riverside communities being involved in either setting or holding the local team to account for delivery against identified priorities is telling. This is the only part of the policy that contains the strongly worded 'must' phrase, as detailed in the evidence from the Rapid Evidence Assessment forming the basis of the guidelines (College of Policing 2018, p.2).

While it is clear from the responses of focus group participants that much good and well-meaning work is being done at the tactical level, this is not necessarily being driven by the policy. It is challenging to draw conclusions as to why this may be; is this a conscious decision made by a street level bureaucrat not to follow policy because of a lack of resources, or their discretion or simply they are not aware of its existence, or that policy developed at the national level may not adequately consider local perspectives. Each member of the focus group indicated an awareness of the guidelines but were not able to necessarily demonstrate an understanding of them. I would suggest that the limited extent to policy implementation is more about a local level blocker in the policy translation process. This would suggest that the two theories of Kingdon and Lipsky collide at some point in the process at a more operational level. That is that an enthusiastic policy advocate will be met with a street level bureaucrat, and it is at this point that the policy journey hits a bumpier road.

Chapter 5: Monitoring and measuring community engagement

Introduction

Sausman et al (2015, p.5) suggest that the 'process of transferring guidelines into practice is not a rational, linear process but one which must accommodate the enduring practices and cultural artefacts of the organisational context into which guidelines translate'. This chapter will explore what the data tells us about how the policy implementation has impacted on practice, considering the factors that Sausman et al identified. We will explore how community engagement has been monitored, measured, and how learning from practice is captured. This will also explore how practice is informing or may inform future policy development. This is informed though data captured through interviews with the key actors at all levels of the policy journey, the focus group with the front line staff and through the concluding report of the implementation (Miles et al, 2021) and subsequent reports from the Inspectorate. (HMICFRS 2019; HMICFRS 2022)

This chapter will address the last two research questions:

- How is community engagement captured and measured?
- Is there evidence of promising practice at a local level informing force and national policy development?

<u>The national context for measuring engagement</u>

HMIC (2017) set the requirement for the need for new neighbourhood policing guidelines and for the National Police Chiefs Council, College of Policing and

the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners to work together to achieve this. In terms of this partnership, the incoming NPCC lead, as a Chief Constable of a Welsh force in her interview, mentioned the good links with the UK and Welsh Governments, and the Home Office have been an active part of her national Neighbourhood Policing portfolio working group. The challenge is a lack of involvement from the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) or HMICFRS. This is somewhat surprising to see, as the original work was built from a recommendation from the Inspectorate and specifically required the APCC to be involved in the creation of the guidelines. The Outgoing NPCC lead reflected in his interview, that the APCC were indeed involved in the policy creation, however when the project moved to an implementation stage their involvement ceased, something specifically commented on by the incoming NPCC lead in her interview. Police and Crime Commissioners are key actors in the process, responsible for setting the strategic direction of the organisation and setting Police and Crime Plans, which in effect is the strategic intent of the individual force. The Inspectorate have been involved, as mentioned earlier, and they have contributed towards question sets for the peer review process. There is a confidence in all national leads that they will hold forces to account and reference the guidelines throughout their assessments. The College lead also pointed out that one should refer to HMICFRS PEEL inspections, as these are now '*littered with reference to the guidelines and how well forces have adopted them'*.

In her interview, the incoming NPCC lead suggested a mixed level of confidence in relation to how forces have embedded the policy in relation to

engagement, describing some as '*just playing at it'*. However, they do have confidence that HMICFRS will hold Chief Constables to account.

Measuring the effectiveness of the policy implementation process

Existing literature on the measurement of policy implementation reflect on Kingdon's theory of three streams; the definition of the problem, the development of the policy and the role of politics and public opinion. Brownson et al (2010) suggest metrics for measuring these elements are required to understand if a policy has made impact.

In his interview, the College lead spoke of specific metrics in the early stages of implementation but was unaware if these have been revisited again, so there is no data to support this assertion. That said, the view of the Local Neighbourhood Inspector and the Focus Group at force level would support this. From the analysis conducted by Miles et al (2021) and HMICFRS (2021), there was nothing contained within these two documents that helps us to identify how well the centrally developed resources are being used at a local level.

Discussing measuring the effectiveness of the refreshed neighbourhood policing policy, the incoming NPCC lead stated in her interview:

> '*There is no specific plan to measure the effectiveness of implementation nationally, for forces there is a peer review process, but there is no easy way of measuring how effectively the guidelines land'.*

The incoming NPCC lead suggested that measuring performance in neighbourhood policing would form part of the Inspectorate's work through Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Police, Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Police

Effectiveness, Efficiency and Legitimacy (PEEL) Inspections at a force level (HMICFRS, 2019). In his interview, the outgoing NPCC lead spoke of the Inspectorate's involvement in the formulation of the peer review question set. This does to a certain degree help the NPCC lead to establish how well the guidelines have been established collectively at a national level and to a greater extent will inform individual forces of their strengths and development needs. However, there would appear to be no overall process that has been undertaken to review the guideline development process itself. Indeed, in my interviews, neither the incoming NPCC lead, nor the College lead were aware if the College were looking at the guideline development process itself.

The outgoing NPCC lead further explained the peer review process in terms of tracking the implementation of the policy; progress would be measured through force self-assessments, which would be informed by a peer inspection process, where regionally forces would partner up and review each other. The first stage was to create a baseline assessment; several questions were developed to test where forces were against each of the seven areas of the guidelines. This was not a direct contrast and compare exercise but needed to be good enough to understand the direction of travel. In his interview, the College lead concurred with this view. They added they had never heard any criticism of this approach. This might be indicative of the fact the core parts had not changed, or simply that the question of how effective this process is had not been asked.

One of the challenges of this approach is the subjective nature of the assessment and this is ultimately the professional judgement of the Chief Officer from each force responsible for the submission of the form, aided by

the input from colleagues from the force undertaking a peer review. On reviewing Hope et al 2018, the early returns from forces identified a possible over confidence in the reporting of their readiness at the pre-implementation stage, with several forces suggesting high confidence levels that they were already delivering against these. This was supported by the view of the outgoing NPCC lead in his interview, and further supported by Hope et al 2019, where those same forces had, on reflection, downgraded their initial assessments. Unfortunately for this study, Miles at al (2019, p.4) reflected that the process had to be undertaken differently for the concluding summary and as the question set to forces had changed, direct comparison to the previous returns could not be made.

In his interview, the College lead focused on the importance of the peer review process as a tool for monitoring and measuring policy implementation. However, it is not the role of the College or the NPCC to judge how well forces have implemented national policy. The Inspectorate will ultimately inspect against the guidelines and the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) will use this as a framework for dealing with complaints and misconduct.

Ultimately the College lead felt the results of the mid-project (Hope et al, 2019) and final assessment (Miles et al, 2021) were good and give confidence that forces have improved their position when measured against the guidelines. Miles at al (2021) supports this assertion, evidencing an increasing understanding and confidence level in the application of the policy.

Challenges to measuring engagement

From my personal experience and involvement as the Neighbourhood Policing Adviser for the College, it is not possible to effectively measure one force against another for several reasons. Firstly, this is not overly helpful in the bigger picture of things, as this is not about a league table of how well forces are delivering neighbourhood policing, but more for them to identify where development needs are. Secondly, no two forces are alike, they differ in size, both in terms of geography, population, and staffing. You cannot compare community engagement in the diverse inner city communities of London and Birmingham with rural North Wales or Durham. Each force's individual challenges and operating landscapes make this a futile endeavour. A similar situation was observed in Sausman et al's study of policy implementation in a health care setting where adaptation to local and regional conditions, was observed. (Sausman et al 2015, p.19). Interestingly in this study, this was ultimately seen as a positive factor in implementation at a local level.

This approach is supported in what both NPCC leads, in their interviews, described as the pairing of forces to help with areas for development, where those forces requiring improvement are paired with a force who have stated they are performing strongly in that area.

Measuring the change to engagement as a result of the policy

At a more localised level, and specifically viewed through an engagement lens, both outgoing and incoming NPCC leads interviewed concurred there is a gap in the performance management of engagement. Through the self-

assessment process (Hope et al 2018; Miles et al 2021), it can be seen that several forces have refreshed their engagement plans, a point also made by both NPCC leads in their interviews.

The outgoing NPCC lead, in his interview, suggested that the lack of performance information also linked to the Race and Inclusion agenda, The outgoing NPCC lead explained he added that as a question to the force self-assessment around engagement with young black men. He described:

> '*There are hard yards to do in relation to addressing a national confidence issue, with a very low 10-20% confidence level within black communities. There is a need to set some very ambitious targets to address this'.*

There is a will to work together on engagement with black communities on the national stage; NPCC and College leads interviewed, describe a good working relationship between the NPCC and the College. Miles et al (2021) does not specifically provide any evidence of force's answers in relation to this specific question; however, in early 2022, the 'Police Race Action Plan was published by the NPCC and College of Policing (College of Policing, 2022). This was produced in the aftermath of the murder of a black man, George Floyd, by police officers in the United States. The College of Policing identified UK policing's 'difficult history in its relationships with black communities' (College of Policing 2022, p.2). The Race Action Plan will detail how individual forces will review and subsequently adapt their engagement to ensure this increases trust and confidence with black communities. The outgoing NPCC lead made specific mention of the development of this plan in his interview. Forces will be

expected to monitor performance in this area (College of Policing 2022, p.50); however, there is no indication of how this engagement should be measured.

How engagement is monitored and measured at a force level

This section will look at what activity is being undertaken within the case study force to monitor and measure community engagement. This has been informed through interviews with the case study force strategic lead, the Riverside Inspector, and a focus group with operational staff. The case study force lead spoke of a confidence measure in place in her organisation. The force has a Joint Neighbourhood Survey that reports back to Division and Borough level and looks at how people in the local community feel. In addition, those that receive policing services around crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) also are surveyed. The confidence measure as part of the Crime Survey for England and Wales is also useful, however this has not been undertaken since March 2020. There are also local bespoke surveys undertaken around specific issues and each borough has a single point of contact (SPCO) within the corporate communications department who can report back on the use and reach of social media.

The Borough Commanders will also bring examples of practice through to the bi-monthly meeting and this is in addition to the traditional performance management that takes place in Focus meetings between them and their divisional Chief Inspectors. (Focus is the name that the case study force gives to their regular appraisals of staff by their line manager).

The force lead in her interview stated that practice is shared through several different methods. The force invested in the creation of a prevention and problem solving team and through this work developed the problem solving hub. This has an intranet site with a library of practice and examples of good work. This is further supported by the College of Policing's What Works site and the Police ICT company's Knowledge Hub product. This allows practice to be shared nationally and for other good practice from around the country to be as the force lead said in interview - '*stolen with pride'*. The force also recently set up, through the Chief Constable's staff officer, an Evidence Based Policing Group, which is attended by academics and looks at emerging academic work.

The force lead was very much in favour of the peer review process:

> '*The guidelines peer assessment process has been a great way of sharing practice and forces were paired with others who the national team felt could benefit from their experience. The regional group has also helped to share and make use of best practice. As a result, the force worked with both Durham and West Mercia. The guidelines implementation structure opened a network across the country*'.

This is a timely place for a discussion around evidence based policing and its challenges on Neighbourhood Policing. Innes (2020, p.211) suggests that while there is a wide acceptance of the benefits of evidence based policy making, the concept of evidence based policing is more contested. There are many academic proponents of evidenced based policing (Sherman, 1998: Weisburd and Neyroud, 2011). That said, there are critics of evidence based

policing; Fielding et al (2022) question the efficacy of the ‘medical model’ of EBP and the methodological approaches employed. Hales (2014) suggested that caution should be applied to findings of EBP, and that a lack of quality analysis in policing leads to focusing on the short term. Innes (2020, p.211) suggests that policy should be ‘evidence informed’ rather than ‘evidence based’

Innes (2020, p.211) points out that ‘the strong programme of evidence based policing has proven highly influential politically’. This is an interesting observation and Innes’ work is informed by the impact of austerity on policing observed at the time and picks up on the recommendations of the Inspectorate (HMIC, 2017). This could also be argued as a driver of the political policy stream leading to the updated neighbourhood policing policy my study relates to.

As a proponent of evidence based policing, Sherman (2013) identified ‘The Triple T’ principle of this approach. That is that ‘Targeting’ speaks of the importance of interventions being focused on the areas where the condition requiring treatment prevails. ‘Testing’ refers to the need to have a meaningful evaluation of policing responses applied to the issue. ‘Tracking’ then relates to the monitoring of those receiving some form of treatment. This approach is notable in Higgins (2018) work on Neighbourhood Policing, where he identified the emergence of ‘a new orthodoxy’ within neighbourhood policing. Neighbourhood teams were increasingly focusing on the case management of victims and offenders, applying Sherman’s three T’s rather than a more holistic view of neighbourhood issues or understanding the underlying causes.

One could opine that to achieve this level of understanding Sherman speaks of, having a robust and rigorous process to not only identify an issue, but have a framework for testing and tracking would arguably require Maryland scale 5 randomised control trials (Welsh et al 2002). Greene (2014, p.216) describes this as 'extolled as the gold standard for criminological and police research'. The reality of operational policing is that such high confidence levels in findings are almost impossible to produce. My own experience of neighbourhood policing has been that when a particular issue has seen to be resolved, prior to taking time to understand why an approach has been successful, the operational pressures result in officers simply moving on to solving the next problem without any meaningful evaluation. Goldstein's (1979) concept of Problem Oriented Policing (POP) has been universally adopted by police forces across England and Wales. Indeed, the Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines (College of Policing, 2018) section on Solving Problems promote the Scanning, Analysis, Response and Assessment model identified by Goldstein. This guidance is much more pragmatic, and simply speaks of having a baseline before and after, as a minimum requirement to identify the effectiveness of responses and to help identify promising practice.

Greene (2014) suggests that evidence based policing has narrowed the lens of police research and this now focuses heavily on methodological approaches primarily around the deterrence of crime and disorder issues. This led to a lack of emphasis on theoretical influences with less research on the role, structure and effectiveness of policing in general. I argue that my study bucks that trend, taking a theory informed approach that seeks to understand more

about the evidence base for policy development, implementation and the impact on community engagement practice.

Examples given of positive performance in the case study force

A consistent theme from the previous chapter was Kingdon's concept of the policy entrepreneur. Once again that theme has emerged strongly, the force lead in her interview spoke about the importance of having passionate and committed people charged with delivery:

> *'It starts at the top and you need passion at the top, the force is fortunate to have the national lead as our Chief, this passion, along with my own generates the enthusiasm needed to make it all land. The culture is important, the Chief has stated that he doesn't want bureaucracy and to go out and try things, empowering staff to try new things. We have stolen with pride, ideas from other areas, Durham's Nana's on patrol influencing our own Street Angels**.'

*Street Angels are a group of volunteers who aid welfare to those in town centres during the night time economy.

> *'It's vitally important to have the right people in the right post. The force has focused on the recruitment of the right people into the Borough Commander roles, having a grumpy person in one of those posts and it won't happen. The most important thing is passion. The PCC has never been a blocker, historically the PCC has been very supportive, I see no reason that will change with the new PCC in post'.*

Along with key people being in the right role the force lead spoke about the importance of communication and securing buy in during our interview. They

felt that this was a reason the force had been rated as good in their last inspectorate review (HMICFRS, 2019):

> '*Communication is key to delivering policy changes, simplifying the message, and linking it to where it sits within the force vision. Its then about how you sell it, the Chief has been very good about using innovation and getting the message from the top through with clarity, making use of video blogs'.*

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, the force lead believes she can still drive through positive change, and an example of this was putting in place the forces digital 101 service. In her interview, the force lead explained this was done at a time the contact centre were working across multiple sites because of the social distancing measures brought about by the pandemic. The digital 101 service is a dedicated team of staff in the contact centre who manage direct messages sent through the force's website, one of many police services using 'Single Online Home' and direct messages through social media such as Twitter and Facebook. Single Online Home is a national project to have consistency in the look, feel and functionality of the websites of the forces in England & Wales (NPCC, 2022). The team also pro-actively monitor the force social media and neighbourhood team accounts out of hours, able to reply when the teams are not at work. This service is in place 24/7, 365 days a year.

Sharing practice

In this section we will explore what the data tells us about how promising practice is identified and shared. This section has been informed through interviews with the key policy actors and a focus group with frontline staff in Riverside borough.

The college lead, in his interview, suggested that much of the practice sharing occurs at an informal level. The guidelines were supported by practice examples and the College's Front Line Policing Adviser (the new title of the Neighbourhood Policing Adviser role I had at the College), has been refreshing the case studies and attending the regional meetings to pick up on promising practice. There is no set date for reviewing case studies and this is likely to occur in line with a broader review of the guidelines in the future. When interviewed, the incoming NPCC lead explained that her staff officer is looking at examples of good community engagement. These should also be shared using the Knowledge Hub, but as previously stated this is not being used in the way it would be hoped. The incoming NPCC lead stated that some forces have a repository for good practice, but there is no single place for this nationally.

In the focus group, the lack of evidence of measurement and evaluation of engagement activity within the case study force was evident. Sergeant Dave said that he was not aware of any activity at any level to evaluate community engagement. Focus group participants were able to describe some examples of where they can obtain examples of effective practice from other areas, but not how they share what they were doing. PC Sarah spoke about the national Knowledge Hub product and the force's problem-solving pages; these contain

good practice they can go to; there is also a divisional intranet page that contains good work they can learn about. PCSO April spoke positively about the force's Problem Solving pages and how this is used to share practice. She explained how she has used this to seek innovative methods of engagement to solve problems.

Lack of evaluation

Participating in the focus group, PC Sarah commented on the lack of any measurements, which suggests there is no systematic evaluation of engagement activity. Currently they will discuss their engagement activity as a team, and if something is good, they will do it again, but this only based on a hunch. PCSO April did mention that the team have received positive feedback around being in the right place at the right time; but she confirmed there is no formal recording of this feedback.

There is a weakness that the effectiveness of engagement is not recorded at either a local or force level; there appears to be no formal process for this either. Historically, PC Sarah explained that she used to record detail about their panel meetings, but this was limited to the number of attendees and the recorded votes for specific priorities. Panel meetings were face to face engagements set at a local church hall or community centre, that were advertised for residents to attend; they would then set priorities for the team by voting for selected options. There was nothing to suggest that any crime and disorder data was used to support this process. The local team have now moved away from this style of engagement. While the team seemed to

understand a need to monitor the effectiveness of engagement, there was consensus that this had to be about more than statistics of who turned up. PC Sarah saying: *'It's not about the numbers though is it'.*

The use of social media statistics is contentious, and in the national documents there is commentary on the importance of ensuring this is not simply broadcasting and provides an opportunity for two way dialogue (Miles et al, 2021). Simply looking at views, shares, and likes may not provide the level of insight required to understand if such an engagement is successful or not.

Is practice informing policy?

In this section we will explore to that extent emerging practice is shaping policy development, including any plans to refresh the policy because of the pandemic, a common theme raised by interview participants. The data has been informed by interviews with the key strategic actors, a focus group, and the concluding project report (Miles et al, 2021) and the inspectorates report on policing the pandemic (HMICFRS, 2021).

> *What has been most beneficial to policing in terms of community engagement from the introduction of the guidelines has been giving communities a voice and allowing them to have their say, and an ability to do this in the form that suits them.* (Incoming NPCC lead)

In his interview, the outgoing NPCC lead explained how academic evidence informed the initial drafting of the guidelines, but there has not been a review since, nor to their knowledge is one planned. This is supported in the analysis

of the guidelines (College of Policing, 2018) and Miles et al (2021). Contained with the guidelines is the rapid evidence assessment process that was used to capture the relevant academic evidence in 2017 (College of Policing, 2018); but Miles et al (2021) reflects a need to reassess the evidence base. The NPCC leads interviewed, suggested that this evidence base should be revisited to capture learning from the pandemic. A contrasting view was held by the College lead, who in his interview suggested there was no need for a wholesale review of academic evidence currently. They felt that this was still in an early stage and there will be findings from studies of policing during the pandemic. It may be a further six to twelve months before any findings can be realistically reviewed. There are likely to be studies that will be of use around the increased use of social media and alternative methods to the traditional meeting in a church hall.

An example provided by the incoming NPCC lead in her interview, of a need for further academic research, is the 4 E's approach to policing the pandemic. This is engaging, explaining, and encouraging before enforcement (HMICFRS, 2021) and how lessons can be learned. Chief Constable Martin Hewitt, NPCC Chair has stated to Chief Constables nationally that engagement now should be better than it was before the pandemic. (NPCC, 2022)

Emerging promising practice is shared through the Knowledge Hub, an IT platform for policing, which has a bespoke Neighbourhood Policing Guideline area. Additionally, several practitioner groups exist and the NPCC and College have supported several workshops for frontline staff along with networking sessions. The outgoing NPCC, in his interview, spoke about a number of these opportunities citing the Police Now project:

'Part of the Police Now programme is the officers are required to undertake 100 day impact projects, there is an opportunity to do more with that, and many PCDA Student Officers are also undertaking projects in which there is an opportunity to better catch learning'.

The outgoing NPCC lead said the guidelines have:

'*Recentred the importance of neighbourhood policing' and 'if we don't get this right, nothing else counts'*.

The outgoing lead spoke about very strong links across policing between the NPCC, forces, the College and with academic partners, the incoming NPCC lead supported this view. She spoke about a need to use these relationships to refresh the evidence base, she stated in interview:

'*Tom Nash, a UCL consultant has been doing a lot of work around Neighbourhood Policing and what it will look like in 20 years' time. There is a definite need to look at the guidelines through the Covid lens'*.

The Outgoing NPCC lead suggested that the ultimate performance measure of the effectiveness of how the guidelines have translated to the local level will play out in the findings of the Inspectorate. This view is articulated within the concluding project assessment (Miles et al, 2021).

The incoming NPCC lead made some observations that the pandemic has forced pretty much all formal engagement online, but this needs to be better developed so that it is a two way engagement and not just broadcasting, saying this is:

'Engagement not communication'.

In the focus group, participants reflected on this theme of engagement having moved away from in person to online:

> *'Covid has thrown a spanner in the works, only from the physical side of things. We are given the tools by the organisation, but we only have 5 licenses for social media though'.* (PC Sarah)

> *'We need to engage in different ways, and we need to go back to these documents (the guidelines) to see if we can do things better'.* (PCSO April)

Blockers to understanding policy impact

A clearly made point by the incoming NPCC lead in her interview was that PCSOs are the accessible face of policing, and it is not helpful to train them in things that abstract them from their core responsibilities. Norfolk Constabulary decided to no longer have PCSOs a few years back, but neither the outgoing nor incoming NPCC lead were aware of any formal assessment of this decision. Linked to this was the issue of Operation Uplift, the governments ambition to recruit an extra 20,000 police officers. The incoming NPCC lead highlighted a potential risk:

> '*This does not come with an increased budget that allows this to be sustained, so this will come at the detriment to police staff posts, of which PCSOs form a significant volume'.*

In her own force this translates to an additional 142 police officers, but with funding for only three years.

In clear consensus with the NPCC leads, the College lead agreed that the guidelines came at the right time, the guidelines put attention on Neighbourhood Policing at a time it was losing traction. Austerity built a lot of different policing models and the guidelines enabled forces to look critically at their neighbourhood policing function. It also helps that the Inspectorate have voiced their intention to monitor it. While measurements of effectiveness of this area are still being developed, the perception is that there is a far more consistent way of doing it than there was before.

A recurring theme throughout the project assessment documents and highlighted in Miles et al (2021) is around how Neighbourhood Policing activity can be effectively measured. This directly highlights the lack of a performance framework and a requirement for this to be developed at a national level. Miles et al (2021, p12) recommends that a high-level framework be developed which could be tailored for local use. This is something that in the interview with the incoming NPCC lead commented was '*high on her agenda'*.

Conclusion

In answering the research question of how community engagement is captured and measured, the analysis of the data shows this is not occurring at any meaningful level in the case study force. Hope et al (2018 & 2019) both evidenced measurements of force's confidence in the application of the policy. However, the measurement of the outputs from the policy have not been effectively measured in the case study force. There is a distinct absence of a performance framework for community engagement at all levels, indeed key

strategic actors interviewed all spoke of this as an area for future development. This was also supported in the concluding project assessment (Miles et al, 2021). Brownson et al (2010) in their study of measuring the impact of public health policies, identified the requirement for metrics relating to the process, content, and outcome. Translating this to community engagement, this would suggest that effective measurement of the policy implementation would need to show the policy impact on the organisation, a measure of the policy changing practice and a measure of public level outputs, such as trust and confidence.

In answering the question whether there is evidence of promising practice at a local level informing force and national policy development, a clear theme at the macro, meso and micro levels is impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. This is a cross cutting theme spanning all levels of implementation. The impact of Covid-19 on practice is not yet fully understood, but all actors agreed this requires exploration. The impact of Covid-19 on this research will be discussed in greater depth during the concluding chapter, as its impact on not only community engagement, but broader public services, society and indeed research methods is far reaching.

One of the key drivers of this policy development approach has been that it is evidence based, and there is clear evidence throughout the process of how both practice and academic evidence have informed the policy creation. What is less apparent is how engagement activity can be captured and measured, how success is quantified and then shared. With no review of the policy currently planned, there has been no opportunity yet for any identified practice

to help shape future policy. There was no direct evidence from the case study that the policy has indeed influenced operational activity at a local level. In the absence of measurement of effective engagement at the micro level, one cannot reasonably opine that this would in any way influence policy development at the macro level. Key actors at the strategic policy level recognised that there needs to be a review and update of the policy (the guidelines), to ensure they reflect contemporary developments and challenges. Sausman et al (2010) 'universality perspective' highlighted the need to consider the many factors involved, including contingencies, key actors, and existing infrastructure. This study has provided an opportunity to build upon that existing evidence base, as many of the emerging themes from that study are replicated here. Indeed, I would agree with Sausman et al's conclusion that 'discretion and adaption' are necessary parts of how policy is enacted in practice, rather than how Lipsky described as a blocker. (Sausman et al 2016, p.29). While we may be able to refer to anecdotal evidence to support change in practice because of the policy, there is not even anecdotal evidence of practice informing policy at this stage. In the concluding chapter, we will further explore how these findings add to the existing knowledge base on policy translation and make recommendations for future policing policy implementation.

Chapter 6: Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to understand how well refreshed neighbourhood policing policy and guidance has informed understanding of communities and engagement practice at a local level. This was achieved through the critical evaluation of the development and implementation journey of the 2018 Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines. While there is existing research in the effectiveness of policy development and implementation, there is a gap within the field in the understanding of this journey in a policing context, and specifically within the area of community engagement as a fundamental pillar of a neighbourhood policing approach. To understand this policy journey there were four key research questions:

1) How have national guidelines for neighbourhood policing informed community engagement at a force level?

2) To what extent has national policy translated into delivery of community engagement at a neighbourhood level?

3) How is the effectiveness of community engagement captured and measured?

4) Is there evidence of promising practice at a local level informing force and national policy development?

To answer these questions, a mixed methods qualitative study was undertaken. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key policy actors at a national level, including the National Police Chiefs Council and the College of Policing. To understand the policy landing at a local level, a case study was used. This involved the selection of a territorial police force and a local neighbourhood team within that. At this force case study level, semi structured interviews were conducted with the force strategic lead and an operational

level leader of a local neighbourhood team. At the tactical level the research was informed through the undertaking of a focus group with practitioners operating within the case study Borough. Document analysis was then undertaken of national policy documentation and documents supporting and reviewing the policy implementation, including force and local level engagement strategies and tactical plans. The findings from this research were then subject to thematic analysis. We will now discuss the findings of this study considering how they are positioned within the existing research evidence and theoretical frameworks identified within the literature review chapter.

Main Findings

The operating context and the policy stream

Kingdon identified that three interdependent, but separate streams need to come together for the policy window to open: a problem, a policy and a political stream (Kingdon 2011, p.18). In the case of neighbourhood policing, a problem was clearly articulated by not only the Inspectorate (HMIC, 2017), but also by researchers within the field (Higgins, 2018). The key policy actors interviewed provided a clear picture of the problem, that neighbourhood policing had been 'eroded'; there was a consensus among the policy community that the Inspectorate were indeed right to highlight this. Higgins (2018) spoke about the move away from the neighbourhood policing orthodoxy that was reflected in the Inspectorate's findings (HMIC, 2017). The landscape in which policing was operating had been significantly impacted by austerity, a

key theme of the operating context identified by the policy actors in their interviews.

The College lead made a comment that correlated with the view of Sausman et al (2016), that is that the policy journey is an iterative one. In describing the implementation process, the outgoing NPCC lead detailed an approach positioned in Timmerman and Bergs (1997) theory of 'local universality'. The regional structure and findings from the reviews of implementation evidenced local adaptation, innovation and learning through practice being shared. Indeed, this resonated with the concept of 'bottom up and top down' approach highlighted by Sausman et al (2016) in the evidence based approach to the creation of guidelines within their study.

Both the College and NPCC leads highlighted the importance of key actor networks in the policy journey, incorporating the wider actor networks in both policy design and implementation. This was best summed up by the College Lead in his interview:

> '*those drawn in from counterterrorism and serious and organised crime were telling the story of how important neighbourhood policing is* '.

This was supported by the outgoing NPCC lead who also suggested that the influential actors in these areas were important:

> '*Being supported by big players from within the crime side of the business, such as then Chief Constable Andy Cooke of Merseyside, who led the SOC portfolio, assisted in selling the benefits of neighbourhood policing'*

This clearly demonstrated the importance of involvement of key actors who were seen as policy entrepreneurs in other areas of policing.

The political drivers that we discussed in the literature review that were present in the 2008 iteration of neighbourhood policing were not so prevalent in 2017. There was no change in the political administration or in public discourse, there was however a smaller 'p' political drive from the Inspectorate. Once the policy implementation process was in place, the outgoing NPCC lead described how the involvement of the policing minister, Nick Hurd, facilitated forces coming on board. The lack of that big political push and the budget that came with it that existed in 2008 was identified as a blocker by the outgoing NPCC lead. Each of the key policy actors spoke of how busy the policing landscape was at the time and political energy was directed mostly at the uplift programme.

It would be fair to say that the concepts and theories identified in existing research surrounding the climate required for policy to develop were seen in this study. Kingdon's policy stream can be seen in action, even if in this case the political stream may have been weaker than previous iterations of neighbourhood policing policy.

Policy Entrepreneurs

As we have seen in the literature, academics researching policy implementation have largely supported Kingdon's concept of the policy entrepreneur. The discourse of key policy actors interviewed in this research further supports this concept. Both NPCC leads, the outgoing NPCC lead's

staff officer, the College lead and the case study force lead, all exhibited the character traits that Kingdon identified as policy entrepreneurs which are passionate, connected individuals with a motivation to drive through policy. The term ‘passionate’ appeared repeatedly in my field notes, particularly so with the key national policy actors.

The case study force lead in her interview spoke of passionate and enthusiastic leaders making things happen, this was in relation to both senior strategic and more operational actors. In support of Matland’s (1995) observations of the importance of policy networks, the outgoing NPCC lead discussed the importance of these key actors not just coming from within the neighbourhood policing policy community, but across wider policing. Taking the policy from the national to the force level, the regional leads were described by the outgoing NPCC lead as key. He described the northern regional lead as ‘keen as mustard’, highlighting his passion and commitment.

In fact, policy entrepreneurs were identified at each key stage of the policy journey, except in the last stage of delivery at the tactical level, where one could argue, a committed person was much needed. The importance of key actors became less apparent in the interview with the Riverside Inspector and in the focus group where the theme failed to emerge. This links into the findings of the ‘implementation gap’ which we will discuss later in this chapter.

What was not explored within this research and may benefit future studies would be to explore the motivations for these key actors. What more can we understand about their drive to push forward a particular policy agenda?

The Street Level Bureaucrat

Sausman et al (2016) identified that the overall policy process is overlooked in studies of policy implementation and how Lipsky's (2010) street level bureaucrats influence and shape how policy is delivered through their own autonomy. Lipsky's study used policing as an example of a bureaucracy and police officers as exemplars of the street level bureaucrat. In this case, this descriptor could apply to any of those staff working at the frontline, and specifically relates to the focus group participants. Strategic policy actors interviewed had already identified the challenges in the policing landscape and the incoming NPCC lead spoke of the competing priorities and complex landscape. The outgoing NPCC lead spoke about the policy agenda being in competition with other areas of business, such as the drive nationally around problem-solving. It was not surprising to see evidence of those same factors impacting on the work of frontline staff with competing demands and time for task emerging as key themes in the data. What is less clear, is how much a conscious decision was made by the street level bureaucrats to do or not to do certain activities. I would suggest that from the focus group, participants were largely not aware of the policy. They showed knowledge of existence of the guidelines, but not necessarily what the policy detail was and how this impacted on them as practitioners. The frontline team were undertaking activities that delivered against the intentions of the policy, such as developing an understanding of their community. Focus group participants knew of the community mapping process but appeared not to have been directly involved in the work of it. The examples given by participants of why they chose to undertake engagement on the face of it appear to have an evidence base. For

example, Sgt Dave and PC Sarah talked about identifying vulnerability and areas of high footfall.

From my perspective, it was not surprising that focus group participants did not have an in depth understanding of the policy. From personal experience, police leaders will often seek to find ways of contextualising policy implementation to make it less dry, even though the outgoing NPCC lead observed the guidelines were 'written in plain English'. The frontline staff do have a high degree of autonomy and discretion as to how they apply policy in an operational context. This clearly resonates with Lipsky's (2010, p.8) identification of this being a significant challenge to policy implementation. This reflects the earlier discussion, where the policy journey could be described as hitting a bumpier road. That is the clash of ideologies between policy advocates or entrepreneurs and the street level bureaucrat with their degree of autonomy around what will or will not be implemented. In relation to performance measures, the focus group participants agreed with Lipsky (2010) and Field and Innes (2007) that performance is impossible to measure. None of the key actors ever defined in their answers what an effective performance framework may look like, but there was a consensus that this was not just about numbers and requires a qualitative approach. The case study force lead, the Riverside Inspector and focus group participants spoke about the quality of engagement, its breadth and community involvement, none of which can be achieved through a numerical performance regime.

The outgoing and incoming NPCC leads both discussed how front line staff have shown innovation and adaptions in delivering policy, how these have been picked up through the regional policy implementation structure and

shared on the Knowledge Hub and through the case study forces through the problem solving hub. This would suggest that the existing theories of Lipsky's street level bureaucrats and Timmermans and Bergs 'local universality' come together. That is that that those with a high degree of autonomy and discretion seek to find solutions and adaptions to the policy at a local level, then that innovation adds to the professional knowledge in the policy area. I would suggest that the concept of the street level bureaucrat is a fundamental element of policy implementation based on my findings.

The Implementation Gap

The policy translation was much clearer within the analysis of documents than it was observed in the responses from interviews and the focus group. In the engagement strategy and plan at a local level, a clear synergy with the national policy was observed. However, the findings in relation to take up of the policy at a local level as evidenced in the interviews, supports Terpstra & Fyfe (2015, p.531) concept of the implementation gap. Therefore, I would suggest that the findings from this research provides further support for their theory.

In seeking to answer the last research question about how practice has informed policy, this highlighted a lack of understanding of what good performance looked like within community engagement. As such good practice was not being identified or shared at the level it would need to be in order to build a 'bottom up' approach to policy development based on practice.

I would argue that the implementation gap could also be described as a knowledge gap. This was observed between the force case study lead and the Riverside Inspector and his team who took part in the focus group. The clarity of language around the policy changed dramatically at this level. This also supports Atun's observations around the differences in language between leaders and those working on the frontline and how this leads to what he described as a 'them and us' culture. It would be interesting for further study to delve deeper into this issue of organisational culture and language in relation to policy implementation. We have seen in this study that it does not matter how good your policy entrepreneurs are, if they can't speak in the same language as the street level bureaucrats who will enact the policy, you will have an implementation gap.

The impact of Covid-19

The pandemic had an overarching impact on the policy implementation process, the policy review process and most importantly on the tactical activity to deliver the policy. The concluding summary (Miles at al, 2021) picked up on the impact of the pandemic, but also identifies the need to better understand this. The guidelines were written pre-pandemic and we have seen that the incoming NPCC lead feels a review is required to ensure that these remain fit for purpose in a post pandemic world. Other key policy actors agreed; however, the College lead suggested that a period of time is required to allow for the evidence base of pandemic research to grow to enable a fuller understanding.

What we can see from the evidence gathered in relation to Covid-19 is that the impact on frontline delivery was more than significant. Engagement moved completely away from face to face to online, something that the case study force is yet to fully recover from. The only guideline with the strength of evidence to say a force must be doing (compliance with S.4 Police Reform and Social Responsibility act) is one they are not doing, based on the focus group responses.

There is learning to come from the pandemic, and in relation to answering the final research question. This provides the policy community an excellent opportunity for the innovation and adaption seen as a result of Covid-19 to help shape future policy development.

Conclusion

In this section I return to the original purpose of this study, the understanding of how neighbourhood policing policy implemented at the national level has informed practice at the force and local level, and how local practices inform policy at the higher level of design.

The findings of my research show that the guidelines have informed community engagement at a force level, largely driven by a network of key actors that one could describe as policy entrepreneurs. This is evidenced through the local engagement plan, where the essential elements of engagement are laid out clearly in the tactical plan. The knowledge and awareness of frontline staff is however mixed. This is where the extent to which the neighbourhood policing policy has translated is more questionable.

There is an implementation gap, and the operational frontline staff speak a different language to the senior police leaders. It would appear that it is easier for written policies to share a common framework than it is for street level bureaucrats to adapt, and change their working practices based on it.

I would argue that the findings of this research suggest that the policy was developed and implemented without a structure in place to really understand the impact on improving engagement. The national policy actors identified the absence of a performance framework and a desire for this to be developed. It was therefore not surprising, that in the absence of a national framework, local performance measures were not in place. Consequently, it is almost impossible to quantify what impact the policy change has had. Hope et al (2018 and 2019) and Miles et al (2021) help us to understand the policy implementation journey to force level, but the translation to the local level has no formal measurement available.

There is some emerging evidence of promising practice being identified and shared, but this is largely anecdotal. We have seen examples of the force's problem solving hub, sharing through the force's neighbourhood policing meeting and use of the Knowledge Hub. What is not clear at this stage is whether this practice is having an impact on the policy itself. The ambitions around reviewing the evidence post pandemic provide an opportunity for this, but I must conclude this is not happening in the way I believe policy proponents of an evidence based approach envisioned.

An emerging theory

The existing literature identified several concepts and theories that this research draws upon, including Kingdon's policy streams theory and his concept of the policy entrepreneur, Lipsky's concept of the street level bureaucrat, Atun's observations on organisational culture and language, and Terpstra and Fyfe's findings around the implementation gap. This study contributes to this existing knowledge in understanding how these theories can be applied in the field of neighbourhood policing policy implementation. Most importantly, this study also identified an 'entrepreneurial gap', where the absence of a policy entrepreneur with direct access to the street level bureaucrats appears to have impacted on the ability of the policy to translate effectively to front line staff. A mix of these theories could also be used to describe a new concept of the 'street level entrepreneur', that is a policy entrepreneur working at the street level. These street level entrepreneurs would be able to speak the language of both the frontline and of leaders, have operational credibility, but also have understanding of the strategic world, the aims of the policy and can engage with senior policy actors and street level bureaucrats with equal comfort.

Implications

As a policy actor involved in neighbourhood policing, I set out on this research journey with an ambition that I would provide some useful insights into the policy process that could be used to improve future policing policy development and implementation.

Based on my research findings, I would make the following recommendations for policing in future policy development.

i) Identify policy entrepreneurs at all levels to mitigate the ‘entrepreneurial gap’.
ii) Develop a performance framework to measure desired outcomes at the outset of implementation.

From a future research perspective, I would suggest that from the literature and this research taken together, more can be done to understand the drivers of policy entrepreneurs, what motivates and drives them to support policy development. Additionally, I believe it would be beneficial to increase understanding of organisational cultures and language. This would build upon the themes identified in Atun’s 2003 study and observed here within a police policy implementation journey.

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Appendices

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Appendix 1

Participant invitation letter

Dear

I am currently undertaking doctoral research into the implementation of national police policy and guidance relating to neighbourhood policing, with a particular focus on community engagement. I am specifically looking at how national policy has influenced delivery at a local level. The purpose of this research is to fill the existing gap in academic exploration of how a national policing policy framework has been translated into activity at the local level, and how local innovation can subsequently impact upon national policy development.

I am a serving Police Inspector with Surrey Police, having worked for the College of Policing on secondment as their Neighbourhood Policing Adviser from 2017-2020. I have a passion for Neighbourhood Policing Delivery and hope that my research will help inform future policy development and implementation in this field.

My research is being undertaken through Middlesex University; I believe your involvement can add real value to this and would welcome the opportunity for you to participate.

This will be in the form of an interview with me or through participating in a focus group of 4-6 persons and would only require a couple of hours of your time.

My research has the support and backing of Chief Constable Gavin Stephens (NPCC lead for Neighbourhood Policing).

Many Thanks

Doug Ashman

PhD candidate, Middlesex University

Appendix 2

MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY

Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form

From National Development to Local Delivery: How neighbourhood policing policy and guidance has informed the understanding of communities and engagement practice at a local level.

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this study is to better understand the way in which national policing policy relating to community engagement has been developed and then used by individual police forces to improve their community engagement activity at a local level.

What will the study involve?

The study will involve interviews and focus groups with police officers and staff involved in delivering community engagement as part of operational policing within participating forces. This study will also involve interviews with senior police officers responsible for the delivery of policing services within that area, other government and non-government agencies and strategic leads working at a national policy level.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been invited to take part in this research as it is believed that your views and opinions as a professional working within UK policing and community engagement will provide valuable evidence in support of the research aims.

Do I have to take part?

No, this is completely voluntary, it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

What will happen to me if I take part?

You will be asked to participate in either an individual semi-structured interview or a focus group with other research participants.

What do I have to do?

The semi-structured interview will be conducted by the researcher. They will ask you a number of questions about the research topic and may probe further into the responses that you provide. It is anticipated that interviews will last between 30 and 90 minutes. The purpose is to obtain your views and thoughts on a range of issues relating to the research. You may be asked about topics such as, what engagement activity you are aware of, whether you are involved in the planning of such activities and if you feel this meets community and/or policing needs.

A focus group will take part with up to 5 other participants. This will be a group discussion, facilitated and moderated by the researcher or their research assistant. Another member of the research team may be present to take notes and facilitate discussion over a range of topics relevant to the research question. The focus group will last no longer than 2 hours. The purpose of the focus group is to use group discussion to generate debate over a range of issues relating to the research questions.

Are there any risks to me or disadvantages in taking part?

There are no know risks or disadvantages to you taking part in this research. If you have any concerns, please ensure that you raise these immediately with the researcher, remembering that your participation in this study is completely voluntary.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

There are no intended benefits for the individuals taking part. However it is anticipated that your involvement in this study will help to better understand policy translation from national level to operational activity with communities.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

All information that is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. Any information about you which is used will have your name and address removed so that you cannot be recognised from it.

Any data collected as part of this study will be stored, analysed and reported in compliance with the Data Protection Act.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results will form part of a doctoral thesis that will be published at the conclusion of the study. Individual contributions will be anonymised. If you wish to know the results of the research, then please contact the researcher.

Who has reviewed the study?

This study has been reviewed by the Middlesex University School of Law Ethics sub-Committee.

Contact for further information

Researcher: Doug Ashman, Middlesex University.

Email: DA744@live.mdx.ac.uk

Director of Studies: Professor Karen Duke, Middlesex University. Email: K.Duke@mdx.ac.uk

You will be given a copy of this information sheet and a signed copy of the consent form to keep.

Participant Identification Number: 2A

CONSENT FORM

Title of Project: *From National Development to Local Delivery: How neighbourhood policing policy and guidance has informed the understanding of communities and engagement practice at a local level.*

Name of Researcher: Doug Ashman

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated 18th May 2021 for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

3. I agree that this form that bears my name and signature may be seen by a designated auditor.

4. I agree that my non-identifiable research data may be stored in National Archives and be used anonymously by others for future research. I am assured that the confidentiality of my data will be upheld through the removal of any personal identifiers.

6. I understand that my interview may be taped and subsequently transcribed.

7. I agree to take part in the above study.

_____	_____	_____
Name of participant	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Name of person taking consent (if different from researcher)	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____
Researcher	Date	Signature

1 copy for participant; 1 copy for researcher;

Appendix 3

Ethics consent:

Law School REC
The Burroughs
Hendon
London NW4 4BT
Main Switchboard: 0208 411 5000
29/03/2021

APPLICATION NUMBER: 17407
Dear Douglas James Ashman and all collaborators/co-investigators

Re your application title: Community Engagement Policy Transfer

Supervisor: Karen Duke, Andre Clarke

Co-investigators/collaborators:
Thank you for submitting your application. I can confirm that your application has been given APPROVAL from the date of this letter by the Law School REC.
The following documents have been reviewed and approved as part of this research ethics application:

Document Type File Name Date Version
Data Protection Declaration Data Protection Checklist and Declaration Form (1)
In-Person Face to Face Research Template
In Person Face-to-Face Research Template 25/02/2021 1
Participant Recruitment Information Participant Advert for PhD study 25/02/2021 1
Data Access Approval CC Stephens support 28/02/2021 1
Informed Consent Form Updated FEB 21Participant Information Sheet and consent
Form 28/02/2021 1
Materials Interview questions - National Lead 0221 28/02/2021 1
Materials Interview questions - Local Strategic 0221 28/02/2021 1
Materials Focus Group prompts for frontline staff 0221 28/02/2021 1
Permission/Agreement Letter Gatekeeper permission letter 28/02/2021 1

Although your application has been approved, the reviewers of your application may have made some useful comments on your application. Please look at
your online application again to check whether the reviewers have added any comments for you to look at.
Also, please note the following:

1. Please ensure that you contact your supervisor/research ethics committee (REC) if any changes are made to the research project which could affect

your ethics approval. There is an Amendment sub-form on MORE that can be completed and submitted to your REC for further review.

2. You must notify your supervisor/REC if there is a breach in data protection management or any issues that arise that may lead to a health and safety concern or conflict of interests.

3. If you require more time to complete your research, i.e., beyond the date specified in your application, please complete the Extension sub-form on MORE
and submit it your REC for review.
Page 1 of 2

4. Please quote the application number in any correspondence.
5. It is important that you retain this document as evidence of research ethics approval, as it may be required for submission to external bodies (e.g., NHS, grant awarding bodies) or as part of your research report, dissemination (e.g., journal articles) and data management plan.

6. Also, please forward any other information that would be helpful in enhancing our application form and procedures - please contact MOREsupport@mdx.ac.uk to provide feedback.
Good luck with your research.

Yours sincerely

Chair Dr Alice Donald and Dr Julie Treblicock
Law School REC
Page 2 of 2

Appendix 4

Interview schedule

Interviewee	Date of Interview
Outgoing NPCC lead	16th June 2021
Incoming NPCC lead	18th May 2021
College of Policing lead	21st June 2021
Case study force lead	18th May 2021
Riverside Inspector	21st December 2021
Focus group with Riverside neighbourhood team	6th December 2021

Appendix 5

Semi-Structured Interview Questions – National Lead College and NPCC

How have national guidelines for neighbourhood policing informed community engagement at force level?

What is your involvement in the development of the current Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines?

Why were the current national neighbourhood policing guidelines developed?

To what extent has national policy translated into delivery of community engagement at a neighbourhood level?

How are the guidelines implemented from a national level to forces? What processes/mechanisms are involved?

How is implementation of the guidelines monitored?

What things have helped implement the guidelines from a national to local level?

What are and have been, through your experience the biggest blockers and challenges in introducing new guidelines?

Reflecting now on the implementation of neighbourhood policing guidelines, what if anything would you approach differently and why?

Have key individuals and networks either facilitated or created blockers to the implementation of the guidelines?

How is the effectiveness of community engagement captured and measured?

Is there a measurement of the effectiveness of the implementation? Follow-up question needed here….How does this work?

What relationship exists between the policy development and the role of the inspectorate (HMICFRS) in monitoring its delivery?

What confidence do you have in forces implementation of the policy in relation to community engagement? Please explain why?

Is there evidence of promising practice at a local level informing force and national policy development?

How does new and emerging academic evidence in the area of community engagement inform current policy?

How does new and emerging community engagement practice inform current policy?

What do you feel has been most beneficial to policing in terms of community engagement from the introduction of the guidelines?

Has this practice been incorporated into policy? If so, how?

Any other comments or statements you wish to make in relation to how the new guidelines have impacted on community engagement.

Appendix 6

Semi Structured interview Questions – Force Strategic Lead

How have national guidelines for neighbourhood policing informed community engagement at force level?

Were you involved in the development of the Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines? If so in what capacity?

How did you learn about the development of new neighbourhood policing guidelines?

Does your force actively participate in a regional approach to neighbourhood policing? How does it participate?

Have the Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines changed the approach that your force takes towards community engagement? If so how?

Do you have a force level strategy that informs community engagement? If so how was this developed? What types of issues were considered?

To what extent has national policy translated into delivery of community engagement at a neighbourhood level?

Are there local community engagement plans at a divisional / BCU level? If so what is the relationship between the local plan and the force strategy

How is the effectiveness of community engagement captured and measured?

At an organisational level do you have any measures of the effectiveness of community engagement?

Is there evidence of promising practice at a local level informing force and national policy development?

How is promising practice in relation to community engagement at a local level captured? What do you do with these best practice examples?

Does the force have any methods of capturing promising practice in relation to community engagement and how is this shared within (and beyond) the organisation?

Has any local practice informed your organisational approach to community engagement? (ie learning from elsewhere?)

Are you aware of any examples of where practice at force level has been fed back to a national level? If so are you aware of anything that has happened as a result of this?

Appendix 7

Focus Group prompts

Are you aware of the Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines produced by the College of Policing and the NPCC?

Are you aware of the supporting material contained within the Guidelines provided by the college for frontline staff?

Do you have a local community engagement strategy or plan?

What engagement takes place between the police and community?

Formal Structured

Informal interactions

What is the purpose of it?

Does this relate to the management of police activity, number and deployment of neighbourhood based officers, etc.

Specific policing operations

Use of policing tactics, IE stop and search

Strategic and policy development

Local policing activity

Setting local policing priorities

Managing community tension issues

How is this engagement activity planned?

Have the community been involved in choosing..

Method?

Location?

Time?

Content?

Our other agencies or local groups involved?

How is this engagement promoted and advertised?

What activity has been done to understand the make-up of the community?

What activity has been undertaken to understand the needs of the community?

What does community participation mean to you?

How could we promote further participation?

Do the community feel involved in local policing activity?

What is done to evaluate community engagement?

Are the community involved in this process?

Is this process recorded?

How is learning from this captured?

Appendix 8

NPCC Neighbourhood Policing Peer Review Questions

Intro

What Force are you from?
→ Drop down

Name of person completing this form
→ Free text

Contact details of person completing form
→ Free text

Name of Chief Officer endorsing submission
→ Free text

Engagement

Visible presence Officers, staff and/or volunteers need to have targeted visible presence in communities. Targeted foot patrol, when implemented in combination with community engagement and problem-solving, can reduce crime and antisocial behaviour, reassure the public and improve their perceptions of the police. Random patrols and only responding to calls are unlikely to have the same effect.

1. How confident are you that your Neighbourhood teams understand their responsibilities and role in community engagement under the NHP guidelines?

→ Very confident – Not at all Confident

2. Please outline your reasoning for the above answer, making reference to any emerging best practice

→ Free text

3. Please tell us how your NHP teams understand the differing needs of their communities

→ Free text

4. How confident are you that your NHP teams can tailor their response accordingly to the differing needs of their community?

→ Confidence scale

5. Does the force make use of any of the following to assist with effective community engagement?

→ Drop down MCQ
Volunteer Police Cadets
Special Constabulary
Police Support Volunteers
Community Support Safety Accreditation Scheme

Statutory Partners
Non-statutory Partners
Community Groups
Asset Based Community Development
Other option

6. How confident are you that you have specific strategies for accessing and engaging with seldom heard communities?

→ Confidence scale

7. Please outline your reasoning for the above answer, making reference to any emerging best practice

→ Free text

8. How confident are you that your Forces is meeting the requirements under s.34 around public consultation?

→ Confidence scale

9. How confident are you that your engagement is a two-way dialogue in relation to both virtual and physical methods?

→ Confidence scale

10. How do you measure the impact and effectiveness of your local community engagement plan?

→ Free text

11. What are the outcomes from your local engagement activity?

→ Free text

12. Please upload a copy of a local tailored NHP engagement plan

13. Is there anything else you wish to share in relation to community engagement? Please consider any emerging best practice

→ Free text

Solving Problems

Problem-solving is one of the best-evidenced policing strategies. It has been shown to reduce crime, antisocial behaviour and demand in a wide range of different contexts when fully implemented. Each stage of the problem-solving process, which is captured by the SARA model, is essential to its success and can be aligned with the established tasking and coordination processes.

1. How confident are you that NPT understand their roles and responsibilities of problem-solving under the NHP guidelines?

→ Confidence scale

2. How confident are you that a problem-solving culture is embedded in your force?

→ Confidence scale

3. Please outline your reasoning for the above answer, making reference to any emerging best practice

→ Free text

4. How do you actively involve other police teams, partners and the community in your problem solving?

→ Free text

5. How confident are you that your force is using a consistent and auditable problem-solving method?

→ Confidence scale

6. How confident are you that problem-solving best practice is shared **internally**?

→ Confidence scale

7. How confident are you that problem-solving best practice is shared **externally** with partners and other forces?

→ Confidence scale

8. How confident are you that your NHP team's problem-solving approach incorporates early intervention and vulnerability?

→ Confidence scale

9. Please outline your reasoning for the above answer, making reference to any emerging best practice

→ Free text

10. How confident are you that problem-solving plans are quality assured?

→ Confidence scale

11. Please outline your reasoning for the above answer, making reference to any emerging best practice

→ Free text

12. How confident are you that your NHP teams have sufficient time and space to undertake effective problem solving?

→ Confidence scale

13. Are there any barriers or enablers that impact on your NHP team's ability to undertake effective problem solving?

→ Free text

14. Is there anything else you would like to share in relation to community engagement? *Please consider any emerging best practice*

→ Free text

Targeted Activity

There is strong evidence that the police can reduce demand by targeting the people and places who are most at risk. Crime, antisocial behaviour and related harms are often highly

concentrated. Their distribution could help you to identify those communities, groups and individuals with the greatest needs

1. How confident are you that your teams are able to target their activity under the NHP guidelines?

→ Confidence scale

2. Please outline your reasoning for the above answer, making reference to any emerging best practice

→ Free text

3. How are your NHP teams briefed and tasked?

→ MCQ
Sergeant led
Self-briefing
Remote briefings
Pre-recorded briefings
Other

4. How frequently are your NHP teams briefed and tasked?

→ MCQ
Daily
Weekly
Ad Hoc basis
Not briefed
Other

5. How confident are you that you can access partners/partnership data in relation to targeting activity?

→ Confidence scale

6. How does this influence your decisions around targeting NHP activity?

→ Free text

7. How confident are you that you are able to effectively respond to competing local, force and national priorities when targeting your neighbourhood policing activity?

→ Confidence scale

8. What are the barriers/enablers to the above?

→ Free text

9. How do you identify repeat caller, location, victim, offenders?

→ MCQ
Force data
Partnership data
Cambridge Harm Index
StreetSafe
Other

10. What influence does this have on NHP activity?

→ Free text

11. How do you evaluate the impact of your targeted activity?

Please consider early intervention, reducing demand and crime prevention in your answer

→ Free text

12. Is there anything else you would like to share in relation to targeted activity?

Please consider any emerging best practice

→ Free text

Promoting the right culture When people trust the police and think the police are legitimate, they are more likely to cooperate with them and not break the law. They are generally more willing to do things that make the job of the police easier.

1. How confident are you that there is a force commitment to NHP?

→ Confidence scale

2. How confident are you that Chief Officers' commitment to NHP translates to the frontline?

→ Confidence scale

3. How confident are you that your NHP teams are valued as a specialist role in your force?

→ Confidence scale

4. Please outline your reasoning for the above answer

→ Free text

5. Do you have an abstraction policy for NHP?

→ MCQ

Yes

No

6. How confident are you that the abstraction policy is adhered to?

→ Confidence scale

7. What is the tenure period for your NHP officers?

→ MCQ

No tenure

1 Year

2 Years

3 Years

Other

8. How do you select your officers for NHP teams?

→ MCQ

Attachments

Interview process
Expressions of interests
Preference exercise
Other

9. How confident are you that your NHP teams feel valued in your organisation?

→ Confidence scale

10. Please outline your reasoning for the above answer

→ Free text

11. Is there anything else you would like to share in relation to promoting the right culture within NHP?

Please consider any emerging best practice

→ Free text

Building analytical capability

Each stage of the problem-solving process requires some form of analysis to be carried out. Frontline practitioners can carry out problem-solving analysis, but may sometimes struggle to find the time or benefit from support. Step-by-step tools are available, but can be quite detailed, so additional advice from analysts may be needed.

A lack of dedicated analytical support is widely seen as a major barrier to problem-solving. Problem-solving is more likely to be effective when those on the frontline have access to skilled analysts and analytical tools.

1. How confident are you that your Force has the analytical capability to support NHP?

→ Confidence scale

2. How confident are you that your NHP staff are suitably skilled to carry out their own analysis?

→ Confidence scale

3. What are the barriers and/or enablers to your above answer

→ Free text

4. For higher threat, harm and risk issues, do your NHP teams have access to **force** analytical support?

y/n

5. What are the barriers and/or enablers to your above answer

→ Free text

6. Do **all** your NHP teams have access to **partnership** analysts?

y/n

7. What are the barriers and/or enablers to your above answer

8. Is there anything else you would like to share in relation to building analytical capability?

Please consider any emerging best practice
→ Free text

Developing officers, staff and volunteers

Classroom training can help ensure people have the knowledge and skills they need to do their job and keep up to date with the latest developments. This type of learning should extend to new and existing officers, staff and volunteers and may need to be refreshed. Practice-based learning While traditional classroom training can improve knowledge, learning that is integrated into routine practice is more likely to change behaviour. Community engagement and problem-solving may be particularly suited to this style of learning if people are able to apply their knowledge on the job and learn from their experiences.

1. Does your Force have a NHP induction training course?

y/n/ Being developed

2. Is this accredited training?

y/n

3. Please provide a copy of the induction training course

4. Please provide a copy of the plans for induction training course

5. Do you hold any annual NHP CPD/conferences?

y/n/ being developed

12. Please outline your reasoning for the above answer

→ Free text

6. Do you have regular NHP training days/CPD time?

y/n/being developed

7. Please provide details of the regular NHP training days/CPD time

→ Free text

8. Do you have specialist roles for PCSOs in your NHP team?

Please select all that apply
→ MCQ
PCSO supervisor roles
ASB coordinators
PCSO Crime Prevention Tactical Advisors
Police Community Engagement Officers
Police Community Support Investigators
Tri-Service PCSOs
Police Fire Community Support Officers
Citizens in Policing PCSOs
Hate Crime PCSOs

Rural Crime PCSOs
Problem Solving PCSOs
Early Intervention PCSOs
Schools PCSOs
Mediation PCSOs
No specialist roles
Other

9. Are any of these specialist PCSO roles accredited?

y/n

10. Please provide details of the accreditation for each role

→ Free text

11. Is there anything else you would like to share in relation to developing officers, staff and volunteers?

Please consider any emerging best practice

→ Free text

Developing & Sharing Learning

As part of its role in building the evidence base in policing, the College provides officers, staff and volunteers with access to specialist hands-on advice and guidance.

1. Are you aware of any academic research regarding NHP and the following areas?

→ MCQ

- Counter Terrorism
- Serious and Organised Crime
- Vulnerability
- Evidence Based Policing
- None of the above areas

2. Please provide details of any academic research into Counter Terrorism, Serious and Organised Crime, Vulnerability and/or Evidence Based Policing

→ Free text

3. How confident are you that your NHP teams regularly access the National Modernising Neighbourhood Policing Knowledge Hub group?

→ Confidence scale

4. Are your NHP staff involved in any NHP Practitioners groups?

→ Multiple choice per row

	Force groups	NPCC groups
PCSO		
PC		
Supervisors		
None		

5. Is there anything else you would like to comment upon relating to the developing and sharing learning guideline?

Please consider any emerging best practice

→ Free text

Additional information

1. From a NHP perspective, is there anything that has not already been covered that your force would like to share as good/innovative practice?

→ Free text

2. From a NHP perspective, are there any areas identified where you would like assistance from NPCC NPT Portfolio Holder or the College of Policing?

→ Free text

Strategic approach to NHP (to be completed by force Strategic Lead)

1. Please describe your NHP delivery model

→ Free text

2. What are your Force plans for future NHP investment?

→ Free text

3. Please provide details of the above, for example the monetary spend in relation to NHP in:
    - 2020
    - 2021
    - 2022 (projected)

→ Free text

4. What affect has Operation Uplift had on your NHP delivery?

→ Free text

5. Does your force have a specific NHP performance framework?

y/n/being developed

6. Please provide a copy or plans of the NHP performance framework

7. Does your Force make use of the PCSO Handbook 2022 to inform decision making?

y/n

8. Do you issue your PCSOs with any of the following?

→ Single choice per row

	Y	N
Baton		
BWV		
Handcuffs		

9. How often are your PCSO designated powers reviewed?

→ MCQ
Twice a year
Yearly
Every 2 years
When required
Not reviewed
Other

10. As a result of the pandemic, has there been any specific learning and/or changes to NHP delivery that you have continued to implement as business as usual or which you have ceased?

→ Free text

11. How confident are you that your Force has a good understanding of current and future NHP demand?

→ Confidence scale

12. In relation to the above question what threats or opportunities have you identified and what are your plans to address these?

→ Free text

13. In your opinion what are the greatest threats to NHP both locally and nationally?

→ Free text

Appendix 9

Gatekeeper letter

Gavin Stephens
Chief Constable

1st March 2021

To whom it may concern,

I'm am writing to confirm my support for Inspector Doug Ashman at Surrey Police and his wish to access what he needs within the National Police Chiefs' Council's Neighbourhood Policing portfolio for his research.

Insp Ashman has previously been heavily involved in the implementation of the College of Policing 2018 Neighbourhood Guidelines which have been central to this portfolio over recent years and so I welcome his proposals and look forward to seeing the results.

Kind regards,

Gavin Stephens
Chief Constable

Appendix 10 – Documents

Document	Detail
Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines (2018)	The national policy document, includes the following sections: The Guidelines Supporting material for frontline officers Supporting material for supervisors Supporting material for senior leaders
Rapid Evidence Assessment (Colover & Quinton 2018)	Neighbourhood policing – impact and implementation document attached to guidelines as a related resource.
Initial force readiness assessment (Hope et al 2018)	The report on the self-assessment of forces position against the neighbourhood policing guidelines at the start of the implementation phase. Authored by the NPCC and College of Policing national implementation team.
Mid-project assessment (Hope et al 2019)	A report on the position of forces against the neighbourhood policing guidelines one year into the implementation phase
Concluding project report (Miles et al 2021)	A report on the position of forces against the neighbourhood policing guidelines at the conclusion of the roll out of the implementation phase
Knowledge Hub (2022)	Online resource created by the Police digital Service for UK policing and partners to collaborate and

	share ideas and practice.
HMICFRS PEEL Inspection (HMICFRS 2022)	The HMICFRS PEEL Inspection report for the case study force, the links online to this have been removed in the bibliography to protect anonymity
East Division Engagement Strategy	The engagement strategy for East Division within the case study force, this is protectively marked and cannot be included within this thesis
Riverside Engagement Plan	The tactical level plan at the neighbourhood team level that delivers against the divisional engagement strategy. This is protectively marked and cannot be included in this thesis

Appendix 11

Table showing codes emerging from thematic analysis

	Interviews & Focus Groups						Documents		
	A1	A2	B1	C1	C2	C3	National	Force	Local
Financial Climate	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Political Issues	■	■		■			■	■	
Operating Context	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Resources & Competing Demands	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Key Actors & Networks	■	■		■			■	■	
Actors as blockers and facilitators	■	■	■	■			■		
Evidence Base for policy	■	■	■						
The Development Process	■	■	■	■					
Capturing Learning	■	■	■	■			■		
Not landing at the micro level			■			■	■	■	■
performance framework	■	■		■	■		■	■	
Measured outcomes	■	■		■			■	■	
Sharing of Practice	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
The Knowledge Hub			■	■	■		■		
Impact of Practice	■	■	■	■					
Practice informing Policy	■	■	■	■			■	■	
Further Academic	■	■	■				■	■	

Review									
Reviewing Practice									
Covid 19									

Appendix 12

Chart showing the structure of accountability and scrutiny of Police forces in England and Wales

(Adapted from Murphy et al, 2017, p.13)