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Initiating Change: Best Value in the Police Service

**A Thesis submitted to Middlesex University in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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Abstract

Managerialist principles have been applied within public services for a number of years but their ability to alter or improve public service has been questioned. This study examined the introduction of Best Value in the police service. Best Value was introduced to Police Authorities by the New Labour Government in the Local Government Act 1999 to ensure that all services provided by these authorities were 'delivered to clear standards'. In addition, they must take into account the cost and quality of all services and provide them in the most efficient, effective and economic manner. All services are subject to review over a five year period and should be reviewed in connection with the four C's, competition, comparison, challenge and consultation in order to achieve continuous improvement. In addition, Best Value aimed to change the organisation of the police service by encouraging a greater role for the Police Authorities in deciding how services were delivered, supported the opening up of the police to partnership arrangements and promoted the need for local innovation and ways of working.

The main aim of the research was to look at the effects of these 'Best Value' policies on the police service and whether the implementation of these policies led to improvements in service delivery and the restructuring of the organisation as intended. This was achieved by selecting three case study areas and employing a number of research methods including semi-structured interviews, using documentary analysis and examining quantitative data.

The study found that despite initial differences in the way the Best Value was implemented a fairly uniform approach was adopted in the three Police Authorities. It established that Best Value was encouraging the police service to make changes to the way that services were delivered. In addition, there was some evidence that Best Value had encouraged greater involvement of Police Authorities in deciding how services were delivered. Under Best Value change tended to be gradual and incorporated both national and local objectives. This incremental nature of change meant that as yet there was little evidence of improvements in measured performance.

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List of Abbreviations

ACC	Assistant Chief Constable
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
APA	Association of Police Authorities
BCU	Basic Command Unit
BVPI	Best Value Performance Indicator
CCT	Competitive Compulsory Tendering
DCC	Detective Chief Constable
DETR	Department for Transport and the Environment
EFQM	European Foundation of Quality Management
FMI	Financial Management Initiative
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationary Office
NCRS	National Crime Recording Standard
NIM	National Intelligence Model
NPM	New Public Management
NSWP	New South Wales Police
PACE	Police and Criminal Evidence Act
PCCG	Police Consultative Community Group
PFI	Private Finance Initiative
PMCA	Police and Magistrates Court Act
PPAF	Police Performance Assessment Framework

Introduction

New Public Management is a term that has become synonymous with the changes that have occurred within public services in Britain throughout the 1980s and 1990s. There are a number of disagreements on the exact ideology and philosophy of why New Public Management (NPM) was introduced (Hood 1991 Walsh 1995,.) but in general the reforms are associated with a 'way of reorganizing public sector bodies to bring their management, reporting and accounting approaches closer to (a particular perception of) business methods' (Dunleavy and Hood 1994: 9). The desired effect as stressed by the Conservative Government was to bring about services that were economic and effective and provided quality, choice and value for citizens who used them.

There are a number of key themes that can be associated with NPM (Hood 1991, Pollitt 1993, Walsh 1995) namely:

- the introduction of competition (market and non-market based)
- the attempt to decentralise operations while centralising strategic command
- the extended development of performance management techniques
- the emphasis on users of public service as customers.

The introduction of competition came in different forms and included the development of both internal and external markets. In the NHS the internal market was established with the introduction of the purchaser/provider split. The external market came with the development of Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) that was introduced into local government and later to the NHS, education and white-collar services.

One of the main features of the reforms was the emphasis on devolution of management for services when particular financial and strategic conditions had been set by central government. Both the Education Reform Act 1988 and the NHS Community Care Act 1990 provided clauses to enable both schools and hospitals to self-manage and become more financially independent (Hoggart 1996). The

purpose behind these reforms was to allow room for decisions on both the allocation of budgets and fulfilling local expectations.

The development of performance systems was very much related to decentralisation and was introduced to retain accountability of public services to central government and the public. These types of systems involve the setting up of clear objectives, to be measured with the use of performance indicators. A number of other forms of performance systems were suggested including performance reviews, performance related pay and customer feedback mechanisms (Hoggart 1996). To ascertain if organisations were meeting their targets, regulatory bodies such as the Audit Commission would inspect and monitor performance, as well as ensure that value for money was being achieved.

The Impact of NPM

A number of criticisms have been raised about the introduction of NPM (Dunleavy and Hood 1994, Hood 1991, Pollitt 1993, Stewart and Walsh 1995). It has been suggested that if emphasis is placed too greatly on cost effectiveness, this could be to the detriment of other values commonly associated with public services such as honesty, fairness and mutuality (Hood 1991). Pollitt (1993) pointed out that the managerial reforms have failed to take into consideration the nature of public service work and the high commitment of staff carrying out this work. CCT has had a particular effect on staff with productivity increasing but pay, conditions and levels of staff deteriorating (Stewart and Walsh 1992). Other critics of CCT have argued that focusing on reductions of cost is at the detriment to the quality of the service provided (see Cutler and Waine 1997).

The extent to which public services have actually been decentralised has been questioned. Despite the rhetoric that services were given the 'right to manage', this has been on an operational basis only. Hoggatt (1996) pointed out that although responsibility for operations has been devolved, the allocation of resources and control over policy has become increasingly centralised.

The introduction of performance indicators has introduced particular controversies. Indicators that have been imposed using a top-down approach (allocated by central government) have raised issues around the manipulation of figures to ensure that performance targets are being met (Cutler and Waine 1997). Other arguments about the use of performance indicators have centred on whether they have made services more accountable to service users and to what extent adequate performance indicators can be developed to assess the perceived outcomes of public service (Stewart and Walsh 1992).

NPM and the Police

The key themes described above were prevalent in the reforms introduced to the police. As with other services such as the NHS and education, the police were subject to CCT of ancillary and support services. There has been the growth of civilianisation within the police service mainly with the aim of cost reduction and the contracting out of some functions such as training (Savage and Charman 1996). The police service were included in the Citizen's Charter (1991) and the emphasis was on the police setting out general standards and quality of service for the public, as well as setting clear objectives and priorities for their local communities. The Police and Magistrates' Court Act 1994 (PMCA), introduced the setting of national key objectives and performance indicators by the Home Secretary, and provided Police Authorities with the ability to set local policing plans. Overall the emphasis of the reforms was to place enhanced managerial responsibility on Police Authorities and Chief Constables to effectively manage the resources allocated to them and the staff under their control (McLaughlin and Murji 1997).

Although it has been agreed that the reforms, which have been introduced to the police service have changed the shape of the organisation to one that is more business-like, there are certain questions that have been raised about the introduction of NPM. The extent to which performance indicators have served to make the police more accountable is questionable. It has been established that within police forces there has been the clear massaging of figures in order to meet the defined performance objectives (Loveday 2000). The setting of clear targets

and priorities was been problematic in policing terms and it has been stressed that the police service has alternated between 'service' and 'force' orientations (McLaughlin and Murji 1997: 100). Johnston (2000) reiterated that despite the greater budgeter control awarded to police authorities under the PMCA the Home Secretary still has a great deal of financial control over total spending and a greater influence on what the objectives of policing should be as a whole.

The Introduction of Best Value

When the Labour government came into power in 1997 they emphasised the need to 'deliver services and programmes that are not only efficient and effective but also joined up and responsive' (Cabinet Office 1998: 23). They emphasised that although some advances had been made in achieving more effective and efficient services this had not gone far enough. They argued CCT had failed to provide quality services, that efficiency gains had been irregular and competition had often been used as an end in itself (DETR 1999). To achieve the aims set out in Labour's 'Modernising Government' agenda, the regime of Best Value has been introduced into Local, Police and Fire Authorities. Best Value emphasises the need for all services carried out by these authorities to be 'delivered to clear standards' while taking into consideration cost and quality and ensuring that all services are provided in the most efficient, effective and economic manner (DETR 1998). All services are subject to review over a five year period and should be reviewed in connection with the fours Cs: competition, comparison, challenge and consultation, in order to achieve continuous improvement.

The similarities to Best Value and the reforms brought in under the umbrella of NPM are associated with the key themes. They continue to emphasise competitive practices within public services, the need for devolved management and the need to make public services responsive by assessing their daily operations with the use of a suite of performance indicators. This assessment of their performance will also continue to be inspected by a number of regulatory bodies such as the Audit Commission.

The difference between Best Value and what has gone before is that it is much more intensive than the previous reforms. Unlike CCT, all services will now be subject to review and will have to take the four Cs into account. The scope of performance indicators is wider and the level of inspections more intense. The consequences of not achieving Best Value could have a greater impact on services that cannot show they are achieving continuous improvement. The emphasis has changed from short-term efficiency to long-term effectiveness (Newman 2000) and there is a greater responsibility to consult local communities on their needs for the service.

The aim of this research was to investigate the introduction of Best Value in the police service by examining three case study areas. The purpose was to examine to what extent Best Value had been internalised within the police service and whether policies such as Best Value were achieving their intended outcomes. This was achieved by using both quantitative and qualitative data from a number of sources and by using a number of research methods.

Chapter One provides brief overviews of when New Public Management was introduced into Britain and some of the reasons why this occurred. Following this, an examination of some of the key themes associated with the public management reforms are outlined. The consequences of these reforms are then discussed. The chapter goes on to consider why attempts were made to reform the police service through the introduction of managerialism and how the police service viewed these reforms. It outlines some of the key policy documents and reforms introduced to ensure that, as with other public services, the police would be subject to managerialism.

Chapter Two outlines the impact that managerialism has had on the police service. It then goes on to consider the change in government from Conservative to New Labour and examines New Labour's 'Modernising Agenda' introduced to improve the public sector. The chapter reflects on New Labour's approach to public services and identifies some of the key themes that have been introduced within their programme. This includes an examination of Best Value and the possible implications for the police services under the policy.

Chapter Three provides a detailed account of the main research questions of this work. In addition, it discusses the research methodology employed and the data sources used. This includes a critique of performance indicators and some of the problems and issues faced when researching the police.

Chapters Four, Five and Six are the empirical chapters and examine issues such as how Best Value has been implemented within the police service and the difficulties experienced by the authority areas, whether it has led to service improvements and increased levels of performance and finally whether Best Value has led to the types of cultural change encouraged. The concluding chapter offers a summary of the research and possible implications for the future of managerialism within the police service.

Chapter One

From Crisis to Managerialism

During the 1980s both the legitimacy and the accountability of the police were severely questioned. This was because of police actions during times of social unrest and issues concerning both the role of the police and their relationship with the community. Despite initial support from the new Conservative administration, the police service would face a period of intense scrutiny from the government, other public bodies and the academic community. The police service, as well as the rest of the public sector, would be subject to the increasing prominence of New Public Management ideologies that were encouraged and supported by the Conservatives.

The aim of this chapter is to consider issues of police governance and accountability and how these were addressed during the 1980s. This will include examining the emergence of New Public Management (NPM) one of the main strategies employed to reform the public sector and the police. The main themes of NPM will be identified, as will some of the difficulties in implementing these into the public sector. The problems of introducing managerialism into the police service will also be explored.

Police Governance: A Brief History

The governance of police and the tripartite structure that are still relevant today can be traced back to the Royal Commission set up in 1962 and the passing of the Police Act 1964. Although Peel favoured the establishment of a national police service this never occurred and prior to the 1960s policing arrangements were mainly localised and varied (Lustgarten 1986). During the 1950s a number of 'scandals' involving the police (see Oliver 1997, Reiner 2000) raised doubts over their constitutional position and accountability. There was also increasing anxiety about higher levels of crime and concerns were raised about inadequate lines of inquiry when complaints were made about the police. R.A Butler, the Home Secretary at the time argued that appropriate arrangements needed to be made in order to maintain an independent and democratic police service.

‘I am quite concerned that it would be wrong for one man or one government to be in charge directly of the whole of the police in this country. Our constitution is based on checks and balances, this has kept our liberty through generations’ (Times, 27 June 1962 cited in Oliver 1997: 1).

In some ways this statement could be seen as key to the establishment of the Royal Commission in 1962, which was assembled to explore the constitutional arrangements of the police throughout Britain, examining the role of the local Police Authorities, investigating the relationship between the police and the community and considering an appropriate system of complaints. Its main remit was,

‘to bring the police under more effective control by making them more fully accountable while securing that they are no longer hampered in carrying out their tasks by a system designed many years ago in different conditions for different purposes’ (cited in Oliver 1997: 6).

While considering its recommendations the Royal Commission was directed to take into account the traditions of the police service. This meant in reality maintaining ‘Constabulary Independence’, a recognised concept viewed as essential to police legitimacy. ‘Constabulary Independence’ is the notion that the police should be free from political interference. Lord Denning in his judgement regarding chief constables in their duties stated they ‘are not a servant of one, save for the law itself. The responsibility for law enforcement lies with him. He is answerable to law and the law alone’ (cited in Oliver 1987: 20). However as suggested by Lustgarten¹ (1986) the concept has a confused and unreliable past. It is often traced back to the case of *Fisher v. Oldham Corporation* (1930 2 KB 364) where Fisher was arrested in a case of mistaken identity. He sued the Oldham Corporation and Watch Committee for wrongful arrest but was unsuccessful. The judgement made was based on a previous judgement, *Stanbury v. Exeter Corporation* (1905 2KB 838), which held that as police officers had national duties, the Local Authority could not be held accountable for all the actions of the officers. In addition, it was noted that the constables were not subject to direct control by those who paid them and in turn the local authority could not be held responsible.

The Police Act 1964, based on the findings of the Royal Commission and set against the principles of Constabulary Independence, established the structure of the tripartite system. Under the terms of the Act the Home Secretary was given powers to ensure the efficiency of the police service, set 51% of the police budget and further amalgamate forces on grounds of efficiency. This was done in 1966 and 1974 leaving the 43 forces structure that still remains today. In addition, the Home Secretary could set regulations regarding pay and conditions, the distribution of equipment and police discipline. Under the Act each provincial force in England and Wales would have a Police Authority comprising two-thirds members who were elected councillors and one-third magistrates. The primary aim of the authorities was to ensure the maintenance of an efficient police force for its areas. They would also appoint chief constables and were entitled to receive an annual report from them about the policing of the area. For chief constables the main issue to emerge from the Act was direct responsibility for the direction and control of their force and staff.

The 1964 Act has been identified as ambiguous and vague (Jones, Newburn and Smith 1994). This was probably due to attempts to appease all parties involved in the structure and to maintain the concept of Constabulary Independence. The Act was described as a ‘gentleman’s agreement to gloss over the ambiguities and contradictions concerning the responsibilities for framing, monitoring and financing police policy’ (Morgan 1986: 86). Other commentators have referred to the centralising influence of the policy (Oliver 1997, Wilson, Ashton and Sharp 2001) stating that it provided the Home Secretary with most of the power given its responsibility for providing the majority of the budget and ability to withdraw funding if it did not believe forces were acting efficiently. It could be argued that both the chief constables and the Home Secretary gained while the Local Authorities lost out. Although Police Authorities were allocated the responsibility of appointing chief constables this had to be done with the approval of the Home Secretary. Furthermore chief constables could request not to provide an annual

¹ Lustgarten (1986) provides an in depth account of the case law surrounding the concept of ‘Constabulary Independence’.

policing plan if it was seen as not being in the public interest. In addition, as Lustgarten (1986) identified, the Police Authority might have the power to sack a chief constable, but an appeal could be made to the Home Secretary who could then overturn the authority's decision. The Home Secretary did appreciate the rights of the chief constables to make operational decisions but the same respect was not necessarily afforded to the Police Authorities.

Despite these constitutional arrangements set down in the 1964 Act, questions over police governance and accountability continued to escalate, including further corruption scandals surrounding handling of suspects by the police (see Newburn 2003, Rawlings 2002) and failures to investigate claims made against them. Tensions were also identified between certain sections of the community and the police. Gilroy (1987) outlines how black communities, particularly young people, were increasingly stigmatised as a law and order problem during the 1970s leading to conflicts with the police. A move towards unit beat or fire brigade policing where, rather than visibly patrolling the streets, police were racing around in panda cars, caused further difficulties in communities. At the end of the 1970s following the 'Winter of Discontent' and a period of severe strikes, a political shift was about to occur. The subsequent years would prove to be one of the tensest times for the police. The police service was about to experience significant change driven by the agenda of the new Conservative government and the support for New Public Management.

A New Era: 1979 The Conservative Government and the Emergence of New Public Management

The election of the Conservative government in 1979 is seen as a watershed in public service reform affecting the police and other services. It has been identified that the Conservatives, and in particular Margaret Thatcher favoured, 'New Right Ideologies' and this was influential in the adoption of New Public Management ideals. The 'New Right' holds up the market as a mechanism that can not only provide efficiency but also ensure the rights of the individual (see King 1987, Walsh 1995). They therefore reject strong influence over the market by the state such as existed with state monopolies and the Keynesian era and stress that

the state should have a minimum role in the economy as it would be mostly self-regulating.

Hayek (see Cutler and Waine 1997, King 1987 and) was a major influence in the 'New Right' philosophy of Margaret Thatcher and fully criticised the Keynesian style policies. Hayek rejected Keynesian beliefs about social justice and redistributive policies (Cutler and Waine 1997) professing that the only way to allow for individual freedom in terms of economic, social and political realms was through the function of increased market relations and capitalism. Too much state involvement in terms of activities and service provisions is viewed as coercive to this individual freedom. It is from this viewpoint that the 'New Right' thinkers reject the welfare state, and see a high level of public expenditure as reducing individual liberty (King 1987). The welfare state is seen as paternalistic, directing citizens towards defined choices, and by placing bureaucratic and/or legal restrictions on individuals, it results in dependency among many of its recipients and supports interest groups such as bureaucrats and professionals (Goodin 1982, cited in King 1987: 45). The 'New Right' further emphasised that the welfare state under the Keynesian system was inefficient because macroeconomic management is inflationary (Farnham and Horton 1993) and the only way to achieve efficiency is through allowing welfare provision to be operated through a market-based system.

The Rise of NPM in Britain

Defining NPM has been no easy task and its emergence in several countries is equally difficult to explain. The election of the Conservative Party to power in 1979 is often seen as a watershed in the development of NPM in Britain (Gray and Jenkins 1993). Despite the assertion that the ideas and concepts of the 'New Right' were influential in the adoption of managerial techniques and privatisation of the public sector, some commentators have rejected this. Cutler and Waine (1997), who provide a detailed account of the politics of managerialism, argue that Conservative policies have involved a mixed legacy. They state that while there has been an identifiable hostility to producer interests, for example the Conservatives' anti-trade union legislation, other approaches adopted by the

Conservatives in social welfare policy and privatisation have in fact been antipathetic to New Right Ideologies. Taylor-Gooby and Lawson (1993) emphasise that while New Right philosophies were influential in the adoption of management techniques in the public sector, other long-run factors were relevant. These included the continuing economic decline of the UK, which was contradictory to continuing expansion of state services, increasing inequality which threatens the solidarity of mass welfare, and changes in social structure which require greater flexibility in service provision. It has been recognised that the expansion of welfare states and bureaucratic regimes were not just criticised by countries dominated by New Right politics but changes were also being introduced by left wing governments such as the one that existed in Australia (Walsh 1995).

It would be inappropriate to describe the reforms that have occurred merely as a New Right phenomenon. Hood (1985, 1991) gives a number of explanations for the introduction of the reforms at the same time but does not indicate any explanation as being essentially dominant. It is more likely that the reforms were introduced due to a combination of factors. The economic crisis did, for example, make governments think about how they could reduce public spending. Furthermore, criticisms of the current administration were not new, as Gray and Jenkins (1993) report; it was by the 1960s that critics had begun to see the public service as outdated. The Fulton Committee (1968) 'had argued that the generalist ethos in central administration had limited relevance to the management of a modern state' (cited Gray and Jenkins 1993:10).

There are a number of criticisms (see Dunleavy 1986), which place the changes within the public sector out with direct influence from the New Right. Clarke, Cochrane and McLaughlin (1994), identify reasons why NPM cannot be seen purely in this light. First they point to the 'reworking of party political positions on the provision of public goods, with an increasing degree of consensus about the need for, and irreversibility of, organisational reform, whether in the form of internal markets, mixed economies or welfare pluralism' (Clarke, Cochrane and McLaughlin 1994: 227). Second they identified that the critics of the bureaucratic era were found on the other side of the spectrum prior to 1979. The left wing

labour councils of the 1980s, for example, had themselves emphasised the need to reduce the power of ‘professional hierarchies’ and the need to facilitate ‘user involvement, empowerment and decentralization’ (1994: 227).

‘Taking managerialism seriously as an ideology means looking at the way in which it reshapes or recasts the contexts and the frames of reference—indeed the very language—within which decisions about the public service are made. It has destabilised and reorganised the complex balance of powers and interests which characterized the old regimes by, at one and the same time, providing a prescriptive explanation of what was wrong and highlighting what could be done to make things right’ (1994: 228).

Key Themes

There have indeed been a number of changes to public services and the way in which they are managed following the rule of the Conservatives in 1979. The reforms, which have been introduced have come in a number of formats. In spite of the large number of changes introduced, Hood (1985) identified a number of traits commonly associated with NPM. These included the shift in emphasis from policy making to management skills, a stress on output rather than on process, a shift to more a competitive basis in providing public services, a change from fixed to variable pay structures and a move away from a uniform and inclusive public service to one which is variant with a greater emphasis on contract provision (Hood 1985: 95). Stewart and Walsh (1992) provide a good description of the key themes of reforms which were introduced into Britain, including; the separation of the purchaser role from the provider role; the growth of contractual or semi-contractual arrangements; accountability for performance, flexibility of pay and conditions; the separation of the political process from the management process; the creation of markets or quasi-markets; emphasis on the public as customer and the reconsideration of the regulatory role (Stewart and Walsh 1992: 504-7).

One of the first moves of the Conservative government was to appoint Sir Derek Raynor to advise on the promotion of efficiency and the elimination of waste in government departments (Fry 1988). These were known as the ‘Raynor Scrutinies’ and made a number of recommendations for potential savings in a variety of departments (Fry 1988). At the same time as the Raynor programme was being

developed Michael Heseltine introduced MINIS (Management Information System for Ministers) into the Department of the Environment. This system was designed to provide an annual review of objectives, achievements and resources used in all departments. Following this, in 1982 the FMI (Financial Management Initiative) was introduced, derived from a combination of the above. Under the FMI, departments were required to review their management and financial systems to ensure:

- a clear view of their objectives and means to assess, and wherever possible, measure output or performance in relation to these objectives
- well-defined responsibility for making the best use of these resources, including a careful scrutiny of output and value for money and
- the information (particularly about costs, the training and the access to expert advice) needed to exercise their responsibilities effectively (National Audit Office 1986 cited in Stewart and Walsh 1992).

Further reforms brought in under the FMI in 1986 involved devolved budgetary control from the Treasury to departmental managers, giving them responsibility.

Markets and Competition

The integration of markets and competition was a primary goal of the Conservatives. From the Conservatives viewpoint and in relation to the 'New Right' ideology competition is stimulated by the introduction of markets. The Thatcher administration initially introduced competitive practices with the introduction of Competitive Compulsory Tendering (CCT) by the Local Government and Planning Act 1980. Later extended in the Local Government Act 1988. Ascher (1987) argues that it was between the period 1980 and 1985 that contracting out was encouraged by the Conservatives in a bid to increase efficiency and pursue competitive practices. In local government the arguments for the introduction of CCT were contained in the document 'Reservicing Britain'. This document presented three arguments in favour of CCT: that there was a lack of accountability in Local Authority services, there was no need for locally based services to be publicly run and private contractors could provide more efficient

services (Ascher 1987: 37). The Local Government Planning and Land Act therefore recommended the contracting out of housing maintenance and highway work. This was later expanded under the 1988 Act to include other services such as refuse collection and school catering. The 1988 Act aimed to 'secure that local and public bodies undertake certain activities only if they can do so competitively' (Department of the Environment 1987 cited in Ascher 1987:1).

Customers and Quality

The impetus of many of the later NPM reforms from the mid-1980s revolved around the issues of the customer or consumer of public services, which went hand in hand with the notions of quality. The New Right argued that previous bureaucracies and monopolistic systems were self-serving and this inhibited customer choice. A number of initiatives such as competition were introduced on the basis that they would promote greater choice for service users. The Citizen's Charter (1991), published under the first Major administration, embodies customer choice as one of the main priorities for all public services (Clarke and Newman 1997). Setting out a number of principles that public services should adhere to. The Charter stated that every citizen is entitled 'to expect the provision of choice wherever practical' (HMSO 1991: vi). The Citizen's Charter further argued that 'there should be regular and systematic consultation with those who use services and their priorities for improving them to be taken into account in final decisions on standards' (1991: vi). This resulted in an increase in the use of customer satisfaction surveys and changes in complaints procedures.

The rise of consumerism brought with it a greater emphasis on the quality of public services. Kirkpatrick and Martinez Lucio (1995) suggest the growing emphasis on quality has been used to legitimise a number of changes the government introduced including competition, 'quality was seen both as a justification for and outcome of radical organisational change' (Kirkpatrick and Martinez Lucio 1995: 7). Kirkpatrick and Martinez Lucio also go on to identify two dimensions of quality, the first relates to efficiency where it is believed that 'value for money' brings with it increased quality in services (more for less). The second dimension, which came to dominate later reforms, is associated with providing the customer with greater

prominence (1995: 26). Peters and Waterman (1992) promote quality as a mechanism to meet customer requirements. It is argued that focusing on quality brings about organisational change and ensures greater openness and visibility within organisations (Pfeffer and Coote 1991). A number of change programmes were injected into public services such as the NHS and police to ensure quality. This included initiatives such as Total Quality Management (TQM), which had previously been used in private companies. TQM focuses on achieving results to the highest quality to satisfy customer requirements and encourages a holistic view of organisations where everyone is working to achieve the same goals (Pfeffer and Coote 1991).

The impact these key changes had within the public service is a complex issue to discuss. Some commentators have highlighted the difficulties in adopting private sector and managerial techniques within public services (Flynn 1993, Walsh 1995). It has been argued that the reforms did not have the desired effect. Rather than decentralisation allowing services to manage themselves there has been increasing centralisation of control, a large focus on efficiency at the cost of effectiveness and instead of improvements in performance, inappropriate actions to achieve organisation goals.

The Effect of Performance Management

One of the major components of NPM has been the emphasis on improving the performance of public sector organisations. This has been implemented by setting objectives, emphasising output and staff achievement in terms of reaching organisational goals. Cutler and Waine (1997) argue that although performance measurement is not new to public services, the difference in the 1980s and 1990s was the 'scale and pervasiveness of such measures'. This was illustrated by the way they have been used by central government to demonstrate improvements in public service delivery (Cutler and Waine 1997: 29). In particular, performance indicators have been widely used throughout and been assessed by regulatory bodies such as the Audit Commission, who use indicators, not only to assess whether organisations are achieving value for money, but to compare public sector units such as hospitals. The way in which performance indicators have been

implemented by central government has raised a number of issues. Namely, the extent to which adequate performance measures can be developed to assess the outcomes of the public sector, whether they do actually make public service more accountable and whether they can be used to make comparisons between units.

Efficiency and Effectiveness

The overarching aim of public sector reforms was to achieve the three Es, economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The difficulty presented is the uneasiness with which the concept of efficiency and effectiveness sit side by side. Pollitt (1993) asserted that the majority of the initial reform promoted efficiency and this was evident in the performance indicators and was at the cost of effectiveness. Pollitt (1986) considered the classification of performance indicators for a Local Authority, the NHS and educational performance and found that the primary concern was efficiency gains with 61 %, 54% and 43% respectively measuring this and only a small sample measuring effectiveness. Both Flynn (1993) and Cutler and Waine (1997) have recognised the complexities in developing performance indicators, which adequately measure the outcomes of an organisation and provide an appropriate picture of a service's effectiveness. Cutler and Waine (1997) have specified that outcomes are difficult to define and often intangible. Therefore, a proxy is substituted to provide a measure of the outcome. Cutler and Waine (1997: 37) provide the example of the use of citations in higher education to measure the impact of research. The number of times a piece of work is cited is used to measure the contribution of the research within a particular subject area. However as the outcome is qualitative, it cannot be measured simply by counting the number of times it is referenced. Flynn (1993) argued that the nature of outcomes achieved are as important as their quantity and pointed out that if services such as education concentrate on producing high numbers of examination passes, and if these exam passes are not appropriate to the workplace then you may be efficient but you are not effective.

Hood (1991) has highlighted a particular problem of concentrating primarily on efficiency. He identified different types of administrative values, including sigma-

type values and theta-type values. Sigma-type values specify frugality: reducing waste and matching resources to tasks for given goals, success is to be measured by using resources sparingly and providing services at no greater cost than is absolutely necessary. Theta-type values emphasis honesty, fairness and mutuality with the main aim of assessing how the job is done rather than by quantifiable outputs. Success here is concerned with providing a service, which retains public confidence and allows effective participation of citizens. Hood (1991) argues that if the reforms associated with NPM are designed to ensure sigma-type values, it limits the effect of theta-type values.

The Problem of Competition and Contracting Out

LeGrand and Bartlett (1993) argue that the introduction of quasi-markets into public services may not necessarily ensure efficiency, which was one of the primary aims of the restructuring. They argue that as public services are still not profit-maximisers under the arrangements then the claim of efficiency is rendered invalid. LeGrand and Bartlett claim that there are a number of costs in setting up the market structure and that competing institutions could use a greater amount of resources to increase their market share and that switching from monopolistic providers to competitive ones may bring about a rise in labour and other input costs. Ferlie et al (1996) found in their study of NHS Trusts that efficiency gains had been made by shedding staff and contracting functions out.

As with markets, the introduction of CCT has brought with it certain controversies. One of the main arguments is that contrary to popular belief CCT has failed to bring about efficiency gains or improve quality (Cutler and Waine 1997). Szykmanis' (1996) research into refuse collection found 20% cost savings when a private contractor won the contract and 10% when a Direct Service Organisation (DSO) won the contract (cited in Cutler and Waine 1997: 104) and also found changes in the specification of the services provided. While studies have identified cost-savings, it could be argued that these savings have been to the detriment of the quality of service provided. This claim has been difficult to substantiate due to problems of defining savings if the specification of the service has changed and the

issue of defining quality and how it is measured (see Cutler and Waine 1997). One of the main contentions against the introduction of CCT has been the effect on labour and conditions for staff such as pay and benefits (see Cutler and Waine 1997). Stewart and Walsh (1992) argue that while contractual arrangements were introduced in order to bring about greater accountability they have in fact decreased accountability. For example, access to information and open government, which applies to local government does not apply to private contractors.

The idea that all organisations should take into account the needs of their users or customers is not disputed, however what has been realised within the public sector is the difficulty in defining the customer and addressing their needs. Stewart and Walsh (1992) argue that using the concept of consumerism is arbitrary in public services as it 'is inadequate to encompass the complexities of public action. Thus there are limits to the extent to which public services can regard those affected by the services as customers whose wishes are being met' (Stewart and Walsh 1992: 514). They also point out that public bodies provide free services and there are times where these services need to be rationed, not allowing all customers wishes to be met. Similarly, at times, the needs of 'consumers' will not necessarily be the same and will be at odds with each other. Newman and Clarke (1997) argue that the way in which consumerism has been presented within the NPM reforms has had little impact on power relations and that the expansion of choice has been limited. Flynn (1993) argues that one of the main problems of using the term 'customer' is an issue as it is difficult to define who the consumer is and what their needs are. Potter (1994) examines whether the notion of consumerism is actually enough to address the needs of public service users. She argues that individuals have a number of relationships with public services and can be affected both directly and indirectly by services. She adds that to be user-centered public services would have to embody ideas relating to citizenship rather than just consumerism.

'Consumerism can help authorities to advance from considering individual members of their public as passive clients, to thinking of them as customers with legitimate rights and preferences. But it will rarely be enough to turn members of the public into partners actively involved in shaping public services (Potter 1994:

The difficulty in defining quality is one of the main contentions against its use when it is applied to the public sector. Kirkpatrick and Martinez Lucio (1995) stress the importance of thinking about quality in the context of how it is constructed and used by different interest groups. In their work they argue that quality is not neutral but a concept which is highly contested in its meaning (Laclau cited in Kirkpatrick and Martinez Lucio 1995: 8). Shaw (1995) in his analysis of the emergence of quality in personal social services emphasises how the meaning of quality remains elusive because it has been used to service different purposes by different people. Pfeffer and Coote (1991) provide a good illustration of this diversification by considering the introduction of TQM under the NHS management executive. Different centres used under a pilot initiative for TQM interpreted the term quality by using a number of techniques: one increased staff training in 'customer awareness' while some carried out surveys of patients' perceptions of the health service.

New Public Management and the Police: An Emerging Agenda

The police service were also subject to New Public Management. However prior to examining the introduction of NPM into the police service it is necessary to address why some commentators viewed the implementation of these reforms into the police as more complex than the rest of the public sector. It has been argued the police 'were unique, they were what could be called 'doubly different', first because of their place in the public sector and their unique constitutional position, they were different from the rest of the public sector' (McLaughlin and Murji (1997: 86).

Leishman and Savage (1993) argue that the 'policing function presents specific dilemmas as far as attempts to introduce coherent managerial approaches is concerned' (Leishman and Savage 1993: 210). The first of these dilemmas is the notion that the lower ranks of the organisation hold a high level of discretion when executing their duties. The difficulty is how this discretion can be reconciled with management strategies, which are determined from the top of the organisation and

with the prescribed targets that officers may be set. The police are separated not only due to the difficulty they face in terms of discretion but also because the

nature of their work cannot be dictated and is often unpredictable. As Leishman and Savage emphasise this means the work carried out by the police does not sit well with the process of rational planning often associated with managerialism. Raine and Wilson (1995) are keen to separate the criminal justice agencies from the rest of the public sector and argue that these agencies are different for a number of reasons. One concern is the need to take into account human rights considerations. Raine and Wilson argue that human rights issues are particularly relevant to the Criminal Justice System and that managerial practices could serve to undermine these types of issues. One of the other matters they raise is the separation of the Judiciary from the government and how an essential part of the criminal justice system, namely Judicial Independence is compromised by managerialism. The doctrine of Constabulary Independence of the police officer that stresses the need for the police to be completely separate from any political authority (Savage, Charman and Cope 2000) is also at odds with managerialism. A final issue that separates the police from other public services is the difficulty in defining the customer. While this is an issue in other areas, the nature of policing and the subjects that they deal with makes it much more difficult to address the customers' needs. Whether the person involved is a suspect, victim or witness to a crime, each of these customers has different, often incompatible, requirements and expectations (Raine and Wilson 1995).

The Police of England and Wales

In addition, to identifying why the police were seen as distinct from other areas of the public sector, it is necessary to consider the current arrangements of the police service. Although the 'police service' is often referred to as a single entity in England and it refers to the 43 police forces that are currently in existence². This number is made up of 41 county or area forces, the City of London Police and the Metropolitan Police Service. While forces have developed and restructured in a

number of ways due to historical and geographical changes. (see Mawby and Wright 2003) there is a recognised organisational structure (Appendix A). Generally forces in England and Wales comprise a headquarters, which houses strategic managers and support departments and a number of Basic Command Units (BCUs), which deliver policing services in a geographical area. The number of BCUs varies depending on the size of the force.³

The 1980s: Crisis in Police and the Emerging Agenda of NPM

When the Conservatives came into power in 1979, they identified themselves as the Party of law and order by arguing that they would spend more on 'fighting law and order while they economised elsewhere' (Conservative Party 1979: 19). The new government were keen to quell 'rising crime, public disorder and industrial unrest which had merged to form a society under siege from the forces of lawlessness' (Savage 1990: 89). To demonstrate their commitment to law and order and the police the government introduced the recommendations of the Edmund-Davies Committee. This meant an improved pay package for police officers as well as the introduction of generous allowances and benefits. Not only did police officers gain from the Conservatives' generosity with improved pensions and better allowances than other public sector workers (McLaughlin and Murji 1997), but the service itself benefited from an increase in expenditure of 41% in real terms between 1986/87 and 1993/4 (Home Office 1995a: 69) whilst other public services, for instance education, experienced a downturn in expenditure.

The police service did not only profit from initial financial support but were provided with additional powers under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE). Although the Act did aim to strike a balance between powers provided to the police with the 'consent and co-operation of society at large' (Home Office Working Paper on Criminal Justice 1984 cited in Reiner 2000a: 176). The

² The term 'force' has been identified as a controversial term (see Stephens and Becker 1994) but is often used to refer to individual county constabularies.

³ For further information of the structure, size and make-up of the police force in England and Wales refer to Mawby and Wright (2003).

additional powers included national powers of stop and search, redefined powers of arrest and new laws on police detention and interrogation. The powers were provided with further Codes of Practices that were intended to regulate practice and protect the rights of suspects. This included safeguards over stop and search, where constables must keep records of all searches conducted and the requirement for stops only to be done if there was 'reasonable suspicion'. Critics of PACE argued that the Act posed a threat to civil liberties. Christian (1983) disputes that the Act increased suspects' rights but suggested that it projected a 'philosophy of coercion rather than consent' (Christian 1983: 210). Other concerns raised (Christian 1983, Kinsey et al 1985) maintained that certain extended powers given to the police are counterproductive to their primary task of crime control; for example, stop and search can alienate the sections of the community who could provide the police with information about crime. Reiner (2000a) pointed out that although PACE did impact on police practices, the results were uneven and patchy. He argues that formal rules as applied by PACE can not always successfully penetrate the informal culture of the police nor overcome the discretionary element of much routine police work⁴. Subsequent legislation in the same period, namely the Public Order Act 1986, extended police powers with regard to policing public order. It was emphasised by the government that this act was designed not just to protect the democratic right to protest but also the wider community. Hillyard and Percy-Smith (1987) argue that the new offences created by the Act in relation to demonstrating and the Act itself served only to create greater antagonism between the police and protesters. Despite criticisms of these Acts they were strongly supported by the government, for example the Public Order Act 1986 provided the police with additional powers if they were to face unruly disputes similar to those in the 1984/1985 miners' strike.

In spite of this assumed early support for the police service, it soon became apparent that they, like other public services, were also going to fall under the remit of the NPM reforms. McLaughlin and Murji (1997) argue, 'a closer examination of the 1980s and a re-reading of the key moments reveals a gradual

⁴ For a detail account of the changes introduced by PACE and the effects of the Act see Reiner (2000a)

and complex process of increasing, under the counter, governmental scrutiny of virtually every aspect of the police role' (McLaughlin and Murji 1997: 87). In addition, a build-up of academic commentary, independent reports, media attention and public outcry questioned the role of the police, their effectiveness, their relationship with the community, their legitimacy and their accountability.

Questions of Accountability

The Brixton Riots and The Scarman Report

Police accountability emerged as a key area for debate soon after the Conservatives took power. In April 1981 riots broke out in Brixton, South London. A large number of police officers were injured and a substantial number of arrests were made in a weekend of disorder. Other riots were to follow in other major cities including Birmingham, Liverpool and Sheffield and again later in the year in Brixton. The Brixton riots had a long history and were sparked by the death of 13 black youths in a fire at Deptford earlier in the year and the commonly held view by the Black communities in the area that the police had failed to investigate the incident (see Gilroy 1987). Some claimed that the riots were a result of social deprivation and marginalisation experienced by Black communities in inner cities. Some politicians, including Roy Hattersley, argued that they were a result of poor police–community relations (Benyon 1984). Both of these views were evident in the report by Lord Scarman who was appointed to investigate the causes of the riots. While the Scarman Report (1981) emphasised aspects of social deprivation as contributing to the unrest, it was also critical of the police and some of their actions in the Brixton areas. Most notably he argued that there had been a 'withdrawal of consent' between the Black community and the police. Lea and Young (1984) argue that consensual policing, policing with the support of the community, is essential for positive relations between the two groups and in order to make policing effective. When this positive interaction exists the flow of information to the police enables an enhanced possibility of detecting crime. Whether this type of consensual situation ever existed in Brixton is questionable (Gilroy 1997). It is more likely there had been a drift towards military policing (Lea and Young 1984) identifiable by tactics such as Operation Swamp. In

response to high levels of street crime, officers invoked their powers of stop and search, making a large volume of stops but a small number of arrests. The community saw these tactics as oppressive and unnecessary.

Scarman's recommendations to resolve these issues were wide-ranging and included the introduction of consultation, using statutory consultation committees, increased recruitment of ethnic minorities, lay visitors to police stations and setting up an independent review of the police complaints. The introduction of local community consultative groups was encouraged by the Home Office and is an indication of a move towards the greater involvement of communities in policing. They became statutory under s. 106 of PACE.

Police Complaints

The Police Act 1964 laid down the system of police complaints. However there had been a failure to introduce an independent element to the complaints systems and the internal investigation. After much criticism, an independent element was introduced through the Police Act 1976. This led to the establishment of the Police Complaints Board (PCB) (for a critique see Maguire 1991) which was also criticised for its lack of independence. The PCB was replaced by the Police Complaints Authority (PCA) by PACE. The PCA was responsible for supervising the investigation of complaints of death or serious injury or where they felt that it was in the public interest (Reiner 2000a). However, as Reiner emphasises, this new system still failed to establish a fully independent mechanism to review police complaints.⁵

The Policy Studies Institute Research

Other studies were also critical of the police. Research by the Policy Studies Institute (PSI) was requested by Commissioner of Police Sir David McNee who was also concerned about the relations between the public and the police in London (Smith and Gray 1985: xix). As with the Scarman report before it, the PSI

⁵ For a more detailed account of current police complaints arrangements see Reiner (2000a).

report found that the contacts between certain sections of the population, most notably those of West Indian origin, and the police were predominantly of a 'negative kind'. It further stated that public confidence in the police was at an all time low. In addition, other findings emerging from the report emphasised poor supervision of lower ranks, no concern over performance in terms of career advancement, the lack of objectives and a need to review the management structure (Smith and Gray 1985: 527).

The police service did not only receive criticism for their actions in Brixton. There was also a body of research which:

'Debunked and demythologised the 'reality' of policing as it was portrayed by the police; it presented a picture of police work which differed considerably from the public image. For example it indicated that contrary to police and media characterization, law enforcement and crime-related work accounted for a relatively small proportion of police time and that most calls were related to the '24-hour social service' side of policing. It questioned whether increased expenditure on the police would have any significant impact on levels of crime and disorder' (McLaughlin and Murji 1997: 88).

At the beginning of the 1980s a number of Home Office studies questioned whether the police could successfully control crime and how effective they were at doing so (Clarke and Hough 1984, Morris and Heal 1981). Hough's (1988) study argued that a police officer would witness a crime only once every eight years and that in reality clearing up crime only made up a minor part of the police's daily task. This has been identified by other research in the past. For instance Punch and Naylor (1973) found that a vast amount of police time was spent dealing with what they classed as service calls. These included incidents such as noisy parties, sudden death, dealing with lost animals, missing people, highway incidents and other various calls for assistance. Overall they argued that the majority of calls (59%) were to deal with social service issues, whereas law enforcement issues consisted of only 41% calls for assistance. Earlier studies, for example, Banton (1964) also found that police officers tended to be involved in 'peace keeping' activities addressing requests for assistance rather than enforcing the law. In spite of numerous research studies suggesting that the main role of the police was not clearing up crime, this view of the police as crime-fighters had been encouraged by the government. The inability of the police to reduce crime levels led to concerns

over the increasing expenditure allotted to them in order to detect crime. Although still viewed as a main part of police work by the government, increasing crime levels did not, to their mind justify the additional resources that the police had been afforded.

The Home Office, like other sections of government, would be subject to the aforementioned FMI initiative. This meant scrutiny over the finances of the police and their performance. This was set out in the Home Office circular 114/83. This circular signalled the beginning of more intense scrutiny and creeping managerialism into the police service. Although Home Office circulars are often only guidance to Chief Officers they are usually taken as law (Lustgarten 1986) and have been highly influential in policing policy (Jones et al 1994). The circular 'Manpower, Efficiency and Effectiveness in the Police Service' emphasised the need for the police service to be efficient in the use of its resources.

'The constraints on public expenditure at both central and local governmental levels makes it impossible to continue with the sort of expansion which had occurred in recent years. Yet the workload shows no sign of diminishing. If the police service is to deal with this situation and retain public confidence it is essential that it should make the most effective use possible of the substantial resources now available' (Home Office 1983: par. 2).

As well as focusing on cost-effectiveness the documents stressed the need to allocate resources accordingly and signalled the beginning of the requirement of forces to set objectives; 'The effective and efficient use of resources also depends crucially on knowledge of where and when they are most likely to be needed and what result they will have' (par.10).

In addition the Home Office also promoted the role of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) in monitoring the police service. The approach to inspections by the HMIC was aimed at enhancing this new performance culture.

'HM Inspectors are now adopting in their inspections an approach which is more specifically directed towards the way in which chief officers, in consultation with the Police Authority and local community, identify problems, set realistic objectives and clear priorities, keep those priorities under review, deploy manpower and other resources in accordance with them, and provide themselves

with practical means of assessing the extent to which chief officers are achieving their objectives' (Home Office 1983: par. 10).

This document certainly represented a shift in the government policy towards the police service but the continuing scrutiny of the government on the police was sidelined during the miners' strike of 1984-85. The government was keen to secure police support during this period. Again the police demonstrated a 'militaristic' policing style in clashes with the miners and were viewed as agents of an 'authoritarian state' (Hillyard and Percy-Smith 1987, Scraton 1985). The National Reporting Centre (originally established in 1972 to organise mutual aid between police forces) caused anxiety over police accountability. The fact that the Centre,

directed by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), was not effectively accountable to any elected board, displeased many MPs and local Police Authority members (Morgan and Newburn 1997). The picture created by the police tactics in the miners' disputes, the activation of the National Reporting Centre in 1984 and lack of the consultation with Local Authorities all led to a picture of the police were highly centralised, politically influenced and accountable to no one (Scraton 1985).

The lack of influence held by the Police Authorities became apparent during this period. Lustgarten (1986:114) demonstrates that during the miners' strike the situation of mutual aid was a real test of the extent of Police Authorities financial powers. Mutual aid is where a police force needing additional manpower to cope with incidents such as riots or strikes can request this from another force. Under the Police Act 1964 chief constables could decide what assistance was required and request it from another chief constable, leaving the authorities to deal with the financial issues. Refusal to provide assistance could lead to the involvement of the Home Secretary to order assistance as he deemed necessary. The Police Authority is therefore kept out of the decision, which conflicts with its responsibility to ensure that its force are operating efficiently and effectively (Lustgarten 1996). This contradiction was evident in the miners strike. Certain police areas, including South and West Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire needed substantial increases in police numbers to deal with miners' disputes. This meant large bills

for authorities both sending and receiving additional manpower to pay for extra staff. The difficulties came when the Home Secretary prevented authorities' attempts to cut resources elsewhere in their police forces to account for the additional costs. In South Yorkshire the authority asked the chief constable to seek approval for all expenditure in its area prior to going ahead with any arrangements. When the chief constable asked for payment for costs of staff on picket lines from other forces the Authority refused to pay and sent the bill to the Home Office which had previously agreed to take up some of the cost. However, this was refused and the authority was forced to pay the bill. This was a common occurrence during the strike demonstrating the limited power of the authority to make real financial decisions (see Lustgarten 1986).

'The tripartite structure is a very lopsided thing. The miners' strike exposed almost cruelly the powerlessness of the Police Authorities to carry out their duties. Taken with the long-term steady flow of power to central government, and the growing importance in stature of chief constables the diminution of the Police Authority has radically reshaped, not to say badly distorted, the structure over the past two decades' (Lustgarten 1986: 125).

Spencer (1985) examined the impact of Authorities during the miners strike. She found from a survey of Police Authorities that although they demonstrated support for their chief constables on issues of mutual aid throughout the dispute they were rarely consulted about decisions concerning costs. This was in spite of the fact they were responsible for ensuring the efficiency of the force. Spencer recommended reform of the 1964 Police Act to ensure that Police Authorities were responsible for policing priorities and methods in their areas.

Some Labour MPs were uneasy about Police Authorities' apparent lack of influence over chief constables. There was a belief that under then current arrangement Police Authorities could assert little authority in their areas and the Home Secretary had too much central control. In fact this encouraged Jack Straw to introduce a private member's bill proposing changes to the 1964 Police Act. The proposals included allowing Authorities to determine general policing policies for their areas, being able to appoint senior officers down to the Superintendent level and disposing of Magistrate members and making them all locally elected members.

Towards the end of the 1980s there was very much a return to the managerial agenda. Further circulars issued by the Home Office continued to draw attention to the need for setting objectives and deploying resources appropriately (Circular 106/88) and encouraging civilianisation (Circular 105/88) in a bid to achieve further efficiency savings. However these circulars were just the beginning of the move towards managerial practices and in the 1990s the police service was to face more radical attempts at reform.

Into the 1990s: A Managerial Agenda

At the end of the 1980s controversy continued to surround the police. Questions relating to police accountability and the control of the service increased further. This was due to a number of miscarriages of justice including the cases of the Guildford Four, the Birmingham Six, the Maguires and the Tottenham Three (Morgan and Newburn 1997) and the disbanding of the West Midlands Crime Squad after serious allegations of corruption and dubious practices. Fears over rising crime rates were also not alleviated and satisfaction with the police was declining (Morgan and Newburn 1997). Criticism about police management and inefficiency came from other political quarters. Sir John Wheeler who was part of a Home Affairs Committee considering policing in Europe argued that there needed to be an 'overhaul of complex structures and funding systems' in order to resolve the 'glaring deficiencies, incompetent use of resources and blinding incompetence in police management' (Independent, 26 July 1990).

The Audit Commission was critical of the police in the early 1990s and produced a series of reports questioning their efficiency. In addition, the reports emphasised the need for the police service to develop appropriate ways to measure their activity and encouraged financial delegation to Basic Command Unit (BCU) Level. The Audit Commission also began to produce reports on improving the way in which the police carried out their duties. 'Helping with Inquiries—Tackling Crime Effectively' (Audit Commission 1993) makes recommendations on how to improve the way that the police deal with crime, for example how best to conduct burglary investigations and the establishment of crime desks to deal with calls

from the public. The underlying message of these reports is how this can be achieved more effectively. McLaughlin and Murji (1997) argue that using the Audit Commission was a way of reforming the police without seemingly encroaching on operational independence but in fact 'trampled all over the 'operational independence' of chief officers, thereby exposing its organisational independence, though not, legal status' (McLaughlin and Murji 1997: 92). This increased involvement of the Audit Commission also further enhanced the monitoring and inspection regimes, a key aspect of the managerial reforms. In order to ensure efficiency and effectiveness the Local Government Act 1992 allowed the Audit Commission to define performance targets that Police Authorities must provide information on.

There were attempts internally in the police service to achieve change. These came as early as 1979 from John Alderson, Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall, who argued that there was a need to focus on a service-orientated approach to policing. He was a key advocate in the adoption of community policing styles (Alderson 1979). Following the Scarman report, Sir Kenneth Newman, who became commissioner of the Metropolitan Police in 1992, wanted to develop the idea of a 'notional social contract' which favoured preventative policing methods and multi-agency working in order to restore positive relationships with the community. Moreover, he favoured setting objectives with the cooperation of the rank and file in order to alter some of the negative aspects of police culture. A code of ethics was also promoted (Reiner 2000a). However as Reiner (2000a) emphasises, the continuing social polarisation created by the Thatcher government undermined such strategies. Towards the end of the 1990s the police again were keen to demonstrate that they were willing to change. The 'Operational Policing Review' published in 1990 was a combined effort of the Police Federation, the Police Superintendents' Association and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO). The purpose of the review was to address growing pressure from the government and examine the contemporary issues the police service faced as well as outline what their priorities should be. The clear message in the review is that the police were concerned about the growing analysis of their finances and their objectives. They said that;

‘At the beginning of 1989 pressure on the police service from government was being felt in almost every area of operation. It was considered that too much was being expected from a service that was very much under-resourced in terms of both equipment and manpower and that if current demand trends continued, the whole concept of policing by consent, that has been valued in this country for so long, would be lost to the accountants’ balance sheet. Essentially, it was feared that policing policies would be set by Treasury targets rather than by professional police officers who are sensitive and responsive to the public’s requirement’ (Joint Consultative Committee 1990: p1).

Following this review ACPO set out a ‘quality of service’ statement, ‘Setting Standards for Policing: Meeting Community Expectations’, which acknowledged that there was a discrepancy between what the public and police prioritised in service delivery. The document sought to rectify this and move the police towards a service-orientated approach taking into account the needs of the public in setting key objectives of policing. The document also encouraged the importance of providing quality service to the public (Waters 1995).

Despite attempts by the police to address these issues of accountability and uneasiness of the public they did not alleviate the government’s disquiet. When Kenneth Clarke was appointed Home Secretary in May 1992 it was argued that his entry to the Home Office ‘was the beginning of the end of what had become the most protected public sector profession outside Whitehall’ (Daily Telegraph, Jul 1, 1993). Just a matter of days after being elected Kenneth Clarke announced at the Police Federation annual conference that there would be a wide-ranging inquiry into the role, responsibilities and pay of the police (Guardian, 21 May, 1992). This Inquiry was headed by an international businessman, Sir Patrick Sheehy, who was chairman of BAT Industries. The terms of reference for the inquiry were to consider rank structures and conditions of service, whether flexible systems of rewards for performance existed and to ensure adequate remuneration in order to recruit, retain and motivate officers (Home Office 1993a, p1). The final report presented a number of recommendations; these included reducing the ranks structure (by eliminating some ranks e.g. chief inspectors) to dissolve a top-heavy management structure, establishing fixed term appointments (FTA) for all ranks, the introduction of performance related pay and the abolition of certain allowances.

The police did not view the Sheehy Inquiry favourably. Following its publication criticisms of the recommendations were made from every quarter of the police ranks. At the highest level of these, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Police Superintendents' Association believed that if accepted the proposals would result in adverse consequences for the police service in terms of recruitment, retention and the morale of police officers (Leishman, Cope and Starie 1996: 14). John Burrows, the President of ACPO at the time, argued that the introduction of contracts and performance related pay for officers would turn the police 'into just another job, with people coming in and out, rather than giving dedicated service over many years and would affect the nature of the police force and the job it does' (Daily Telegraph 19 July 1993). At the other end of the scale the Police Federation representing those officers below the rank of superintendent organised a rally at Wembley to show their anger at the proposals and to air their objections to them. Despite this opposition Sir Patrick Sheehy continued to defend the report. He argued that 'these and other measures were essential to bring the police into line with other workers and to allow the management flexibility. The police have failed to adopt reform and would now have to face imposed change'. Initially it appeared that the government would stand by the Sheehy Inquiry and adopt most of the recommendations made by Sir Patrick and his team. However, in October 1993, after months of criticism and a change of Home Secretary, Michael Howard announced that he no longer accepted large sections of Sheehy's report.

In the same period the White Paper for police reform, 'A Police Service for the Twenty-First Century' (Home Office 1993b), was directed at resolving the issues of police governance. Prior to the paper being released there was growing controversy about what it would contain. ACPO, calling a conference following a leak about government plans for a radical re-organisation of policing was concerned about the nationalisation of Police Authorities and central control. ACPO was also uneasy about not being fully consulted on changes that were going to be implemented. President of ACPO, John Burrows, stated at the time 'plans have been drawn up in the corridors of Queen Anne's Gate. We have not been involved' (Guardian 12 January 1993). When the paper eventually came out, the main proposals were that the Government would set key objectives against which

the police would be measured. These objectives would reflect the government's main belief that the police should be responsible for fighting crime. The proposals also suggested reforming Police Authorities. This was primarily because the Home Secretary viewed Local Authorities as ineffective in their current state.

There were also concerns that due to opposition of labour-dominated Authorities during the 1980s they had become highly politicised (Jones and Newburn 1997). The Authorities would be restructured, reduced in size and become freestanding bodies comprising of 50% councillors and 50% amalgam of magistrates and independent local people nominated by the Home Secretary. Reducing the size of the Authorities was primarily because their size and structure were seen as inhibiting them from being effectual. This had been confirmed by research by the PSI (Jones et al 1994). The Home Secretary would also be responsible for appointing the Chairperson of the authority. The aim of the Authorities would be to ensure that the constabulary under their direction met local objectives. The Paper also proposed that chief constables should be allowed 'greater freedom to manage the resources at their disposal'. The White Paper suggested that local BCU Commanders should have responsibility for local policing. It also recommended the strengthening of the HMIC in order to make sure those standards were maintained and that the best quality of services were being provided. The police would also have the duty to consult local communities to ensure that they were setting priorities according to public desires (par 1.8: 2-3). Further contracting out under CCT was also supported. Although no services were specifically mentioned it was suggested that this would be a continual process.

The proposals created concern that allowing the Home Secretary to appoint both the Chairperson and independent members of the Authority meant increasing power to the centre. ACPO believed that the Home Secretary setting national targets was tantamount to central control by the government. They were also concerned about the prospect of performance related pay and fixed term contracts, which they believed would have an impact on 'operational independence' of chief officers (Jones and Newburn 1997: 26). The Superintendents Association was concerned over measuring police forces against each other. The Police Authorities also arranged a conference to discuss the White Paper (Leishman, Cope and Starie: 26). The response from some MPs, particularly Labour, was also negative. Tony

Blair, Shadow Home Secretary at the time, argued that the plans laid out in the paper were highly centralising and a threat to local democracy.

Police and Magistrates' Courts Act 1994

The Police and Magistrates Courts Bill contained many of the proposals outlined in the White Paper. Disagreement continued to surround some of the proposals and pressure from the police associations and from inside parliament led to some amendments being made to the Bill. In due course the Bill passed through Parliament and became the Police and Magistrates' Courts Act (PMCA). The PMCA did recast the roles of those in the tripartite structure. Local Authorities would be made up of 17 members, nine local Councillors, three Magistrate members and five independent members. The Home Secretary would not directly appoint independent members but he would approve the list of candidates put forward; the chairman would still be appointed by the authorities. Three quarters of police expenditure instead of 51% would be provided by central government through a cash limited grant. The Home Secretary would also set national objectives and key performance indicators would measure these. Local Authorities would develop a local policing plan, which would take into account the national objectives. They would also be responsible for ensuring the efficiency of the force, while the chief constable would be responsible for the operational matters of the force and how the budget would be spent. The Act allowed the Home Secretary to amalgamate forces further if it was deemed necessary and this could be done without local consultation. The Act also allowed the Home Secretary to direct the Authority to spend above any total set in order to achieve additional directives.

Posen Inquiry

Another major inquiry to impact upon the police was the Posen Inquiry. This Inquiry was set up to 'examine the services provided by the police, to make recommendations about the most cost-effective way of delivering core police services and to assess the scope for relinquishing ancillary tasks' (Home Office 1995b: 1). The main intention behind this review was to identify ways of contracting out policing tasks and privatisation. As with the White Paper it

reasserted the view that the police had one core task and that was the task of catching criminals. However despite fears that this paper would lead to the full-scale privatisation of some police functions and further fragment the police service, the results proved to be uncontentious with only minor activities such as escorting wide-loads being put forward for consideration.

Conclusions

New Public Management (NPM) embodied a package of reforms that were aimed at transforming public services to make them more efficient and effective and in order to ensure that services met the needs of customers. This included restructuring through the use of competition, performance management systems, the use of audit and inspection and encouraging market mechanisms. Despite reservations about whether managerial techniques could improve the public sector, the Conservative government continued to implement these reforms in all public services including the police.

It initially appeared that the police would be immune from these reforms but over the next 15 years the police were subject to creeping managerialism. This growing emphasis on managerial solutions was not only due to the dominance of New Right ideological thinking favouring marketisation, but also as a response to police accountability and legitimacy which was severely questioned throughout the 1980s. Although there were some attempts by the police to improve the service, for example, through the adoption of quality initiatives, this was not good enough for the government and in the early 1990s the police were subject to a number of proposed reforms incorporating the key themes of NPM. Attempts to produce change were not clear-cut primarily because of resistance by the police and Local Authorities. However the passing of the PMCA meant that from then on managerialism would play a role in the police service. The next chapter aims to consider the effects of NPM on the police and how managerial agendas were extended further under New Labour when they came to power in 1997.

Chapter Two

From Managerialism to Modernisation: Introducing Best Value

Managerial practices were introduced into the police service in a bid to resolve issues of effectiveness and efficiency that became apparent during the 1980s and early 1990s. Rather than produce a more answerable police service these management solutions actually created a different set of issues. It was also argued that they had not been fully accepted within the police service due to resistance and this resulted in a diluted reform programme. In 1997 New Labour came into power promising to move beyond managerialism and follow a programme of Modernisation to improve public services, including the police. This would include the introduction of the Best Value regime into the police service to improve both the cost and quality of service provision.

The aim of this chapter is initially to examine the key themes of NPM and how these affected the police service. This will include considering some of the difficulties of applying rational management techniques within the police and some of the barriers to their success such as the occupational culture of the police. Following this New Labour's Modernisation agenda will be outlined. This will include a summary of the Best Value regime, identifying the key themes in this policy and how it is expected to improve a police service provided to the public. The possible implications of the policy will also be explored.

The Effects of Managerialism

As noted above the 1980s and 1990s were a period of increasing scrutiny for the police and they were subjected to a major reform programme. The resulting managerial agenda became associated with a number of key themes evident in the changes implemented into the police service. These included the introduction of the performance culture, a focus on consumerism, cost-effectiveness, simultaneous decentralisation and centralisation and increased auditing and monitoring of the police service. The aim of this next section is to examine these themes and how they affected the police.

The Performance Culture

A key part of the NPM was to establish performance frameworks within the public sector in order to measure efficiency, effectiveness and economy. As previously identified the Home Office circular 114/83 suggested that each force area should set measurable objectives. The emphasis on performance continued with both the HMIC and the Audit Commission collecting data from the police in order to measure their achievements. Under the PMCA the Home Secretary set objectives that the police would have to adhere to and provide information on. These measures were primarily aimed at assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of the police service and some of the key indicators required by different establishments are outlined in Figure 1 on page 34. While the indicators do include measures of public satisfaction with service and other aspects of policing, crime indicators have dominated in assessments of police success (Neyroud and Beckley 2001). The core measure of police performance throughout the 1980s and 1990s was the use of police generated crime statistics. Although the police service is generally aware of the limitations of these statistics and the reliability of such measures as the 'clear up' rate, the government, the public and the media tend to rely on these figures as indicators of police efficiency (Loveday 1999, 2000a). Reliance on these figures raises two issues. First, police control over both the collection and presentation of these statistics is always likely to undermine the validity of these figures both within the police service and outside. Second, the measures employed are not reliable or sophisticated enough to measure something as complex as effectiveness (for a more detailed critique of performance indicators used in policing see Chapter Three).

Crime detection, seen as a key way of assessing police effectiveness, has also been subject to manipulation (Young 1991). One of the most notable practices used to clear up crimes during the 1980s and early 1990s was to encourage already convicted prisoners to admit to other offences (see Young 1991). Although Police forces can no longer add crimes cleared up in this way to detection rates, it demonstrates the willingness of police officers to find easy options when they knew that their performance was being measured. Other practices have included targeting specific crimes in order to produce positive results. For example, one of

the Key Objectives set by the Home Secretary in 1996/97 was to increase the detection of violent crime. In order to secure more detections rank and file officers tended to concentrate on offences such as domestic violence. While prioritising this type of offence might appear to have been a positive step, the way in which these crimes were 'detected' was not. In many of these domestic violence cases officers recorded the crime and detected it using a downgraded method of detection (Hallam 2000). Grading domestic violence as 'detected–no proceedings' meant that an offender had admitted the offence but no further action was taken against them. An officer did not need to spend too much time on the case and could add the result to the weekly target. The ease of detecting domestic violence cases in this way has assisted in increasing the detection level of this offence. The problem is that there is often little resolution for the victim of the offence. A recent thematic report by the HMIC 'Police Integrity' stated that;

‘The increasingly aggressive and demonstrable performance culture has emerged as a major factor affecting integrity, not least because for some years there has been an apparent tendency for some forces to ‘trawl the margins’ for detections and generally to use every means to portray their performance in a good light’ (HMIC 1999: 19).

On one hand, the Audit Commission has promoted the need for the police to improve performance and productivity with the resources provided and have put performance indicators in place for the police since 1992 (Local Government Act 1992). In contrast, they have also emphasised a need for caution when interpreting police statistics. For example, the Audit Commission report ‘Helping with Inquiries: Tackling Crime Effectively’ (1993: 10) highlights a number of deficiencies in crime and detection rates as performance measures. They state that ‘the volume of crime is not directly a measure of police performance’ and that in terms of detection a charge counts even though a person may not be later convicted in court.

A related issue concerns the lack of discretion that the performance culture allows to both the rank and file officers and chief constables. Having to meet specific targets means that at times behaviour which is deemed to be a minor infraction of the law, rather than being ignored or resulting in an unrecorded warning, is

reported in a conscious attempt to inflate the figures. Hallam (1999: 92) argues that ‘discretion was rarely exercised with a consequence that the results produced in the name of performance have not always been in the interests of justice or reflected a credible service to the public’. It could be argued in line with the zero-tolerance approach in policing that even minor infractions of the law should not be ignored (Johnston 2000, Young 1999).

Figure 1

Performance Indicators Used to Assess Police Performance*

Establishment	Crime Related PIs	Other PIs
Audit Commission	Crime recorded per 1,000 population Burglaries recorded per 1,000 population Violent Crimes recorded per 1,000 population Crimes detected (for same categories as above) Repeat victimisation of burglary Public satisfaction with response to 999 calls, burglary and violent crime	999 Calls answered in target time, number of calls. Road traffic accidents involving death or injury Availability of Police Officers Complaints Cost per head of population
Home Office 1994**	Maintain and if possible increase the detections of violent crime Increase detection of house burglaries Respond quickly to emergency calls from public Target and prevent crimes which are a particular local problem including drug crime in partnership with the public and local agencies.	Provide high visibility policing to the public Respond promptly to emergency calls from the public.
HMIC	Similar to above	Stop and search measures Ethnic minority and gender mix in police service Racial incidents Sickness absence

* Data adapted from Neyroud and Berkley 1998: 108-10.

** These indicators have been changed from year to year but generally crime related incidents have featured predominantly on the Home Office agenda. The key indicators have also changed to reflect priorities, for example the ‘increasing of the number of recorded racial incidents’ following the Macpherson Report 1999.

However, in order to retain a reasonable level of community support some level of discretion on the part of officers is necessary (Pollard 1997). Pollard argues that removing police discretion through the adoption of zero-tolerance policies results in a largely counterproductive form of 'short-termism' by placing an 'undue emphasis on the numbers game' and this 'poses an enormous threat to the future'.

Decentralisation and Centralisation

Key to the discussions on management issues has been the argument that they have led to greater central control over the police service. The PMCA signified the devolution of power to local Police Authorities and the provision of greater power to chief constables to manage their police force. Despite this attempt to decentralise power it was argued that 'under the banner of devolved powers and managerial freedom, the police will in future be subject to significant centralisation' (Loveday 1995: 155). Loveday (1995) argues the primary purpose of the introduction of key national objectives was so that the government could direct the police to those activities that they feel are important, namely detecting crime. Loveday (1996) reports that the response of chief officers to the PMCA was mixed. They felt that having to provide the Home Secretary and Police Authorities with costed plans restricted them financially, subtracting from the provision of the Act allowing the devolution of budgets. Chief constables had power to make operational decisions, however they must take into consideration the strategy determined locally by Police Authorities and this was to be consistent with the objectives decided nationally by the Home Secretary. Reiner (2000a) argues that a House of Lords judgement illustrates this point (*Regina v. Chief Constable of Sussex Ex Parte International Traders Ferry Limited*). The case involves a company called International Traders Limited who from the beginning of 1995 transported livestock to the continent from Shoreham in Sussex. Due to the possible outbreaks of disorder from demonstrators International Traders Limited kept the police informed about shipments from Shoreham. In order to reduce disorder it was decided that a police presence would be necessary. However it was decided by the chief constable that in the long run the police could only provide a minimal amount of support at specific times due to other priorities. International Traders Limited applied to quash the decision of the chief constable to restrict

policing to particular times. While the case was not upheld it was important in two respects: first, the ruling by the House of Lords took into account the chief constable's independent role in deciding what should be a priority for his areas suggesting that under the PMCA real decentralisation had occurred. On the other hand, the judgements reasserted the need for the chief constable to take into account the national objectives and priorities of the Home Secretary. As Reiner states this judgement leaves the concept of 'police operational independence' as an 'empty shell' and as other commentators have suggested while chief constables were allowed to 'row', the direction they are moving in is very much 'steered' by the Home Secretary (Reiner 2000: 197).

Other commentators have suggested that the centralising impact of the PMCA has been overestimated. Newburn and Jones (1996: 125) suggested that 'the nexus of control is a complicated one and how it works in practice will, like the previous arrangements, be heavily dependent on how the relevant parties choose to use their power. It was believed that the PMCA would dilute the powers of the Local Authorities and there was also some debate about who the independent members would be. However Jones and Newburn (1997) indicate that in reality the appointment of independent members was uncontroversial and created few problems within the new Police Authorities. They argued that in fact the new style authorities were considered as more effective and assertive than their previous counterparts. They also found that the national objectives were acceptable to, and not at odds with, what chief constables and Police Authorities would include in local plans. Research by Savage, Charman and Cope (1996) with members of ACPO confirmed that the new Police Authorities were viewed as more challenging and interventionist than before the Act. The new Police Authorities also began to work together collectively to enhance their position within the governance structure. In 1997 the Association of Police Authorities was established to promote the interests of Police Authorities nationally. Jones and Newburn (1997) did argue that it remained unclear if the PMCA had completely enhanced the position of Police Authorities. They stress that Local Authorities were still reluctant to use fully the powers that they hold over chief constables and that in making key decisions and developing the Local Policing Plans the chief constables still retained the upper hand.

Competition and privatisation

There are three ways that competition has affected the police service over the past few years: load-shedding where services are ceded to commercial or voluntary providers, contracting out to an alternative service provider, and the public police charging for services (Johnston 1992). The rise in private and voluntary security provisions are well noted in the past decade, linked largely to the rise in consumerism and the increased perception of risk associated with modern society (Johnston 2000) and has led to the increased use of private security firms to secure places such as shopping complexes. Both Johnson (2000) and Jones and Newburn (1998) outline the growth in commercial security in Britain in recent years. However, as Johnson emphasises, in Europe, unlike in North America, the private security industry remains secondary to the public police. Areas of work that are undertaken by the commercial security industry include the provision of physical/mechanical security such as safes, shutters, cash bags, electronic security including CCTV and staffed services, for example, security guarding. In addition, to a rise in the use of the commercial security sector, forms of voluntary and civil policing have grown and been encouraged by the government. This can be seen in the spread of schemes such as Neighbourhood Watch where local communities take responsibility for their own surroundings and organisations such as the Special Constabulary whose numbers are on the increase.

Contracting out has also affected the police, as along with other public services they were subjected to CCT and certain functions, not directly related to policing, such as catering and cleaning, were contracted out. The Posen Inquiry initially caused widespread concern for the police service; however, the recommendations proposed only minor services, such as parking enforcement, for privatisation. In reality the privatisation of the police service has not occurred to any great extent although the increased need for security could lead to the further expansion of alternative providers offering policing services to the public.

Consumerism and the rise of quality

As noted in Chapter One, the Scarman report stressed the need to consult local communities about how policing should be conducted in their area. This signalled the beginning of the consultation process with the public in order to gauge their opinion about policing issues. This need to consult local communities in order to form the Local Policing Plan was a key part of the PMCA. The expansion in consultation can also be linked with the rise in consumerism and the requirement to view the public as users of services whose needs should be met in order to make the service effective (Loader 1999, Squires 1998). The primary method of consultation used by Police Authorities was the Police Consultative Community Groups or PCCGs. The intention of these forums was for the police to provide information on the work they were doing in the locality and to obtain feedback from the public on this and their views on what the police should be doing in their area. Although these forums were seen as a positive step towards engaging with the community the reality was quite different. As Loveday (2000b) emphasises, during the 1980s the Conservative government used these groups to undermine the Authority of locally elected members. In addition research done on these groups has demonstrated that they have failed to engage the community and that members of these groups have tended to be white, male and middle-class (Loveday 2000b). Also the groups have been taken over by local political agendas with members of multi-agency or organised groups dominating their composition (Squires 1998).

The police themselves have encouraged consultation with the public. Sir John Woodcock emphasised in the early 1990s that the police needed to create 'a culture which insists that all officers, not just some, not just the majority, but all, measure up to the requirements of the customer' (Woodcock 1991:182). The Operational Policing Review (Joint Consultative Committee 1990) included a public survey to gauge the public views on policing. This identified a disparity between public and police expectations, encouraging the development of the Quality of Service Programme by ACPO. This programme aimed to encourage those in the police service to be more responsive to public needs and to strive to offer the best service

possible, delivered with integrity (Waters 2000). These types of quality programmes became widespread in the police service during the 1990s. This has included the adoption of quality models previously applied in the private sector in order to improve businesses. The key model adopted has been the European Foundation and Quality Management (EFQM), a tool used by the organisation to assess its own performance and then to consider how it can achieve improvement (see Bland 1997). In spite of many police forces adopting these quality programmes there has still been some cultural resistance and cynicism towards these programmes—as the HMIC emphasised ‘they can strike terror in the hearts of practical coppers’ (HMIC 1998: 152). In addition Waters (2000) noted that many of the quality programmes became more performance orientated and focused on setting and developing objectives.

Cost-effectiveness

A primary goal of the managerial agenda was to ensure the police provide value for money and know what they were spending and how. As Raine and Wilson (1997) emphasise the cash limited grant implemented under the PMCA provided the Treasury with much tighter control over finances than previously. Although the chief constable had the ability to set the budget once it was allocated, it was the Home Secretary who decided on what resources would be provided. In spite of the emphasis on linking resources to outputs and the requirement to develop costed policing plans there has been a failure in the police service to fully develop techniques where the police relate funds to the work they do. As Jones and Newburn (1997:207) acknowledged:

‘One of the intentions behind the introduction of policing plans was to provide the basis for a finely-graded costing of policing services. All the evidence so far suggests that there has been considerable resistance, and successful resistance to such a move. There is no obvious enthusiasm from either the police or from the Police Authorities for producing plans in which the objectives are ‘output costed’. As a consequence, little has been done, to either develop the technology or other means for achieving such an end’.

This viewpoint was reflected in the HMIC report ‘What Price Policing’ (1998) which argued that many forces had still failed to adopt systems where they could

adequately cost services and were unable to demonstrate that they were providing value for money. In some ways this could be because of the difficulties in the ability of the police service to be able to do this. It may be difficult to break down and identify all of the resources that go into investigating a crime and, if the crime remains unsolved, does that mean the resources that go into that operation have been wasted? One example provided by Wright (2000) concerned a single operation where a gang was intending to target an automatic telling machine, using a mechanical excavator. The police were notified about the incident by an informant and set up an operation to capture the suspects while the crime was being committed. However, on the day, the gang failed to appear, as one of the gang members was rushed to hospital. The result was a large number of resources involved in setting up the investigation but no output at the end. In purist terms this would not be seen as cost-effective as no arrests were made. In some ways the police have begun to streamline operations in attempts to save money. For example certain lower level crimes such as shoplifting or theft from a motor vehicle are unlikely to be attended by an officer if there is little possibility of catching the perpetrator. This could also mean little resolution for the victim and make them feel that reporting future incidents to the police is pointless.

Audit and Inspection

The monitoring and inspection of the police service has grown in recent years primarily as a result of NPM. However, the influence of these monitoring bodies is unclear. Reiner (1991) found in his study of chief constables that the HMIC were viewed more as an advisory body. The HMIC, originally set up in order to provide an independent assessment of the police service, has been used more and more by the Home Office to transmit their views forward (Savage et al. 2000). For example, if there is considered to be a problem within the police service it is usually followed or preceded by an HMIC thematic inspection and report. Recent publications including 'Winning the Race Revisited' (1999b) examined how the police service was interacting with ethnic minority communities and can be related to the publication of the Stephen Lawrence Report (Macpherson 1999). Also 'On

the Record’, an investigation into crime recording practices paved the way for the introduction of a National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS)¹.

Organisational Culture as a Barrier to Reform

NPM reforms were aimed not only at restructuring the way that public services operated but also at changing the organisational culture. As mentioned in Chapter One, at the beginning of the 1980s many public bodies were seen as self-serving and bureaucratic. It was emphasised that to make the public sector more amenable to managerialism there would also have to be a shift in the organisational values. This type of approach was encouraged and promoted by management gurus such as Peters and Waterman who believed that senior management could shape and adapt the culture of the staff and organisation (Pollitt 1993). However as Pollitt (1993) argues, the assumption that these cultures are open to change or that senior management can adapt them is a limited view and suggests that the links between action and culture are not linear.

The policing policy network (see Savage et al. 2000) incorporates a number of actors, including the police service and the related associations, such as the Association of Police Authorities (APA) and Police Federation. It also includes the HMIC, Audit Commission, Local Police Authorities and the Home Office. It can also be affected by outside groups such as the media and the public. These ‘actors’ are all included in the routine of police policy-making. Savage et al. (2000) indicate that each of these groups has a differing influence over policing policy and this can change over time. They also emphasise that while the dominant party in policing policy is seen to be the Home Secretary, and this is supported by the centralising thesis, they argue that the Home Office is constrained by what it can do within the policing policy network by other actors (Savage et al 2000: 30).

This view is supported by the actions of the police service during the attempts by the government to implement NPM into the police. Widespread resistance from

¹ The National Crime Recording Standard was introduced by the Home Office to ensure that all police forces are recording crime in a standardised manner.

the police made the government retract from some attempts to implement managerialism within the police service. This was demonstrated through the collective resistance demonstrated by the police service to the Sheehy Report (1993) (Leishman, Cope and Starie 1995) and attempts by the police to reform themselves through the Operational Policing Review rather than have reform imposed by the government. Leishman et al (1995) refer to the policing policy network and argue that:

‘The failure of the government to get its reforms through Parliament can be largely explained by using the policy networks approach. The policing policy network has successfully resisted much of the reform package. This network is highly integrated as witnessed by the ease with which many of its constituent parts were welded together to block the reforms. The reforms represented an attempt by the government to restructure an obdurate policy network and the consequent weakness of government meant that the police reforms were always likely to be blocked. The government could only ever exercise infrastructural power because of its dependence on other actors’ (Leishman et al.: 35).

Organisational culture has been described by Schein (1985: 6) as the ‘deeper level of basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organisation, that operate unconsciously and define in a basic taken-for-granted fashion an organisation’s view of itself and its environment’. This definition also assumes that each organisation embodies a specific set of notions and commonly held views. While this may be true in one sense and certain traits and characteristics have been linked with the police occupational culture such as a sense of mission, solidarity, conservatism and machismo (see Reiner 2000). Police culture cannot be seen as monolithic nor can it be identified as unchanging (Reiner 2000a: 106).

Although research has often focused on the culture of rank and file officers and this is assumed to be the dominant culture, there are variations within police culture (Foster 2003). This has been confirmed by research (for example, Fielding 1994). Fieldings’ research on community police officers in London found that although they had shared views about the organisation in terms of its role and environment and other officers often viewed them ambivalently and as not doing ‘real police work’, community constables actually began to feel comfortable and appreciative of their roles. Other research by Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (1983)

identified two different types of cops in their research: 'street cops' and 'management cops' each with differing views on the goals of the organisation.

It is these variations in police culture that may make it difficult for managerial reforms to be fully implemented throughout the police service. It is argued that each sub-culture within the police service can cling to its own set of values and this could influence whether change is accomplished. The best illustrative example of this is Chan's (1996, 1997) research on the New South Wales Police (NSWP). Chan developed a different conception of policing culture by applying the concepts of 'field' and 'habitus' to policing culture and acknowledging that the police have different levels of 'cultural knowledge', for example, 'axiomatic knowledge' which indicates 'why things are done in the way that they are' and 'dictionary knowledge' which defines labels and events in an organisation' (see Chapter Six). She indicated that although culture can be influenced by changes within cultural knowledge, for example through the espousal of certain views, this does not necessarily lead to adaptations in behaviour. Cultural change is more likely if there are changes to both cultural knowledge and the environment that the actors involved are operating in, although this change can be unpredictable and uneven. Savage et al (2000) provided an example of this. Although ACPO work as a collective group in some ways to harmonise and standardise policing policies, they also preserve the notion of 'Constabulary Independence'. In one way chief constables are encouraged to adopt the directives and follow a common policy but on the other hand chief constables are encouraged to hold onto their autonomy.

The introduction of managerial reforms in the 1980s and 1990s was aimed not just at restructuring the way that the public sector operated but also changing existing organisational cultures. Ultimately the NPM package was aimed at delivering better services that were more transparent and economic. Whether this was achieved is debatable. As noted above, the introduction of the performance culture has led to police officers undertaking unethical practices in order to meet targets that have been put in place to measure whether the police are being effective. There is also the issue of the enhancing of local autonomy and the real devolution of power to individual police forces. Critics have argued (Loveday 1995, Reiner 2000) that the reforms have actually empowered central government further at the

cost of the needs of local communities also promoted within the reforms. The prominence placed on meeting the needs of communities has been encouraged through moves towards consultation with the public and has led to the adoption of quality programmes within the police service. But as outlined previously, these have shifted to more performance orientated models and those included in community liaison are not necessarily representative of the community. Although it may appear that NPM reforms have been internalised in the police service there has been some resistance, for example the failure to adopt effective systems of monitoring costs and the retention of the notion of 'Constabulary Independence' by chief officers.

Raine and Wilson (1997) argued that by the mid-1990s managerialism had in actual fact run its course and in terms of organisational models a new post-managerial model was emerging. This model was based on collaborative partnerships (Quinn 1988 cited in Raine and Wilson 1997: 88), which favour small teams where co-ordination is achieved through informal networking and consultation. In addition there are shared goals and principles that assist in organising work. Raine and Wilson (1997) argue that this model has become more prominent due to emergence of the 'new morality' which favours the 'democratisation of public institutions' and 'communitarian values' favouring the local. They argue that the effect of this 'new morality' would lead to the re-definition of the role and function of the criminal justice system to one that was more regulatory and long-termist rather than dominated by the service or consumerist, greater attention being paid to crime prevention, and that there would be a greater emphasis on the Criminal Justice System working as a whole. Some of these themes were evident in the New Labour policy agenda.

New Labour, Modernisation and the Third Way

In the 1997 General Election, 'New Labour' won with a landslide victory gaining 418 seats, the highest number of seats ever gained by a Labour administration. After 18 years of Conservative rule, the electorate decided it was time for a change. Many attributed the success of the party to the skilful leadership of Tony Blair, and have argued that his restructuring and remodelling of the party enabled

them to regain popular support. Shortly following his election as Prime Minister Tony Blair declared 'Our task today is not to fight old battles but to show that there is a third way, a way of marrying together an open, competitive and successful economy with a just, decent and humane society'. According to Blair the Left must 'modernise or die'. There is no doubt that the character of the Labour Party had changed ever since the election of the Conservatives in 1979. The transformation from 'old' to 'new' Labour occurred for a variety of reasons and over certain stages and was finally consolidated by the election of Tony Blair (Heffernan 1998).

Heffernan (1998) argues that the modernisation of the Labour Party was the result of both exogenous and endogenous factors. These included the division and conflict within the party between 1979 and 1983 amongst the 'far left' and those in the centre left (see Shaw 1994, Smith and Speer 1992,) and the failure of the Labour Party to provide any significant alternative to the Thatcher government. The breakdown of Keynesian social democratic consensus during the 1960s and 1970s (Driver and Martell 1998, Giddens 1998), the failings and downfall of other European social democratic parties and the rise and increased popularity of the 'New Right' policies also contributed

Smith (1992) provides two reasons for the shift in Labour's policies: the need to adapt to a changing world economy, which made it increasingly difficult for national governments to control their own economies and secondly the rapid expansion of financial and banking markets. Smith stressed 'Labour's adoption of more market-orientated policies and the rejection of the national economic policy of the left is not a result of Thatcherism. It is rather a reflection that the world economy has changed'. Jacques and Hall (1990) introducing a collection of essays previously published in 'Marxism Today' argued that due to changes in advanced capitalist society and economic changes the left had to find a new politics, a politics 'beyond Thatcher'. Giddens (1998: 3) maintains that social democrats were searching for a new way, but have struggled to achieve any consensus about which direction they should be heading. He argues that to survive in contemporary society, social democrats must move beyond the 'old' left and the 'right' and adapt to a 'third way'.

It is the 'Third Way' that is said to be influential in the politics of Tony Blair and is seen as the final peg in the modernisation of the Labour Party (Shaw 1994). The core values of the left and the new commitment to markets and adapting to a changing world have underlined Blair's adoption of a 'Third Way'. This adoption of a 'Third Way' was in particular to address some of the economic deficiencies of the old left and address social issues ignored by the new right. Benington (2000) emphasises that the adoption of this 'Third Way' has been influential in the New Labour approach to public services and states that, under the term 'Modernisation', there has been a far-reaching programme of change and innovation in the organisational forms and cultures of the state, and in particular in its relationships with citizens, users and civil society' (Benington 2000: 3).

New Labour, New Managerialism

The term 'Modernisation', as well as dominating Labour's reform party politics, has dominated their dialogue towards public services (Newman 2000). After being elected, the Labour government claimed that it was time to provide 'Modern, efficient and high quality public services' which they argued lie at 'the heart of a productive and fair society'. Newman applied discourse analysis to initial Labour government policy documents, argues that, 'Modernisation is presented as a necessary process of updating services to match the expectations of modern consumers and to meet the business requirements of the modern world.' (Newman 2000: 46). She emphasises that, viewed at this level, Modernisation is seen as a process of continuation of previous management reforms implemented under the Conservative governments (2000: 46).

Newman indicates that while there are some consistencies with the previous managerial reforms, the discourse of modernisation attempts to distance itself in some way from the previous policies. Benington (2000:3) comments that the whole modernisation programme is consistent with an attempt to find a third way and a move away from the centralised state and the private competitive market. While the overall discourse of Labour's programme may be different and emphasise alternative connotations such as 'partnerships' and 'Best Value', other

commentators (Andrews 1999, Pollitt 1999) have argued that the modernisation agenda does not deviate far from NPM reforms. In a submission to the Select Committee on Public Administration, Pollitt (1999) argued that;

‘The continuities with the general line of management reform under the previous administration are more striking than the discontinuities. From a distance, Modernising Government does not look like a new paradigm. The managerialist apparatus of benchmarking, targets, standard setting, executive agencies, performance-related pay (and so on) is if anything further strengthened’

The aim here of the following section is to examine the Labour government’s approach to public service since they came to power in 1997.

Cost-effectiveness

The Labour Party is identified as always maintaining a close relationship with public services (Benington 2000). However, this relationship has altered under New Labour. One of the major adjustments has been Labour’s approach to public spending (Deakin and Parry 1998, Powell 1999). Whilst ‘old’ Labour tended to support a level of high social expenditure, this was rejected by New Labour (Powell 1999: 21), and an approach more consistent with the previous Conservative administration has been adopted. In the 1997 election manifesto New Labour maintained:

‘New Labour will be wise spenders, not big spenders. We will work in partnership with the private sector to achieve our goals. We will ask about public spending the first question that a manager in any company would ask: can existing resources be used more effectively, to meet our priorities? And because efficiency and value for money are central, ministers will be required to save before they spend. Save to invest is our approach, not tax and spend’ (Labour Party 1997: 12).

The intention when Labour were first elected was to retain the spending plans of the previous administration for the first two years of office and honour their pledge in the election manifesto that they would not raise the basic or top rates of income tax. New Labour had accepted the view that increases in spending did not necessarily improve the quality or outputs of services (Powell 1999). The tide of

opinion had changed to one of not 'how much is spent but what it was spent on' (Powell 1999: 22).

Partnerships

One of the main themes of New Labour's approach in public services has been their emphasis on partnerships. The idea of partnerships has pervaded a number of key policy documents and has been witnessed in a number of policies introduced into education, the Health Service, criminal justice and social services. A significant feature of the Labour government's Modernisation programme has been a concern to achieve more joined-up government and policy-making, 'in general too little effort has gone into making sure that policies are devised and delivered in a consistent and effective way across institutional boundaries for example between different government departments' (Cabinet Office 1999, Chapter 2: para 5). The idea is that management should focus on 'integrating the delivery of related services by pooling budgets and other resources and by working in partnership across organizational boundaries' (Newman 2000: 52).

Performance Management

As the Conservatives did before them, New Labour have embraced performance management as a tool to hold public services accountable. The performance framework introduced by New Labour embraces regulation and control combined with a strict policy on non-compliance where units such as schools or hospitals can be taken over by an alternative provider if they are deemed to be failing to achieve the targets set for them. The Labour government have taken a more multifaceted approach to setting performance indicators. They have argued that the performance measures of their predecessors did not take enough account of the quality of services and that measures introduced by the Conservatives were excessively focused on efficiency (Cutler and Waine 2000: 322).

Citizenship

One of the main aims behind the NPM reforms was to increase choice for service users as well as providing services that met with users' expectations. Under the 'Modernisation' programme the discourse has changed from one of consumerism to one of participation. Newman (2000: 56) points out that the adoption of the principle of participation has led to the increased use of technologies of participation driven by marketing and consumer research in public services. Instead of the term consumerism, which represented accountability to users, the language of citizenship and communities is used and particular mechanisms introduced (for example the Citizen's Panel) to include members of the public in local decision-making about services. This supposed increased level of participation is combined with added individual responsibility where users of the services are the essence of partnerships and are seen to have a role in both maintaining and improving services.

The Introduction of 'Best Value'

Part of the 'Modernising Government' agenda included modernising local government. As with other areas of the public sector, New Labour were determined to ensure that Local Authorities provided high quality services that ensured value for money was provided. New Labour believed that CCT had failed to provide these requirements.

'Under CCT service quality has often been neglected and efficiency gains have been uneven and uncertain, and it has proved inflexible in practice. There have been significant costs for employees, often leading to high staff turn over and the demoralisation of those expected to provide quality services. Compulsion has bred antagonism, so that neither Local Authorities nor private sectors have been able to realise the benefits that flow from a healthy partnership. All too often the competition has become an end in itself, distracting attention from the services that are actually provided to local people. In short, CCT has provided a poor deal for employees, employers and local people. CCT will therefore be abolished' (DETR 1998b: par. 1.5).

As in other policy areas, New Labour seemed determined to distance themselves from the previous Conservative reforms as well as the course of action pursued by old Labour. Tony Blair himself emphasised that, 'there can be no monopoly of service delivery by councils: the 70s will not be revisited. Delivering quality services means that councils must forge partnerships with communities, agencies and the private sector. The Best Value programme will replace the crude dogma of competitive compulsory tendering'.

Best Value was originally set out in a draft circular to local government by DETR (1997) but more fully explained and set out in a later White Paper in 1998, 'Modernising Local Government: In Touch with the People'. It was finally set in statute by the Local Government Act 1999.

Best Value incorporates a much wider remit than its predecessor CCT and is advanced as the 'rigorous system for delivering high quality, responsive services based on locally determined objectives' (Cabinet Office 1999: 41). Performance measurement and a system of inspection underpin Best Value where the primary goal is to achieve continuous improvements in service delivery (Cabinet Office 1999). Best Value also expands beyond CCT, covering all services provided by local government rather than from selected criteria. The next aim here is to outline some of the more intricate details of Best Value policy.

Duty of Best Value

The primary duty of Local Authorities under Best Value is to 'make arrangements to secure continuous improvements in the way in which functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness (HMSO 1999: clause 3.1). To enable Local Authorities to fulfil their duties of Best Value they also have a duty to consult local communities, not just individual members of the public but other groups who may have an interest in the area: these could include private businesses and voluntary groups.

Performance Framework

The White Paper specified that authorities 'need to establish priorities and set them out clearly'. It further emphasised that authorities 'need to know what local people think of performance' and 'need to know where improvements are most needed' (DETR 1998, para. 7.9). To ensure that Local Authorities are meeting these requirements the government set up a system of performance indicators, standards and targets. The intention of the performance indicators is to consider if authorities are improving service delivery in terms of both quality and value for money. The performance indicators are set by the government in conjunction with the Audit Commission and local government (DETR, 1998, para. 7.10). The indicators are intended to focus on what has been delivered (outcomes) (DETR 1998, para. 7.11) rather than inputs. Performance standards and performance targets will work alongside performance indicators. Performance standards are nationally set, performance targets are set locally and are intended to bring about sustainable improvements in strategic objectives, efficiency, effectiveness, quality and fair access (DETR 1998: para. 7.14). The targets will be underlined by a minimum requirement for improvement and each authority's targets will be set with the top 25 % of performing Local Authorities in mind.

Performance Reviews and the Four Cs

In order to meet the requirements set out, Local Authorities need to review all services they provide over a five-year period. These are known as service reviews and have to be conducted with a certain framework in mind. This framework is known as the four Cs: challenge, compare, consult and competition. Apart from taking into account the four Cs, there is no prescribed way of how each Authority should conduct service reviews.

Challenge

This implies that Authorities should question whether a particular service is required and if it meets users' expectations. It also suggests that Authorities should look closely at who is the best situated to provide a particular service.

Compare

Under this category, Authorities are expected to compare their performance with other Authorities' by using the set of national performance indicators. Authorities are expected to compare not just with other authorities but are also expected to compare with other groups such as private businesses who provide similar services. 'Comparisons should go beyond Local Authorities to embrace the experience of other public and voluntary bodies and the private sector' (DETR 1998: para. 7.20).

Consult

The primary goal here is to consult both users of services and communities about what they think would make service better and what their priorities are. There is no set way in which Local Authorities should consult.

Competition

Competition is advanced as necessary to contribute to the wider goal of 'a competitive market with a flexible labour market' (DETR 1998: para. 7.22). It is also argued in the White Paper that competition will not mean the continuation of CCT but will be re-shaped in the form of partnerships. The emphasis of competition is that Local Authorities, private and voluntary sectors will work together in order to provide the best quality and efficient services. Fair competition in a climate where employees' rights are respected, and where Local Authorities and the private and voluntary sectors are working in partnership to

deliver what local people want, should encourage new providers and therefore new options for delivering efficient quality service' (DETR 1998b: para. 4.17).

It is intended that as a result of the service review, Local Authorities will develop local performance plans to demonstrate their projected aims and targets for improvement in service for the following year. These local plans are expected to be used as a measure of accountability to ensure that Local Authorities are meeting the targets set. These plans are also to be used as a means of consulting with the public about strategies for the coming year (DETR 1998b 4.21-4.28).

Audit and Inspection

To ensure that Best Value is being implemented and that authorities are meeting the requirements it sets out, a system of external audit and inspection has been introduced. This will include an audit of performance plans and inspections by the Audit Commission. Best Value authorities will also be assessed on the targets they have set and whether these are challenging enough.

Intervention

If Best Value services are perceived to be failing to meet the requirements set out by the Best Value regime, the Secretary of State has the power to intervene in that service. Intervention can occur at different levels where the Secretary of State can direct a Best Value Authority to 'prepare or amend a performance plan' or other similar sanctions (HMSO 1999: clause 15-2). If an Authority is still perceived to be failing after these initial sanctions have been imposed, the Secretary of State can direct 'that a specified function of the Authority shall be exercised by the Secretary of State or a person nominated by him' (clause 6).

As with New Labour's other reforms in the public sector an attempt has been made to unearth both continuities and discontinuities with the Best Value policies (Martin 1999, Boyne 1999). From the above outline a number of continuities with previous NPM reforms can be identified: the continued emphasis on performance indicators, the need to provide services that are efficient, effective and economic.

the need to meet customers' requirements and a system of regular audit and inspection. The reforms introduced under Best Value are consistent with the other reforms introduced by New Labour into services such as the NHS and in addition to the previous public sector reforms.

Martin (2000: 217) suggests that Best Value 'is neither wholly new nor simply more of the same', instead it combines elements of both 'continuity and change'. He identifies a number of contrasts between Best Value and the previous CCT framework e.g. as previously indicated, a move from the application of CCT to 'defined activities', and to the inclusion of all local government services. A move from periodic testing to a continuous and overlapping process of service review. The transition from competitive tendering to a much wider array of competitiveness, an emphasis on partnerships and a concern not just for cost-effectiveness but an amplified requirement to produce better quality services (2000: 212-13). Geddes and Martin (2000: 380) draw attention to a number of other key differences in the approach of New Labour and their implementation of Best Value. First they argue that contrary to the top-down imposition of CCT, Best Value has been implemented with the use of widespread support from local government services and associations. Second, there has been a move away from the instinct to place public sector activities under the direction of business-led organisations towards a key role for Local Authorities managing to demonstrate service improvements. And finally, unlike the regulation of CCT, the Best Value frameworks have allowed for a number of approaches to emerge. Despite these apparent differences between Best Value and previous reforms Geddes and Martin still argue that Best Value 'clearly draws upon neo-liberal critiques of the traditional welfare state that emphasise the importance of delivering 'more for less' from public services and reducing the burden of public expenditure' (Geddes and Martin 2000: 380).

Partnerships

As in other areas of public policy, partnerships were favoured as a way of improving public service delivery. In their criticisms of CCT, the Labour

government argued that there has been a failure to make effective use of partnerships and that the CCT framework led to antagonism between the public and the private sector. Geddes stressed 'the rigidity of the CCT system encouraged hostility towards external providers, with contracts frequently constructed to deter external bidders. It limited open debate on ways to improve services, negotiate contracts and share rewards and risks of joint working' (Geddes 1998: 18). The introduction of Best Value was set up to challenge the traditional separation of public-private sectors and was promoted as a step forward from the previous reforms. Again the emphasis is heavily placed on public-private initiatives such as the Private Finance Initiative. The Government White Paper on Local Government emphasised, 'where the relationship between the council and its essential local partners – local businesses, voluntary organisations and other public sector bodies is neither strong nor effective, that council cannot hope to lead its community successfully' (DETR 1998a: par. 7.5).

Despite an emphasis on partnerships and collaboration within local government, facets of the CCT regime still remain. As Geddes and Martin (2000:388) argue, a number of the contractual relationships under Best Value seem to mirror traditional styles of contracting out 'masquerading as collaborative ventures'. While the approach by New Labour appears more pragmatic and open, the result may be the same as under CCT.

Darwin et al.'s (1999:18) research, which examined the relationship between contractors and clients in the context of CCT, identified that in order to sustain a valid contractual relationship three types of trust must be maintained. These are contracted trust where promises between the two parties are kept, goodwill trust which includes mutual open commitment, and competence trust where the purchaser must be assured of the supplier's ability to provide quality services. There is also a need for flexible and informal relationships. Issues of 'trust' appeared to be lacking in the CCT arrangements but may not necessarily be resolved under Best Value. Research conducted by the Newchurch Partnership on behalf of the DETR identified a number of issues that could affect public-private partnerships. These included cultural differences between the two sectors. Both sectors are said to be suspicious of one another and therefore it may be difficult for

‘high trust’ relationships to be developed which would be required to fulfil the requirements of partnership working. A further issue is the continued concern over gaining value for money; if the priority is still to find the most cost-effective service, will the same problems as existed under CCT arise?

Although support has been given to expanding PFI by associations such as the Local Government Association (LGA) and Local Government Information Unit (LGIU), concern has been expressed about its use. ‘There are widespread concerns about whether PFI represents Best Value, its appropriateness for particular projects and issues around accountability and open government that the government needs to be further addressed’ (LGIU 1999: 23).

Central–Local Relations

The Local Government White Paper emphasised the need for Local Authorities to address the needs of their community and to have the capacity to make decisions regarding services in their area. One of the main features of Best Value has been the ability of Local Authorities to decide how they will review and improve services. This led to a number of approaches by those authorities that participated in the Best Value pilot projects, these included service based approaches, market-based approaches and corporate approaches (Geddes and Martin 2000). However while it appears that authorities have been allowed to determine how to evaluate services in their local area, this has been undermined by the determination of Local Government to drive down costs and the assumption that Best Value authorities will take a fairly uniform approach. The intense performance agenda and the high level of audit and inspection on Best Value continue to place control in the hands of central government.

Performance Measurement

In accordance with Best Value, Local Authorities have to achieve continuous improvements in service delivery and in performance. The performance framework set up by the Government to secure Best Value is based on a desire not just to measure cost-efficiency but to measure service improvements and quality of

the service via 'Best Value Corporate Health Indicators'. The Best Value Performance indicators (BVPI's) have been set up to provide a 'rounded view of performance' (DETR 2000: par. 2.1.1: 11) and are divided into two types. They have been developed to provide an overall picture of how the Authority is performing and the Best Value Service Delivery Indicators are designed to 'reflect the national interest in the delivery of local services' (DETR 2000: 12). A number of dimensions have also been added to the performance framework. These include strategic objectives, cost and efficiency objectives, service delivery outcomes, quality and finally indicators to measure fair access elements to the service (DETR 2000: 12).

There is an acceptance that New Labour has attempted to solve some of the issues that were raised about performance indicators under the previous regime by introducing a more rounded approach (Boyne 1999, 2000). On the other hand problems have still been identified with the performance indicators adopted to measure certain outcomes. Boyne (1999:3) provides the example of an indicator used to measure efficiency which is usually defined as the ratio between inputs and outputs, e.g. 'percentage of new benefits claims processed within 14 days' measures the speed of service provision rather than efficiency. Boyne (2000: 9) also points out that in some areas such as 'fair access' the indicators are narrowly defined and superficial and ignore issues such as age, ethnic group and gender. The need for authorities to meet the performance of the top 25% of authorities ignores external differences between different localities and could be difficult for some authorities to achieve in five years (Boyne 1999: 4). This could impact on the way that Local Authorities meet their targets and does not resolve the issue of 'massaging figures' that can undermine accountability (1999: 4).

New Labour, Criminal Justice and Best Value

When New Labour initially came to power 'law and order' was to be a key part of their agenda. However, as noted above, a shift in political philosophy would also lead to a new approach towards crime and criminal justice. The infamous sound bite that is often associated with the New Labour law and order programme is 'tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime'. The emphasis was on both

‘fighting crime’ and addressing the underlying causes of crime. There was also an emphasis on dealing with crime collaboratively and at a local level. This was apparent with the passing of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Although there was renewed emphasis on multi-agency working and crime as a social issue this was to operate in conjunction with continued managerialism. McLaughlin and Murji (2000) suggest that while the police may have had reason to believe that under New Labour there would be a halt or reverse to the NPM agenda they were to be disappointed. It would become apparent as with the Conservatives before them, managerialism would continue to be extended as a way to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of the service.

Initially like the rest of the public sector the Criminal Justice System was subject to the Comprehensive Spending Review. This dictated the level of spending and outlined plans for a more co-ordinated approach within the Criminal Justice System. Within the review it is emphasised that to improve the performance of the Criminal Justice System, the Government will ‘invest in an evidence-based crime reduction strategy’ (HM Treasury 1998, Chapter 10) or in other words ‘what matters is what works’ (Leishman et al. 2000: 3). Other ways to improve performance include setting clear objectives and targets for the system as a whole and introducing new arrangements for joint strategic planning and performance management. This document also included long-term objectives to be achieved. The main objectives are to promote safety and reduce disorder, reduce crime and the fear of crime and contribute to delivering justice in a way that secures and maintains confidence in the rule of law. These objectives underline New Labour’s approach to law and order and the emphasis within this document is the whole Criminal Justice System working together not just in partnership with other elements of the Criminal Justice System but also with other government agencies and voluntary agencies to solve crime and related issues, for example drugs. There was also a renewed emphasis on crime prevention and community safety in an attempt to move away from the predominance of crime fighting which dominated the Conservative period.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 embodied a number of core measures that attempted to represent the objectives set out by New Labour. It included measures

to tackle youth crime, reduce delays in the criminal justice system and prevent anti-social behaviour that was seen as contributing to the fear of crime. It also adopted the recommendation of the Morgan Report (1991) placing a statutory duty on chief constables and Local Authorities to work in co-operation with Police Authorities, probation committees and health authorities to formulate and implement a 'strategy for the reduction of crime and disorder in the area' (Crime and Disorder Act 1998: sections 6 to 8). Of course while the focus was on joint-working and emphasised crime prevention, the Crime and Disorder Strategy which was to be produced every three years, would set out local priorities and included targets and performance measures which had to be met. As Newburn (2000) emphasises the requirement to develop a strategy and define local priorities and objectives is parallel to the local policing plans introduced via the PMCA.

As with other Local Authorities the police would be subject to the regime of Best Value described above. The policy would be the responsibility of the Police Authority to implement rather than the chief constable. They would be charged with ensuring that the Best Value regime was implemented and that it led to improvements in service delivery. In addition, the police would have to develop a local Best Value Performance Plan to outline what services they would review each year. As with Local Authorities the original legislation required the Police Authorities to review all of their services and functions within a five-year period. This was later revoked. A suite of Best Value Performance Indicators was also developed for the police service (see Figure 2). Police Authorities are encouraged to develop their performance targets locally, however, under section 5(7) of the Local Government Act the 'Secretary of State can issue statutory guidance which states the matters which should be taken into account when setting performance targets and that these matters may include the range of performance expected to be attained by the Best Value authorities' (Home Office 1999a) and the police would be measured against these. These indicators would cover key areas and measure the police on both effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, quality, equity of service and corporate health (see Figure 2). Police Authorities would also have to strive to achieve comparable results were those in the top 25 % of performing forces. Even then, it was noted by the government:

‘We are conscious of the fact that many factors outside the direct control of the police can have a bearing on performance and that police forces vary considerably in terms of size, geographical location and other factors such as demographics ... ministers want Best Value authorities to be ambitious and strive for real and sustained improvement in their local communities’ (Home Office 1999a: 3).

The HMIC and Audit Commission would be responsible for inspecting Best Value. The HMIC would inspect all of the Best Value reviews produced by the Police Authority and the Audit Commission would be responsible for assessing the Best Value Performance Plan. The HMIC would make judgements about the likelihood of service improvement

Figure 2 Best Value Performance Indicators for the Police Service²

Category	Best Value Indicators
Crime	BVPI125–Total Number of Recorded Crimes per 1000 population BVPI126–Domestic burglaries per 1,000 household and the % detected BVPI127–Violent Crime per 1,000 population and % detected BVPI28–Vehicle Crime per 1,000 population and % detected BVPI33–% of 999 calls answered in target time
Fair Access	BVPI40–Number of substantiated complaints against the police BVPI41–% of reported racist incidents to the police where further investigative action is taken and % of these crimes detected
Strategic Objectives	BVPI121 Fear of Crime (using British Crime Survey) BVPI122 Public Confidence in Criminal Justice System

² This table was devised from information obtained from DETR (2000). It does not provide all of the BVPIs but provides an indication of the key indicators used to measure police effectiveness.

Best Value in the Police Service

There has been much speculation about how New Labour's 'Modernisation will impact upon the police service'. As argued by McLaughlin and Murji:

'A disorganised picture of policing has emerged over the past decade. The messy and sometimes contradictory provenance of NPM and its hybrid character and sources has produced new fissures and fault lines within policing in the UK. Externally the relationship between the police, Police Authorities and the Home Office have been changed; internally there is observable strain as the rhetoric of efficiency, effectiveness and economy increasingly pervade police discourses, while resistance to its implications and aspects of a culture of special pleading continue alongside. The ways in which these tensions will play out under New Labour's Modernisation project remain to be seen' (McLaughlin and Murji 2000: 118).

McLaughlin and Murji (2000) propose that the result of this modernisation programme could further extend the internalisation of managerialism within the police service as it becomes an everyday discourse of output, efficiency and audit. They also argue that a continuation of New Public Management and further managerialism will shift the police beyond being viewed as a unique public sector institution and in that sense has 'swept aside a whole tissue of illusion and consoling fictions about the nature of British police' (McLaughlin and Murji: 119).

Some commentators have suggested that other possible implications of Best Value are the increased marketisation and fragmentation of the police service. As Leishman, Loveday and Savage (2000) emphasise;

'From the standpoint of policing, Best Value presents many fundamental challenges, but perhaps the biggest threat to the status quo lies in the philosophy of 'what matters is what works'. This apparently single dictum contains within it quite a radical agenda for service providers in that it allows, even encourages, budget holders at every level to focus less on who delivers than what and how it is delivered' (Leishman, Loveday and Savage 2000: 3).

Butler (2000) argues that while Best Value aimed at improving public service it is still underpinned by the need to save money and that this narrow-mindedness fails to take into account the complexity of police work. He maintains that the emphasis on achieving efficiency gains fails to take into account previous attempts by the

police service to do so. Prior to Best Value the police service were required to make 2% efficiency savings in 1999 and it is believed that savings made as a result of Best Value reviews will contribute towards this. This increasing need to make efficiency gains disregards cuts that the police have already made in their budgets in recent years (Butler 2000).

Another issue raised by Best Value is its potential impact on the 'Constabulary Independence' of Chief Constables. Savage, Charman and Cope (2000b) argue that as Best Value implies the possible provision of policing services by other bodies if they can be seen to be offering better value services than the police then employing the notion of constabulary independence may no longer work. They also suggest that the need to consult various stakeholders of policing services will lead to the inclusion of more and more outsiders having a vested interest in policing policy matters. The fact that Police Authorities are the policyholders of Best Value means that they will have the ability to question the chief constables more. This could signal a move towards more local electoral inclusion in police decision-making and improve the position of the Police Authorities within the tripartite structure. On the other hand failure to achieve the results that the centre are looking for may invoke intervention and as the Police Authorities are ultimately responsible it may be they who again lose out and are criticised rather than the individual police forces.

Conclusions

This chapter began by discussing the effects of NPM on the police. It was argued that rather than making the police more accountable, effective and cost-efficient, the regime has in fact had some adverse effects. The introduction of performance indicators, has made some sectors of the police service act more creatively when recording and detecting crime. This does not serve to improve the effectiveness of the police. Furthermore, it has been argued that rather than devolving power locally to Police Authorities and police managers the policies have actually led to further central control by the government. It could be argued that the breadth of central control is uneven with chief constables still playing an influential role where it appears that it is the Police Authorities who has continued to lose out. In

addition, despite the reforms, the police service have not been able to employ techniques to ensure cost-effectiveness and the effect of early attempts at consultation did not adequately gauge the views of all communities. This imbalanced pattern of managerialism could be linked to the resistance from within the organisation and a failure to adapt within the organisational culture of the police. While the police service is not made up of one culture, variations could explain why attempts to reform the police have led to contradictory outcomes.

The second part of this chapter examined the period following the election of New Labour in 1997 and outlined their Modernisation programme. According to New Labour the previous reforms favoured by the Conservative government have failed to transform public services to fit in with the new global, social and economic climate. However, like the Conservatives before them, Labour instituted a programme of reforms which aimed to improve the public sector, including the police. Their Modernisation programme claimed to be different in that it focused on long-term goals, on the quality of the service provided and was more concerned with collaboration. However, the old traits of managerialism remained and were combined with the new Modernising agenda. For Local Authorities and then the police, this meant the introduction of the Best Value regime. The policy combined the need to set targets, draw-up service plans, and cost activities. The aim was to meet the requirements of local users, reviewing service delivery while collaborating and working in partnership. The regime would again be overseen and monitored by the auditing bodies. In addition, it put the liability for the regime on the Police Authority, which potentially could lead to readdressing the balance of power within the police service. The introduction of Best Value is intended to improve the service delivered by the police and to make them more accountable to 'users' of their service. The question is whether the policy could achieve this when the previous reforms have been seen to fail. The aim of the next chapter is to identify the research question and the methodology that was applied in this research.

Chapter Three

Research Design and Methodology

The main aim of this chapter is to outline the research questions, research design and methodology employed in this study. The chapter will begin with the main questions to be addressed throughout this research. Following this it will provide a detailed account of the favoured research design and why this particular approach has been adopted. The subsequent section will discuss the different methods implemented throughout the research and why these specific methods were selected. The process by which the data was analysed will then be reviewed. Finally the dilemmas and problems encountered while completing this research will be examined.

Research Questions Aims and Objectives

There has been much debate about the use of managerial practices in the police service and whether they have served to make the police more accountable and improved the services delivered to the public. However, there has been little empirical investigation into these policies, how they have been internalised by the police service and whether they can lead to the types of organisational changes that are expected. The introduction of Best Value into the police service provides the opportunity to examine the application of rational management to the police service. In addition, there is the need to examine whether the introduction of Best Value is different from previous regimes and whether it can achieve its goals. The potential implications for the police service in not achieving Best Value are far-reaching. The possible outcomes of the policy are similarly extensive. Therefore, the main aim of this research is to explore the above issues and pose the question.

‘Can Best Value achieve its aim of improving service delivery within the police service?’

The research has a number of aims;

1. To consider how Best Value has been implemented within the police service and what methods have been employed by the Police Authorities to achieve Best Value
2. To examine whether Best Value has led to any changes in police performance and what, if any, service improvements have been made through the application of the regime and how these were achieved.
3. To examine whether Best Value has led to organisational change and if so, how this was accomplished.

These research aims will be addressed through the applications of a mixed method of research design and methodology. The reasons for this approach and the methods employed are outlined below.

Research Design and Methodology

New Labour's policy agenda was not just about implementing new policies but also about providing evidence of success. Most policies and programmes that were implemented were to be evaluated and assessed in terms of their effectiveness. The need for the police to demonstrate effectiveness has been a key issue for a number of years. Not only do the police have to establish that they are making improvements in performance and meeting defined targets but over the past few years most policing strategies or initiatives aimed at advancing police operations have been evaluated (Tilley 2001). What is important is not whether these programmes are being evaluated but what techniques are used to achieve this.

In terms of policy research there has been a tendency to rely on certain types of research methods. There has been a resistance to using qualitative studies within the policy arena and a tendency to concentrate on quantitative methods. Clarke (2001: 32) argues that policy makers are attracted to quantitative research, as they

believe that it provides 'objective and scientifically sound analysis of the nature of social problems and the impact and effectiveness of policy solutions'. The use of quantitative techniques has also been encouraged as inputs, outputs and performance indicators often used to measure organisational success. While these types of measures can provide useful descriptive data, they fail to provide us with the information about the meaning and choices in the policy process (Pollitt at al 1992).

Pawson and Tilley (1994, 1997) argue that one of the major problems with the evaluation of crime prevention initiatives was the dominance of one particular model to assess effectiveness that relied heavily on quasi-experimental methods. Quasi-experimental methods tend to ignore qualitative work and concentrate on trying to quantify issues that can be measured before and then after the initiative has been introduced. Although quantitative methods are wholly appropriate in some cases in terms of evaluating policy they only provide an indication of whether a programme has achieved its objective, for example, of reducing offending but do not indicate why this may have occurred. Pawson and Tilley present the example of Bennett's (1991) research to illustrate this point. His research aimed to examine the effectiveness of police patrols to reduce the fear of crime in high crime areas using two experimental sites and two control areas. Bennett who measured time spent and contacts made with the police found that it failed to make any impact on the fear of crime amongst residents. Other factors were taken into account but as Pawson and Tilley argue tell us little about how the programme was delivered or how it was experienced within the experimental sites, which is in essence why it failed. They also argue that it does not convince us whether that this type of strategy might have been effective elsewhere.

Crawford (1997) considering the evaluation of crime prevention initiatives highlighted that qualitative methods have often been ignored because of the over-emphasis on quantitative measures. He states that there 'is a need to supplement quantitative methodologies with more qualitative research in the evaluation process' (Crawford 1997: 207). Crawford goes on to praise a research study by Hope and Foster (1992) which considered the impact of the Priority Estates Project (PEP) on crime prevention. The actual PEP aims to change the way in which local

housing services are managed by involving the tenants in the day-to day running of their estates (Foster and Hope 1993: vi).

Foster and Hope believed that the improvements brought to the estates through the PEP would also facilitate reductions in crime. As with other past crime prevention evaluations, Foster and Hope's methodology included a before and after study and comparisons with similar estates where the PEP programme was not introduced. This survey included measuring crime patterns and fear of crime. Significantly it also included ethnographic research. Foster and Hope (1993:98) acknowledge that the 'process of change on the estates was as important as the absolute changes measured by the 'before and after' surveys at two fixed points in time'. The intention of this qualitative work was to consider the experiences of the tenants on the estates and how they perceived their experience and how PEP was implemented. The findings of this research were contradictory. For example on one hand it appeared from the survey results that in the experimental area where PEP was applied crime had been reduced. A closer reading of events found that two of the areas of the estate with more stable population and the areas which benefited more from the implementation of PEP experienced a reduction in certain types of crime such as burglary. They also felt that there was greater social cohesion within the estate. However, this was not reflected in other parts of the estate where there were more transient, youthful populations and the incidents of youth crime and social disorder increased. While the PEP programme in some senses worked to reduce some levels of crime and increased informal social control, due to the changing population of the estate there was a simultaneous increase in criminality and disorder. If this study had simply examined whether there had been a reduction of crime it might have failed to identify these different processes at work.

Pawson (1989) notes that the pluralistic nature of contemporary research encourages the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Bullock, Little and Millham state that qualitative case studies can be used to illustrate explain and add depth to the findings of quantitative research (cited in Clark 2001: 33). Clarke suggests quantitative and qualitative bring different perspectives to policy research and provide alternative dimensions to the research process. Quantitative analysis

can provide a general indication of problems, for example a national level survey of crime may indicate general areas of concern where qualitative data can be used to consider the impact of that crime on certain communities.

Research on Best Value

Other researchers who have studied the effectiveness of Best Value have also favoured mixed method approaches. The Warwick Business School conducted the main evaluation on Best Value during its pilot phase. The main aim of this research was to establish whether Best Value had made a difference or 'added value' to Local Authority services. The objectives of the research were to provide an assessment of the framework within which Best Value in service delivery can be achieved and to assess the extent of real improvements in the efficiency, effectiveness and the quality of service delivery (Martin and Davis 1999: 9). This was to be accomplished by monitoring and evaluation at three levels. The aims of this evaluation would be to assess the strengths, weaknesses, achievements and failings within the approach to Best Value by the Local Authorities, consider service improvements achieved as a result of Best Value and whether Best Value improved the performance of local services.

In order to achieve their research objectives a series of data sources was used including semi-structured interviews with over 1,000 individuals involved in the policy process as well as some in-depth interviews, the analysis of internal and published documents and reports regarding Best Value and participant and non-participant observations at policy shaping meetings. A survey of Best Value officers at the end of the Best Value process and a before and after survey of residents in the pilot areas were conducted and performance data was used to analyse changes in the authority pilot sites compared to those authorities that were not piloting Best Value. Changes in performance of the services subject to Best Value were also measured for improvements.

The application of a number of techniques and a variety of methods allowed the researchers to uncover a number of issues. The interviews and documentary analysis allowed them to assess how Best Value was being implemented and the

roles played by various stakeholders in the Best Value process. It also allowed them to examine how Best Value was challenging the authority areas and the potential impact it was having on organisational and cultural contexts. The Best Value officer survey offered them an insight into the perception of Best Value officers about the way the policy was being implemented. Subsequent research completed by the same team (Martin et al 2003) has continued to measure the impact of Best Value and how it works in relation to Local Authorities. Their final evaluation report is being used to provide a baseline from which to measure the effect of Best Value in the future.

This research aimed to provide a comprehensive review of Best Value. However, it was also originally sponsored by the DETR who had an interest in the research and therefore could have influenced how this research was conducted. In addition, Local Authorities were also involved in shaping the research and on deciding what techniques were used to evaluate the project. This involvement of these bodies in the research process could be said to have affected the independence of the research as they would benefit from positive results. The team who conducted the research (Martin et al 2001) claim that the inclusion of these bodies did not affect its objectivity. Overall the research completed on Best Value by this group is of a high quality. The main issue is that it focused on Local Authorities rather than Police Authorities.

The only research which has been conducted on Best Value in the police service was that completed by the Police Research Group at the Home Office, 'Best Value Policing: Making Preparations' (Leigh, Mundy and Tuffin 1999). This research was completed prior to Best Value being fully implemented into the police service. This research identified a number of issues. It found that initially police forces were developing a number of different approaches but that after having time to pilot Best Value their approaches were becoming similar. They also identified that police forces were experiencing some early problems when trying to implement the policy. This included staff feeling threatened by the introduction of the policy and the responsibility for the policy being left to a small number of staff. Other problems concerned the ability to apply the four Cs methodology appropriately, for example, it was identified that there was a lack of data to benchmark and to assess

current levels of service. Some forces also felt threatened by the 'compete' and 'challenge' aspects of Best Value. This research provided a baseline of initial problems that police forces were facing. However, as it was done prior to the policy's introduction it does not track the experiences of the police service since the policy became operational in 2000. Subsequent research was planned by the group to follow developments in Best Value but never materialised.

Research Methods

As with other studies on the effectiveness of policies the research combined both quantitative and qualitative data. During this research a number of methods and data sources were used. The aim of this section is to outline what data sources were used and which methods were employed. It also outlines some of the issues related to the use of such data and how it has assisted the research.

The Use of Performance Indicators

As suggested in the previous chapter one of the fundamental components of the public management regime has been the development of performance management frameworks and the use of key performance indicators. It was argued that the introduction of performance indicators into public services has been highly inappropriate because of the way that they have been constructed. One of the main concerns had been the way that performance indicators have been developed in accordance with the three Es efficiency, effectiveness and economy and under the model of inputs, outputs and outcomes (see Carter 1991, Carter, Klein and Day 1992). There are a number of definitional problems with these terms (Carter, Klein and Day 1992). An example of this is quoted in by Carter, Klein and Day (1992), using a statement by Sir Peter Middleton, they illustrate the difficulty in defining efficiency. 'Do you get the maximum output from a given input, or do you get the given output for a minimum input' (PAC 1997 cited: 38). Critics argued that the development of performance indicators within the three Es framework ignored such issues as efficacy, access, quality of service provided and consumer choice (Flynn 1988, Horton and Smith 1988, Pollitt 1986).

One of the primary indicators used to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of the police had been the levels of recorded crime and the rate of detected crimes. These measures have been favoured as they fit into the three Es model, for example, we have the input or the resources provided to the police and then we have the activities or outputs they undertake (fighting crime) and then we have the achievements or outcomes (reduced crime levels and crimes cleared up). However as Cherret (1993) argues this does not really provide a full picture of where police resources have gone or what activities have taken place that may lead to the overall outcomes of policing activities. The use of the types of indicators assumes that the police are entirely responsible for reducing crime, whereas falls in the crime rate could be as a consequence of changing social or economic factors. Furthermore crime detections may be assisted by an outside agency such as the Forensic Scientific Service who are responsible for providing data on DNA.

One of the difficulties in assessing police performance lies in the diversity of the tasks undertaken by the police service (Carter, Klein and Day 1991, Horton and Smith 1988, Weatheritt 1993). Although clearing up crime has been the dominant concern of successive governments, research has demonstrated that the police fulfil a far greater role than simply that of crime fighters. In fact commentators (Hough 1980, Morris and Heal 1981 Punch and Naylor 1993) have argued that rather than crime fighting the police spend a considerable amount of their time dealing with non-crime related incidents. In addition to dealing with calls from the public the police also conduct other duties such as the policing of sporting events, work within communities, traffic control, missing persons. The list is endless. The difficulty comes in incorporating this variety of tasks into measures of police performance. As Horton and Smith (1988) highlight a vast array of the responsibilities of the police are difficult to quantify and evaluate. A good illustration here is crime prevention, how can you adequately measure such an activity? 'A crime prevented can not be counted and there is no obvious way of assessing the contribution to crime prevention of an officer on patrol' (Horton and Smith 1988: 21). The Audit Commission reported 'definitions of good policing were still not adequately supported by objective indicators of performance' (1990a: 4). Conversely in order to fully appreciate police performance and what they are

achieving in terms of value for money these other activities should be accounted for.

One of the chief problems of using crime, as a measure of police effectiveness is its assumption that the police have a major and sole influence over crime rates. As a number of commentators have suggested (Carter et al 1991, Horton and Smith 1988, Loveday 1999, Neyroud and Beckley 2001) 'as yet there is, no clear or unambivalent evidence that the police either have the capacity or the capability to significantly influence the crime rate' (Loveday 1999: 219). Even organisations that supported and utilised performance indicators themselves have acknowledged the difficulties associated with using crime as a measure of police success. The Audit Commission (1993) reported that volume crime is a measure of demand for police services rather than a measure of police performance.

Another issue has been the quality of both recorded and detected crime data. For a number of years, the accuracy of recorded crime data by the police has been questioned. One difficulty is that not all crime is actually reported to the police. The British Crime Survey confirmed this and other independent crime surveys suggest the level of crime recorded by the police is far below the actual crime rate (Loveday 1999). A major concern raised by academics and official groups alike has been the propensity of those of the lower ranks to manipulate recorded and detected crime. Research by Young (1991: 323) highlights the practice of 'cuffing' or 'hiding or eliminating the incidence of reported crime from public scrutiny'. Although this practice may have eased due to the introduction of computerised crime recording systems the HMIC have still identified discrepancies in the way that crime has been recorded. In their thematic inspection on crime recording, the HMIC uncovered a number of incidents 'closed as 'suspicious incidents' that were clearly crimes of which some had crime numbers and some did not' (HMIC 2000: 43). They also reported that in terms of accuracy the coding of incidents was often poor and that due to variations in crime recording systems comparing police services against one another was impractical. In some cases when incidents were not believed to be crimes by staff manning crimes desks no record of the incident was taken at all (HMIC 2000). Crime detection rates are

also frequently used to measure the effectiveness of policing. As noted in Chapter Two these are also flawed.

As mentioned above one of the major criticisms of the use of performance data has been that measures that have been introduced have failed to take into account issues such as the quality of the work completed by the police. Some indicators presented as measuring quality, for example the measuring of time it takes to respond to an incident, have been criticised for not actually measuring quality at all. While police officers may respond to an incident quickly and effectively there is still no indication of the level of service provided at an incident. The difficulty in assessing quality is that it is often not quantifiable. When attending an incident where a victim is upset it may be difficult for them to provide any coherent indication about the level of service provided. Also it is unlikely that offenders would be the most suitable to ask about quality of service when they have just been arrested. This leads to another predicament for the police service how do they measure whether customers' needs have been met when they have a wide range of customers who may have opposing needs? As Raine and Wilson (1995) emphasise the police have a wide-range of customers encompassing the local community, victims of crime, and individuals suspected of committing crimes and each have requirements that are not necessarily compatible.

Despite the issues associated with the use of performance indicators within the police service, they are necessary to demonstrate accountability to both the public and the government. Tilley (1995) for example while acknowledging the difficulties in defining adequate performance indicators for the police service has argued that they can act as a guide as to whether an organisation is heading in the right direction. He states for example that high level performance indicators may provide the public with information about how a public service is operating and whether it is or is not fulfilling its general commitments. He argues that these types of indicators can also provide the government with a way of 'ascertaining whether public services ... seem to be attending the priorities set for them' (Tilley 1995: 3). Tilley also proposes that they can be a useful management tool to assess how the organisation is functioning and if there any areas that need to be examined.

The police themselves have been attempting to develop indicators that would effectively measure what they do (Joint Consultative Committee 1990). The main issues for other commentators has not been whether performance indicators should be used at all but what types of indicators can be developed in order to provide a more rounded picture of police performance. During the 1980s the HMIC developed a matrix of performance indicators that covered various aspects of police service delivery. While this number of indicators was seen as overbearing and excessive, it was recognised that other areas outside of crime data could be used to measure police performance. Indeed as Waters (2000) emphasises ACPO have attempted to design and implement performance indicators that provided measures of quality since the early 1990s. He states that ACPO initiative on quality led to the introduction of a number of customer related indicators including

- percentage of callers satisfied with response to 999 calls
- percentage of customers satisfied with service at station inquiry counters
- percentage of victims satisfied with initial response to a report of a violent crime
- percentage of victims satisfied with police performance at the scene of a road traffic accident
- percentage of victims satisfied with initial response to a domestic burglary
- percentage of public satisfied with the perceived level of foot and mobile patrols (cited in Waters 2000: 269)

There are problems with these indicators, such as measuring satisfaction with foot patrols, as the general public have a tendency to want to see more police on the streets and this is not necessarily effective. It has to be argued that there has been an attempt to measure levels of service to the public. These indicators were generally accepted by the Audit Commission and incorporated into the performance data collected by them. The HMIC argued in its 1997/98 annual report that, 'The degree of public satisfaction is a particularly important element against which to assess service delivery...The overall figures continued to show

that a reassuringly high level of public satisfaction was achieved in the areas surveyed (cited in Waters 2000: 270).

Carter (1991:92) argues that much of the criticisms of performance measures underestimate the 'conceptual and technical complexities in measuring effectiveness'. He argues that although critics have suggested that performance indicators should be developed to measure such areas as quality and customer satisfaction this is not always straightforward, especially for public services such as the police. Instead he argues that a wider approach should be adopted where 'quality and customer satisfaction are regarded primarily as aspects or process—the way in which a service is delivered—rather than what is delivered that quality should be seen as a by-product of other activities rather than as a separate entity'. Carter would argue that measuring whether police attend 999 calls within a certain time period is an adequate quality measure as it is something that is required of them within their daily activities.

Horton and Smith (1988) argued that measuring overall police performance using general measures such as crime rates is futile and that it would be more appropriate to use a larger number of more specific measures to cover all areas of police work. They argue that although measuring all crime detection may be of little use, detection rates for particular categories of crime such as burglary, can be used to gauge the success of specific kinds of policing strategy. They also supported the use of families of measures where areas of performance are assessed by more than one measure but where the measures are related. They also argue that performance measures should not focus on final outcomes. This includes issues such as crime prevention, public order, the apprehension of offenders or the preservation of tranquillity. This is because these objectives are too general and there are a number of alternative policing strategies contributing to overall outcomes. They argue instead that measures of performance should be based on intermediate outputs such as the number of hours spent on patrol. Horton and Smith (1988) argue as do others that performance measures should not be seen as a means to an end but rather a guide on whether police services are heading in the right direction.

Performance measurement developed in the 1990s along the lines of those proposed by Horton and Smith. There has been a greater emphasis on gauging public satisfaction with the police since ACPO's attempt to improve the quality of service within the police. New Labour under the Modernisation programme have still emphasised the need for public service to remain accountable to both the government and the public and this was also to be achieved through the use of performance frameworks. New Labour had argued that previous performance measurement had been too narrow in focus and should be expanded to include a number of issues. A main part of Best Value was the performance framework or Best Value Performance Indicators that have been introduced. These were designed to 'provide for a rounded view of performance'. They endeavour to 'reflect the resources devoted to the service, the efficiency with which they are used, the quality of service with which they are used, the quality of the service and the service users experience of service delivery' (DETR 2000: 11). Best Value Performance Indicators would consist of two types: Corporate Indicators to provide an overall view of how the organisation was performing and Service Indicators representing the national interest in the delivery of local services. This approach to widening the performance framework has been encouraged by New Labour who emphasised the need to include measures of quality within the performance targets. At present the Home Office along with ACPO, the HMIC, APA and other relevant groups are developing the performance framework to include a number of domains, which will assess the police performance at a number of levels. A publication by the Policy Exchange Group (2002) supports the extension of police performance along these lines and outlines four main domains, which are, crime, public satisfaction, efficiency and community safety. The crime domain does not focus just on recorded and detected crimes but considers repeat victimisation in an attempt to assess whether police are successfully targeting and reducing crime amongst particular groups.

The Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) developed for the police while still including crime also include other indicators to cover areas such as complaints, satisfaction with the police services, equal access, sickness levels, drug issues, personnel issues and file handling. All of these indicators are used to assess how individual police authorities have performed. Under the Best Value

legislation Police Authorities were also asked to set targets over a five-year period for key area of performance. Police Authorities were required to develop a Best Value plan. This was to form part of the Annual Policing Plan, which sets out the local targets that the Police Authority and the police force have set out for themselves. Police authorities often analyse their own performance by assessing whether the locally set targets have been achieved. A number of forces also conduct their own public service satisfaction survey to assess how local communities feel about the services delivered.

As one of the aims of Best Value was to encourage continuous improvement and facilitate enhanced performance, it is appropriate to examine whether there have been any significant changes in performance since the introduction of Best Value into the police service. This included the selection of some of the key indicators used to measure the police service in recent years including recorded and detected crime. Figures for one year prior to Best Value were analysed against the first two years since Best Value was introduced. Although this did not provide a complete picture of the effect of Best Value, it was able to offer an insight into whether the introduction of Best Value has stimulated any major changes within performance. The data was analysed using data tables where the performance data for each force in England and Wales was entered for the year prior to and the two years following the introduction of Best Value. In order to identify if any changes had occurred the percentage increase or decrease was identified. This approach although simplistic does demonstrate the extent of performance change and aims only to provide an indication of whether Best Value has had any influence over police performance.

Qualitative Methods

While quantitative data can be used to provide useful descriptive data or indicate the output of a programme or policy, it can not tell us how this was achieved or how those working with the policy interacted with it and the reason why a programme may have or have not been effective (Pollitt et al 1992). As Denzin and Lincoln (2003:13) state 'quantitative studies emphasize the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not processes. Proponents of such studies claim that their work is done from within a value-free-framework.

They further note, ‘qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of social reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situation constraints that shape inquiry’. Rist (2003) argues that the use of qualitative data can help researchers understand the implementation of policy in a number of ways, exploring whether the initiative is reaching its target audience. to consider how and whether the condition has changed as a result of a programme and finally and most importantly in the context of this research how the organisation responds to the policy. Qualitative data would help to address the questions about;

‘The expertise and qualifications of those responsible for the organisational response, the interest shown by management and staff, the controls in place regarding the allocation of resources, the organisational structure and whether it adequately reflects the demands of the organisation to respond to this initiative, what means exist in the organisation for deciding upon competing demands’ (Rist 2003: 631).

Qualitative research has been criticised in the past for not been fully objective or ‘scientific’ (Denzin and Lincon 2003). In order to resolve this researchers are encouraged to ensure the accuracy of research. There are a number of strategies to achieve this (see Creswell 1998, Maxwell 1996,) including the triangulation of data collection method where data is derived from a number of sources (Denzin 1970). Maxwell (1996:75-6) proposes that using this type of method ‘reduces the risk that your conclusions will reflect only the systematic biases or limitations of a specific methods, and it allows you to gain a better assessment of the validity and generality of the explanations that you develop’. In this research data was obtained from a number of sources including documents and semi-structured interviews. Also to bring more generality to the research three case study areas were selected. To retain confidentiality and anonymity these were all renamed. The names given to the authorities were Sunnydale Constabulary, Eastbrook Constabulary and Westfield Constabulary. Other techniques used included transcribing verbatim transcripts from interviews to produce accurate accounts.

Documentary Sources

Scott (1990) acknowledged that the use of documents in social research has largely gone unrecognised despite the wide range of availability and use of documents. Documents have become increasingly important in the contemporary policy-process. New Labour emphasised that policy making would be inclusive and information on governmental issues would be available for the masses (Cabinet Office 1999). Documents that were previously restricted or hard to access can now be obtained through the internet and other media such as glossy reports and leaflets. The use of documents to initiate and guide the policy was key in the development of Best Value. As New Labour have been keen to present policy ideas to public services and local government prior to their introduction and keen to direct policies once in operation, a number of documents exist which outline the policy and provide guidelines on how the Police Authorities should implement Best Value. These documents can provide us with an overview of what was expected of the Police Authorities in terms of Best Value, what mechanisms were to be introduced through Best Value and the expectations of the policy stakeholders.

Other documents included in the research were those produced by each individual authority. These include documents on the process of Best Value and how Best Value has been implemented. These were used and analysed in conjunction with other qualitative data such as the semi-structured interviews with Best Value team members. The Best Value reviews were also analysed. These illustrate how the Best Value teams conducted reviews, what issues they considered and the outcomes of the reviews and how these outcomes were arrived at. Other documents included in the research were progress reports and plans that have been written to demonstrate what changes will be introduced to improve the service. In addition other documents relating to Best Value were investigated such as HMIC inspections reports on the Best Value reviews. These identify how the HMIC view Best Value within the individual authorities and if this corresponds with the information provided by the police services involved in the research.

Semi- Structured Interviews

When attempting to establish the effectiveness of a policy it is necessary to discuss the policy with those responsible for its operation. Pawson and Tilley (1997) argue that when it comes to gathering knowledge an effective evaluator must consider how and from whom this knowledge might be acquired. In the context of this research it was thought that the best way to gather knowledge surrounding the implementation of Best Value into the police service and the issues involved in this process was to conduct semi-structured interviews. In terms of who should be interviewed there are a number of key participants who were seen as crucial in understanding the issues surrounding the implementation of Best Value in the police service. The number and position of respondents included in the research is outlined in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3 Table of Respondents Participating in Research

Position of Respondent ¹	No. Included in the Research
Members of Police Authority	6
Executive Members (ACPO)	3
Members of HMIC	4
Senior Manager/Service Managers	13
Members of Best Value Team	11
Other Members of Staff	4
Other respondents	1
Total	42

¹ The respondents are split into a number of categories, some obvious. Senior Manager refers to a police officer of the rank of superintendent or above, Service Manager is either a civilian or police officer below rank of superintendent, usually inspector or chief inspector responsible for a department or function within the police force such as Human Resources. Others represent the participant from the Home Office.

Police Authorities are ultimately responsible for Best Value. It is their duty to ensure that police service under their control is meeting the criteria set out in Best Value and that the policy is being effective. As the Police Authorities own Best Value it was seen as necessary to establish their thoughts about the policy and whether they believed that it was improving police service delivery as intended.

Other key participants in the Best Value process are Best Value team members and managers. Although Police Authorities were provided with the option of introducing Best Value in the way they choose, the majority of force areas selected the option of allowing a specific team of individuals already employed with the police service to implement the policy. Those who work with Best Value on a daily basis can be considered as practitioners. They can provide an in depth knowledge of how Best Value works within their particular service and any issues they have faced during the implementation of the policy

Respondents also included senior management and members of staff responsible for services where Best Value reviews were conducted. Changes or recommendations made as a result of the Best Value reviews would have an impact on the services under their control. In terms of staff, changes made could also influence how they worked. It was seen as important to interview staff members, as part of Best Value is about value for money and reducing the cost of services provided. The number of staff interviewed was limited and the reasons for this are explained later in this chapter.

Other subjects of the Best Value policy are the users of the service. One of the primary aims of New Labour's modernising agenda was to listen to users of service and provide better public service that addressed their needs. In order to assess whether Best Value managed to do this, the Warwick School employed a social survey to assess whether residents noticed any significant changes in the service provided to them. This was done in the pilot areas and compared with other areas where Best Value was not introduced.

The final group interviewed were stakeholders of the policy. This included the HMIC, Home Office and ACPO. They all have a vested interest in Best Value and are all included in offering support and guidance to the police service over the policy and how it operates. It was important then to gauge their views on Best Value and how it was functioning within the police service.

Observations

As the HMIC play an important part in the auditing and monitoring of Best Value, it was seen as essential to determine their views on the Best Value process and how the policy was being implemented. Also they had a responsibility to make judgements about whether Best Value was leading to service improvements. The HMIC responsible for inspecting in the region of one of the Police Authorities included in the study were contacted and asked if they would be willing to participate in the research. They agreed and a week of observations was undertaken during the HMIC inspection in the first year of Best Value reviews in Sunnydale Constabulary. This inspection included an initial meeting with the whole Police Authority, senior police officers and members of the Best Value team. Here the HMIC inspectors outlined how they were going to conduct their inspections. During the week's observation I shadowed two HMIC Inspectors while they conducted interviews with members of the Police Authority, the executive, the Best Value team, senior managers and members of front-line staff. I sat in on these interviews and one of the HMIC inspectors explained to all the respondents who I was and why I was there. I listened to all of the interviews and took notes. The key elements the HMIC inspectors were addressing included how Best Value had been implemented, what improvements had been made as a result of the policy, difficulties that the individuals and police force had experienced and challenging interviewees about aspects of the policy that the HMIC felt they had failed to address. Overall these interviews although formal, were generally of a friendly and co-operative nature. There were also some informal conversations with the HMIC officers at lunch and driving to and from appointments. Each evening after these observations I went back to where I was staying and wrote up my notes and observations for that day. I was not allowed to tape record these

interviews. However by writing my notes up at the end of each day I felt that I managed to retain most of the information provided. Generally this week of observation helped to provide a framework for the subsequent research and assisted in the development of some key questions (see Appendix B).

Analysing the Qualitative data

There is no set way or method that qualitative researchers use to analyse data. 'Researchers tend to operate in analytical circles rather than adopt a linear approach' (Creswell 1998: 142) Maxwell (1996) notes that the first step in analysing the data is to read carefully and examine all the data that you have and to take notes on it. This was done in relation to all of the documents and interview transcripts and notes gathered from the three case study areas and other sources. The next stage was to decide how the data will be coded. There are a number of strategies for doing this including categorising strategies where data is 'fractured' and rearranged into categories that facilitate the comparison of data with and between these categories and that aid in the development of theoretical concepts' (Maxwell 1996: 78). After reading all of the notes, documents and interview transcripts a number of themes and categories were developed. These themes emerged from a number of sources including available literature on the subject, policy documents, interviews and observations. The themes were related to the research questions and included areas such as 'service improvements?', 'changes to performance', 'views on cultural change' and 'difficulties in implementing Best Value'. Once these themes and categories were developed all of the documents were reread and phrases relating to individual themes were colour coded or highlighted. For the interview transcripts relevant text was colour coded and then each segment of text relating to a particular theme was copied and pasted and into another document that contained all relevant information pertaining to that theme or category. For the documents a note of relevant texts (e.g. relevance, page number) within that theme was recorded on the same document. When this was completed there was a total of 20 separate documents ranging in length each relating to a specific category and grouped into separate themes. These were then re-read and analysed with relevant and important quotes being highlighted. These documents were then linked to specific research questions and helped to form and

structure the findings chapters. For example, one of the key aims of the research was to ascertain whether Best Value was leading to organisational change including the changing relationship between the police service and the Police Authority. One of the categories within the organisational change theme was the 'role of the police authority'. The data in the document relating to this category was used to write and develop a section in Chapter Six. It was also used in Chapter Four, which examines how Best Value was implemented, as increasing the responsibility of the Police Authority was one of the main requirements of the policy.

Researching the Police Issues and Dilemmas

Researching within the field of criminology can be a complex task. In recent times this has been reflected in the increasing number of accounts and books related to the specific barriers one can face when exploring criminological issues (Jupp et al 2001, King and Wincup 2002). Criminal justice agencies such as the police are seen as presenting specific problems to the researcher (Brown 1996, Jupp 1989, Reiner 2000b, Sheptycki 1994). These include issues of access, knowledge, gathering relevant information and researching powerful individuals. These can impact upon how the research is conducted, what type of research can be undertaken and how the research is used. It is important to acknowledge and be aware of these issues when conducting research of this type. This section will outline some of the difficulties faced when undertaking this research within the police service and how these were dealt with. These experiences were recorded through the use of research diaries kept during the research period.

Negotiating Access

Gaining access is seen as one of the major barriers against conducting research within organisations such as the police. Jupp (1989:19) stressed that

'By their very nature many of the institutions of criminal justice are truly closed, particularly to those not doing officially sponsored research. This has implications for the practical aspects of the way in which investigations may be conducted but also more crucially, for what in the first place can be researched.'

While this is true, access to the police service may depend very much on one's status in relation to the research subject. Brown (1996) identifies two broad groups that conduct police research, insiders and outsiders. Insiders include police officers researching for an academic qualification (insider insiders) and other researchers namely civilian researchers working for the police or a police-related organisation such as the Home Office (insider outsiders). The other group, outsiders, consists of those who previously worked within the police context and have since left the police to pursue academic interests but write about their experience when in the police (outside insiders) (e.g. Simon Holdaway 1983) or academics (outsider, outsiders) who are interested in their police but have no recognised links with them. Even though all of these groups have their own issues with access (Brown 1996, Reiner 2000b), Reiner (2000b) argues that it's the outsider outsiders group which experiences the most difficulties in gaining access. First he suggests that they have no official status that provides automatic consent so they have to negotiate access. These negotiations can involve more than one hurdle, as Reiner (1991) experienced in his own research on chief constables as he had to obtain official backing from two gatekeepers before he could contact the chiefs themselves. Access will also often be dependent on providing an assurance of confidentiality and anonymity (Reiner 2000b: 222-3).

My position in terms of a researcher was an outsider insider. When embarking on this study I had no formal connections with the police service although I had previously been employed in the police service as a civilian researcher. I also had some contacts within the police service. Despite this I still had to negotiate access through official gatekeepers using the most appropriate means. This led to some difficulties when attempting to secure access into the police service. First I was informed by a contact that in order to get the police involved in my research it would be necessary to contact ACPO as research would need to have their official backing, a process that other researchers, for example Reiner (1991) had experienced. The first step was to write to ACPO. I initially telephoned the ACPO Head Office and asked who they thought was the most appropriate person to

contact. I was told to address the letter to the General Secretary. I sent the letter² (Appendix C) and after several weeks with no response followed up my letter with a phone call. Again the response was rather negative and the person I spoke to did not know anything about the letter but recommended that if I wanted to do research within the police service that it was really up to the discretion of the individual chief constables.

The three Police Authority areas were selected based on size, population and location. All of the areas selected were similar in geographical size and contained both rural and urban areas. To provide a comparative element each authority was from a different region in England. In the initial Police Authority area I contacted the relevant chief constable. In response I received a letter confirming they would be interested in participating in the research and providing me with the name of a key contact. In another of the Police Authority areas I selected I had a personal contact and he provided me with the name of a relevant person who was involved in Best Value. Although my letter was acknowledged, it took quite a long-time for the access to be granted. The person I contacted who was in charge of Best Value thought that it would be appropriate to gain permission from the Police Authority as well as from the Detective Chief Constable as Best Value is the primary duty of the police authority. However due to a staff change the research process had to be started from scratch. I had to go through the formal process again of sending an initial letter and research proposal. When it was presented to the Police Authority, they were not satisfied with the research documents provided and wanted further expansion on the detail of the proposed research together with an indication of how they would be able to gain anything from the research. I agreed that I would provide them with a brief report of my findings and also assured them that I would retain confidentiality and anonymity. In the third Police Authority area I was given the name of the chief inspector to contact who then referred my request to a more senior officer who granted permission for the research to take place. Following a letter and several e-mails and presentation of documents outlining the research the Police Authority declined to take part. I decided that I would continue to research this Police Authority area, as the police themselves were willing. Here I had to negotiate access separately where in the other two Police Authority areas I

² A similar letter was sent for all requests for research.

addressed the letter to one individual and access was negotiated for both parties, the force and the authority.

Ostander (1995) in her studies with elite groups maintains that while well thought out strategies for gaining access are of an advantage when studying inaccessible groups, 'luck and a willingness to take advantage of opportunities as they arise have proven just as valuable' (Ostander 1995: 25). In my research I found that taking advantages of opportunities offered to me added another dimension to the research that I had originally not thought of. The first Police Authority that I contacted were very prompt in accepting my request to conduct the research and a few weeks after being accepted I set up an initial informal meeting to discuss the research with the Best Value manager who was my main contact. In this meeting he told me that within the next month the HMIC would be conducting their inspections of the first year Best Value reviews and that if I wanted to observe the inspections that they would be happy for my to do this research in their police authority. The HMIC in this region also agreed to this.

Another significant part of the research was to interview people or participants who had a vested interest in developing, monitoring or implementing the policy. I sent a letter to organisations and bodies closely related to the police including the APA, ACPO, the Police Federation and the Audit Commission. Initially I received little response to these requests so then contacted individuals whose names I was given by others included in the research. I had no response from most of the organisations and refusals from others. One example was the Audit Commission who did not feel that they could provide anything valuable to the research. This lack of willingness to get involved in the research could be because these organisations have limited time or they have a large number of request from people completing research.

Barriers to access are not just about obtaining permission to conduct the research but can still emerge once a researcher enters the field (Jupp 1989, Reiner 2000b). One of these problems is with gathering access to information and data once in the field. Horton and Smith (1988) in their research on evaluating police work found that although they were given permission for the research by the chief constable

they experienced difficulties in gathering the information at the lower level. This was because the research was conducted at a sub-division of the force that was nominated for the project rather than asked whether they wanted to take part. Also they argue that as participation in the research was voluntary and up to individual officers this caused a further constraint to the research. The reluctance of front-line police officers to be included in this research could be due to the critical nature of previous research conducted with those in the lower ranks.

I experienced similar problems within my own research. Despite being granted authorisation to conduct the research and providing a research proposal several avenues were closed to me. I had difficulty in accessing particular groups within the police service and was not provided with direct access to individuals. A member of the Best Value team or an individual's secretary made appointments for me. Within the Police Authority areas I was not provided with direct contact details unless the person had already given their permission for these to be passed on or if another respondent provided me with information. In one of the authority areas this is how I made most of the appointments, through another participant who said that I should also speak to this person or that. Then the respondent would usually mention my name and make them aware of the research I was conducting and often they would agree to participate. This type of obstruction is common for outsiders who are often not aware who to speak to in the research arena and are reliant on those within the field to provide details. As Hughes notes

'A more personalised mode of access often involves a designated 'chaperone' to escort the researcher down the metaphorical 'corridors' of the research process. Such access may also be very restricted in that despite the apparent openness, in reality the researcher is sent down the wrong corridors into cul-de-sacs and/or the personalised chaperone controls the nature of the information gathered' (Hughes 2000: 240).

When the research began I had the idea of introducing a questionnaire to staff to gauge their views of Best Value and whether they thought that it had made improvements to the service they provide and to assess how Best Value had affected their work. It was soon discovered after gaining access to the Police Authority areas that this would either not be practical or was not viewed favourably by the police service. One of the difficulties was that in the context of

Best Value the force have to consult with stakeholders and this will nearly always include staff. Frontline staff were frequently asked to fill out and return questionnaires so they were unlikely to want to complete another questionnaire. Another issue was that in all of the authority areas the Best Value stressed that frontline staff had little knowledge of Best Value or what it was and was supposed to achieve and a questionnaire would therefore be arbitrary. For these reasons the authority areas were also reluctant to allow this. In this respect they prevented me from applying a research strategy, which could have been valuable to the research.

I did manage to conduct some discussions with staff in Sunnydale Constabulary but this was only because a senior manager I was interviewing suggested it and the staff were still continuing with their daily activities. For example, one respondent who was deemed suitable to speak to me had to keep returning to their daily duty of answering incoming calls. Also, I was allocated time to see Best Value staff but again this was in an office situation so it was difficult to conduct the interview with other workers surrounding us. They then took me for lunch as a group in the canteen and discussed some of the issues with Best Value here. It was in these informal discussions with staff that some significant issues were raised and lines of enquiry established.

Although provided with official access to conduct the research in general, the problems I faced were similar to other experiences of research within the police service in the past (see Brown 1996, Jupp 1989, Punch 1979 Reiner 200b). Access is provided but only on a superficial level. Each authority to a certain extent did control whom I spoke to although I did request to interview certain people and this was generally allowed I was rarely provided with details to contact them myself. This did create some complications. At times people would either forget to put the appointment in their diaries or they would have another more important engagement. Because respondents did not have a direct contact number for me or I for them they could not, or failed to, inform me of changes to their schedule. On a few occasions I turned up to appointments only to be told that the person was no longer available or not present. This was frustrating, particularly when I had travelled some distance to conduct interviews. In one case a respondent who I did actually have direct contact with arranged a meeting at a set point in central

London but then forgot to turn up. The respondent was apologetic and rearranged the interview. This issue was that when interviews had to be rescheduled this was at great cost to me in terms of time and resources. In most cases I did confirm appointments prior to attending and contacted secretaries one or two days prior to interviews to confirm arrangements. Despite these complications the contacts that I made were very helpful in assisting setting up appointments for me, assisting me with the research and providing information. Also I was studying an organisation that is a busy and in demand public service, so my research was probably not at the top of their agenda.

Another well known barrier one faces when conducting research within the police service, is being provided with the official line or members of the organisations attempting to hide from view their real feelings or opinions. This can happen to a researcher no matter what their position and has been seen as a common problem in this type of research (Brown 1996, Holloway 1983, Reiner 1991, Reiner 2000b, Sheptycki 1994). Punch's (1979) research into the work of police officers in Amsterdam reflected that little corruption was present at the station where he was undertaking observational work and it was not until leaving the field and a corruption scandal appeared in the press that Punch realised that the officers he had been working with had been engaged in a form of 'impression management' where reality is masqueraded. Reiner (1991) argued that impression management could be as a result of police suspiciousness of academics who have sometimes been viewed as very critical of the police service. However, he felt that in general most of the chief constables he interviewed gave honest and open answers. Weatheritt (1986) remarks that often academic accounts of policing have tended to provide 'less-than-flattering accounts' of police activity. Although police research has developed and is now often done with their co-operation at times there was a tendency for respondents to not be critical of their own authority areas.

When identifying a specific problem with Best Value some respondents were cautious not to relate the issues to their own circumstances and surroundings. They would state rather that 'well I know one force where this happened, but not here'. There were a couple of occasions where the respondent was anxious that what they said should be confidential and in no way could be related back to them.

During one interview with a senior manager, he asked how I was going to use the interview and that he would tell me something but that he really did not want it coming back to him. He continued to stress not that he would not be open about his opinion if anyone asked but he would rather people did not know. In my own research I did feel that in a few cases there was a tendency for respondents to be highly favourable of the Best Value policy and give a short tailored response rather than their own real perceptions of the policy. To resolve this issue I would often repeat a questions or ask them what they personally thought of a specific aspect of Best Value or ask additional questions to try to obtain further information. In addition, I continued to emphasis how important their views were in the research and in order to provide an accurate account. I also treated all respondents patiently and courteously when asking questions and conducting the interview. Before each interview I attempted to make respondents feel at ease by providing them with a brief overview of the research and explaining why their open and honest responses were valuable. I also made respondents aware that they could stop the interview at any time or ask me any questions they wished relating to the research. In general I felt that the majority of respondents answered the questions as openly and widely as they possibly could.

Knowledge

A number of researchers (Ostrander 1995, Thomas 1995) argue that when studying elite groups it is necessary to appear knowledgeable about the subject of one's enquiry. For my own research I found this particularly relevant not just when studying those who held senior positions but also when conducting interviews with staff. In terms of discussing Best Value with senior officials such as those from the Home Office or ACPO it was necessary to demonstrate that I had an in-depth awareness of Best Value policies. In one interview with a senior official the changes and current developments within Best Value were frequently raised and the respondent went to great lengths to update me on what was happening in the policy arena. I attempted to draw the participant back to my questions by telling them that I was already aware of the changes and what I really wanted were their opinions on specific issues. I felt that having an adequate knowledge of policies was essential for some interviews as some of the respondents assumed that I had a

high awareness of polices and therefore went straight on to discuss issues about recent developments that had just occurred. At times other participants would test my knowledge and would mention a specific policy document relating to Best Value and once I clarified that I was aware of it they would continue with what they were saying.

I also found that while conducting my research my previous experience of working with the police service was valuable. Often respondents would use acronyms and abbreviations which I would not have known if I had had no previous experience of the police service. In this sense a number of respondents assumed that I would have knowledge or be aware of what they were discussing. My own experience of the police service enabled me to understand situations or events to which some respondents were referring. This meant that during the interview I did not have to stop to ask the participant questions about their response.

Ethical Considerations

Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured for all research participants. Before starting the interview each respondent was informed about the nature of the research and how the findings would be used. They were also asked whether they would mind having the interview recorded. In order to retain confidentiality and anonymity all of the police forces were provided with pseudonyms, interviewees have also only been referred to in relation to their role. To ensure the anonymity of the police force, internal documents have also had to be excluded from the bibliography.

Conclusions

Before beginning this research I was aware that the police service like other criminal justice agencies presents a number of dilemmas for the researcher and that I would probably confront a number of barriers. During the course of my research I experienced some obstacles. I was able to locate and include the Police Authority areas with relative ease but access had to be continually negotiated. I was not able to directly contact individuals and the police forces decided with whom I was able

to speak. Although I experienced difficulties in gaining access, being persistent, keeping in constant contact with the three police authority areas helped me to overcome some of the obstacles I faced. Irrespective of these problems it has to be noted that most of those interviewed within the study demonstrated an interest in what I was doing and a willingness to be included. Many respondents were also happy to discuss the issues with me and on a number of occasions I was offered subsequent assistance should I require it. I managed to establish a rapport with respondents by explaining to them why I was conducting the research, that I was going to ask them a series of questions and assuring them that anything they told me would be in confidence.

Using a number of research methods helped me to address the research questions I set. The performance data provided an indication whether there had been any improvements in service delivery since the introduction of Best Value. While the qualitative data enabled me to understand how the policy was working in practice and whether the policy was achieving its goals. The interviews allowed me to determine how people in the organisation were interpreting and understanding Best Value. The use of other qualitative data such as documents helped to clarify comments made in interviews and provided information on what changes were occurring because of the policy. Overall the use of a number of methods enabled me to gain a broader picture of the effect of Best Value on the police service. The next three chapters outline the main findings that emerged from this research.

Chapter Four

Implementing Best Value in the Police Service: Towards a Uniform Approach

One of the original fundamental principles of Best Value was that its development should not be uniform and individual authorities were encouraged to develop their own approaches when implementing the policy. One of the main aims of the empirical research was to examine the ways in which the police service was interpreting and applying Best Value, the approaches they took and what difficulties they encountered when trying to set up the regime.

The aim of this chapter is to consider the guidance offered to Police Authorities in terms of preparing for and introducing the Best Value Review framework.¹ It will examine how each of the case study areas implemented the Best Value Review framework taking into account some of the difficulties they experienced such as applying the four Cs methodology and creating an appropriate role for the Police Authority. In addition comments and issues raised by the HMIC responsible for inspecting the Best Value reviews will be examined. It will be argued that while Police Authorities were allowed to interpret Best Value in their own way in reality a fairly uniform approach has emerged.

Implementing the Policy: Preparing for Best Value

As mentioned above one of the fundamental principles of Best Value reviews was that authorities, both local and police, should be allowed to decide how they would review services and what methodology they would apply, provided it was rigorous and led to service improvements. The principle being that they could develop a flexible framework that would enable them to improve service at a local level (Freer 1998,

1. Best Value as a whole also requires that Police Authorities and police services develop a Best Value Performance Plan, which provides details of their performance in the past year, assesses current performance and outlines future priorities and targets. These will not be discussed here mainly because little reference was made to them within the research and most respondents had little knowledge of them and secondly performance improvement will be discussed in subsequent chapters. When respondents refer to Best Value their views relate to the Best Value review process.

Martin and Davies 2001). Geddes and Martin (2001) emphasise that all of the documentation surrounding Best Value including the White Paper and associated consultation papers direct Local Authorities towards developing their own approach to Best Value. Geddes and Martin and the team at Warwick Business School responsible for evaluating the pilot Best Value programme identified a number of different approaches to Best Value.

Despite this early emphasis on local adaptability and pilot programmes employing their own methodologies, it has been suggested that the emphasis on local involvement was an attempt to disguise or hide the central thrust of the regime. Geddes and Martin (2000:381) for example, stated that local representatives were not satisfied with various elements of the legislative framework such as requirement to set targets that were comparable with the top 20 to 25% performing authorities. But the legislative process overtook the pilot work and decisions about how the framework would be implemented were already determined. Geddes and Martin (2000) emphasise that despite some moves towards local autonomy Best Value provides the possibility of increased central control. Barlett et al (1999) argue that whilst the policy process is fluid, if Local Authorities did not find innovative ways of applying Best Value then this would lead to further central influence.

Another plausible explanation for the move towards uniformity is that since the introduction of Best Value, Authorities have adapted their methodologies as they have learned through their own and other Authorities' experiences. This was the original intention of the pilot programme to examine how the policy could be adapted to yield the best results. As will be discussed, in this chapter Police Authorities did experience a number of difficulties and obstacles when implementing Best Value and it could be suggested that advancing towards a relatively standardised approach was negotiated rather than enforced. These issues will be discussed in relation to the empirical data derived from the case study areas and in conjunction with other documentary evidence.

Police Authorities the Initial Guidance and Approaches to Best Value

For Police Authorities at the beginning of the Best Value process there was a similar emphasis on individual interpretation. As stated in a Home Office research publication;

‘the legislation and guidance deliberately do not prescribe what mechanisms and techniques are needed to deliver Best Value. Instead, along with other public service providers, Police Authorities and forces must decide how best to establish their strengths and weaknesses; how to benchmark; what consultation methods to use; how to produce and carry forward actions plans and so on’ (Leigh et al 1999: v).

The guidance offered to the police service was offered in briefing notes and made suggestion on how the police service might implement Best Value. In terms of developing a Best Value review methodology it is emphasised;

‘Authorities have the scope to arrange their programme in a variety of ways to best suit local conditions and needs. This will mean that across the country there will be a variety of different focuses for individual review (e.g. function, geographical area, process, customer base etc.) with a consequent variation in the elements that would most appropriately comprise or deliver a Best Value review’ (Home Office 1999b:1).

This was acceptable providing authorities applied the four Cs and had a set viable methodology that worked for them. Other crucial elements of the Best Value review process was they must take into account the three Es when conducting reviews. Furthermore any efficiency gains resulting from the reviews should be fed back into the efficiency plan. The Best Value reviews also must take account of performance and they are encouraged to set targets to demonstrate that improved performance will be achieved. Finally the changes emerging from Best Value are to be monitored on a regular basis.

The briefing notes also identified that Police Authorities must establish a suitable role for themselves. It is stated that 'Best Value represents a significant test of the Police Authority role but also represents a real opportunity. It is Police Authorities who will have to set and drive forward the Best Value agenda locally' (Home Office 1999c: 1). The same briefing paper also states that 'Best Value will mean a step change in the way Police Authorities operate. Authorities will need to be much more closely involved in reviewing the quality and effectiveness of every aspect of the performance of their forces' (Home Office 1999c: 1).

It is acknowledged within the guidance that Police Authorities will have to work jointly with their police forces to develop a programme of reviews, and that they will have to develop a close relationship in order to make Best Value work. It is also seen as a role for the whole authority the document reads 'It is important that the whole Authority is committed to achieving Best Value and that all members, working closely with the force, are able to play a full role in reaching decisions and monitoring progress' (Home Office 1999b: 1).

Other key responsibilities and issues that Police Authorities are encouraged to think about are how they are organised and whether they will need to change their structure to deal with Best Value. Other factors that they are encouraged to address are how they consult with people and how many resources they will put into Best Value. Generally from reading this brief guidance offered to Police Authorities the expectation is that authorities will have a substantial role in developing and contributing to the Best Value process and in making assessments about what they need to do to achieve service improvements.

To examine how the police service adopted the Best Value framework three case study areas were selected. As Police Authorities were encouraged to develop their own approaches to Best Value reviews, the aim of the research was to examine in what ways this was achieved. Did they, like the Local Authorities in the pilot studies, adopt different strategies towards the Best Value review process, was an appropriate role

established for the Police Authority and how did they consider efficiency and performance when conducting reviews and how did they monitor the changes. What difficulties did Police Authorities face when implementing Best Value and how were these to be overcome?

The Case Study Areas

Case Study 1 Sunnydale

Situated in the South West region of England this county is mainly rural with some urban areas. It covers a large geographical area and contains some major traffic links. It is divided into three BCU areas and employs in the region of 1,700 staff, with approximately two thirds being police officers and civilians making up the remainder. The crime rate for the county is lower than in other parts of the county. It has a higher than average cost of living. In recent years it has been viewed as a well performing force when compared to similar forces and is in the top 25 % of forces in some of the key performance indicators.

Case Study 2 Eastbrook

Eastbrook Constabulary is situated close to London and is a county with a population of over one million. It is in commutable distance to London making the cost of living there higher than average. Geographically it is made up of both rural and urban areas with some very large towns. It has 10 district and borough councils. It has a number of major roads running through it with travel links to many parts of the country. In terms of staff in total both civilians and police officers there are over 3,000. The county is split into three separate police divisions. In recent years the force has suffered from a recruitment crisis and experienced a shortfall in the number of police officers. Performance of the force has been mainly in the second quartile of forces.

Case Study 3 Westfield

Westfield is located in the east of England and has a population of about half a million. It contains both rural and urban areas. It also has some major traffic links to the rest of the country. The county has a diverse community with some pockets of social deprivation. The Police Authority is separated into three BCUs. The force had approximately 1,600 staff, made up of two thirds police officers and one third civilians. When Best Value was introduced in 1999/2000 Westfield was not seen as performing well and was among the forces in the lower quartile (bottom 25%) nationally for some of the key indicators and public satisfaction within the force had recently declined.

Initial approaches to Best Value

Case Study 1 Sunnydale Police Authority

At the start of the process Sunnydale set up a project plan and board known as the Best Value Board that consisted of both police staff and Police Authority members and completed a corporate review.² The purpose of both was to construct a Best Value framework within which they could operate, to set targets for improvement in line with corporate goals and to develop a performance measurement, to specify and design a Best Value review process and consider a consultation structure.

Sunnydale decided to adopt the Best Value strategy established by Derbyshire, one of the original pilot programmes. Derbyshire's model (see Leigh et al. 1999) proposed the establishment of a separate Best Value section. Subsequently Sunnydale created a separate Best Value Unit responsible for conducting reviews on behalf of the Police Authority. The Best Value Unit consisted of a Best Value manager who was of Chief

² It should be noted that the way that Best Value was implemented was correct at the time of the research but may have subsequently changed.

Inspector rank, a deputy to the manager who was the rank of Inspector and four to five civilian researchers each of whom had separate roles. One person for example was responsible for benchmarking and was responsible for comparing Sunnysdale's structure, performance and process with other Police Authority areas. This Best Value Unit was placed under the umbrella of corporate development.

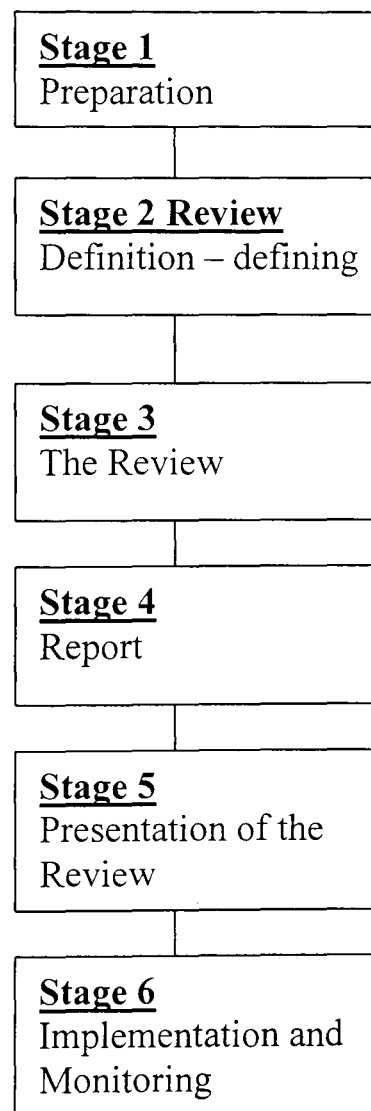
As well as the Best Value Unit and Best Value Board, a Best Value Panel (BVP) was set up. The role of the BVP was to monitor the progress of the Best Value reviews as they were completed. The BVP would include members of the Police Authority, a member of the executive, the Best Value manager who would report on progress to the board and the service manager. It was decided very early on in the process that when the BVP was set up the Best Value Board was no longer required and this was disbanded. The BVP was made up of Police Authority members and consisted of about four Authority members. They had a number of responsibilities including appointing a Police Authority Liaison Officer (PALO) for each review who would act as a liaison between the authority and the Best Value Unit and agreeing the terms of reference for Best Value reviews. Once the reviews were completed they would also be responsible for examining the recommendations suggested and supported by the Force Forum and deciding which ones should be adopted. The Force Forum is made up of the Force Executive (Chief Constable, DCC, ACC), Chair of the Police Authority, Divisional Commanders, staff associations, the Best Value manager and his deputy. The Force Forum deals with strategic and organisational issues for the whole county.

Sunnysdale decided that they would conduct Best Value reviews by examining different functions. This could mean looking at a department or unit that carries out a particular operation such as drugs investigation. To decide what areas were to be reviewed all the functions conducted by the police service were set out in a matrix and assessed on a number of factors. These included resources that went into the departments, the performance of the department or service, whether or not the function had been recently reviewed and how critical they were to the core business of the

police. Once scored all the functions were put into a five-year programme. Sunnydale had 64 Best Value reviews planned over the five-year period.

It was decided that when conducting reviews Sunnydale would base their process on the six-stage methodology designed by Derbyshire Constabulary. This six-stage process is provided in Figure 4 and covers most of the elements suggested in the guidance offered to Police Authorities on what stages a Best Value review might go through.

Figure 4 Sunnydale Police Six-Stage Methodology



At each stage of the review process there are different tasks that are performed. In the first stage of the process a Police Authority liaison member (PALO) is selected by the Best Value Panel and the Best Value Unit identify a key service manager who would usually be a senior manager who had key responsibilities for a department or the service under review. An initial EFQM³ assessment would be conducted to define the terms of reference for each review. The EFQM assessment would provide areas of poor performance or areas of the service that were considered weak. The second stage in the process was for the Force Forum to consider the terms of reference for the BVR and amend them if required and then for the Best Value Panel to approve these. Once these terms of reference were agreed the review team would be responsible for undertaking the Best Value review. This would include carrying out consultation, producing benchmarking data, researching best practice, identifying the cost of service and examining processes, workloads and other relevant data.

Once the review process was concluded the Best Value team would then consider the information collected and develop options for improved service delivery. A member of the Best Value Unit would then, in consultation with the PALO, prepare a report of the review and then forward it to the Force Forum for consideration. Following this the BVP would receive the report and the recommendations of the Force Forum, resolve the recommendations and report to the authority. The final stage of the process is a report on the decisions made by the Police Authority to the Force Forum who are then responsible for deciding on an implementation plan, which will then be passed to the Best Value Manager who is responsible for monitoring the implementation plan and feedback to both the Force Forum and the BVP.

Each Best Value review provided background data on the service or function being reviewed, the current level of provision and in which ways it is delivered. The methodology is outlined in terms of how the four Cs have been applied. The findings

³ EFQM means European Foundation of Quality Management or is also known as Business Excellence Model (BEM) see Bland (1997). The model is used to assess organisational success by examining certain criteria such as leadership, processes and key performance results. It is also used to help organisations improve. For more information see Leigh et al. (1999).

are then provided. Costed options for change are presented outlining both the advantages and the disadvantages of the options for change, as well as what benefits the recommendations would bring and possible shortcomings.

Implementation plans were drawn up after the Force Forum and the Best Value Panel decided what options to change would be taken forward. These were then advanced to service managers who would be responsible for implementation. There was no information on the implementation plans with regard to costs or performance.

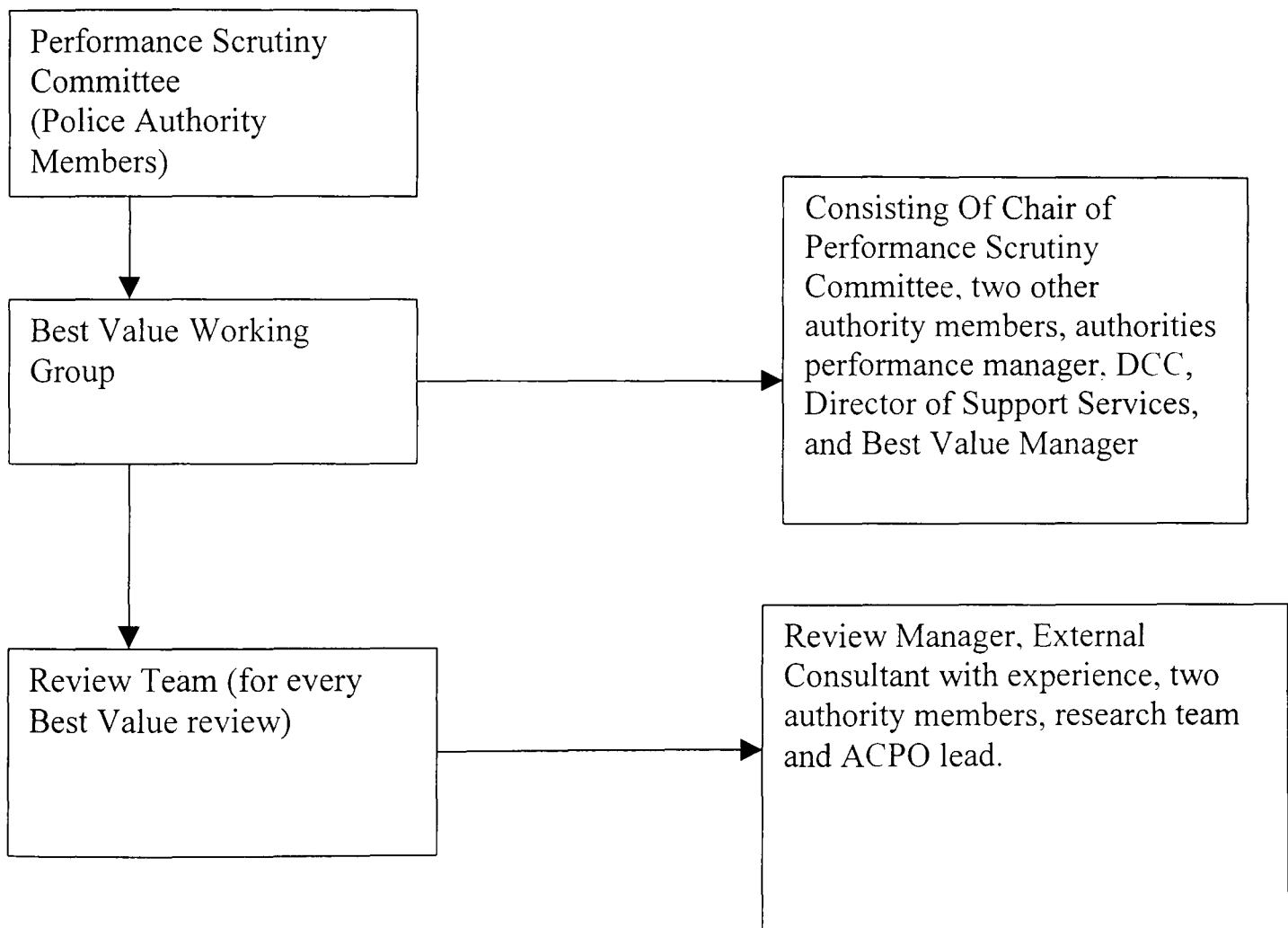
Best Value was quite well publicised by Sunnydale Constabulary and there were road shows about what Best Value would possibly mean for them and how it would effect them. Information about Best Value and the Best Value unit was also provided on the intranet. Staff were also interviewed and questioned by those conducting the reviews either to look at the way they were presently working or how the service could be changed.

Case Study 2: Eastbrook Constabulary Best Value process

In a similar manner to Sunnydale, Eastbrook Constabulary also established a central team, the lead member of which was a civilian senior manager, his assistant, who was of chief inspector level and a small team of four to five researchers who were there to support the Best Value process. In terms of deciding on what reviews to complete they also conducted a corporate review using set criteria to enable them to set a programme of Best Value reviews over the five-year period. In Eastbrook process-led reviews were preferred. The aim was to examine what improvements could be made to existing processes in order to improve them, what changes would be made to make the way that crime was detected or how public safety was promoted. An example of changes implemented to address these two issues was the introduction of a new policing style which was seen as a better way of detecting crime and promoting public safety. In the five-year plan there were a total of 22 reviews to cover all the processes involved in policing.

The Police Authority were integrated from the start of the Best Value process and at least two members were involved in each of the first year of the Best Value Reviews. The Authority decided to employ a Best Value officer whose role was to enhance the working relationship between the constabulary and the authority and to provide advice and information to Authority members on the Best Value process. The committee structure for decision-making is illustrated in Figure 5.

Figure 5 Eastbrook Constabulary Committee Structure.



The Best Value Review Process

The Best Value process for Eastbrook is similar to that of Sunnydale. Initially a loose scope was drafted to be agreed by authority and constabulary members. It would be

e-mailed to the senior management team that included divisional commanders and heads of departments. It would also be forwarded to the Chief Officers, including all members of ACPO. Then to the Best Value Working Group (BVWG) consisting of the chair of the Police Authority committee, two other authority members, the Deputy Chief Constable, the director of support services and the Best Value manager. If agreed this would form the basis of the review.

Once the scope was agreed the review process would begin and be completed within the set time scale. Updates of the review would be done on a monthly basis to the BVWG. Once the review was completed with recommendations in a preliminary format this would be forwarded to the Senior Management Team (SMT) for comment, the chief officers' meeting (COM) would also receive and be able to comment on the Best Value review and provide feedback to the Best Value team. Following this it would be presented to the BVWG with the feedback from chief officers. When this stage was completed it would be forwarded to all Authority members for comment. As soon as feedback was made by all of these groups, it would be passed back to the review team to revise the report, taking into account the suggestions that had been made. This would then form the final report that would again be forwarded and discussed by all the groups mentioned above before finally reaching the Police Authority committee who would agree the recommendations and implementation plan.

In terms of conducting the Best Value reviews each review in the first year of the Best Value process in Eastbrook was conducted by a service manager usually of the rank of superintendent or an equivalent civilian post. The Best Value team who provided research support, information and completed tasks such as the consultation exercises would assist them. Reviews again were conducted utilising the Best Value methodology and applying the four Cs in the reviews. The process of applying the four Cs was similar to that of Sunnydale.

In terms of providing staff with information or knowledge about Best Value this was not deemed necessary by the Eastbrook Best Value team and Executive and initially little effort was made in providing any information across the Constabulary

There is a lack of evidence concerning what format early implementation plans took. The HMIC in their inspections of the first year reviews concluded that there was no formal process whereby the Authority gave formal approval to an improvement plan. Recommendations were adopted without the authority's knowledge and based entirely on decisions made by the Constabulary. As there was no formal monitoring process there was no information provided concerning the potential efficiency savings or what potential improvements in service might be made.

Case Study Three: Westfield Constabulary and Police Authority

Westfield Constabulary varied quite considerably in their first year from the other two case study areas and preliminary attempts to implement Best Value were hampered by the lack of enthusiasm from the Executive. Their approach was to employ a Best Value manager who would be responsible for implementing the legislation in the constabulary with another two or three staff. There was no distinct role for the Police Authority initially and they were not really included at all in the Best Value process, but were kept at arms' length.

There were similar difficulties in terms of deciding what approach to take when completing Best Value reviews. They used an existing methodology that had been used in the organisation by the corporate development department labelled Business Process Reengineering (BPR) an activity applied to internal services to look at more effective and efficient ways of delivering them. This methodology did not incorporate the four Cs or apply them in any manner although the Best Value team did attempt to apply the four Cs and began to develop their own methodology. In essence in the first year of Best Value in Westfield there was no formal structure or approach to implementing Best Value.

Difficulties Experienced in Implementing Best Value

The HMIC during the early inspection of the first year Best Value reviews revealed a number of common problems that the police service were experiencing in terms of implementing Best Value. These included their inability to develop an appropriate Best Value methodology to conduct reviews, failing to adequately apply the four Cs and not defining an appropriate role for the Police Authority (Todd 2002). Other comments made by the HMIC were related to the implementation plans and the lack of information on these and the monitoring of them.

Establishing an appropriate methodology

Innovative approaches to Best Value were to be underpinned by a well-developed and established methodology. As can be seen from case study areas Police Authorities' ability to achieve this varied. As can be identified from Westfield Constabulary they used a methodology that was not specifically tailored for Best Value. Places that put in place a rigid methodology from the beginning such as Sunnydale Constabulary were praised by the HMIC for demonstrating good practice. Eastbrook Constabulary were also praised for their methodology. The HMIC did raise the issues that differing approaches did make it difficult for them to make judgements in terms of improvements and comparison because different services were being reviewed at different times by different forces.

Lack of guidance

A common grievance for those interviewed was the lack of guidance offered about how to implement Best Value. Many respondents believed that the guidance that had been offered to them in the early stages of Best Value was very poor and many felt that this hampered their ability to effectively apply Best Value.

‘Well I can remember and I suppose that would have been April 1999, I was at a seminar at Hendon which was about Best Value and there was somebody I think she was from the Audit Commission talking about Best Value, and it was clear that she did not have very much idea about what it meant. A lot of the responses to the questions from the floor from senior officers, who were concerned because it was coming our way. She said ‘well that is yet to be decided and we have not received any guidance from the government on this’ and frankly I thought this is ludicrous. One minute we are being asked to go down a particular path here but there wasn’t any guidance from the government well certainly not firm guidance. Well there was some guidance in the early stages but there were fairly loose comments like well that has yet to be decided or not quite sure. But when I started this off (means conducting a Best Value review) I just felt there is an element of making this up as I go along here. In time various bits of guidance appeared and we did our best to try and comply with that but it was almost a bit cart before horse sort of thing where we seemed to be going wrong and then all of a sudden a bit of guidance would come out. It was always like there was a haste to get things going and pressure from the government to do that without quite having decided quite what the rules were going to be. So I do not think that it got off to a particularly good start’ (Senior Manager, Eastbrook Constabulary).

Not only did it create difficulties for Police Authorities in terms of employing the policy but it also made them sceptical about Best Value.

‘There is some good practice emerging although the lack of guidance has been chaotic and rather than be sent out guidance has been allowed to emerge. This does not advocate good business. Private companies would not wait to see how the best were doing before they developed their practice. The lack of guidance has not given Best Value a good name. This means that those who are cynical about it have been able to rubbish it because of the way that it has been resolved and the weakness in the way that it has been administered’ (HMIC Inspector 02).

This lack of guidance led to a number of interpretations of Best Value in Local Authorities. Although this was in the spirit of the policy it was stressed that this also led to difficulties for both the police service and the HMIC in terms of inspecting the Best Value process. The HMIC found it difficult to make any comparisons between Police Authority areas because of these variations. When discussing the introduction of Best Value into the police service an HMIC inspector made these remarks:

‘The inspection process has been a difficult and torturous one particularly as there has been no attempt to prescribe how to conduct a review. The whole process has been a shambles from the start. There has been no proper guidance, it has been

lacking. There is no guidance on how to put a programme of reviews. This has also resulted in poorly conducted reviews' (HMIC Inspector 01).

Insufficient direction was also thought to have created difficulties for forces in trying to develop and decide on how to conduct Best Value reviews and was seen as one of the primary reasons for the police service in failing to effectively implementing Best Value.

'Some forces have had difficulties in getting to grips with Best Value. Some reviews have been structured and have set methodologies and are therefore easy to assess for example you may be able to see the efficiency savings and the costs that might have been saved. In other forces it might not be so easy. It is important to remember that everyone is different and that the guidance from the Home Office and the Audit Commission are not very good. There has not been a great deal of guidance about how forces should implement it and there have been cases where Best Value reviews have had to be done again. But this typifies the arrogance of government with everything else they employ. The guidance is usually slow at coming out' (HMIC Inspector 03).

Establishing the Role of the Police Authority

As identified above a key aspect of implementing Best Value was for Police Authorities to establish an appropriate role within the Best Value process. An HMIC inspector reported one of the emerging themes from the initial inspections on the first year of Best Value was that there were different degrees of engagement in the process by the Police Authorities (Todd 2002: 40). Developing an appropriate role for the Police Authority was not a clear-cut process particularly in the police service because of the issues of operational independence and the fear that Best Value provided Police Authorities with a greater stake in these operational decisions. There was some evidence to support the view that some members of the police service did have concerns about the Police Authority encroaching on their position.

'It was also hard to establish where the Police Authority fitted in because they were the owners of Best Value and in the initial stages when I was involved in it, it was hard to convince the chief constable and the deputy chief constable. It takes over from the traditional line of operational independence with efficiency and effectiveness

taking over. This was difficult for chief officers to overcome. They had to think about how it would go across the organisation at a strategic level. At first we were sort of operating in a vacuum. The Best Value board which was set up, which I was part of at first, were key in advocating Best Value' (Senior Manager, Sunnydale Constabulary)

'In most forces, Police Authorities have been kept at arms length by chief constables. That has not be the case here as the chief constable is not that kind of manager. Never the less I know that in other authorities there has been a very rigid line and the door has been very firmly locked' (Police Authority Member, Sunnydale Constabulary).

Keeping the Police Authority at a distance was apparent in one of the case study areas. In Westfield in the first year the Police Authority were kept on the periphery of the Best Value process and had little opportunity to get involved.

'Absolutely no. For the first nine months the Police Authority were kept at arms' distance. They were not even involved in the picking of the five-year programme. The five-year programme was picked through consultation done with members of staff across the board in focus groups and that is where the senior executive got what they deemed to be review areas' (Best Value team member, Westfield Constabulary).

The respondent further stated:

'It was not until one dark cold dark night in November, well actually it could have been December, the Police Authority were actually let in the door and then they set up scrutiny panels. By that time there was a feeling from the Police Authority well we have not been involved in this and this is our process and why were you not banging on the door? It was then the review was given to them. The view was even though I kept going to the Dept (DCC) and saying this legislation says that the Police Authority owns it and what are we going to do about it. It was no, no, no this is what we will do and then we will show it to them' (Best Value Team Member, Westfield Constabulary).

The impression provided by the other two case study areas Sunnydale and Eastbrook was that the relationship between them and the Authority was positive and both Authority members and members of the constabulary were satisfied with the level of participation by the Police Authority. It is apparent also from the way that Best Value process was implemented that the Police Authority have always had some level of

involvement in the process. In Sunnydale this inclusion was visible. When the HMIC conducted their inspection the Police Authority were included at every stage and feedback about the results of the inspection were provided to the HMIC and lead Police Authority member at the same meeting. Whereas it was reported in an interview with an HMIC inspector that this was not a general occurrence the chief constable had attempted to intercept some of the findings that were going to be reported back to the Authority following the inspection process.

Most of the respondents regardless of their role in all case study areas did, when interviewed, appreciate the increased role for the Police Authority. They believed them to fulfil both a supportive and challenging function within the Best Value framework and that they were not stepping on the toes of the chief constable's operational independence.

'It is utterly alien as well, this thing of involving the Police Authority because it strays across into operational policing massively. I think it is not so much of a problem here because we have a good relationship with our Police Authority but if you have a bad relationship with your Police Authority you could find this becomes a constitution issue. We have not had that. So it makes a big difference. And Best Value is about challenges and we have introduced a fair bit and the Police Authority has been very supportive. We have involved them right the way through as part of the groups doing our work and we demand a lot from our Police Authority in that respect and they respond to it' (Executive Officer, Eastbrook Constabulary).

'In terms of Police Authorities it did give them more say over what was happening in their force and this can only be a good thing. Police Authorities started to engage more where previously they did not tend to do this. It has given the Police Authority a real role' (HMIC Inspector 02).

This variance in Police Authority involvement could be as a result of different personalities that exist within the police service. Reiner (1991) in his research on Chief Constables identified 'types' of chief constable each with opposing views on police accountability and authorities involvement in it. For example the type that Reiner classifies as 'Baron' sees his role as determining the direction of his police service and getting subordinates including Police Authorities to accept this. In

Westfield Constabulary the relationship and inclusion of the Police Authority in Best Value was more to do with those in position of power within the constabulary. When this changed the relationship with the authority altered and improved leading to a greater role for the Police Authority.

Another difficulty was actually getting Police Authority members to get involved in Best Value. Leigh et al (1999) identified that a common problem that Police Authorities were encountering was that it was being left to a minority of Police Authority members. A member of Eastbrook Constabulary stated,

‘I mean it was actually more difficult to bring all of the Authority members on board because some of those were not actively involved in the first stages and probably just saw a lot of paperwork to do with Best Value reviews at county level. That has improved to but I would say that in the early stages not all Authority members were fully on board and that took some time’ (Police Authority Member, Eastbrook Constabulary).

This was also the view held in Westfield Constabulary that although some members of the Police Authority had been included in the process this had been limited

‘It has not universally gripped every member of the authority. There are certain members that are far more proactive in either volunteering to be either the chair of a scrutiny panel or be represented on a scrutiny panel and I can name the three or four that do that. There are other members that tend to go along to the odd one but do not contribute widely to the review process and there is probably four or five members that have not really engaged with the process. So there is a mix. There is going to be the people who have a real interest and have an experience of Best Value in other public authorities whether it be the public arena or elsewhere’ (Executive Officer, Westfield Constabulary).

Again the level of commitment by the Police Authority could be down to either one or a few members of the Police Authority. In Sunnydale the reason that the majority of the Police Authority got involved in the process was due to one particular member’s enthusiasm:

‘She is the lead person on Best Value. She has been a real champion and she started inspiring everyone about it. Persuading everyone to be liaison officers and

getting us to take it on board and treat it very, very seriously. ***** has been saying get involved in it from the beginning. She really has been wonderful a champion of the cause and pushed it very hard' (Police Authority Member, Sunnydale Constabulary).

In the case studies the level of the involvement from the Authority members was dependent on the relationship with the force and their enthusiasm. Sunnydale Constabulary included their Police Authority from the start and ensured the inclusion of all members so they were aware of Best Value and what their role and duties were with regard to the policy. This was illustrated when during the observation of the Best Value inspections Authority members were well aware of what Best Value was and what had occurred within their constabulary. In the other two case study areas the inclusion of the authority was less apparent.

Applying the four Cs Methodology

When conducting Best Value reviews Police Authorities must apply the four Cs methodology. Certain aspect of the four Cs were anticipated to be problematical to the police service, specifically the challenge aspect. Leigh et al (1999) found from their research prior to the introduction of Best Value a number of concerns were raised about how the four Cs could be applied effectively. In terms of the challenge aspect authorities were unsure about how this should be achieved and there was a belief that this only applied to support services rather than operational matters and they were unsure what the term 'challenge' actually meant. In terms of comparison the greatest concern was reliability of data both internally and externally. Not all data is recorded using the same method and in the same context and this was seen as leading to difficulties. They might compare themselves against other similar forces as dictated by the Home Office⁴ but did they provide the best services? A lack of national standards was seen as making it difficult to benchmark against others (Leigh et al 1999: 52)

⁴ Each of the 43 police forces in England and is split into groups known as force families. They are split into these groups on the basis of similar characteristics such as population and size. These groups are used to assess performance by the Audit Commission and Home Office and look at comparisons.

In terms of consultation Leigh et al (1999) identified that Police Authorities were concerned with over-consulting with diminishing returns on questionnaires or offers to respond to surveys. This was also identified within Local Authorities. Authorities were attempting to find alternative ways to fulfil the consultation element by using techniques such as citizens' panels and focus groups. A key aspect of consultation was to obtain the views of staff.

Competition was seen as the most difficult of the four Cs to apply to police services. They were not expected to open out core service to competition because of the nature of this work. They were however, expected to ensure that when reviewing services they did take into account the efficiency and effectiveness of the service compared to how it was provided elsewhere.

How well the four Cs were actually employed within the police service was debated with respondents specifically the HMIC officers who were responsible for inspecting Best Value reviews. It was emphasised that there was variation in forces' ability to appropriately apply the four Cs methodology

'In terms of challenging why and how this has not been done very well, it hasn't been done in the way that the legislation intended. There has been no challenging of whether they should carry out that function or not. In terms of consultation some have fared better than others have. The public are dying under consultation. You also have to ask how true this consultation actually is. In terms of comparison-reviews undertaken are different in every force, benchmarking also takes extra work. Every force is doing things in different ways so therefore you are not comparing like with like. For example in the firearm review it was difficult for Sunnydale to compare themselves with others because of the unique role that they have due to their special circumstances. BVPIs can capture differences between forces and reviews carried out. In terms of competition this element has been lost. They did compete under CCT but there was not the lack of guidance that there is now. Most are not sure what is meant by it (in the sense of Best Value) and some have just made their own inference from it' (HMIC Inspector 02).

The challenge aspect of the four Cs was seen by the HMIC as being done poorly. It was argued that the police service had not embraced the full meaning of this concept.

In some of the reviews by the case study areas the challenge aspect was merged with the comparison element so that comparing themselves against similar organisations was also seen as challenging, or having members of the Police Authority on the project team was viewed as providing external challenge. One respondent, a service manager in training, discussed the issues of challenge in relation to his experience of the Best Value:

‘The authority said these are the things that we need to look at and they were set around the usual things concerning training and what comes from training i.e. how we identify what the training needs are, how we designed the training product to meet those needs, how we then deliver that training product and how we evaluate it, the usual training cycle. So in terms of the four Cs it was looking at those specific areas of the business rather than training as a function. Now as a consequence some of the more basic aspects that one might expect to be looked at in a Best Value review were not. The most obvious question should be, should we train or don’t we train? But did not form part of their view. There was the assumption ‘well that we have got to train’. Therefore we start of at that level. We are a training provider, therefore we look at how well we do it rather than if we do it at all. So there was that and if you are going to come in cold and do a Best Value review the first question that you need to ask is ‘do you need to do it?’ I do not think that question was asked and if it was asked it certainly was not answered. It has all been our Best Value review internally driven though we do it therefore it is simply a case of how well do we do it or whether we can do it better’ (Senior Manager, Westfield Constabulary).

At the outset making comparisons against other police services and outside organisation was also problematic.

‘Initially there were no mechanisms in place to compare with outside and at first we had to rely on information that other people had put together about their own organisation. Also forces are doing different things at different times and you could therefore not get a comparison. There was also the problem of questionnaire fatigue where forces would receive too many questionnaires from all different areas and on different subjects’ (Best Value Team Member, Sunnysdale Constabulary).

The ability to compare did ease with time as review programmes began to develop and expand. Performance data was frequently used when available to compare against other police forces. Although regional developments did form part of the research, informal discussions with respondents revealed that there were a number of regional

groups who collaborated in how Best Value was conducted and to provide a database of information for regional partners on best practice. Comparisons were also made with outside agencies for both support and core police services. A good illustration of this is comparing how calls are handled by private companies such as banks and insurance agents who also deal with a large volume of calls.

Generally consultation was extensive and incorporated both relevant internal and external groups. All of the three case studies made use of current consultation exercises relevant to the subject area. At times there were criticisms that certain individuals or groups had not been consulted, such as hard to reach groups, but generally this was seen as being the most successfully applied of the four Cs methodology. Westfield Constabulary used postal questionnaires, victim satisfaction surveys, local mobile police stations where residents are invited to provide their views, local forum meetings and beat manager surgeries where locals are encouraged to drop in. There was also evidence that they were attempting or starting to think about hard to reach groups. As stated in their local policing plan 2003-2004, 'we are currently re-assessing our consultation strategy. We want to ensure that consultation is as robust as possible, accesses a diverse population'. This included targeting young people through youth consultation workers and youth forums and setting up focus groups, specifically for ethnic minorities. Consultation was carried out with staff when necessary and was through various forms such as focus groups and questionnaires.

There was also limited evidence that competition had been applied to the police service. Again this could be due to the nature of the services that were being reviewed as most were core services where there was no alternative provider available to supply that particular service or because the police have a legal duty to provide it. The HMIC, although acknowledging the difficulties that the police service encountered in trying to apply the four Cs expressed concern that they were not applied in the way that was intended by the legislation:

‘In terms of competition this has not been applied to all services, only services that are not required by statute. The areas of core policing have not been scrutinised in this way and have not been addressed at all. But more consideration should be given to competition. It should be remembered though that the market might not exist for the service. There may not be private provision in this area’ (HMIC Inspector 02).

The HMIC report ‘What Price Policing’ (1998) emphasised the need for the police service to cost all their activities. This has been slow in developing within forces but again raises a number of issues particularly when larger forces tend to provide more cost-effective services, primarily due to size of the force. In the three case study areas evaluation of the Best Value reviews revealed a lack of information available in terms of costing services particularly when these related to operational policing. Comments in the Best Value reviews were often that there was little or no information to be able to adequately cost services. For the HMIC this was again seen as an area that needed improvement

‘The costing of the review... is an aspect of the process that the authority recognises needs further development. Very little financial input was made to this and other early reviews, something that has improved significantly since, but remains an area where further improvements can be made’ (HMIC Inspection report of Best Value Review, Eastbrook Constabulary).

Monitoring and Implementation

The HMIC during their first year inspections also noted that the monitoring of progress on recommendations had been poor. Police authorities were conducting reviews but then failing to draw up implementation plans or put in place monitoring systems to ensure that changes were being made to enable service improvements. Even when these plans were drawn up there was no way of taking them forward. This was one of the main criticisms of the process within the case study areas that in the early reviews the authorities had failed to set up appropriate monitoring and implementation systems that took into account the efficiency savings that could be made from implementing changes. The authorities were also criticised for not setting targets to ensure that improvements were being made.

There was a realisation from the Best Value teams that this was an area that needed to be improved upon and those responsible for completing Best Value reviews were aware that to begin with they had failed to ensure that proposals for change were driven forward internally. They did note however that it was difficult at times to put into place systems of monitoring in terms of assessing improved performance. Primarily because there was no quantifiable way of measuring whether service improvements could be achieved or proposals for change were longer-term and would not necessarily lead to significant improvements in performance until well into the future.

Bureaucracy

An additional issue for Police Authorities in implementing Best Value was the bureaucracy. Many respondents criticised the way that Best Value had been set up in their own authorities and believed that the process of completing a Best Value review was at times too lengthy and onerous. There were concerns that the process surrounding Best Value was too extensive and undermined positive aspects of the policy.

‘Well the year one and two I think that we set up a nightmare bureaucratic system I think the first year there was little evidence that anything was really happening I think that there was then a demand from the Police Authority that it wanted to see some action. Unfortunately I think what was then put in place was a very bureaucratic framework and there was clearly some need to give some actions to owners throughout the force. I personally do not agree with the way that was done. It was giving the Superintendents of the force responsibility for those actions to their already busy roles that they were doing. I do not think that was appropriate I think it was put in place very bureaucratically’ (Senior Manager, Westfield Constabulary).

Some respondents suggested that by the time the recommendations had been approved through various committees, many of the recommendations had already been completed and at times other developments meant that they were no longer relevant. Provision of feedback on how changes were being implemented was also a

contentious issue. At the beginning of the Best Value process Police Authorities were criticised for not monitoring progress of recommendations. While this was actually occurring and the three case study areas examined had put mechanisms in place to resolve this, it was seen, especially by senior managers as creating a further layer of bureaucracy that actually hampered their ability to do the job. As one senior executive member suggested,

‘I am supportive of Best Value in terms of applying quite a rigid and robust process to review the way that we do our business. I am not sure that it requires the bureaucracy of the reporting mechanisms through the authority, through the audit commission, through the HMI inspections on what we do to make sure that we are actually bringing about step change in an organisation. It strikes me that at times it can be dis-empowering for chief officers rather than empowering for the Authority. I think the fact is that we have a Best Value team that operates very professionally, that produces quality reports and some meaningful recommendations. But what we have to do is report all that through a committee structure of the Police Authority that then goes for independent review with the HMIC and an independent review by district audit. Consequently you get into this process of bureaucracy that doesn't add a great deal of value to the process of the thing initially reviewed. I think that there is a time for rationalising the whole process of Best Value review, not discounting the principles—you know the four Cs principles are a good way of looking at your business’ (Executive Officer, Westfield Constabulary).

It was also apparent from HMIC inspection reports that they were concerned that Police Authorities had become caught up in setting up the process rather than actually thinking about how they could improve service delivery.

Staff expectations and knowledge

Barlett et al (1999) in their evaluation of Best Value in local government pointed out that staff felt threatened by the streamlining effects of Best Value and that it could impact on their employment position. They also suggested that staff had little awareness of Best Value or what it meant for them. This was reflected in the three case study areas. Some respondents argued that at the beginning of the Best Value process staff felt threatened by Best Value because they believed that it would lead to them losing their jobs. Other respondents believed that the Best Value review process

created expectations of major changes or improvements to service that were not necessarily fulfilled and this led to negative views of the policy. In particular, Best Value team members felt frustrated when they had made a number of suggestions for change but these were not implemented. While the impact of Best Value will be discussed in the next chapter it is necessary to note that those most negative towards Best Value were the respondents who were not necessarily included in the process. This made them sceptical about the policy and whether it would have any bearing on the service they provided. It was noted that in Westfield in the first stages of Best Value there was an inadequate level of staff inclusion where even divisional commanders were not consulted about what was happening. However this began to change and when they were consulted about the process, that seemed to have a bearing on how Best Value was accepted within the constabulary.

All of the case studies consulted staff during the course of their reviews but there were variations to how Best Value was presented to staff. In Sunnydale, as noted, there were attempts to market Best Value whereas in the other two case study areas it was not presented at the beginning of the process. Some believed that staff did not necessarily need to be included in the process. This is discussed further in Chapter Six.

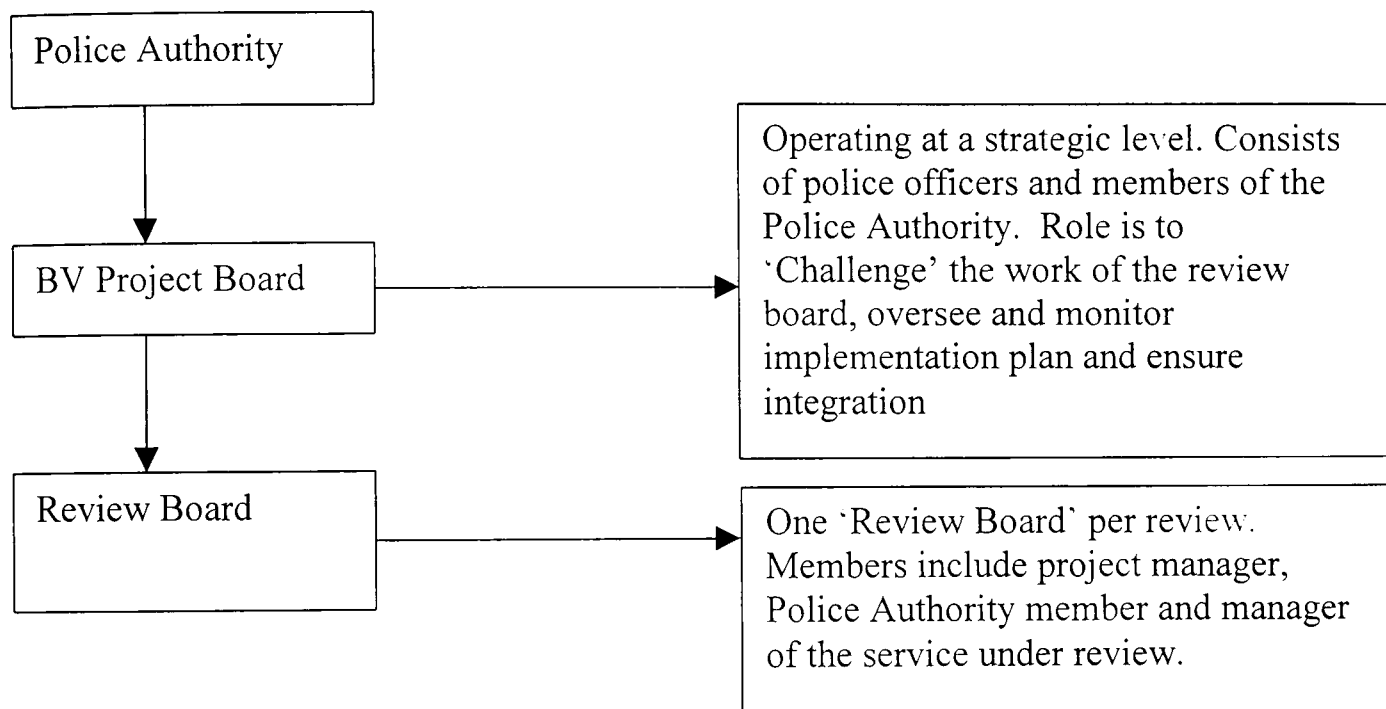
Changes to the guidance and process

While the research was being undertaken changes were made to the legislation and the guidance to Police Authorities. The HMIC who demonstrated concern over the way that Best Value was being implemented in some Police Authority areas composed a toolkit of how Best Value should be implemented (HMIC 2001a). A further change was that the need to review all services over a five-year period was revoked. This meant that Police Authorities no longer had to review all the services they provided but could review services where they felt that most improvements could be made.

The HMIC toolkit was put together in order to provide Police Authorities with advice on how to conduct Best Value reviews. The stages outlined in the toolkit for developing Best Value include establishing a review structure to enable the Best Value reviews to be conducted. They point out that the most common review structure is a three-committee structure (see Figure 6) with the Police Authority placed at the top. The second level included a Best Value project board operating at a strategic level including both police managers and members of the Police Authority. The final level was a review board for each review, consisting of a project manager Police Authority members and manager of the service under review. The HMIC report also suggests that the review teams should be integrated into the mainstream structures of decision-making within the force.

It is also recommended in the HMIC toolkit that the next stage should be deciding on the scope and scale of reviews. It is argued that constabularies should not select small areas to review but opt for larger subject areas, being careful that the area they select is not unmanageable and too wide-ranging, for example crime detection, that involved numerous functions and departments. The next stage of the review as suggested by the HMIC was to compile a service review looking at the level of current service. This is where EFQM was used by the police service to review the existing service to examine areas for improvement. The subsequent stage suggested by the toolkit is the application of the four Cs in the review process, followed by optional appraisal where options for changing the service are put forward taking into consideration how the service and performance can be approved. This includes examining whether any alternative providers can deliver the service better. The final stages proposed by the HMIC toolkit are the signing of the review and the drawing up of an improvement and monitoring plan to keep track of any changes, set up performance targets and time scales for the changes to occur.

Figure 6 Recommended Committee Structure outlined in HMIC Toolkit 2001



Changes to the Best Value Process-The case study areas

In Sunnydale Constabulary the Best Value team were more co-ordinated and rather than have team members undertake specific tasks such as benchmarking they would work on every element of the review. Sunnydale also abandoned their five-year programme of Best Value reviews relatively quickly and attempted to focus on areas of concern or to take into account strategic priorities and be more process-based than functionally based. They also changed the way that they monitored and implemented Best Value reviews making sure that each option for change was provided to an action owner and also put in place a monitoring system so that recommendations could be monitored by the Police Authority.

Eastbrook Constabulary was praised by the HMIC for the way that they conducted reviews. One of the main criticisms of the HMIC of Eastbrook was that their reviews were too wide-ranging and this meant that they had missed some elements which would be suitable for review, particularly support services. This was addressed by the team by attempting to focus on key parts of services or processes such as detecting crime that were seen as weak and where improvements could be made rather than looking at the whole process. They also demonstrated that they have developed the monitoring and implementation of the recommendations of Best Value. In addition, they had begun to develop a system of doing this appropriately taking into account costs, efficiency gains, targets and that fed into the overall planning process. A marketing strategy was produced and work was going to be publicised internally to staff to provide them with information about the teams work and what they were trying to achieve. They also stopped using senior managers to lead Best Value reviews as it was found that this created too much work for them. Instead they employed 'experts' or someone with a knowledge of the area. On many occasions this would be either an ex-police officer or external consultant who was known to the authority. The Best Value team they remained as a unit. Feedback on the review process suggests they felt that they could have had more inclusion in running the reviews. Eastbrook Constabulary also developed a Best Value practitioner's guide for anyone conducting a Best Value review.

Most changes occurred within the Westfield Constabulary at the end of the first year when the fieldwork was completed. There was a much more formal process put in place and responsibility for Best Value was incorporated into the Corporate Development department rather than an individual team of a few people. The Police Authority were also provided with a more proactive role; they were included in the Best Value review and they also formed a Scrutiny Panel that met monthly and consisted of Police Authority members, a Best Value review team member, an executive member, a financial representative, a human resources representative, a senior user (usually a senior manager) and representative from a staff association.

Westfield drew up a seven-stage methodology similar to the other case study areas and in accordance with the HMIC toolkit. As the Best Value manager stated they were influenced both by the HMIC toolkit and other ongoing best practice that was identified throughout the police service. They did change the format of their team and instead of a fully dedicated team they integrated Best Value team members into the wider corporate development department and staff would conduct Best Value reviews alongside their other work within the department. This did create some difficulties within the service as one manager commented when their department was subject to a Best Value review they were unaware of who was responsible as different members of staff had been involved at different times and they were not sure with whom to communicate.

As with the other two Authorities they had began to market themselves throughout the constabulary using the staff intranet. Monitoring and implementation had also advanced with the introduction of the Performance Improvement Pro Forma (Appendix D) where each recommendation is summarised including who is responsible for taking it forward, the possible benefits, actions to be taken forward, and progress made against the actions. Action owners are generally service managers and they are responsible for feeding back progress to the Corporate Development department.

Many of these changes took place prior to the guidance issued in 2003 (Home Office 2003a). What can be identified from this guidance is that it does attempt to alleviate some of the problems that Police Authorities faced during their attempts to implement Best Value, such as how to conduct reviews. Many forces were finding that when they conducted Best Value reviews if this was done on small scale, as in Sunnydale, the resources put into the reviews were not necessarily reflected in the recommendations and often the suggestions for change were limited. Other issues that were addressed through the legislation were issues such as ensuring staff were fully aware of the policy and were provided with information about what was happening.

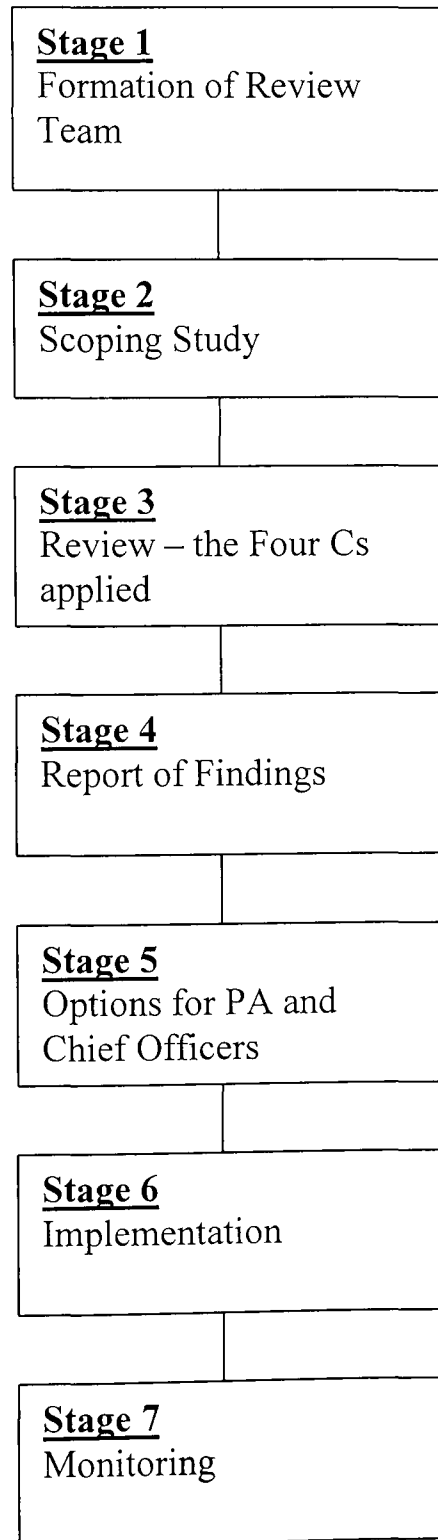
In the Local Government Act 1999 (HMSO 1999) it is stated that when thinking about how to fulfil the duty of Best Value authorities must consult:

- (a) representatives of persons liable to pay any tax, precept or levy to or in respect of the authority:
- (b) representatives of persons liable to pay non-domestic rates in respect of any area within which the authority carries out functions:
- (c) representatives of persons who use or are likely to use services provided by the authority: and
- (d) representatives of persons appearing to the authority to have an interest in any area within which the authority carries out functions (Local Government Act 1999, section 3)

In the most recent guidance this requirement has been extended to consult staff, staff of recognised trades unions and representatives of staff associations (Home Office 2003a: 3, section 3).

In terms of the four Cs the guidance provides greater detail of what questions should be asked in terms of consultation and is a reflection of comments made throughout the HMIC inspection reports. There is also a new emphasis on collaboration as a fifth C, something highlighted by the HMIC officers interviewed: Police Authorities are encouraged to conduct reviews in collaboration with other Police Authorities that may be situated close to them or have common interests. There is an emphasis on collaborating with Local Authorities and other key organisations and authorities on strategic issues such as crime and disorder so that it can be dealt with on a county basis with all partners.

Figure 7 Westfield Seven-Stage Best Value Review Process



Again there is evidence to suggest that this was already occurring in some authority areas. For example in Sunnydale, in their Best Value review of Scientific Support in

the second year, one of the main suggestions was that they examined the possibility of collaborating with other constabularies in providing scientific support services in partnership. Sunnydale has also completed a crosscutting review on community safety in alliance with the Local Authority. Westfield had collaborated with another constabulary in fleet provision.

It could be argued that the guidance on the way to conduct Best Value reviews was not simply enforced but done through a process of learning by the Police Authorities, through the experience of the HMIC when conducting Best Value inspections and discussions by key players in policing policy. It was also evident from the problems experienced within the three case study areas and from talking to respondents both formally and informally that guidance was welcomed. This could be because Police Authorities through the guidance finally have some indication of what Best Value is and what is expected of them. This was reflected in comments made by the respondents and in the HMIC annual report:

‘In the spirit of continuous improvement, in January 2000, with the benefit of the lessons from the early inspections, HMIC updated the guidance and expanded it significantly to provide advice on all stages of the process, including reviewing. The Best Value toolkit does not amount to mandatory direction, but is intended to help forces by setting out proven good practice. It has been welcomed by Police Authorities and the Best Value practitioners within forces and will continue to be updated as further good practice is identified’ (HMIC 2002: 22).

‘Central government and this government in particular has had some very definite ideas and once they get an idea in their head ... they are going down a certain route, any Police Authority or constabulary would be stupid not to go wholeheartedly in opposition to it. But before anything goes out there is usually some indication that the government are thinking this way; it comes out from the Home Office comes to the APA and then we cascade it down into the force through ACPO and into the Police Authority. That has been really excellent we get information very quickly. Within one or two days of it coming out of the Home Office, it is in this Authority and we are thinking about it. We do try to influence it if we do not like it and we do say ‘look we do not like this it, is not a good idea’ but once it has gone through that process or comes out as a directive or in a White Paper or something like that quite obviously we have to go along with that idea whether we like it or not. But nearly always with everything coming in there is some form of mechanism that can influence it’ (Police Authority Member, Sunnydale Constabulary).

There is a possibility that recent guidance issued to Police Authorities could result in further uniformity and take ownership of Best Value away from local Police Authorities, which had been the original justification for not providing governmental direction. The initial guidance emphasises that Best Value is to be achieved locally and meet the needs of local people. The most recent guidance issued three years into the process emphasised that 'Best Value must provide local people with policing services which meet national aspirations and strategic priorities as set out in the 'National Policing Plan' (Home Office 2003b). The Home Secretary also retains the ability to decide on which reviews are carried out within a financial period. This has already been achieved through the National Best Value Review of Training and could be extended to cover other functions in a bid to ensure national standards.

Conclusions

In order to investigate how the police service implemented Best Value three case study areas were selected. The aim was to examine whether different approaches to Best Value were adopted as this was an underlying principle of the policy. The assumption was that Police Authorities would develop a range of methods to employ Best Value. What emerged from the case studies was that initially Police Authorities were approaching Best value in a number of ways. Sunnyside put a significant effort into establishing an appropriate methodology as soon as they were aware that Best Value was being implemented and set up adequate structures to establish a role for the Police Authority and include them in the Best Value review and decision-making processes. Westfield on the other hand failed to set up any formal structures and relied on an internal review process that was already established.

All of the Police Authorities experienced some difficulties when implementing Best Value, including dealing with the bureaucracy of the policy, correctly applying the four Cs, having the suitable information and data to achieve this and establishing an appropriate role for the Police Authority. Many respondents argued that these

difficulties emerged because of the lack of guidance but could also have been due to a lack of enthusiasm on the part of the police service and because of fear about letting the Authority get too involved, as demonstrated by Westfield in the early stages. HMIC inspectors interviewed stated that some Authorities had been more successful than others in adopting Best Value and that diverse approaches made it more difficult for them to make judgements about the success of the policy.

The difficulties experienced by the inspectorate were instrumental in the development of the HMIC toolkit, which guided authorities on how Best Value should be approached. This toolkit assisted and led to changes in the way that Westfield in particular approached Best Value and they used it to develop their process, as did Eastbrook Constabulary. Sunnydale was already seen as an example of good practice, and the toolkit nearly mirrored their approach. Although the toolkit influenced how Best Value was adapted too, it was acceptable to the case study areas. They complained of the lack of guidance from the centre and reflected how earlier guidance would maybe have prevented some of the mistakes they made initially. This suggests that the Police Authority were keen to adopt the preferred model favoured by the Home Office and HMIC. It also indicates that the Best Value has been very much integrated and internalised into the police service.

Chapter five

Can Best Value Lead to an Improvement in Services?

Best Value, as with previous managerial reforms, was introduced in order to ensure that services were provided with the three Es, efficiency, effectiveness and economy in mind. In addition, there was an emphasis on achieving 'continuous improvements' in performance through the setting of key performance targets over a five-year period. The overall goal was to improve services delivered to the public. The distinction of the Best Value policy was that it was not about to whom or how services were provided but whether they met users' needs. The purpose of this chapter is to outline initially what is meant by service delivery and how it can be defined. There will then be an examination of the performance data and whether or not there has been any noticeable change in performance since the introduction of Best Value. This will be followed by an investigation of qualitative data including views from respondents and whether they believe that service improvements have been achieved. Whether Best Value has led to greater efficiency and changed the way that services have been provided will also be discussed.

Defining Service Improvement

One of the primary objectives of New Labour's Modernising Agenda was the provision of improved public services (Cabinet Office 1999). This has also been the significant message of many previous public sector reforms and is the purpose of the Best Value regime. However there is no definition of what is actually meant by service improvement (Boyne 2003). While debates about how service improvements could and should be defined are relevant, they will not be discussed here (see Boyne 2003). The main question is how can service improvement be characterised in order to examine if Best Value has realised its objectives?

Martin et al. (2001,2003) in their evaluation of Best Value acknowledged that assessing whether Local Authorities had realised service improvements was

complex, partly because of the lack of data and the time lag between reviews, subsequent developments in services and changes in performance. In their evaluations they considered a number of factors when assessing service improvements. These included adjustments in performance data, changes to and expansion of existing services, the creation of new services and an assessment of whether or not they met local needs. They also took into account local service users' and residents' views as well as the views of those responsible for implementing and managing Best Value within Authority areas.

Therefore what is being examined is if Police Authorities have delivered services and established a clear set of standards, which have served to improve performance. This chapter will also consider whether Police Authorities have developed different ways of delivering services, how the Best Value reviews have met local issues and developed services at a local level and how the cost and quality of services have changed. These will be examined by considering quantitative and qualitative data gathered through semi-structured interviews and documents. What will be important here are the views from those who have experienced the introduction of Best Value within the police service. There will also be some discussion of the external evidence on the effect of Best Value.

Has Best Value delivered?: an initial assessment

A key part of the New Labour policy agenda was that policies must be evaluated and assessed in order to consider what worked and what was effective. As previously identified the piloting and implementation of Best Value within Local Authorities has been evaluated through government and academic sources. These evaluations of Best Value have concentrated primarily within Local Authorities and have presented a very mixed view on the success of Best Value. The Audit Commission responsible for auditing Best Value within Local Authorities published the report on 'Changing Gear' in 2001. This report provided an ambivalent message regarding the success of Best Value. On one hand it argued that there was reason to be satisfied with the progress that Best Value had made in service improvements. The report states:

‘This year’s statement identifies that we should celebrate in council performance. Performance across local governments has improved in three quarters of the 20 Best Value indicators where historical data exists. Best Value inspectors have found that 40% of services were good or excellent and that half are likely to improve in the future ... And Best Value has helped to ensure that that councils are in touch with the needs and wishes of service users and council tax payers’(Audit Commission 2001: 2).

Despite this positive assessment they pointed out that a number of problems existed and that while some authorities had proved to be successful in adopting Best Value and achieving advances there was still much to achieve. They stated,

‘Public satisfaction with many local government services is low, while public expectations continue to rise. Over 60% of inspected services are found to be poor or fair and there are still substantial variations in performance across different councils ... There are stark differences in how well councils are coping with Best Value ... In some case this is because they lack the capacity or systems to improve themselves. More often and more worryingly, it is because they lack the will to ask challenging questions or the vision to tackle difficult choices’ (2001: 2).

The key findings were that performance in accordance with the BVPIs was better for the bottom quartile of authorities and that there was less of a gap between top performing councils and those at the bottom. They did emphasise that despite these developments there was still a wide variation between the best and worst performing authorities. The report also emphasised that a number of authorities had failed to adequately apply the four Cs methodology and this led to questions about whether the service was really necessary or how it was provided. They argue that failing to properly apply the four Cs leads to a lack of ambition in the recommendations made at the end of the Best Value review process (Audit Commission 2001). This often resulted in only a limited number of management issues being raised or minor changes suggested to services. Another difficulty councils faced, according to the report, was that they were unable to deliver efficiency savings. One of the primary reasons for this was the inability of councils to adequately measure potential savings. Councils who were reported to be doing well within the Audit Commission report were stated to have redirected resources in line with priorities and delivered local and national priorities.

Other early evaluations of Best Value and its introduction into Local Authorities were also varied. The evaluation of the pilot studies emphasised that in terms of service improvements the picture was relatively positive. Martin et al (2001) found that Local Authorities participating in the pilot studies reported that they had used Best Value to deliver existing services to a higher standard, in order to better meet the needs of local residents or to achieve lower costs. In some cases Best Value reviews had resulted in the establishment of new services or the expansion of existing services. Examples provided include the introduction of new information kiosks around the city in Bristol, the reintroduction of gardeners into parks in Oldham, the creation of new places for 300 children and young people through the early years partnership. Some pilots did state that they felt Best Value reviews had reinforced changes that were already underway but were not necessarily as a result of Best Value. However, some authorities did believe that changes to services had been as a direct result of pilot Best Value reviews.

Martin et al. (2001) reported that some of the pilot initiatives set out to achieve cost savings but many did not, focusing instead on ways of improving service standards. Just over a third (35%) of respondents stated that no savings had been achieved. On the other hand about a quarter of the Best Value officers in their study reported efficiency savings. Other respondents were uncertain if any savings were achieved because of a lack of data.

A central part of the evaluations of Best Value was to consider the views of Local Authorities' members and staff about whether they believed that Best Value had led to any improvements in service delivery. Martin et al (2003) identified that there were differing views about Best Value and whether it had delivered improvements. They found that many respondents believed that the changes made as a result of reviews would have occurred anyway although Best Value gave them impetus. They also found that service officers were more likely to believe that Best Value had led to improvements than inspectors were. Corporate officers were less optimistic and were less likely to stress that their Authorities had adequately adopted Best Value processes and that it had led to the types of changes expected

Elected members were more cautious about the role of Best Value in improving services (Martin et al 2003). They found that respondents were divided on whether the Best Value had in fact led to perceived improvements in performance.

This opinion was reflected in other research by Boyne et al (2001) and their research into impact of Best Value on Welsh Authorities. Their postal survey of staff at all levels revealed that there were variations in opinion on whether service improvements would be achieved. They found that some respondents believed that Best Value had led to improvements in service and the cost of other services while others believed that their services were already provided to the highest quality so therefore Best Value could have little impact on service delivery. Martin et al (2003) argue that these variations in views could be as a result of different perceptions of what constitutes 'service improvements'. They argue that Local Authorities may believe that service improvements are achieved through incremental changes to existing approaches to service whereas inspectors may be expecting greater innovation in the way services are delivered, for example through the adoption of strategic partnerships with external providers. Another explanation is that Best Value officers are more likely to believe that Best Value has been successful as it has been their primary responsibility to implement the policy.

Driving up Performance

Evidence from available data

As mentioned, a key aspect of Best Value has been the introduction of a performance framework to drive up standards and improve performance of Local and Police Authorities. To achieve this the government required Police Authorities to report on a number of centrally defined indicators known as BVPIS (Best Value Performance Indicators). There is a substantial number of BVPIS that Police Authorities must set targets for and try and improve on. These indicators were designed to reflect changes in performance in a number of areas including efficiency and effectiveness. Other indicators used to measure the police included levels of public satisfaction and police strength.

The aim here is to look at some of the key indicators that have been used to assess police performance and to consider respondents' views on improving performance through the use of these indicators. The intention is not to provide an in depth analysis of every indicator used by central government to analyse police performance but to look generally at what has happened in core areas and whether there have been distinct changes in performance since the introduction of Best Value.¹

The level of recorded crime is seen as one of the key indicators used to assess police performance. It is believed that lower levels of recorded crime represent a more efficient police service, whether this is achieved through crime reduction initiatives, successful operations or effective policing styles. In recent years the police have not just been assessed on the overall reduction of crime but also on their ability to deal with specific types of crime, which are seen as affecting the public and communities most. These include recorded levels of violent crime, burglary and vehicle crime. Burglary and vehicle crime are isolated because those offences account for most crime recorded by the police. One of the difficulties in using recorded crime has been the inconsistency across the police force areas in how crime is recorded. Despite Home Office counting rules on what should be recorded as a crime, conflicting data has been offered by constabularies (see HMIC 2000). There have been attempts to resolve this by introducing the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS), which requires police services to record every incident reported to them as a crime (see Simmons, Legg and Hoskings 2003). This has led to a substantial increase in recorded crime, making it difficult to assess real changes in crime levels. Because of these difficulties comments and data reported by the HMIC and the British Crime Survey (BCS) will be used here to consider changes in recorded crime.

Over the past few years most forms of recorded crime have decreased. Since 1995 the number of crimes recorded by the police and through the British Crime Survey have diminished (see Simmons and Dodd 2003). This trend continued following the introduction of Best Value. Taking into account the NCRS, crime rates

reduced by 3% in 2002 and 2003, a continuation of the downward trend (Smith 2003: 9).

In the three case study areas there was evidence of increases in recorded crime (Figure 8). This is mainly attributed to the NCRS. In Sunnydale recorded crimes per 1,000 decreased between 1999/2000 and 2000/2001 but then rose again the following year. In Eastbrook levels of recorded crime also rose between 1999 and 2002. In Westfield the situation was similar to Sunnydale with incidents of recorded crime decreasing, then subsequently rising

Figure 8 Recorded Incidents of Crime per 1,000 in the Case Study Areas²

Case Study Areas	Recorded Crime Per 1,000 pop. 1999/2000	Recorded Crime Per 1,000 pop. 2000/2001	Recorded Crime Per 1,000 pop. 2001/2002
Eastbrook	60.0	61.6	64.2
Sunnydale	63.5	59.9	63.4
Westfield	96.3	83.3	93.9

Generally, recorded incidents of vehicle crime and burglary in particular decreased since the early 1990s and have continued to do so in recent years (s Appendix E). A number of reasons have been put forward for this crime drop including better security, targeted policing, as well as economic, demographic and social changes (for example see Field 1998)³. The HMIC annual report 2001/2002 reported that recorded incidents of vehicle crime and domestic burglary reduced but reflected that nationally there was significant variation between different police force areas (HMIC 2002) (Appendix E). In both Sunnydale and Eastbrook the recorded incidents of burglary have increased in the past couple of years. In Westfield recorded incidents of burglary decreased between 1999 and 2001 and then rose again the following year. Incidents of vehicle crime dropped in the case study

¹ The dangers of using performance data were discussed in Chapter three.

² Some data was unavailable or taken from other sources. The primary data used in the charts was taken from BVPI data provided by individual forces to the HMIC. The raw data is provided in Appendix 4.

³ Simon Field argues that the volume of certain crimes specifically burglary, is affected by the number of young people in the population. The greater the numbers of young people the higher the rate of burglary.

areas over the past couple of years. The HMIC reported that it was disappointed at the increase in burglary in Sunnydale but the force had made plans to tackle this.

Figure 9 BVPI 126 and 127 Reductions in Vehicles Crime and Burglary in the Three Case Study Areas

Case Study Area	Levels of Burglary Per 1,000 Households 1999/2000	Levels of Burglary Per 1,000 Households 2000/2001	Levels of Burglary Per 1,000 Households 2001/2002
Eastbrook	9.8	10.0	11.6
Sunnydale	8.8	8.4	9.5
Westfield	16.3	14.0	15.7

Case Study Area	Levels of Vehicle Crime per 1,000 Households 1999/2000	Levels of Vehicle Crime per 1,000 Households 2000/2001	Levels of Vehicle Crime per 1,000 Households 2001/2002
Eastbrook	14.3	14.3	13.6
Sunnydale	10.9	8.6	8.6
Westfield	*	22.4	22.9

* Missing Data

Since reducing crime is one of the core objectives of the police service, their ability to clear up crime has been used as a key measure of effectiveness. Crime reduction has also been a key government measure to assess whether individual police services are performing well. According to the available figures (see Appendix E) detection rates for most constabularies have decreased in recent years rather than increased. On this measure it would suggest that the police service became less effective in clearing up crime between 1999 and 2002. That's since the introduction of Best Value. If we look at Figure 10⁴ it shows that between 1999 and 2002, in two thirds of the police forces, detection rates went down. Performance did increase in one third of the police service but most of this increase was very minor. It is also the case that in 23 % of the constabularies there was a rise but it was less than 2%.

⁴ These figures are based on the number of constabularies where all data was available; the percentage rate is a percentage of all 43 police services in England and Wales. This is the same for analysis of all data. In some cases data was not available for all indicators in all forces.

Figure 10 BVPI 125 Changes to Performance in Crime Detection between 1999 and 2002

Crime Detection	No of Constabularies where performance increased	% of police service	No of Constabularies where performance decreased	% of police service
Change Less Than 2%	10	23.3	7	18.6
Change between 2% and 5%	3	7	13	30.2
Change Greater than 5%	0	0	9	20.9
Total Of Forces	13	30.23	29	67.4

Case Study Areas	Detected Crime Per 1000 pop. 1999/2000	Detected Crime Per 1000 pop. 2000/2001	Detected Crime Per 1000 pop. 2001/2002
Eastbrook	26.3	23.8	24.3
Sunnydale	33.3	29.8	30.2
Westfield	13.8	27.5	24.7

There are also considerable variations in detection rates. The best performing services probably due to their geographical location and small population, were Dyfed Powys and Gwent with a detection rate of 64% and 55% in 2002 respectively. The lowest detection rate of 14% was in the Metropolitan Police area, the largest populated area in England and Wales. Mayhew (2003) argued that this differentiation 'may in part be due to differing deployment of resources—larger forces investigate a much larger proportion of crime' (Mayhew 2003: 118). One of the case study areas, Eastbrook, reported that their forces' ability to detect crime was lessened as a result of an inability to recruit adequate numbers of staff over the past few years. In addition, they claimed that a larger than usual number of major

incidents⁵, meant that the number of officers available for everyday duty was reduced. This could lead to a reduction in the ability of the forces to detect volume crime. The HMIC did raise some concerns over the Eastbrook ability to detect crime in recent years and emphasised that although their detection rate had previously been good it had since declined. They acknowledged that this was probably due to difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff. Sunnydale's detection rate also declined but remained one of the highest rates in the country. In Westfield the detection rate was extremely low in 1999 and increased in the following two years. This could be partly related to changes in crime recording practices that occurred in the force in 1999.

A common measure used to analyse efficiency has been the ability of the police to respond quickly to emergency 999 calls with a set target time. This is seen as important because it is often the first point of contact between the police and members of the public and can influence how the public view the police (HMIC 2001b). Considering that call centres have been the focus of early Best Value reviews, a Best Value review had been completed on the issues of call management within all of the three case studies, and been subject to external scrutiny through the HMIC Thematic Inspection 'Open All Hours' (2001b). There had also been an attempt to divert calls which are not specifically 999 by educating the public about when to use the emergency numbers (HMIC 2001b).

If the figures are examined again, in two thirds of forces, there has been a decrease in performance as the number of 999 calls answered within target time has fallen. This could be partly explained by the increase in the number of calls that have been experienced by most constabularies in the past three years. However, in a third of all the police service, performance in meeting 999 calls in target time improved. This could be for a number of reasons, for example better training of staff or more money spent on creating more effective call handling systems. Again as in crime detection performance was variable. This finding was also confirmed by the HMIC thematic inspection which showed a lack of consistency in standards, training and performance measures (HMIC 2001b). In Westfield Constabulary the

⁵ A major incident can include murder inquiries, other serious assault, or an incident which is both resources and manpower intensive.

% of 999 calls answered in target time increased significantly. This might be related to the introduction of a new centralised call centre to deal with all 999 calls at headquarters and the introduction of a new answering system

Figure 11 BVPI 134 Response to 999 Calls within Target Time

Response time for 999 Calls	No. of Constabularies where Performance Increased	% of Police Service	No. of Constabularies where performance decreased	% of the Police Service
Change less than 2%	6	14.0	3	7.0
Change greater than 2 % less than 5%	5	12	10	23.3
Change greater than 5 % less than 10%	3	7.0	6	14.0
Change greater than 10%	0	0	6	14.0
All of the Police Service	14	33	25	59.5

Case Study Areas	Response time for 999 Calls 1999/2000	Response time for 999 Calls 2000/2001	Response time for 999 Calls 2001/2002
Eastbrook	83.2	84.5	87.5
Sunnydale	96.3	88.4	91.5
Westfield	77	84.7	93.2

Another important way of considering the success of the police has been through measuring the satisfaction of the public with services offered by the police and of the police in general. Important measures have included satisfaction with response to 999 calls. As mentioned above this is often the first point of contact with the police. Other measures have centred on victims' satisfaction with how they have been dealt with in particular circumstances, for example when they have experienced a violent crime.

Figure 12 BVPI 23a Changes in Performance in the Satisfaction with Response to 999 Calls

Satisfaction with 999 Calls	No. of Constabularies where performance increased	% Police Service	No of Constabularies where performance decreased	% Police Service
Change Less Than 5%	8	18.6	10	18.6
Change between 5% and 10%	1	2	6	14.0
Change Greater than 10%	4	9	7	16.3
Total of Police Service	13	30.23	23	53.5

Case Study Areas	Satisfaction with 999 Calls 1999/2000	Satisfaction with 999 Calls 2000/2001	Satisfaction with 999 Calls 2001/2002
Eastbrook	86.1	82.9	82.8
Sunnydale	82	83.3	*
Westfield	83	78.5	69.3

* missing data.

In terms of satisfaction with 999 calls, the picture is mixed (see Figure 12). In just over half of forces there has been a decrease in satisfaction with response to 999 calls although in 18 % of areas this change has been relatively minor from the period of 1999 to 2002 and is less than 5 %. In some areas the decrease in satisfaction levels has been much greater than 10 % in the same time period. In 30 % of the police service, satisfaction with response to 999 calls increased although in most of the cases, the rise in satisfaction was less than 5% between 1999 and 2002. In Westfield the satisfaction levels with response to 999 Calls declined. This could be partly explained by the introduction of a new Call Handling Centre in April 2000. It was noted in the HMIC force inspection that the new call handling system created some unforeseen problems for the force in terms of handling calls and this could have led to a decline in satisfaction levels. The pattern is similar with the satisfaction of polices initial response to violent crime as

can be seen in Figure 13. In a high number of constabularies there has also been a decrease in satisfaction with the police response to violent incidents. The extent of this decrease in satisfaction also varies.

Figure 13 BVPI23b Changes in Levels of Satisfaction with Response to Violent Crimes

Level of Satisfaction with initial response to violent crime	No of Constabularies Where Performance Increased	% of Police Service	No of Constabularies Where Performance Decreased	% of Police Service
Change less than 2 %	2	4.7	6	14.0
Change between 2 and 5 %	5	11.6	7	16.3
Change between 5 and 10 %	3	7.0	5	11.6
Change greater than 10 %	5	11.6	9	20.9
Total of all Police Services	15	34.9	27	62.8

Case Study Areas	Satisfaction with response to violent crime 1999/2000	Satisfaction with response to violent crime 2000/2001	Satisfaction with response to violent crime 2001/2002
Eastbrook	85	82.3	81.5
Sunnydale	74	64.5	72.6
Westfield	68	67	67.8

In the case study areas satisfaction with the police response to violent incidents remained stable in Westfield Constabulary, but was much lower than the satisfaction levels experienced in Eastbrook where performance dropped slightly. In Sunnydale performance decreased between 1999 and 2000 but then improved the following year.

General satisfaction with the police has decreased slightly in the past couple of years according to the British Crime Survey. The proportion of respondents expressing satisfaction with the police remained stable between 1992 and 1998 but

has fallen since the 1998 survey. The proportion of people interviewed for the BCS stating that they thought the police did a very good job fell from 19% to 14% (Sims 2003: 107). A possible explanation for this could be increasing concern about crime and the police ability to deal with crime (Fletcher and Allan 2003). Levels of satisfaction could also be related to the police ability to detect crime. Flood-Taylor and Page (2003) report that victims are likely to be more satisfied with the response to an incident if the outcome of the case was positive.

It is difficult to pinpoint specific reasons for variations in performance in forces and why levels of satisfaction may have dipped. When we examine some indicators that assess the corporate health of the organisation, such as police strength, it can be seen that the number of police officers particularly in the past couple of years, has increased substantially. For example police strength has risen. By March 31st 2003 total police strength (police officers only) was 124,418 in England and Wales (Sisson et al 2000). This was slightly less than the previous year. By 2003 police strength had risen to 133,366, an increase of 3% from March 2002. Thirty-eight out of forty-three constabularies experienced an increase in their total officer strength. The number of female and ethnic minority staff had increased slightly since the previous year (Cotton and Smith 2003). This could account for the additional expenditure on the police service, which has also increased over the past three years (Appendix E). The three case study areas experienced an overall growth in monetary resources in the past two years.

Figure 14 Increases in Expenditure between 1999 and 2000 in the Case Study Areas

Case Study Areas	Expenditure 1999/2000	Expenditure 2000/2001	Expenditure 2001/2002
Eastbrook	103,696,000	132,005,000	130,005,000
Sunnydale	69,069,000	72,000,000	75,540,000
Westfield	63,307,000	64,603,000	71,807,500

From the indicators discussed here it appears that the performance of the police service overall has not improved greatly since the introduction of Best Value. On the whole and as reported by a recent HMIC Annual Report (2002) performance has remained relatively stable, but as demonstrated above and suggested within this report there is a large gap in performance levels between different constabularies. Although this can be partly accounted for by different geographical compositions and socio-economic differences, the HMIC argue that this variation is too broad and needs to be addressed. The HMIC in his annual report stated that one of the main causes of this apparent variation in performance was of some forces failing to effectively adopted a performance culture (HMIC 2002). In the thematic inspection 'Open all Hours' the HMIC argued that there was inconsistency in the way that data was collected across forces. Satisfaction with service offered by the police has also decreased. As has been demonstrated the rate of satisfaction with response to 999 calls and the initial response to violent crime has decreased in the majority of constabularies. The number of those responding to the BCS who regard the police as doing a good job also dropped.

Measuring the effect that Best Value has had on performance is complex. Why there are such distinct differences in performance between forces is often not identified in documents such as HMIC inspection reports. In the case study areas it was equally hard to determine why changes in performance had occurred. At times there was some evidence as to why there had been a perceived decline in performance, for example, the detection rate of Eastbrook Constabulary. Often there was little information to account for these changes. One explanation is that this research was conducted in the early stages of Best Value, meaning that recommendations were still being implemented or the effect on performance was minimal. As the performance data presents such difficulties, qualitative data was also used to assess whether performance had improved since the introduction of Best Value. The views of respondents about performance improvement are outlined below.

Driving up performance: a view from respondents

Most respondents in the three case studies believed that in reality Best Value as yet had not improved the performance of the constabulary. It was identified that there was little connection made between the Best Value reviews and proposed recommendations and the contribution that changes to services might make to overall performance. A common criticism raised by the HMIC was that many of the constabularies which they had inspected had failed to set or develop any indicators to identify or quantify changes that were taking place. Speaking to HMIC inspectors informally during the observation week, I found they were aware of the dangers of performance data and appreciated that changes made to services would not necessarily lead to any identifiable change in performance but would lead in the long-run to the service improving. This ambivalent view is expressed by an HMIC inspector:

‘They should try (talking about police services) to have some quantitative measures in all areas of performance. This will improve with the police standards unit but there are frailties in the measures that are used to measure police performance. Often performance is relied on too much and decisions are made by agencies including the government on these performance indicators. Sometimes they are taken as fact but they do not represent fact’ (HMIC Inspector 01).

Respondents, although critical of BVPIS did use them to identify areas of weakness or to benchmark themselves against other constabularies.

‘BVPIS are a way of measuring the health of the whole organisation and have not really been used as a tool to improve services. Performance measures need to be consistent and they need to be reduced. But there is a need for them to be able to compare with other forces’ (Best Value Manager, Sunnydale).

Other respondents reflected that the Best Value process including Best Value reviews did not have much impact upon BVPIS and that they were not related, although there was an appreciation that police service had to be measured in some way.

‘In the areas where there are BVPIS they are good to indicate how the organisation is functioning. In some areas we have not done that well, for example, in volume crime, we have not hit our targets. I am not against performance indicators because some of them can be meaningful and there is a direct relationship, but a lot of Best Value reviews that have been done do not have a large impact upon the organisation’ (Senior Officer, Sunnydale Constabulary).

‘I have always been slightly bemused about Best Value as a process and Best Value indicators, I mean Best Value performance indicators and Best Value are two separate issues. I do not see any direct relationship between the PIs and what we choose to review, other than clearly if we are going to make business improvements with the Best Value process you would like to think that we should make some difference to the bottom end of the organisation, as happens to be a range of indicators’ (Senior Officer, Westfield Constabulary).

In general most respondents held the view that not meeting targets or improving in certain areas of performance did not necessarily mean that Best Value had not been accomplished or led to changes. They also thought that performance measures were affected by other factors, therefore making the connection between Best Value reviews and changes in performance was difficult. Other respondents were also keen to point out that if they concentrate on a particular aspect of performance then levels in other areas are likely to drop. In addition, it could be argued that in the case of the three case studies although there is some room for improvements for example in Eastbrook detecting crime, improvements in performance are likely to reach an optimal position with the current resource restraints that the police service are facing.

Service Improvements

Changes to Services

In the three case studies the most common theme within the Best Value reviews was a desire to alter the way that existing services were provided. The table below (Figure 15) provides an illustration of some of the changes made to services as a result of Best Value.

In terms of working with other stakeholders to provide services, this was difficult to establish. As noted in the previous chapter competition in terms of contracting

out and challenging whether the police service should be delivered by them or someone else was the most poorly applied aspect of the four Cs. There was some evidence to suggest that the police worked with private agencies but this tended to be for support services, particularly in areas where they thought that a private contractor had more experience. For example, Sunnydale employed a large private Information Technology (IT) company to review its IT strategy and make an assessment as to its IT requirements. Sunnydale seemed generally happy with these reviews. Westfield also employed the services of private companies to conduct some of their Best Value reviews, for example, Human Resources. However the general consensus was that the reviews conducted by these groups were not satisfactory because they did not fully appreciate how the police service operated. This view was reflected in Eastbrook, where when selecting people to conduct their reviews, this would usually be someone who already had a connection with the constabulary or whom Eastbrook believed to have an adequate knowledge of policing issues.

‘From the experience that we have had and from going through the reports that have been written not necessarily by police officers but, by people with an intimate knowledge of the organisation, I just think that the internal people have got a better grip of the organisation and really what needs to change not on a superficial level. Some of the consultant reports are a bit superficial and a bit on the lower level. A lot of tiny management issues that tinker around the edges but no real changes strategically’ (Member of the Best Value Team, Westfield Constabulary).

Overall, there was evidence to suggest that external agencies are included in policing and that police services are attempting to work with external agencies in improving services. However, progress was slow and tended to be concentrated among support services. In addition, it was difficult to assess how the changes to services identified above were working, as many of the changes had just been or were still being implemented. Therefore it was seen as necessary to examine the views of respondents.

Perceptions of service improvements by respondents

There was a difference of opinion on service improvements achieved by the introduction of Best Value within the case studies. Some respondents were certain

that Best Value had led to, or would lead to, significant improvements in service delivery. They believed that the Best Value process had played, or was beginning to play, a significant role in changes that had occurred recently within their police services. These positive comments tended to be offered by members of the Best Value teams who were responsible for managing Best Value in the Police Authorities.

Figure 15 Changes to Services in the Three Case Study Areas

Constabulary	Best Value Review	Recommendation
Sunnydale	Managing Demand	Force to prepare and implement an agreed patrol strategy Change call grading system so as to provide a more accurate police response Establishment of a public service desk to deal with non-emergency calls.
	Drugs Investigation	Buying System to Manage Performance data on drugs
	Custody Review	Improving Facilities in Custody Suite
Eastbrook	Maximising Skills	Improved use of staff appraisal
	Preventing Crime	Additional Support and Funding opportunities for local community projects to assist crime prevention
	Detecting Crime	Development of an alternative way of handling non-emergency calls
Westfield	Case Handling Review	Co-location through the collaboration of Criminal Justice Units and Crown Prosecution Service
	Public Interface	Review Layouts of opening hours of police service Enquiry Office
	Crime Investigation	Introduction of the National Intelligence model
	Transport	Collaborative Fleet Management with another force

There was some negative opinion from Best Value team members or people who had conducted Best Value reviews particularly from those respondents who were responsible for implementing Best Value in the early stages. Their negative attitudes may well reflect the difficulties faced when Best Value was first introduced and the case study areas were in their developmental phases. A further observation made by Best Value team members was that at times they had made suggestions that, in their opinion would lead to service improvements but which had not been implemented because they were seen as unacceptable either to the executive or the Police Authority.

‘As a Best Value team we came up with some really challenging suggestions for change within our reviews but these were not acceptable or were put on the to hard too do at the moment list and as a result the impact of Best Value has been limited’ (Best Value Team Member, Sunnysdale Constabulary).

While some authority members felt that Best Value had directly led to service improvements, others believed that the improvements to service delivery were not substantial. In addition they suggested that the resources invested in Best Value had not been justified. This view of resources verses outcomes was a common view held by most of the respondents. There was a belief that the effort put into producing Best Value reviews in terms of time, money and staff had not really led to the major improvements that were expected from the introduction of the Best Value review framework.

Those respondents most likely to be negative towards Best Value were the service managers responsible for implementing the changes. While being positive about the principles of Best Value and the need for the police service to ensure that they were providing quality services, they believed that the progress in terms of service delivery was slow and that changes being made were having only a minimal impact on service delivery.

‘Trying to implement the results of the Best Value process is laborious and bureaucratic. For example in the Managing Demand Review, there were quite a number of recommendations made. Some of these were presented as too difficult but in general most of them were accepted and there was little disagreement about the changes and a group was set up to implement these changes but there was little progress made; none of them have really occurred in full. There have been some small changes and that is the effect that Best Value is having’ (Service Manager, Sunnysdale Constabulary).

Other service managers believed that the administration of Best Value was in fact inhibiting them from improving services. An illustration of this was the Human Resource Manager in Eastbrook Constabulary. In two years of Best Value the Human Resource department had been included in five reviews. The service manager in charge of this department was responsible for monitoring and implementing over 50 recommendations. While the service manager stated that they were satisfied with most of the recommendations that had emerged from the reviews, they explained that there was a difficulty in trying to implement and keep track of changes made and there was a concern about what level of influence some of the proposals would make in terms of service delivery.

‘Honest opinion is that I could have told you before the review what you would find and I could probably come up with the recommendations in half the time. That sounds quite conceited but many of the reviews tell us what we already know. And you might turn round and say ‘well that is reassuring’ but when you look at the time and energy that is consumed by them you sometimes question whether the methodology is worthwhile’ (Senior Manager, Westfield Constabulary).

An additional problem identified by a number of respondents, but in particular the service managers, was that service improvements were also as a result of pre-existing ideas and were not always as a result of Best Value. However these were often incorporated into Best Value reviews and subsequent recommendations. In these cases Best Value had not in itself directly led to improvements in service delivery but had at best assisted changes that were already underway. There was evidence to support this view. In Eastbrook the Promoting Public Safety Review contributed to the adoption of a new policing style. In Sunnysdale the Managing Demand review was viewed as a key part of changes occurring in Call Management. This was stressed by one respondent when asked whether Best Value had led to service improvements.

‘It is difficult to say, to be honest, because there are things that have happened that can be attributable to Best Value, but it is very difficult to say if they would have happened anyway. What I think is useful is that it gets the Police Authority involved. If you look at a few things—for example we have had huge changes in the way that we police—the changing policing style to an intelligence model, restructured around three areas; all that is cited as coming from a Best Value review which arguably it could have done because the leader of the Best

Value review was the leader of the other project so the two projects sort of merged. But it is difficult to unpick it all and say that was specifically because of Best Value' (Best Value Officer, Police Authority, Eastbrook Constabulary).

It was also noted that many key projects were underway prior to or at the same time as the Best Value policy. In Sunnydale two of the most recent major change projects expected to improve service delivery, did not emerge from Best Value. They included the E-Policing project where the use of better technology such as palm tops for police officers was encouraged and IT systems were used in a bid to reduce paperwork. Another development was the introduction of the Prison Handling Unit where civilians are employed to deal with suspects brought into police custody. The intention is that civilians will deal with all the paperwork and time spent booking in a suspect to the custody suite allowing police officers to get straight back out on police patrol. A Senior Manager in Westfield also commented how a number of the recommendations made as a result of Best Value would have happened without the Best Value process. The resilience Best Value review suggested the development of a new shift pattern. The senior manager was keen to stress that this project was started on his division and later assimilated into the Best Value process.

'Well I can tell you that the resilience one the shift change did not come about as a result of Best Value. The shift change came about as a result of this division putting together a working group where I actually looked at the options for a new shift pattern. That was then presented to the executive and as a result of that the executive then took a sergeant from this division that had been involved in that work to headquarters. They got him to carry out some more project work on behaviour of the whole force as a result of which there was then negotiation with the Federation and as a result we ended up with the new shift system. So that was nothing to do with Best Value. I suppose I am a little sceptical because if you look at some of the big changes that we have made they have not come out of Best Value so you then have to say 'what is the value of Best Value'' (Senior Manager, Westfield Constabulary).

One respondent was keen to stress that Best Value had made improvements but that those changes were not recognised by people within the organisation. It was also emphasised that this was due to the time it took to implement changes.

'It has made a real difference to service improvement but people cannot relate those recommendations to Best Value. The reason is that it can take a long period of time for the recommendations to come out and some of them are really

big that it can take about 12 months to 18 months for something to happen because you are talking about staff redeployment, employing staff and getting the finance. There are some significant service improvements because of what we have done in my view' (Best Value Manager, Westfield Constabulary).

The respondent outlined some of the changes that had been implemented,

'I was surprised of the number of things that were on that list that effect frontline services, like the National Crime Intelligence Model, centralisation with crime desks, collaboration of the ***** Fleet (another police force traffic fleet). I mean there are some big things that have come out of Best Value there are the three out of the 20 and I can go on.'

When asked whether he thought that the improvements that he suggested above might have been implemented anyway, the respondent was keen to emphasise that they would not.

'I do not think that we would have centralised crime desks if it was not for the Best Value review, it may have happened over time but I do not think that it would have happened as quickly as it is going to happen or is happening. Westfield Police did not have the National Intelligence Model (NIM) ... and have made lots of other recommendations outside the National Intelligence Model that have made a real difference. Like career structure for analyst that was never in place before. We have developed a corporate tasking structure because there was not one. There is now and they have all happened in addition to the NIM.'

There was quite a difference of opinion here and as this study was related to Best Value it was difficult to know what other projects were in place that proposed recommendations similar to those in the Best Value reviews. In terms of the National Intelligence Model, discussed in more detail later, it is likely that it would have been implemented without being proposed in the Best Value review. Previous reviews of call handling had also suggested the centralisation of the call handling centre to headquarters⁶.

⁶ Call Handling fields calls to the police including 999 calls. Prior to the suggested centralisation individual BCU's would deal with their own incoming calls.

While some people believed that it might have not necessarily led to major improvements, the process was still worthwhile because it confirmed that the services being provided were already sufficient and meeting the required objectives.

‘What it does do is make sections and departments look in depth and ask fundamental questions as to why are we doing it this way. That is the good bit. So even if it creates no change it has caused people to look and say yes we are doing it and it hasn’t changed and we seem to be doing it in a most efficient manner and if it has done that it has done something’ (Police Authority Member, Sunnysdale Constabulary).

A view from the HMIC

The HMIC has a pivotal role in assessing the impact of Best Value. The HMIC set out strict guidance drawn from the Audit Commission (2000) document ‘Seeing is Believing’ about how it would inspect Best Value reviews. When assessing the Best Value reviews they would consider the rigour with which the Best Value review had been completed and to assess whether the Best Value requirements were being met. The other purpose of the Best Value inspections by the HMIC was to make judgements about how good the services provided were and the likelihood of improvements to the service as a result of the Best Value review. Successful implementation plans and the ability of the police authority and constabulary to execute changes were also addressed (HMIC 2000b). Other key elements that the HMIC were keen to ensure was whether Best Value would improve performance, ensure the efficient use of resources and to identify and disseminate good practice.

When making these judgements the HMIC graded services on a four-point scale. This mode of assessment, however, changed during the period of the research. In terms of judging the current level of service provided by individual police services they are graded on a basis of ‘excellent’, ‘good’, ‘fair’ or ‘poor’. When considering whether services were likely to improve or not the judgement made by the HMIC was ‘will improve’, ‘will probably improve’, ‘unlikely to improve’ or ‘will not improve’. This was later changed to a grading system where the

prospects for improvement were classed as 'excellent', 'promising', 'uncertain' or 'poor'. The HMIC inspectors believed that the inspection process that they had in place to measure service improvements was relatively rigorous but they believed that due to the different approaches taken towards Best Value and the variety of reviews carried out that it made it difficult to make judgements about prospects for improvement. They admitted difficulties in making judgements about certain services particularly where there were no protocols or quantitative data available to benchmark services against each other. The judgements that were made therefore were very dependent on information available in Best Value reviews or, through other existing documentation relating to the service and information provided to the HMIC during their site visits to authority areas.

'In terms of grading the service in terms of possible improvements usually promising is awarded. It depends on whether the review has challenged the status quo. There is no definition on the type of change that is being looking for. It should be counted against step changes and counted against need. Changes should be quantum step changes and balanced arguments should be put forward to suggest what changes are needed therefore the changes are proper changes and are not just rushed through for the sake of it' (HMIC Officer 03).

The HMIC officers interviewed were unsure about the introduction of Best Value achieving service improvements. HMIC inspectors believed that improvements to service would be dependent on a number of factors, for example, having effective implementation plans in place and reviewing services or processes that would actually lead to step changes. In general it was believed that there was slow progress on the part of the police service to effectively implement Best Value and that this was reflected in the limited degree of change that had been achieved. As stressed by one HMIC officer when discussing service improvements:

'There has not been the huge shift that politicians were looking for and if you talk to forces I not sure that it is just around the corner. A lot of that has to do with the sort of reviews that they were doing in the first place. And how challenging they were on those reviews and I think that they went half way and not full way. I think that it is going to take time but that it will happen' (HMIC Officer 04).

It was demonstrated from the inspection reports on the first year Best Value reviews⁷ in the three case study areas that there was some optimism about the possibility of service improvements resulting from recommendations made from Best Value reviews (see Figure 16). In both Sunnydale and Westfield the prospect of improvements being achieved as a result of the Best Value reviews was seen as either 'promising' or 'excellent' in most cases. In Westfield most of the recommendations selected to be progressed from the first year Best Value reviews had been realised.

Figure 16 Possibility of Improvements: Judgements made in the HMIC Inspections

Case Study Area	Service	Current Level of Service	Possibility of service improvement
Eastbrook	Detecting Crime	Fair	Uncertain
	Developing and Driving Organisation Values	Fair	Promising
	Managing Organisational Performance	Fair	Promising
	Promoting Public Safety	Good	Promising
	Road Collision and Traffic Enforcement	Fair	Uncertain
Sunnydale	Central Registry	Fair	Excellent
	Information Technology	Fair	Promising
	Firearms Protection	Good	Excellent
	Building and Cleaning	Fair	Promising
	Drugs Investigation	Fair	Promising
	Police Authority	Good	Excellent
	Custody	Fair	Promising
	Divisional Administration	Fair	Promising
	Community Safety	Good	Promising
Westfield	Crime Recording	Fair	Excellent
	Crime Investigation	Good	Promising
	Crime Intelligence	Good	Promising

⁷ The first year Best Value reviews were the only ones available at the time of the research. There is a significant time lag between Best Value reviews being conducted by police services and the inspection of these by the HMIC and then subsequent publication of reports.

This was also the case in Sunnydale although the HMIC did believe that while the recommendations had been implemented within Sunnydale these might not lead to significant improvements in service delivery because the reviews were small-scale in the first year and changes were minor. Eastbrook's forecast was not as positive and the prospects for improvement were 'uncertain' in two of the key first year reviews. This could be because many of the recommendations made by Eastbrook covered larger strategic issues than the other two Constabularies so therefore changes could take time to be realised. A key respondent from Eastbrook argued that he was not satisfied with the HMIC inspections judgements of the Best Value reviews,

'No I wasn't satisfied at all. What it did was penalise people who were challenging and who were attempting to make a big change because I think that the classifications were promising, fair, or good, something like that but if you were trying something new you got a poor grade. If you were reorganising your dog kennels you got a good grade ... The way that it was fed back to us was particularly unhelpful because it is very easy for someone to turn up at the end of the process and say that you have done it all wrong without any attempt to help us or support us during that process. I thought the gradings were unhelpful I thought that whole thing was utterly unhelpful. I got nothing from it.'

It can be argued from comments made by the HMIC and by examining the Best Value reviews that at times the assessments made about possible improvements in service delivery are speculative. This is illustrated by comparing the inspection reports of two of the case study areas.

In Westfield constabulary one of the key Best Value reviews was on crime recording. The current level of service was graded as 'fair' with the likelihood of service improvements seen as 'excellent'. The reason for this grading was because of the recommendations that had been made to improve the way that crime was recorded, such as improved training for staff in standard procedures to record crime and the auditing of crime reports to ensure the quality of them. A common problem for the police service in the past, identified by the HMIC, was the inability of the police to effectively record crime. A further recommendation made in the Best Value review was the adoption of a new crime recording system and subsequent work was to examine what type of system to adopt. The adoption of a crime recording system was seen as a key factor in improving the way that crime

was recorded in the Constabulary because the current system of recording crimes, where crimes could take up to a week to be added to the system, meant that often crime could not be tracked or that intelligence could be missed. As stated by the HMIC in their inspection report:

‘There is evidence of improvement as a result of the Best Value review. The implementation plan is excellent as previously indicated. The installation of the new Crime Information System is key to the improvement of this service. Steps have been taken to implement a number of the supporting recommendations and there is a clear commitment from the authority and force to fully implement the remaining supporting recommendations’ (Westfield Constabulary, HMIC Inspection Report Best Value Review on Crime Recording).

Almost two years after completion of the Best Value review a new crime system had still not been introduced into Westfield Constabulary. The reason for this was provided in the 2003 Best Value Performance Plan, which stated that ‘no suitable system has been identified able to deliver the desired business benefits’ (Westfield, Best Value Performance Plan 2003/2004). A respondent, previously a member of the Best Value team in Westfield Constabulary, argued that the reason was due to lack of additional resources and the authority did not consider it necessary to invest in this area. This example demonstrates that services viewed as likely to improve by the HMIC may not actually improve because the recommendations are not implemented for a variety of reasons. This does not mean that improvements have not or will not occur in the future but reveals that the assessment of improvements is reliant upon a combination of factors.

The situation is the same with the Crime Investigation Best Value Review. For Westfield the success of this review in terms of resulting improvement was seen as dependent on the recommendations being fully put in place. A number of the proposals of the Best Value review also required further work. One of the recommendations was to review and assess current liaison arrangements with the courts and ascertain how much police time is wasted in attending court cases when attendance is not necessary. Two of the other recommendations relate to a training needs analysis of Scenes of Crime Officers and one of investigation officers. This would allow them to identify whether Scenes of Crime Officers or police officers required additional skills to enable them to investigate crime more effectively.

These recommendations suggest that in order to improve crime investigation additional work will have to be completed. However, this need for training may not be carried out, it depends on resources or the availability of training. The prospects for improvement were also viewed as 'promising'.

For Eastbrook their Detecting Crime Best Value review was seen by the HMIC as providing insufficient evidence of improvements and was therefore judged as 'uncertain'. A closer examination shows that the constabulary had made progress in some of their recommendations and made changes to the way they dealt with crime, for example, by establishing a Major Crime Task Force. This Major Crime Task Force was to resolve a recurring problem for Eastbrook Constabulary. The problem was that when a major incident such as a murder or other serious crime occurred officers would have to be taken from the front-line to deal with this. Major investigations can be lengthy and resource intensive meaning that staff would be taken from their division for a long period of time. As a result sections dealing with everyday volume crime such as burglary, car crime or numerous other offences were short of staff. The solution as identified by the Best Value review was to establish a permanent Major Enquiry Task Force, as set up in other constabularies, to deal with major crime and incidents. It was believed that this would be a more efficient use of resources and mean that divisions dealing with volume crime on a daily basis would have more stable resources which they could deploy more effectively. This in turn, would lead to better detection rates of volume crime. It was indicated that this would take some time to implement and might not take immediate effect. In addition other recommendations were similar to those provided in the reviews of Westfield Constabulary such as the adoption of the National Intelligence Model, the need to develop independent internal crime audit processes and improving the training of Scenes of Crime Officers. Most of these recommendations made within the report had also been achieved. The HMIC were hesitant that this would lead to improvements in service delivery. They stated in the inspection report that:

'Whilst many of the recommendations from the reviews have already been implemented, the impact that they will have on volume crime detection is not clear. The detection rate action plan seeks to build on the findings of the review.

but it is still early days in terms of any demonstrable improvement in performance' (HMIC Inspection Report, Detecting Crime, Eastbrook Constabulary: 19).

Statements of this type were made in many of the inspection reports in all three case studies. The key element that was missing from the review was that they had not developed or identified quantitative measures to determine whether improvements had been made. In four of the Best Value inspection reports for Sunnydale the need to develop performance monitoring systems was emphasised. This however did not necessarily mean that there had been no improvement. It was sometimes difficult for the HMIC to make definitive evaluations.

'It is very difficult to make a decision. We do have the National BVPIS and sometimes KPIs to make a judgement and targets if in existence can reveal during the inspection negative performance but sometimes you can't ask questions affirmatively and you tend to mark the service down. If the performance is good you have to mark it as a good service. There hasn't really been a move towards qualitative judgements and qualitative issues, quality of work makes no difference' (HMIC Inspector 02).

Costs and Savings

A fundamental aim of introducing Best Value within the police service was to create services that were more efficient. In addition any savings emerging from Best Value reviews must be linked into efficiency plans, which required the police to make 2% savings year on year. This aspect of services has been one of the hardest elements to analyse within the data, principally because of the lack of data available on the cost of services and the police services' inability to quantify savings from Best Value reviews. Martin et al (2003) in their evaluations of costs savings, while acknowledging these difficulties provide little evidence of savings and profess even when savings were made these were minor.

From examining HMIC Inspection reports and the Local Policing Plans for the three case studies there were claims that efficiency savings had been made. The Eastbrook Policing Plans for 2002/2003 indicates that over the past few years the force has managed to make efficiency savings in excess of £8 million. This amount accounts for both cashable and non-cashable savings. Cashable savings are where resources are reduced and the cash is used to reinvest in other areas. Non-cashable savings are achieved through the re-direction of funds to a higher

priority or where action is taken to improve performance with the same amount of resources. Examples of how this money was saved included savings made in procurement through major contracts, restructuring of departments including the civilianisation of posts and deployment of police resources to front-line services through a civilianisation programme. It was unclear which of these savings if any had been achieved through Best Value. This is also noted in the plan as one of the key recommendations made by the HMIC that the forces needed to identify and incorporate any likely savings made from the Best Value reviews into its efficiency plans.

In Westfield there were also claims of efficiency gains. They emphasise within their plan that in the past few years they have achieved their 2% efficiency targets. It is stated that this has been achieved through a civilianisation programme and Best Value reviews. Details of potential efficiency savings from two Best Value reviews for 2003/2004 are detailed. The Organisational Resilience review would free up a non-cashable £10,000 saving through the provision of an overnight county-wide CID service for the investigation of serious crime. This overnight service would reduce the frequent call-out of senior-officers and give responsibility to detective officers to deem whether an incident needs further investigation by the Crime Investigation Department and save time. Most of the perceived savings in the Best Value reviews relate to making the service operate more effectively, for example reducing the time spent on tasks therefore freeing up time for officers to complete other jobs. This leads to the more effective use of resources. Another common theme within the Best Value reviews as noted above was either through the civilianisation of tasks or reducing the rank of the person undertaking the role. In Westfield the civilianisation of three chief inspector posts, five inspector posts and 5 sergeant posts in 2003/2004 was implemented. In Sunnydale one initiative stemming from a review on specialist operations identified a saving of £17,000 in cashable savings. It was also reported that non-cashable savings have been made through the redeployment of staff back to front-line services. Because of the difficulties in assessing direct efficiency gains from the Best Value reviews at the time of the research respondents were asked for their views on whether they believed that Best Value had led to efficiency gains.

A key issue raised by a number of respondents was that they had invested a large amount of resources in Best Value and this had not necessarily led to equivalent savings from the reviews. This was seen as a main problem within Sunnydale specifically in terms of the amount of time, money and staff that had been provided to ensure the principles of Best Value with little gain in terms of efficiency or improvements to service at the time of the research. As stated by a member of the police authority,

‘I do not really know how many people they have on the team now, around about 11 people. You can add their salaries for a year—that is a lot of money to be saving across the board. Well it has made savings but if you add up the cost of setting up a massive team and set that against everything else by the end of the day when you read the balance sheet that is where I do not think they have made savings’ (Police Authority Member, Sunnydale Constabulary)

Another recurring viewpoint was that Best Value had not been about saving money within the authority but that many of the options for changes actually required more investment by the Police Authority or identified the need to provide more resources. Best Value was not necessarily viewed as an efficiency saving exercise.

‘As far as Eastbrook was concerned we said that this is not a cost-cutting exercise because of the connotation of Best Value itself and the sort of efficiency aim. But I certainly know that we have had some of the reviews like the managing money review came up with over £200,000 to do with contracts and procurement and stuff but its more about service improvement. If you look through the reviews and the recommendations there have been far more saying that you need to invest in this and you need to develop this system, you need to develop these people, you need to do this in terms of actually requiring more investment to improve services rather than saying cut that out in terms of the cost benefit. If you were looking at it solely on a profit account then people would say, well where is the benefit in this if you look at it in ways of organisational development and improvement then I think that my salary and the team salary and the output it has well paid for itself’ (Best Value Team Member, Eastbrook Constabulary).

Many service managers were concerned that Best Value had actually created difficulties because reviews would make suggestions for additional resources and then these were not forthcoming which then made staff questioned the value of the review process. Other service managers believed that the Best Value review gave them added sway when vying for extra money.

Within Police Authorities the efficiency element of Best Value was viewed with most suspicion. Respondents responsible for conducting reviews believed that at the beginning of the process staff viewed them with distrust and believed that they were there simply to save money and therefore that would mean their employment or department were under threat. This was said to create tension at the beginning of the process. Those responsible stated that once Best Value was underway staff began to realise that Best Value was not a threat to their positions. There is also little evidence of staff redundancies resulting from reviews, conversely suggestions were for additional staff or other ways of deploying staff. There was one example of attempting to make efficiency gain through outsourcing custody officers function to a private security firm in a bid to save money by Sunnysdale Constabulary but this was not accepted and was seen as controversial (this example will be discussed in more detail later).

A further concern was how more efficiency gains could be achieved within the police service. This was a point raised by Butler (2003), who argued that the continued emphasis on efficiency savings was penalising those Police Authorities that had effectively saved money in recent years and were already relatively lean. A good example of this was provided by one of the respondents responsible for training when discussing whether Best Value can achieve efficiency gains.

‘The frustration in terms of the Best Value review internally is that we think what we deliver is an extremely cost-efficient and effective product. Because of being a small force we are very lean and keen. So I think there is that tension as we know that we have already slimmed down as much as we can. We know that we are multi-skilled so it is becoming difficult to meet demand. Because a trainer now delivers five subjects but they cannot deliver five subjects at a time but there is demand there for them to do that. Over the past five years the number of trainers has reduced but the demand for training has increased’ (Service Manager, Westfield Constabulary).

Addressing local needs and local issues

In the Modernisation Agenda better services will only be achieved if they have been developed to meet the needs of local users. Plurality and diversity are encouraged. As mentioned in previous chapters, a key aspect of Best Value was to allow Local Authorities to develop their own approaches and they were

encouraged to find ways to deliver services that would address local requirements. Despite this emphasis on local variation, commentators have indicated that the other side of Best Value is a continuation of the top down pressure to meet central targets and meet central policy objectives (Martin and Davies 1999). It is argued that if the central ideals win then there will be limited variation in the way that services are delivered and national priorities and objectives will take over. This could mean services will not be changed to meet local needs but rather to fit in with central objectives and then they fail to improve.

In the first stages of the Best Value, as already indicated, Police Authorities adopted a number of different approaches to Best Value. This was also reflected in what service they chose to review and in local variations in changes that were made to services. There was also evidence that when changing services or trying to secure improvements central policies and ideas were often taken into account. A number of examples can be provided where central ideas have been incorporated into Best Value reviews. A key example is the National Intelligence Model⁸ (Home Office 2003). This adoption of the National Intelligence Model is recommended in both the Westfield Constabulary review on Crime Intelligence and the Eastbrook Constabulary review on Detecting Crime. The National Intelligence Model which is included in the National Policing Plan and is to be rolled out to all forces dictating a central approach to how forces will deal with information and crime. Another example was found in Best Value reviews on call management and public interface dealing with requests from public and other stakeholders. A number of recommendations such as the centralisation of call centres were made as part of the thematic review 'Open All Hours' (HMIC 2001b) and found themselves in recommendations for better services. In their review of Case Handling dealing with criminal cases files and cases going to court from Westfield Constabulary the primary objective of the Best Value review appears to be pushing forward the implementation of recommendations from the Glidewell report which suggests the co-location of police case handling units within the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS).

⁸ The briefing paper referenced provides a comprehensive account of what the National Intelligence Model involves.

Best Value reviews were both supporting and incorporating central ideas posing the question whether this impacted upon individual authorities ability to tailor service to meet local requirements. There is one key example that illustrates this tension between addressing local concerns and meeting central requirements. This was raised in Westfield Constabulary and concerns the National Training Best Value Review. When discussing Best Value with two respondents in the case study areas, one respondent outlined his views of the National Review and how in essence it meant a compromise of local needs in terms of training provision.

‘Something that was made clear from the National Project that became a bit of a black cloud over the whole Best Value process for training was that it was made clear from the National project there would be greater collaboration between forces on training. And I mean literally a black cloud because everything that you do we are going to be told that we need to be collaborating, and that speared a certain direction. When we were looking at probationer training, one of the questions we have had to ask is how can we collaborate which is not a question we would have asked initially. We were already doing some collaborating because of national impetus but the opportunities to do this are actually fewer if you want to achieve Best Value than the National Project would actually have it. So there was sort of a political agenda driving the National Project that actually I think created a tension between us. Because the fact is that at times it can be more expensive for us to collaborate in training than to do it ourselves’ (Senior Officer Westfield Constabulary).

Later the discussion moved on to the implementation plan for the Best Value review. It was suggested again that this was compromised and devised in such a way as to keep the HMIC satisfied and restrict their inspections. All improvement plans form part of the risk assessment carried out by the HMIC to see if services require further inspection. The respondent argued

‘It is in our interest to produce a very bland improvement plan that will account for the stuff nationally that is going on and make sure that we have the ticks in the boxes as far as the HMIC are concerned so that we look good. That is the fundamental flaw and again it goes back to the public sector that we are not really masters of our own destiny anyway.’(Senior Officer, Westfield Constabulary).

Power (1997) suggests that this tick box mentality set up to measure ‘hard facts’ such as the outputs or performance levels of any given service may actually miss the point. Although police forces can provide documentation or reports such as the implementation plans or the performance achievement documents (Appendix D).

and these are acceptable to the HMIC, they tell us little about the effectiveness of new processes or changes to service⁹.

There was evidence within the three case study areas that they were adapting to local circumstances and putting in place changes that would improve the way that they as a constabulary work more effectively. The difficulty in assessing whether they met local needs, is that most reviews are about making internal changes that local residents or users of service may not be aware of but which might improve the service inadvertently. While service changes were localised there was still a noticeable central influence within reviews. Events occurring nationally or recommended at a national level would be incorporated into the reviews and form a key part of recommendation for service improvement.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to examine whether Best Value had achieved its aim of improving the performance and service delivery of the police service. This was achieved by considering some of the key factors used to assess the police performance such as their ability to detect crime, levels of response to 999 calls and public satisfaction with police services. It was identified that there was substantial variation in the performance levels of the police. In some areas performance levels have increased but in others they have reduced. This suggests that Best Value had not led to significant improvements in the performance of the police service. This examination of performance indicators demonstrates that it is difficult to make assessments on whether policies are effective when based on this type of quantitative data.

Best Value was also implemented to improve the way that services were provided. In order to do this, changes in services, the perceptions of staff and the views of the HMIC were all examined. It was found from examining the Best Value reviews that a number of changes had been made to services. The results of these in many cases were not known either because they were still being implemented or there

⁹ For a more detailed critique of auditing systems and their use in the public sector within the UK see Power (1997)

was no way to measure the impact of these changes. Some participants in the study did not think that Best Value had led to service improvements. They suggested that many of the changes implemented would have been put into practice anyway and that Best Value had simply accelerated these developments. Other respondents believed that it had only had a limited effect on service. Some respondents did believe that Best Value had already or would lead to improvements in the long term. The HMIC were also unsure about whether Best Value had achieved improvements. Initial problems that the police service experienced while implementing the policy made it difficult for them to assess whether service would improve. Examining the inspections of the Best Value reviews demonstrated that judgements about service improvements could be subjective and did not necessarily provide a definite view about whether service improvements would be realised.

Best Value was also introduced to produce efficiency savings. This was also difficult to assess. In Local Policing Plans the police service identified that efficiency gains had been achieved since the introduction of Best Value. Whether these savings were as a direct result of the Best Value process was difficult to measure. This was because initially no direct connection was made between the Best Value reviews and efficiency savings. This was supported by the HMIC who argued that the police services had failed to do this. Many respondents argued that Best Value had led to savings but when this was weighed against what was invested in implementing Best Value these were minimal. Other respondents did not view Best Value as a cost-saving exercise but argued that in many cases it had increased investment.

Overall Best Value did lead to changes in the way that some services were delivered; for example the introduction of the National Intelligence Model to improve intelligence gathering within the police service, the establishment of a new policing style and making changes to the way that calls are handled. The difficulty is in assessing whether these changes will lead to service improvements. There is a certain assumption that they will, but there was no agreement of exactly what these improvements might be. Judgements about service improvements were often subjective. Similarly, it was difficult to assess whether performance had

improved as a result of Best Value or whether efficiency gains had been achieved as a result of other changes.

Chapter Six

Achieving Change: a Reformed Police Service?

While Best Value was implemented to improve the performance of Police Authorities and lead to service improvements in terms of cost and quality, it was also about changing the whole way that public services operated. The implied organisational change within the police was seen as instrumental in ensuring that Best Value had effectively achieved its objectives.

The aim of this chapter is to consider whether this expected organisational change occurred. The four main elements that were expected to take place will be examined individually, namely structural change, organisational culture, shifts in strategy formation and strategy content. It will be argued that there has been a failure to fully realise this type of transformation within the police service partly due to the nature of the police service itself and partly due to some of the tensions identified within the Best Value framework and as well as other related reform introduced by New Labour.

Best Value: The Drive for Organisational Change

Boyne, Martin and Walker (2001: 3) argue that Best Value was viewed by the government as the centre-piece of attempts to modernise government and that the implicit goals of Best Value was to generate organisational change. They maintain that while the intended outcomes of Best Value are obvious, for instance service improvements and increase in performance, there were a number of underlying assumptions about the policies. To investigate the ambiguous agenda of the Best Value regime, Boyne et al. (2001: 6) examined a number of official and unofficial documents, Ministerial statements and interviewed senior policymakers in both central and local government. They identified from this research four major types of organisational change that were expected from the introduction of Best Value. These four changes are changes to the structure, culture, process of strategy formation and strategy content.

In terms of structure Boyne et al (2001) recognise three likely changes to structure as a result of Best Value. They argue that the intention of Best Value is to reduce levels of bureaucracy where Local Authorities are allowed a more flexible way of working. This could be related to initially allowing Local and Police Authorities to develop their own approaches to Best Value. Boyne et al (2001:7) emphasise that although in theory the result is intended to be a reduction in bureaucracy it could actually lead to more bureaucracy because of the need to formalise policy plans and publish reviews and the process of audit and inspection imposing external constraints on local managers. Other structural changes that Boyne et al refer to are decentralisation, which allow organisations to provide managers with autonomy in order to meet the need of their local populations as well as integration where authorities are encouraged to conduct cross-cutting reviews. However, the policies may also elicit the contradictory effects of centralisation and fragmentation, as authorities are directed by Best Value performance indicators and key government objectives and the possibility that services will be provided in a variety of ways and by a number of agencies.

As with previous public sector reforms, Best Value aims to change the culture of the organisation. A negative view of existing public service culture was held when New Labour created their reform agenda. In policy documents relating to Best Value the need to change culture is seen as a crucial factor in achieving better performance and delivering a service the public want. Throughout the Modernising Government White Paper (Cabinet Office 1999), the need to achieve cultural changes is continually stressed. In one of the policy statements outlining Best Value it is stated that 'the commitment of local government to the cultural changes which Best Value is designed to bring about is vital' (DETR 1998: 4).

Changes to the way that strategy is formulated is also encouraged under the Best Value regime. Boyne et al (2001: 10) identify three types of strategy process. These include rational planning where the external environment circumstances are scanned, policy options are evaluated and the best one selected and precise targets for future organisational performance are set with subsequent performance monitored. Other processes of strategy formation include incrementalism where strategies emerge from political bargaining between internal groups in the

organisation and between the organisation and its external stakeholders. The policy with the greatest political support becomes the effective strategy. Formal analysis is scarce as is the setting of objectives, while radical decisions are rarely adopted. The final model identified by Boyne et al (2001: 10) is that of logical incrementalism which lies somewhere in the middle of the previous two strategies. Rather than exact performance objectives, there are loosely defined objective goals and strategy is developed through the main consensus. As Boyne et al (2001:11) stress, Best Value favours the rational planning approach to strategy formation with its emphasis on BVPIs, the duty to set and publish targets, the need to consult external stakeholders and the external inspection regime that checks whether rational planning is occurring.

The final aspect of organisational change is that of strategy content, which refers to the ways that services, are delivered and what services are delivered (Boyne et al 2001). As noted throughout, the aim of Best Value and the Modernisation Agenda was to promote new ways of service delivery. Prominence was to be given to originality, while alternative forms of service provision were encouraged. It was not a question of who provided the service but more a question of 'what worked'.

Some of these underlying themes identified by Boyne et al (2001) are synonymous with those of previous public sector reforms such as decentralisation/centralisation elements and the increased fragmentation of services. The Modernisation Agenda extended certain elements of the reforms, for example encouraging new ways of delivering service with agencies working together to ensure the co-ordination of activities. The difficulty is, within these elements and as identified above, a number of these expected organisational changes could have contradictory effects or be difficult to achieve and may vary depending on the authority.

The situation would be the same for Police Authorities also subject to Best Value. As Local Authorities rational planning is encouraged through establishing a Best Value Performance Plan setting out priorities, developing set BVPIs to be met and ensuring that stakeholders are consulted. Police Authorities were provided with more responsibility in an attempt to rationalise decision-making. Local autonomy was also promoted. Police Authorities were encouraged to find alternative ways to

provide services and there is an emphasis on changing the culture of the police service. For example in the briefing notes provided to the police service prior to the introduction of the policy, it is identified that, 'Best Value is not just about undertaking reviews; the reviews are vehicles to help identify performance improvement. The real Best Value will come from a cultural shift, a different way of managing, a different way of 'doing business' and, through improved service provision to local communities' (Briefing Notes to the Police 1999, Home Office website).

The aim of the following section is to examine whether these implicit organisational changes have actually been achieved and whether this has impacted upon the success of the policy. As has been identified in recent literature on effective evaluations of policy (Chen 1990, Pawson and Tilley 1997) what is important is not necessarily what the outcomes are but how these outcomes were arrived at. So what mechanisms were put in place and in what context did the policy operate to make it successful. For the Best Value it is believed that success will be achieved through organisational change with shifts in the structure, culture, strategy process and strategy formation and these would lead to better levels of performance and improved services. The question here is did these shifts occur and whether this influenced the success of the policy.

Organisational Change within Police Authorities: The Result of Best Value

Structural Change

Reducing bureaucracy

As identified above, by allowing flexibility in the way that public services operate Best Value is intended to reduce levels of bureaucracy. Conversely, the importance placed on rational planning in terms of strategy formation somehow invalidates this projected flexibility. As stated in Chapter Four, one of the initial concerns of the HMIC in their inspections was that the Police Authorities were failing to track changes that were being made to services so Police Authorities were then asked to make arrangements to ensure that this was achieved. While this

fits in with the rational planning model where performance targets are set for individual services, a process also encouraged in the HMIC reports. It actually creates further work for managers as they have to track changes. Most admitted that this frustrated them and took up too much time and just added to the high levels of paper work that they already had to contend with. In one of the case study areas, Westfield, this was raised as a major area of concern. Senior managers were responsible for feeding back on how they were progressing with all recommendations suggested in Best Value reviews as well as management issues that had emerged from the reports. This was not the case in the other two Police Authority areas, where managers were provided with responsibility for management issues and did not need to feedback to the Police Authority on these. This Police Authority member's comments illustrate the bureaucracy created by Best Value as well as the difficulties that the managers in Westfield faced.

'Best Value is seen as a straitjacket and you know you cannot do C until A and B have been done. To my mind Best Value is a state of mind that should pass through the organisation. You should not have to wait to get permission to do something that is evidently sensible and can be rationalised on a business case analysis. I think that if we can focus on the headline and allow and enable managers to get on with local management issues because that is what we pay them very well to do I have been chairing the public interface review and we identified that there were key issues that needed to be addressed so if we could address those key issues then it would enable us to improve service delivery. In terms of report back I suggest it is on key issues. We do not need to know that the following 963 things have been done, all we need to know is whether the following five points have been progressed' (Police Authority Member, Westfield Constabulary)

In addition, as established in Chapter Four, there was a whole process of setting up the Best Value regime, which actually created more bureaucracy and paperwork and added levels of decision-making, which did not previously exist. The setting up of new teams and structures to deal with the policy and the process of creating an appropriate methodology also took time and resources, as did conducting and writing reviews and generating recommendations.

Many respondents also discussed the excessive use of audit and inspection. The audit inspection regime that came with Best Value added another layer of inspections to police authorities. The amount of work that had to be completed to

meet the requirements of these inspections was seen as cumbersome and repetitive. Research participants complained about being over- inspected and that there was a lot of crossover between the different inspections by different groups.

‘I have really never had a problem with the concept of it. What I have a problem with is the whole bureaucracy that has gone with it as with anything in the public sector. As soon as there is an initiative centrally then there is three organisations that want to come and audit it. There is the HMIC there is the Police Standards unit, district auditors and we have got our own audit and inspection internally. So as soon as anything kicks off everything is then audited and inspected’ (Eastbrook Constabulary, Senior Manager).

‘But I think that where Best Value went wrong at the start was that it was being depicted as yet another set of just processes that we had to lumber through because unlike some sections of public sector, you know the police service and the authority is subjected to all kinds of external scrutiny. We are inspected upon and audited upon by everyone and their mother. This was yet another burden at the start’ (Police Authority Member, Westfield Constabulary).

This bureaucracy created was a concern for the HMIC who did streamline the inspection regime through the period of this research to try to alleviate some of this bureaucracy (HMIC 2001). Police Authorities have been encouraged to try to co-ordinate their planning cycles together to reduce duplication and reduce paperwork (Home Office 1999C). Again, there is a contradictory message, on one hand Police Authorities are encouraged to co-ordinate activities to reduce bureaucracy, but then are required by the Best Value regime to ensure that certain procedures are followed and to put structures in place, which assisted in creating red tape in the first place.

Decentralisation verses Centralisation

A key theme of recent public sector reforms has been simultaneous centralisation and decentralisation. The reforms were intended to provide managers with responsibility for operational matters and directing service day to day, while policy would be decided at a central level. Critics of managerial reforms have argued that rather than allocating public services greater responsibility there has actually been an increase of central control through managerial policies.

Two staff from the control room in Sunnydale Constabulary who were interviewed as part of this research were asked whether they had been consulted on the changes that were occurring as part of the Managing Demand review. Although they felt informed they were concerned about the extent of changes that were taking place and the effect that this was having on staff. They also expressed doubts about whether their opinions were actually important due to external demands and other agendas.

‘We were asked about our opinion to the changes to the service that were taking place in terms of the centralised control room and we did not think that this was a good idea. For example we believe that the local knowledge of areas will be lost when the control room is centralised. The officers do not know who they are talking to and staff do not have local knowledge of areas, there is a loss of communication between the officers and the control room staff, which we think is essential. However when the government has an agenda then they go ahead and do what they want and ignore what is best for the service’ (Member of Staff, Sunnydale Constabulary).

Other respondents were also concerned that central policy directive actually devalued the work that Best Value had achieved and that many of the recommendations made within Best Value reviews were superseded by government directives.

‘I mean, promoting public safety, you can see there the commitment made to things like introducing ward constables to increase visibility. There had been a number of other things like patrolling with a purpose and mobile police stations have all been linked to visibility... but it is such a fast moving environment that you know any improvement that had been taking place or some of the direction of these had been taken over by the White Paper on Police Reform’ (Police Authority Member, Eastbrook Constabulary).

The Superintendents’ Association (2003) who carried out a study of the operation of BCUs found that generally Commanders would like to have the opportunity to have further control over certain aspects of their work such as the setting and allocating of budgets for their divisions. It was believed by some that they were not provided with adequate levels of responsibility. In terms of Best Value, senior managers pointed out that they found it difficult at times to get to grips with Best Value because it was a centralised policy emanating from headquarters that did not necessarily take into account the differences that existed between BCUs. Other

respondents argued that the independence of divisions actually created complications when trying to review services and it was hard to persuade all BCUs to undertake the same procedures.

‘I think the difficulty is that you have BCUs like the eastern areas, which I think is perfectly capable of doing Best Value reviews on itself. What happens is that you get these corporate reviews and it is one hat fits all and when it doesn’t fit people just dismiss it where in fact you should be looking at, well, these bits apply and these bits don’t’ (Civilian, Eastbrook Constabulary)

The view from the Home Office was that actually chief constables were relatively independent and the implementation of policies such as Best Value was necessary to ensure that police services were accountable to both government and the public. The view from that HMIC was that the reason for the failure of previous policies and the difficulties some forces experienced in implementing Best Value was because chief officers wanted to pursue their own agendas.

‘The police still have quite a bit of independence...the police are in a unique position. They are not responsible to us but the Constitution. Unlike other public services where we can dictate how they operate, for example, like schools where we have a national curriculum and tell them what they can teach. But the police still have to be able to demonstrate to the public that they are being accountable for what they do. The public have a right to know what they are doing...I think that forces really need to be rigorously scrutinised’ (Representative, Home Office).

Changing Organisational Culture

Police Organisational Culture: A Barrier to Reform.

As indicated in Chapter One, the occupational culture of the police service has been viewed as a major barrier to reform. It was also identified that the concept of one homogenous police occupational culture was not appropriate (Reiner 2000) and that even within the police service there is the existence of subcultures each with their own perceptions about their role and the role of the organisation. Boyne et al. (2001) stated that changes to organisational culture is seen as essential if Best Value is to be a success. Yet as will be discussed here, changing police culture is problematic.

Acceptance or Denial

Chan (1996, 1997) in her investigation of police culture and how it affected police-minority relations in New South Wales Police (NSWP) developed a theoretical framework within which to analyse changes to and the resistance of police culture. Drawing from organisational theory by both Schein (1992) and Sackmann (1991, cited in Chan 1997) and using Bourdieu's concepts of field and habitus, Chan formulates important assumptions about why there may be disparities and unevenness in attempts to reform the police. Chan (1997) argues that most literature on police culture recognises the links between police cultural knowledge (habitus) and the structural conditions of police work (field) but wrongly assumes a linear pattern between cultural knowledge and police practice. Chan contends,

‘structural conditions do not completely determine cultural knowledge, and cultural knowledge does not totally dictate practice. Working within the structural conditions with the police, members have an active role to play in developing, reinforcing, resisting or transforming cultural knowledge....Whether a structural change results in any change of cultural knowledge or institutional practice depends on the nature of that change and the capacity of officers to adapt to that change. The relationships are neither uni-directional nor deterministic’ (Chan 1997: 73-74).

Chan (1997) found that regardless of numerous policy adaptations, structural changes and rule tightening used to alter culture within NSWP (see chapters 3, 9 and 10), the effect was minimal. Her view was that these strategies made to improve police-minority relations were primarily aimed at changing the habitus of policing or changing the ‘cultural knowledge’ of the police service. These changes to cultural knowledge included attempts to change ‘axiomatic knowledge’ where there are assumptions about ‘why things are done a certain way’. This can be modified by experience and critical appraisal and in the example of NSWP the adoption of community-based policing strategies in order to improve relationships between the police and the community was encouraged by external criticism like the Lusher Inquiry in 1981 which was an examination into the broader issues such as structure, organisational and management policies and made major

recommendations for reform (cited in Chan 1997: 119). It is assumed from Sackmann's model that incorporating the implementation of these types of strategies will influence the 'dictionary knowledge' of police officers. Dictionary knowledge 'provides definitions and labels of events in an organisation' (Sackmann 1991 cited in Chan 1997: 68) and it was believed changing the structure of NSW Police through regionalisation would lead to increased knowledge by the cultural and social make up of different localities and populations. Other strategies were used in training and recruitment in an attempt to alter police officers' stereotypes but Chan's survey of police officers showed they continued to identify certain groups, specifically Aboriginals, as criminal and a nuisance.

Chan (1997) argues that when strategies are only partially implemented and processes are not taken in the intended directions the old ways of accomplishing tasks remain in operation. If police officers can freely pursue previous practices then it is difficult to achieve change and there is a failure to adapt their 'directory knowledge' that prescribes how things should be done. Finally changes to 'recipe knowledge' that prescribes what should or should not be done in situations usually flow from other changes. Although Chan found some evidence of changes to recipe knowledge, for example more openness and a breakdown of solidarity with police officers willing to 'dob in' fellow officers for mistakes, these changes had not been extensive (Chan 1997: 230). Chan argues that this inability to alter cultural knowledge is probably because of a failure to alter the field that the police exist in. For example the continuation of stereotyping of aboriginal groups could be as a result of their continuing powerless position within society. It is argued that modifications in both cultural knowledge and the structural conditions in which the police operate are necessary to fully reform the police.

Managerial approaches have been employed as a strategy to reform the police for a number of years. There was some resistance to this reorganisation (see Chapter Two) initially but it appears that the acceptance of these reforms grew. Wall (1999) found a rising number of chief constables who could be classed as 'bureaucrats', one of the types identified by Reiner (1991) who also stressed the probability of their increasing numbers. The bureaucrats firmly accept 'that old methods of policing, and of managing police forces can no longer work. The way forward is

maximum professionalism and maximum participation'. More recent research by Davies and Thomas (2003) explored changes in professional policing identities as a result of NPM reforms. They found that many managers, both civilian and police, were aware of their new responsibilities resulting from management polices and of recent criticism from external sources (e.g. The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry 1999). From interviews conducted it was evident that 'core policing identity, for middle and senior ranks had been fundamentally challenged' (Davies and Thomas 2003: 687). It was reflected by respondents in this study that the police service were moving away from an authoritarian style of management where you did what you were told by those in a superior position towards a more communicative, tolerant and ethical style of management (2003: 687-688).

Similarly when discussing Best Value, many of the participants were keen to emphasise how they actually believed in the philosophy of Best Value. There were a number of respondents, including civilian and police who accepted that new forms of management were necessary to keep the police service operating effectively. Many indicated that they thought that Best Value was the key to improving the police service and believed that it was also achieving this aim as was noted in the previous chapter

'I am quite comfortable with the process of Best Value review and I think that as long as you have managers that question but do not resist then it will work. I mean I can sit here and dig my heels in with it but I do not see that as a positive way forward because I actually support a lot of the recommendations. I think that there is an opportunity to change and develop the ways we work and what it does recognise is how good we are. It is not all negative. As a result of what we have already done we can now move this another step forward. So long as it does that I haven't got a problem with it. And if it does make us compete, compare, challenge and consult it has to be a good process' (Service Manager, Eastbrook Constabulary).

Davies and Thomas (2003) also found that other police professionals did not agree with the management changes that were occurring. There was an attitude that managerial reforms were actually inhibiting them from conducting their 'real work'. This view was replicated in some discussions about Best Value. Some respondents reported resistance within the police service and this created difficulties in implementing some of the changes that occurred within the

organisation. Other participants discussing Best Value argued that they did not disagree with Best Value but it was obvious from their comments that they were not fully accepting of managerial policies.

‘In theory yes but in practical terms I just do not think that it is practical because of the amount of things that we are dealing with so at the moment we are over laden with bureaucracy. On this division for example we have 31 strategies at force level that we are expected to have an action plan for. So I think that we are laden down with trying to produce targets and planning grids and performance indicators that I really wouldn’t want anything more that is going to take me away from my job here. To be honest the feeling at the moment on territorial division from command teams that provide front-line policing is that we are under siege. We are not under siege from the public or the criminals we are under siege from the force executive and headquarters based departments that seem to have a mindset that is we are here to support them rather than the other way around. I think that is now endangering us from getting the job done’ (Senior Manager, Westfield Constabulary).

‘I have got the feeling at the moment that Best Value and a number of other systems make you audit what you are doing and by the very nature of doing that, and I am not saying that it is a bad thing you start to consume yourself with a lot of energy in that area and the real bit of the business tends to take a back seat you start responding to all of the reviews of the functions and you take your eye off what is really important and that is getting on with our daily job’ (Senior Manager, Westfield Constabulary).

‘The problem is that people are jaded by years and years of Best Value, policing by objectives or whatever fad there is going, so it is very difficult for them to see it as anything other than the flavour of the month. And that is where the police culture is very important, as you know it is a strong culture that will snap back to its roots if you do not keep a firm control of it’ (Executive Officer, Eastbrook Constabulary).

Others believed that cultural change was occurring though at a gradual pace and therefore the full extent of the policy had not been realised either internally or externally.

‘I think that is one of the reasons it has gone of the political boil because there hasn’t been that huge inner service culture change and there hasn’t been that huge change in service delivery. And I think that I understand that because politicians work to such small time scales like three years. But I think we will that’s because I am an optimist. I think that it has moved the police service so far

down the line of service delivery but we won't get the benefits next year we will start getting the benefits in five years time' (HMIC Inspector 04).

Managerial reforms aimed to move organisations away from the traditional hierarchical structures to more open and flexible systems of working. The aim was also to allow managers to have more power in decision-making, not just at regional or force level but was also encouraged at a more local level. In recent years, for example, in the police service there has been much more emphasis on the performance of Basic Command Units and on them being involved with making decisions about local policing and managing their own resources. There was evidence provided by respondents that the police service is in some ways retaining a hierarchical structure where rank is still used as a basis of decision-making.

'I had the opportunity to give my views on the bureaucracy of Best Value to a member of the Police Authority and it led a week or two later to me being given some advice about embarrassing the force executive and the chief constable because I had given a diverse view to a member of the Police Authority, I had gone off message. In my view I thought we would want to encourage an environment where people question things. But you are not allowed to question Best Value' (Senior Manager, Westfield Constabulary).

'Because you are dealing with a hierarchical organisation and I do not care what people say there is still this perception that if you are a higher rank in the police it is because you are more intelligent not because that is the career path you have chosen. When you interview a divisional commander on a one to one they will say I want to do this and this and this and what they do not realise is that when you interview the other divisional commanders they will come up with a different wish list and your final report might reflect some of what they might say but it won't reflect everything and they take that as a personal insult and sometimes I think we have too much. We have consultation overload sometimes and I think it probably comes down to communication again. We need to get across to them that just because they are a superintendent then it doesn't mean that everything they say is going in that report we have to make a professional judgement as to what is going in that report, as authors we have to decide what is relevant and what sticks out' (Best Value Team Member).

It is demonstrated that although managerial practices have formed part of the police services' strategy for some time, not all members are convinced of their value although many stated the need to operate a more effective and efficient police service. It is clear that all three case study areas have put considerable time

and effort into ensuring they are complying with the requirements of Best Value and are conducting reviews, making changes to services, planning what services to review, consulting the public and staff on changes and setting targets under the Best Value process. Nevertheless, as stated, organisations can present the image that they are fulfilling a certain role but may only be achieving this superficially. Johnson and Scholes (1999) indicate

As organisations increasingly make visible their carefully considered public statements of their values, beliefs and purposes there is a danger that these are seen as useful and accurate descriptions of the organisational paradigm. But they are at best only partially accurate descriptions of the real organisational culture. This is not to suggest that there is any organised deception. It is simply that the statements of values and beliefs are often statements of aspiration or strategic intent ... rather than accurate descriptions of the culture as it exists in the minds and hearts of people within and around the organisation. This 'real' culture is evidenced in the way the organisation actually operates: It is taken for granted assumptions about 'how you run an organisation like this' and 'what really matters round here' (Johnson and Scholes 1999: 236-7).

Communicating Change

Whilst the police service continues to be a rank based organisation that in the past has been classed as an authoritarian regime, Johnson (1988) emphasises that police organisations are better viewed as 'symbolic' or 'mock bureaucracies' (cited in Johnson 1988: 52) to conceal the fact that rather than a hierarchical formal and structured organisation they have more of a casual, lax, and impromptu approach with an inherent culture of deviance (Punch 1983 cited in Johnson 1988: 52). This is primarily because of the discretion allowed to lower ranks and the inability of those at the top of the organisation to control them. The existence of different cultures has already been noted and confirmed by research (Chatterton 1995, Reuss-Ianni and Ianni 1983). Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (1983) identified two different types of culture from their research in New York City Police, management cops and street-cops. As described above management cop culture seeks to maximise those bureaucratic benefits that come from efficient organisation, rational decision-making, cost-effective procedures and objective accountability (Reuss-Ianni and Ianni 1983: 257). Whereas the street cops were more nostalgic and still held on to a time when cops were respected and valued, fellow officers could be counted on

and 'superior officers' were a part of the family (1983: 253). Reuss-Ianni and Ianni noted that the management culture 'co-existed with rather than contained the local precinct culture'. Chatterton (1995) in his research found that although front-line staff gave the impression they were expecting changes in reality they engaged in impression management and maintained the status quo.

This could create difficulties when trying to reform the organisation particularly from a top-down perspective, as most managerial reforms have tended to be in the past. As Bellingham (2000) suggests rank and file officers could hold distinct 'axiomatic knowledge' from management about the key goals of the organisation. The emphasis on Best Value however was to alter this and encourage much more involvement of staff in making decisions. Newman (2000) argues 'there was a stronger emphasis on capturing the support of public service staff to ensure long-term change' (Newman 2000: 80). The original intention of this research was to examine the views of front-line staff about Best Value and whether they believed that it would lead to an improved police service and to gain their perceptions about rational management techniques such as the performance indicators. However when asked if this was possible in all three case studies this was rejected as a research strategy. A common response was that there was no point in questioning front-line staff about their opinions because they would not necessarily be aware of Best Value or know what it entailed. Therefore it would be pointless to interview them. In some ways this does give an insight into organisational values and culture. It is assumed by top management that staff do not need to be aware of management policies as it will not really affect them, but if changes to departments and services affect the way that staff work then it influences their job and how they conduct their daily business.

Respondents of senior ranks especially did not feel that it was necessary to inform staff about Best Value and this could account for Best Value not being marketed initially in two out of three case study areas. Despite the chief officer's view that informing staff about Best Value was not necessary, this did cause some difficulties for managers.

‘I had to reassure staff in the control room that Best Value was not a threat to them. Also the fact that they felt threatened was not taken into account when the reviews were conducted. My main area of concern is custody. This has been a real worry to staff that there is a threat to their employment. The Best Value process just added to that. There are certain departments where it is causing angst and therefore can be a bit patronising. I think that they are being slightly unrealistic about the way that people feel about Best Value. I think that there is a danger of giving people information overload but feel that they should be better informed’ (Service Manager, Sunnydale Constabulary).

An example of this emerged from discussions with a service manager in one of the three case study areas that were responsible for scientific support and a Police Authority member. It had been proposed in part of the Best Value review that at times Scenes of Crimes Officers were acting in an inefficient manner because they were double crewing in patrol vans driving around waiting to be called out to an incident where their services were required. It was believed that it would be more efficient and less wasteful of resources to man patrolling vehicles with only one member of staff. This single-crew proposal was accepted by the Police Authority as a viable option and presented as a recommendation. But this was viewed negatively by the staff, as the service manager reported:

‘I do not think that they are happy with some of the proposals. If you were one of the ones that were not spoken to you would not feel consulted with because Best Value does not speak to everyone and Best Value can interpret comments in different ways. Staff would say ‘right, I think having two Scenes of Crime Officers in a van means that we can do a job quicker’ and somebody from Best Value would believe no, two people in two vans will do jobs quicker and they are not looking at ‘well, there was a really complex job the other day and it really helped the two of us being together and we did it quicker and while we did it no other jobs came in’. So there are different perspectives depending on where you sit and Best Value review has strength. The perspective is here looking down on it but that is its weakness as well’ (Service Manager, Eastbrook Constabulary)

There were some managers who believed that they were not appropriately consulted on the Best Value reviews or that they were kept out of the decision-making process and that the people making decisions did not have the knowledge to provide an appropriate view on what was required to ensure better service delivery.

‘Well there is a team of people with so-called stakeholders involved in the process. They may not have the right people conducting the reviews, sometimes

you think that they may miss the point. Although there is no evidence that any of the Best Value reviews are wrong of course I do think that it takes decision-making away from managers' (Service Manager, Sunnydale Constabulary).

There were inconsistent views about the value on making staff aware of Best Value. Some respondents thought it was necessary, whereas others did not see any value in telling staff about it, although in all three case study areas improvements had been made in terms of trying to communicate to staff what Best Value was and what changes it had brought to the force. If staff do not feel that they have been consulted or included in decisions then this could result in them rejecting changes. As Fielding (1994) argues 'the resilience and solidarity of the occupational culture has long been implicated as a prime force in undermining organisational innovation'.

Strategy Formation

As described above it is clear that Best Value aimed to shift the process of strategy formation. The main difference with Best Value has been (see Chapter Four) the increased role of the Police Authority in making decisions about how services should be delivered and who delivers them. Police Authorities have had varying levels of involvement depending on the police service they work with. In Westfield Constabulary the Police Authority were initially kept at arms' length from the Best Value process, despite the fact that they are the owners of the policy. It is this ownership of Best Value by the Police Authority that was seen as creating major problems for the police service in particular. Thus, rather than seeing the development of rational planning and strategy formation within the police service we see instead a movement towards incrementalism as a result of the concept of 'Constabulary Independence'.

Increasing the role of the Police Authority

Prior to the introduction of Best Value and other managerial reforms during the 1990s previous research has referred to the relatively limited role of Police Authorities within the tripartite structure (Lustgarten 1985, Reiner 1985, 1991, Spencer 1985) and increasing central control over policing policy. Other research

into the role of Police Authorities by Jones, Newburn and Smith (1994) in developing policy, noted variations in their effectiveness. In their study of four Police Authority areas they found that involvement in policy and the influence of the Police Authority depended on a number of factors including their statutory powers, political complexion, self-limitation, their size and structure and information and expertise. Jones et al (1994) argued that the lack of statutory powers was not necessarily limiting Police Authorities' ability to get involved in police policy making and suggested 'increasing their statutory powers would be necessary but by no means a sufficient condition of making them more influential' (Jones et al 1994: 297).

Constabulary Independence

Applying Chan's (1997) development of the notion of 'axiomatic knowledge' Savage, Charman and Cope (2000) argue that chief officers retain and use within policing discourse 'Constabulary Independence', meaning chief officers are independent from other bodies and responsible for policing policy decisions alone. Savage et al argue that the possible threat to Constabulary Independence, which has a long history within the police service, reinforces senior management culture and retention of this concept. They suggest that the 'group elite' ACPO further enhances this and that as a group they have drawn a protective shield around the idea of 'Constabulary Independence' (CI). Schein (1992) has argued culture contains the stable solution to a group's problem of external adaptation and group-learning processes or successful avoidance of painful situations transmits internal integration and culture. In terms of avoiding painful situations the main response is to use a strategy that is known to work and usually once it works it continues to be used as it forms part of the assumptions made by the culture.

Savage et al (2000) argue that that CI is employed by chief officers in a number of ways, for example, through professional closure, where professions close off outsiders and maintain that they possess a level of expert knowledge or expertise that those outside the occupation do not have. The concept of CI is used 'as a means of securing and defending the professional closure of policing' (Savage et al

:197). The other technique used is that of ‘marking out disputed territory’ where CI is used as a defence against intrusion or interference from outside bodies, such as the HMIC or as mentioned above, Police Authorities.

In this research it was identified that a whole process to conduct Best Value reviews and to make decisions on services to be reviewed has been set up. Despite the initial lack of involvement of the Authority in Westfield Constabulary structures were to put in place to involve the Authority in Best Value process and they did have a role in forming strategy. However if examined more closely it was established in all three case studies that at times the role of the Police Authorities could be superficial and decisions were still made by the Force Executive rather than the Authority.

In Westfield Constabulary there was a lack of inclusion from the Force Executive of the Police Authority. Members of the Best Value team noted that decisions on Best Value reviews would not be put forward unless initially seen and approved by the Force Executive prior to being forwarded to the Police Authority. They also noted tension when it was thought that the Authority attempted to get too involved in the decision-making process.

‘I do think that we have got better. The critical issue with Best Value is the ownership of it. And the friction between the Police Authority and the Executive has caused a lot of grief individual grief, and I think that it has caused a lot of grief for the force. And has diluted the effectiveness of the reports’ (Best Value Team Member, Sunnydale).

‘But saying that it is usually complex at times because it is the Authority’s responsibilities but we are the doers, there are at times tensions between what the Authority would like to see and what the Authority would like to deliver and sometimes there is a tension between what the Authority thinks that we should do and the practicalities in policing terms of what we can actually deliver. So there were a few tensions along the way sometimes with members who want the knowledge but haven’t had the policing experience that gives them that knowledge so sometimes and quite rightly they do have some basic questions but they also sometimes get into the detail rather than staying strategic in any review that we are doing so sometimes they get in the weeds a little bit of our processes rather than thinking about how can the organisation make step change for the better policing of the county’ (Member of the Force Executive, Westfield Constabulary).

'The main one is politics. The main difficulty that we have is the politics and the friction between the Executive and the Police Authority. Particularly from my point of view the way our seven stages is set up the Executive see the reports prior to the Police Authority seeing them and politics kick in because they are supposed to put a professional slant on it. What has happened in the past and this is only my opinion is that the reports have been watered down. So the Police Authority only see the watered down version and it has caused lots of friction. Because our boss is the Executive but the Police Authority own Best Value and that is the big problem' (Best Value Team Member, Westfield Constabulary).

There was an example where it was obvious that the police constabulary involved were not content for the Police Authority to be included in deciding what was the most suitable path to be taken to improve a service. Early on in the Best Value review process Sunnysdale Constabulary conducted a review on custody services. One of the options for change that was suggested was to outsource the custody officer role to an outside company. It was deemed that this option would ensure efficiency savings of around £100,000. However when this review went forward to the Operational Strategy Committee, which formed part of the Force Forum who view all Best Value reviews prior to the Authority there was some debate regarding the proposal. Senior officers viewed it as unviable and they did not feel that the Best Value team or the Authority had the experience to make a decision that would effect an operational function. This resulted in the chief officer setting up a working group to examine custody services and how to improve them. A Best Value team member commented how this was a repetition of work already completed. It also demonstrates a lack of trust in ability of the Best Value team to make appropriate decisions.

Other respondents stated that in reality the Police Authority's role was limited in making assessments because they were dependent on the police to provide them with information.

'Because senior management think that they know better than a team of newly recruited support staff and anything that they are going to suggest that might improve the service. It's really up to them to decide what is going to change and it is thought that the Police Authority will run with anything they are told to. They are not really in a position to dispute. There is a good relationship with the Police Authority and the force and the PA get on well together. But the PA really relies on what they are told by the force' (Best Value Team Member, Sunnysdale Constabulary)

'I think that one of the fundamental problems with it (Best Value) is the relationship between the Police Authority and the constabulary. You have an Authority owned process but everything has to be done by the constabulary. So there comes a point where you only have the constabulary's word for what is going on. Which is interesting because I was working for the Police Authority effectively trying to manage the Best Value process but police staff is doing all the work. The general opinion was that the Police Authority genuinely thought that they were working a lot better with the constabulary. I think the constabulary thought themselves more accountable. I mean what actually happened was that the constabulary set up a monitoring process so they could see all the products before it went to the Authority, so while the Authority should be involved and receive a lot more information they have only just got a fairly massaged product at the end of the day but I think that is inevitable really isn't it' (Best Value Office, Eastbrook Constabulary).

Some research participants did believe it has empowered the Authority to get more involved in the decision making process.

'Yes very much so. It has made us much more involved with the process than before. There is much more openness between the Authority and the force now. Prior to this they may have tried to keep things from us in some ways but now with Best Value because it is up to us they cannot do this. They have to tell us everything that they are up to. It has improved the relationship between us and the force' (Police Authority Member, Eastbrook).

Other respondents noted that making strategic decisions was based on negotiation and communication.

'In the public interface review call handling was a bone of contention for our force as it is for every other force across the land and we really did feel that there were areas that needed to be shaken up and not so much differently but that the approach needed to be reinvigorated. All be it that the call handling centre had been reviewed upon review since it came into being a few years ago because the police service to the public was lousy and we clearly have a responsibility to the public out there because much of the initial and indeed subsequent contact with the public is via the telephone so if the call handling is not up to much then you have problems in terms of levels of public satisfaction and the support for the police etc. But it was getting to the stage where we were coming up with proposals that were going to be externally challenging to the management of the operations and fair dues the leaks got out to over 11 people and I had a phone call from one senior officer who wanted to talk to me about his concerns. So I agreed to proximity talks so we sat down and we talked it through. The position of the Authority was made quite clear and I felt more clearly understood on the part of the senior officers and we actually changed the wording in the review to satisfy their sensibilities but the key thing is that I do not believe that the underlying sentiments were compromised from our point of view. It is the old story; it is not what you do it is the way that you do it and I think the way that Best Value can be delivered is as much as by

identifying the pathway to delivery as much as the theoretical concepts that lie behind it' (Police Authority Member, Westfield Constabulary).

It was not just between the Police Authority and the executive that there were conflicts. Those responsible for implementing Best Value stated how at times they could also have difficulties with senior managers who just wanted their idea taken forward and were not satisfied if their views were not taken into account in changes that were made.

'Well I had to be very diplomatic to keep everyone on board. Some services/departments were not happy about being reviewed and were not sure about the process. Some thought that it was simply a way for them to make a bid for more resources and could be used as an empire building process to enable them to get their process through. Some managers under review did manage to get some of their ideas through, and rather than consulting with us they just tried to push their ideas through and always thought that they knew best. In theory we should give the customer what they want and we tried to do that not just what the service managers wanted' (Best Value Team Member, Sunnydale Constabulary).

There was also a concern that the Authority did not have an adequate level of knowledge to be able to make key decisions.

Generally, all of the case studies reported good relationships with their Police Authority areas. Examining how decisions were made in terms of Best Value reports it can be seen that the Police Authority were included in the process and making decisions on what the reviews should cover. However there was a sense of frustration from some respondents that at times this inclusion of Authorities in the Best Value process did lead to friction with chief officers. Other staff were anxious that the Police Authority were trying to get involved in decisions that were not their responsibility. In all of the case study areas chief officers were privy to reviews prior to them going to the Police Authority and if suggestions were not viewed favourably it would be renegotiated before proceeding to the Authority board meetings. Rather than a clear process of rational planning in making strategic decisions over services, these were negotiated by internal groups.

Strategy Content

Best Value is about creating changes in the ways that services are delivered leading to greater innovation and encouraging the use of external agents. There is an emphasis on collaboration and co-operation with other agencies. The emphasis is also on providing services required at local level. While prominence is given to altering the pattern of service delivery and meeting the requirements of diverse populations this is restricted due to other agendas inherent in the Best Value regime. As Newman (2002) states

‘There are however important points of tension at the interface between ‘dominant’ and ‘emergent’ agendas limiting the extent to which new criteria of success and strategic decision-making can be realised. The first lies in the intractable politics of inter and intra-organisational collaboration. Although the discourse of partnership signifies equality of power, shared agendas and goals the organisational reality tends to be very different’ (Newman 2002: 81).

She argues that although importance has been placed on developing ‘cross-cutting’ performance targets that span across organisational boundaries the main emphasis is still on achieving what is meant to be the core objectives of the service. Similarly Crawford (2001) maintains that focus of managerial reforms on individual organisational aims runs contrary to encouraging and developing more collaborative ways of working. These intrinsic contradictions within New Labour’s policy agenda can impact upon whether the police service can develop or change their strategy content and the way that services are provided. The aim of Best Value was to create a shift in strategy content. Has this happened or have the police as predicted above continued to focus on narrowly defined objectives? The changes made to services that have been delivered have been examined. The aim here is to consider the points made by Newman about the limitations created by the performance culture. In terms of intra and inter-organisation working how the police service viewed this type of arrangement will also be discussed.

Not only have the number of targets that the police are subject to been greater than before they also promote a further shift towards centrally defined objectives. This can have a damaging affect on the ability of police forces to meet local targets and

therefore to co-operate and meet targets set through the introduction of the Crime and Disorder Partnerships established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. As noted by Loveday (2004) when discussing National Policing Plan (Home Office 2003) and recent government key objectives 'it becomes apparent that alongside the growing number of priorities against which both BCUs and forces will be measured, national priorities are increasingly seen as of primary concern and may come at the cost of the exercise of local professional discretion' (Loveday 2004: 3). Loveday goes on to emphasise that the extent of the performance regime can lead to an organisational response of 'what gets measured gets done' (2004: 6) and that targets set nationally may not necessarily reflect the reality of policing, for example the 2002 Street Crime Initiative. Loveday and Reid (2003: 29) found that the Street Crime Initiative although reducing street crime in some of the areas where it was applied, also had detrimental effects including the diversion of resources away from other policing tasks, and undermined local arrangements and priorities. One research participant when discussing Best Value mentioning this initiative stated:

'This is reality, there is a government that is big on targets, that is big on performance, big on accountability and micro-management that I do not think the previous government would have come in a thousands miles of. You see the Prime Minister getting involved personally and looking at street crime. I mean that is quite an interesting departure. We have a Prime Minister effectively directing police operations' (Senior Manager, Eastbrook Constabulary).

The survey produced by the Superintendents' Association identified a number of issues. For example it was noted that performance targets are viewed as number crunching exercises and that annually driven targets failed to take into account the realities of policing and the need to focus on long-term goals. Concerns were also expressed about the indicators' ability to distinguish 'quality of service' and that Home Office targets did not necessarily reflect what was important to the public in their local areas (Superintendents' Association 2003).

Similar comments were made when BVPIs were discussed with respondents. Although the general view was that targets were an acceptable part of policing they did not feel that they necessarily reflected what the police service achieved or should be focusing on.

‘These objectives do not always take into account what the people of Sunnydale want. We have to adhere to the BVPIs set out in the policing plan. But some people in the county wanted us to focus on crimes such as distraction burglary but the Police Authority have to be accountable to the government so therefore we have to give the performance indicators and BVPIs as much credence as possible’ (Service Manager, Sunnydale Constabulary).

‘I think that the performance targets are appropriate to what we do. But sometimes there is an issue with how the performance targets are taken at face value and it is assumed that we haven’t met them because we are not working effectively. They do not necessarily question why this has occurred. They do think that the reason we may be missing our targets may have been because of a lack of resource and this can sometimes happen. There is sometimes a bit too much pressure to meet targets’ (Member of Staff, Sunnydale Constabulary).

‘I think it has got out of control as far as BVPIs are concerned, well with performance indicators in general. There is an enormous amount of tension both locally because I am going to local meetings to hear local people speak about what is important to them in policing and public order and it bears little resemblance to what government tells me I should be doing. There was a tension. I do not have any issue with being held accountable and having targets this year and we have done quite well and then they will say well we have hit our targets this year and we have done quite well and then they will say fine but what about the kids hanging around on the street corners, what about parking, what about this, what about that, they will hardly ever mention robbery or a burglary’ (Senior Manager, Eastbrook Constabulary).

Considering the local policing plans for 2003-2004 for both Westfield and Eastbrook constabularies it can be identified that many of the key objectives set centrally form the basis of their objectives. In each of the local policing plans key priorities for the government formed the main priorities for the plan. Local divisions are expected to meet their individual targets that emerge from these priorities. The performance review officer at Sunnydale explained how once targets were set centrally at headquarters each division would be set individual targets that would have to be met so that the central objectives could be achieved. Senior Management Teams and divisions were assessed on whether these targets were met, although as stated above these might not reflect what was happening locally. This finding was also confirmed in the Superintendents’ Associations report, ‘Commanders seemed to favour local targets because they clearly matched the needs of the BCU area. There was some frustration that their preference for

local targets did not seem to fit with the government's approach, in spite of the emphasis on CDRPs and local strategies' (2003: 97).

Another concern for commanders according to the Superintendents' Associations report was that where there were low crime rates it was suggested that having targets on crime as not appropriate because they had already been lowered quite substantially. When asked about BVPIs a respondent from Westfield commented on how at times setting targets around crime did not make sense and that there were contradictions between different sets of targets.

'Yes we are put under pressure to meet a number of those targets and then feed that into the forces' BVPIs ... We have targets to reduce recorded crime reduce the level down but at the same time we know that there is a degree of under recording both in terms of the public telling us things and getting them to report crime so we can get a more accurate picture and again getting things reported to us under the new National Crime Recording Standards that needed to be recorded as crime but we do not record them... There was a recognition that if we were actually recording all the crime, crime was actually going to go up but how does that sit with an objective that is then to reduce crime. Another one is to increase our detection rate in crime but we have policies in place where people who would have got cautioned for a drug or alcohol offence can now defer that caution and may not even have that caution at all if they agree to attend a referral scheme to help them deal with the addiction problem. That is great ... but it doesn't help our detection rate' (Senior Manager, Westfield Constabulary).

Conclusions

It was identified at the beginning of this chapter that a core part of Best Value was to produce organisational change. This was to be achieved on a number of levels. The way that Authorities were structured, the culture of the organisation, the way in which the organisation formed strategy and the strategy content or the way in which services operated. However it is argued here that the introduction has failed to fully achieve these organisational shifts. This has been mainly due to the tensions within these managerial reforms and because of the continuation of some aspects of police culture.

In terms of changing the structure of the organisation, it was emphasised by Boyne et al. (2001) that the main aims of the reforms were to reduce bureaucracy by

creating more flexible ways of working, further decentralise organisations, leading to more integration. However, as indicated by both Newman (2002) and Crawford (2001) there are inherent contradictions that prevent this organisational change. Rather than creating less bureaucracy it was argued by respondents that Best Value led to more and that this was compounded by the audit and inspection regime as well as their having to meet a number of targets and priorities. Although there has been encouragement for BCUs to work with local partners, they are constrained by the central agendas set by the government. As argued by some senior managers they have to meet BVPIs as set from the centre and these are not necessarily relevant to their communities. Furthermore this constrains the direction that individual BCUs can take. Under the Best Value process most reviews are done at a force level and may not take account of differences between divisions. These contradictions have no doubt impacted upon the success of Best Value as managers felt that they could not meet all of the requirements of policies and some respondents were wary that recommendations would be superseded by government initiatives anyway.

These contradictions within the policy may have only served to reinforce police views and attitudes about managerial policies. While there was a level of acceptance of the policies by those interviewed, it was apparent that aspects of police culture identified by other commentators did prevent the full implementation of the policy. Savage et al (2001) using the concept of 'axiomatic knowledge' argued chief officers still hold on to the concept of Constabulary Independence and this encourages them to resist the interference of certain groups. In terms of Best Value this could explain why Police Authorities continue to hold limited roles in real decision-making. Another issue raised within the occupational culture literature is one of shared values and how different groups within the police service do not necessarily take the same views. The belief of most managers that staff do not need to be aware of Best Value may in fact turn staff against it.

Chan (1997) argues that in order to ensure successful changes within the police it would be necessary to change the structural conditions within which they operate. When there are mixed messages about what system the police are functioning in either through centralised government direction or through local decision-making.

meeting quantitative targets or achieving quality of service, achieving national priorities or addressing local ones it is unlikely that policies such as Best Value will achieve their aims.

Summary and Conclusions

Best Value in Place But in Practice?

One of the main changes to affect the public police in Britain in recent years was the development of New Public Management (NPM). The rise of NPM, the collective name for a number of managerial reforms in Britain, followed the election of the Conservative government in 1979. The Conservatives believed that public services were inherently inefficient, bureaucratic and self-serving and in need of reform. A number of themes have been associated with these reforms. The introduction of competition, the development of performance management systems, attempts to strengthen the position of the consumer, the devolution of operation management and budgets and cost-effectiveness and the introduction of systems of audit and monitoring.

Although it initially appeared that the police would not be subject to these reforms, mounting concern about police accountability, effectiveness and legitimacy throughout the 1980s provided the government with the reason to focus on the services provided by the police. The restructuring of the police service began as early as 1983 through the introduction of circular 114/83 (Home Office 1983) that encouraged the police service to set objectives and to assess efficiency to ensure that they were providing value for money. Despite these early attempts at change, introducing NPM into the police service was not straightforward and the government seemed to retreat from the reform programme as they needed police support during the mid 1980s due to the miners' strike and further social disorder in many English cities. However, this did not mean a total withdrawal from managerialism and by the 1990s it was back on the agenda. The early 1990s were a crucial time for the police service with many proposals put forward about how NPM could be incorporated into the police service. The reform package including the Sheehy Inquiry was resisted by the police and some of the proposals made were shelved due to opposition from the police service and associated groups. In spite of this resistance the government did manage to inject the principles of managerialism into the police service and many of the themes mentioned above were consolidated in the Police And Magistrates' Court Act 1994.

When elected in 1997 New Labour pursued similar reforms to those of the previous government. Although it has been identified that the New Labour 'Modernisation' programme repositions the public sector beyond the previous managerialism introduced by the Conservative government (see Newman 2000). Labour's pragmatic policy approach was underlined by three main shifts (Newman 2000); a move towards longer-term planning and effectiveness, the encouragement of more innovative ways of working and an emphasis on collaborative working. To achieve these aims set out in Labour's 'Modernising Government' agenda, the regime of Best Value was introduced into Local, Police and Fire authorities. Best Value emphasises the need for all services carried out by these authorities to be 'delivered to clear standards' while taking into consideration cost and quality and ensuring that all services are provided in the most efficient, effective and economic manner (DETR 1998). The Best Value reforms reveal a number of continuities with NPM; the setting of clear targets and performance management, the operation of public services along the lines of market principles and inspection and audit by regulatory bodies such as the Audit Commission (Geddes and Martin 2000). Despite these similarities it has been argued that Best Value places a greater emphasis on aligning service standards with increasing user expectations and organising services around the needs of the clients rather than with organisational convenience (Martin 2000: 210).

Implementing Best Value in the Police Service

When Best Value was first introduced, Police Authorities were encouraged to adopt their own approaches to implementing the policy. As identified in Chapter Four, the three case study areas initially developed different approaches to implementing Best Value. Sunnydale established a large Best Value team, developed a programme of over 60 small reviews and included their Police Authority in drawing up and developing their programme from the start, they also attempted to include staff by marketing Best Value. Eastbrook developed a programme of much larger, more strategic reviews, the inclusion of the Authority was also apparent from the beginning although it was left to a minority of members. They did not, as Sunnydale did, market Best Value to the rest of the

force. In Westfield Constabulary a small team of people were given responsibility for implementing Best Value. In reality there was an initial lack of enthusiasm in Westfield with regard to the Best Value policy and this was reflected in how it was approached. The Police Authority were kept at arms' length in the early stages. Westfield's approach to Best Value improved following a change in the Executive who was more appreciative of the Best Value policy.

In general it was reported by the HMIC that some forces had been more enthusiastic than others in their implementation of Best Value. This included the application of the four Cs, which was viewed as being applied poorly. Forces found the consultation and comparison elements relatively easy. Most forces already undertook consultation and they compared themselves with other forces and sometimes considered how private operators provided similar services. It was apparent from examining the Best Value reviews that all of the case studies had consulted various stakeholders. This was done through the public satisfaction surveys and questionnaires to staff. What was not clear was how these consultation exercises influenced the decision-making process. This is one area that needs further examination. One member of staff in Sunnydale commented that they did not feel they had any influence over changes that were made to services.

The Police Authorities emphasised that it was difficult for them to apply the competition and challenge elements within Best Value reviews. Challenging whether a service was provided or not was not always appropriate in the police service context. This was dependent on the services being reviewed, for example in Sunnydale the Custody review, this is a service essential to the operation of the police service and must be provided. Applying competition it was also difficult because often there was no alternative service available. One of the Best Value reviews in Eastbrook examined the possibility of using private security firms to improve community policing but found no agencies willing to be involved. This demonstrates the difficulty that the police service can face in trying to adopt more innovative ways of working or in trying to change the way that services are delivered. If there are no alternative providers then the police cannot relinquish that service if there are expectations that it will be provided. There was some

evidence that the police service was attempting to collaborate with other agencies and other police services to provide more effective and efficient services such as Westfield's joint vehicle fleet with another force and Sunnydale examining the possibility of collaborating with other force to deliver scientific support services. Some respondents argued that although they had worked with external consultants they were not necessarily satisfied with the results as they did not believe external consultants were able to deal adequately with police work or know the realities of it. Crawford argues that the emphasis on partnership working has failed to appreciate these inconsistencies:

'The discussion tends to treat partnerships as if the public sector, voluntary organisations, private businesses communities and groups are undifferentiated clusters of organisations, as if they present the same issues and opportunities as well as difficulties. There is little sense of the diverse priorities and forces as well as the plural traditions, cultures and practices which differentiate such clusters of interest' (Crawford 2001: 60).

Other problems acknowledged by the HMIC were that Police Authorities had failed to monitor adequately the changes that were being made to Best Value. In addition it was also found in the case of Sunnydale that the reviews they were conducting focused on small areas of business such as departments, or individual functions such as drugs investigation and that this approach did not identify many options for change or for improving service delivery.

When discussing the policy many respondents suggested that one of the problems they had faced was that there was little guidance offered to them on how it should be implemented. These initial difficulties meant that progress of Best Value was slow and that it took over a year for Best Value to be fully incorporated into their constabularies. There was evidence during the course of the research that the three cases studies adapted their approaches to Best Value. This was encouraged through the HMIC who issued a toolkit offering a preferred model to implement Best Value (HMIC 2001a). By the end of the research it was apparent that this preferred model was operating in all three case studies. The Police Authorities aimed to resolve some of the initial problems they experienced and those identified by the HMIC. This included implementing monitoring regimes, attempting to feed

efficiency savings from Best value reviews into efficiency plans, informing staff about changes as a result of Best Value and conducting reviews which were both manageable and where real changes could be identified.

Overall, from examining the way that Best Value was implemented, it can be argued that a fairly prescriptive framework has emerged. This occurred primarily because Police Authorities demanded or protested about the lack of guidance, or they failed to apply sufficiently the model favoured by the HMIC and the Home Office. What began to transpire, and may become more dominant in the future of Best Value, was further direction by the Home Office over what service will be reviewed, when and what types of changes are expected. The National Training review mentioned in previous chapters provided an example of this. Here training departments were told that their local Best Value reviews would take account of and incorporate national recommendations and developments. While the Police Authorities in this research were happy to comply with this standardised approach to Best Value the assumption by government is that one model will automatically lead to better services. This approach could fail to take account of local variations and flexibility in the way that services are provided.

Improving Performance

A key part of the Best Value framework was to improve the performance of the police service. Chapter five considered some of the key BVPIs that have been used to identify whether police performance has improved since the introduction of Best Value in 2000. It was found from examining all for 43 constabularies on a range of indicators that performance was variable across the country. In addition, it was found within the three case study areas that Best Value had, up until then, had a limited effect on performance. In some cases performance had improved but in other areas declined. There was little information as to why there was such variation in levels in performance across different Police Authorities.

There are a number of reasons to explain why there has been little change in the performance of the police service since the introduction of Best Value. One reason is that some of the Best Value reviews conducted had little relevance to the key

indicators used to assess police performance. In Sunnydale the Best Value reviews in the first year focused on smaller support areas of the service such as BCU administration, the Chief Officer Secretariate and buildings and cleaning. It is unlikely that the results of these reviews would have any influence over performance. In addition, other services reviewed by Sunnydale such as custody are unlikely to lead to changes in levels of police performance. Although it may lead to improved custody facilities, this type of change is not measured by the current BVPIs. There were examples of Best Value reviews where there could be a possible effect on police performance. In Eastbrook it was anticipated that the introduction of a Major Crime Task Force would ensure that front-line staff could deal with volume crime rather than being taken away from daily duty to assist in the investigation of major incidents. However, any performance change may take time to be realised and may not be as a direct result of a Best Value review. Many respondents believed that it was difficult to make the connection between the Best Value reviews and BVPIs. Though many appreciated the need for the police service to be assessed and to have set objectives, there were concerns that Best Value had to be seen in broader terms than just the BVPIs. As noted by one respondent:

‘BVPIs can only tell us about detection rates between divisions and the differences between the family of forces but they do not give us any pointers into why these differences exist or what circumstances have been introduced to bring about these changes. Performance indicators are so easily slanted. We are trying to identify good initiatives, which will be successful and improve service delivery (Senior Manager, Sunnydale Constabulary).

The danger for the police service is that failing to improve performance is still viewed as a major problem by central government. Performance indicators continue to form a major tool used by both the Home Office and the HMIC to measure police effectiveness. Despite the fact that they may fail to fully portray the efforts that the police service has made to improve service delivery. This continued emphasis on demonstrating improved performance was a key message in the HMIC Best Value inspection reports. Forces were encouraged to develop measures from each review in order to ensure that performance is improving.

In some ways it appears that the government have attempted to address the concerns that both the police service and other commentators have regarding performance indicators. The Home Office, in co-operation with other agencies including ACPO and the APA, has currently developed a new performance framework. The Policing Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF) is the new structure within which police performance is measured and it recognises that differences exist between individual forces:

‘It would be misleading to compare the performance of any given police force against a national average for a given performance measure. This is because force areas vary in their socio-economic, demographic and geographical make-up and we know that crime rates are dependent on some of these underlying characteristics. For instance as population density increases crime rates, in general, also increase. Real performance variations can only be identified if we account for these underlying variations in the performance measures’ (Home Office 2003c).

Forces are arranged into peer groups with other similar forces and will be assessed against other forces in these groups. Similarly there is an emphasis on setting and meeting local priorities as it states in the National Policing Plan (Home Office 2003b) and the aim is to strike a balance between national and local priorities and allow for the development of Local Policing Plans, which will reflect the needs of local communities.

Conversely, precedence is still given to measuring ‘like with like’ and there is continuing pressure to reduce variations between forces. It is argued in the National Policing Plan that, ‘The objective of the reform programme is to establish a clear set of policing standards in order to drive up performance of every force and to reduce the significant gap between the best and worst performing forces and BCUs’ (Home Office 2003b). The difficulty for some forces may be that they have already obtained their optimum level of performance with the resources that they have available.

Improving Service Delivery

As well as improving performance, Best Value was introduced to improve the way in which services were delivered. The key aim was to provide services that were both of a higher quality, more cost effective and that met the needs of local users. In other research on Best Value (Martin et al 2001, 2003) service improvements were measured by examining both the provision of new service and changes to existing services. A similar approach was taken in this study. It was found in the three case study areas that Best Value reviews mainly suggested changes to current services in order to achieve service improvements. These suggested changes were wide-ranging and covered a number of areas. These included the adoption of a new policing style in Eastbrook, changes to the way calls from the public are managed in both Sunnydale and Westfield, the adoption of the National Intelligence Model and improvements made to custody facilities.

Although it was evident that changes had been or were being made to services in order to make them more effective, the extent of many of these changes were still unknown. This was partly because of the time-lag between the Best Value reviews being completed and the recommendations being put in place. Despite this time-lag some respondents were optimistic that real change would be or was being achieved as a result of Best Value. Other respondents were not as positive about the prospect of change under Best Value. They believed that many of the changes being made to the service did not emerge from the Best Value reviews but were a result of already ongoing projects or ideas. They thought that many of these changes would have taken place without the adoption of the policy. Indeed forces already routinely reviewed services of their own accord although this was done haphazardly. All of the case studies were using the EFQM model to assess services provided to the public prior to the introduction of Best Value. In addition, the HMIC frequently conduct thematic reviews of services provided by the police in order to ensure effective and efficient services are being achieved. The problem is that while some forces have already been conducting the types of internal reviews encouraged under the Best Value regime, these have been inconsistent. Best Value ensures that all forces have to comply and review services they provide. However this can punish those police forces who have already attempted

to make changes to the way that they provide services leaving little scope for further development.

In general many respondents were positive about Best Value and its ability to achieve change. Respondents who did not believe that any original ideas had emerged from the policy still believed it had fast-tracked existing developments. Best Value has allowed police forces to focus on making service improvements and given them the impetus to alter or examine alternative ways to deliver their services. As some respondents argued the police service cannot be complacent and must strive to deliver better service to the public. However a number of problems remain, how much improvement can be made within resource constraints that the police service is currently facing and how this will effect the services currently offered. One respondent argued:

‘I think as we go on I think it is going to lose its power. Best Value is all about step change it is not about continuous improvement, but there is only so much step change that you can do. Once you have gone through all your major issues, IT human resources, crime services, patrol things like that, once you have done that you have done the step change on that and there is no point in going back until ten years’ time. But once you have done all those there is not much to do. The danger is that if you keep Best Value too long it loses its effectiveness in the force and increases the aggravation that you give people because you start looking around for things just for the sake of it and you start looking for the small, little things that do not really have any impact’ (Best Value Team Member, Westfield Constabulary).

Cost-Effectiveness

Achieving value for money has continued to be a primary aim for subsequent governments. As noted previously, from 1998 onwards police forces were required to achieve 2% efficiency gains year on year. Best Value was to be linked to these efficiency savings. Any savings identified through the Best Value reviews were to be linked to potential efficiency savings. It was identified that despite greater emphasis by the government on ensuring that forces could demonstrate value for money, forces were initially not achieving this. In each of the case study areas at the end of the research there were greater efforts being put into considering

any potential savings from the Best Value process and feeding this into efficiency plans.

It was noted in the Local Policing Plans that forces identified non-cashable savings. One example presented in Westfield Constabulary was that of visibility. It was believed that using civilian staff to undertake custody and case handling duty released 42 officers to patrol duties and this would lead savings of £102,000 in 2003/2004. It was believed that releasing these front-line officers to duty would enable them to deal with crimes on the street or to be out on patrol making them more visible to the public therefore reducing fear of crime. It has unclear how this will lead to more efficient use of resources. A similar project was undertaken in Sunnydale and they actually had to spend money to employ staff to take over the roles of police officers. It has also been noted that having officers on patrol does not mean that they will actually come across any incidents of disorder or crime. These types of strategies may appease the public as they may then have front-line officers on the streets but it is questionable whether the strategies are cost-efficient.

Attempts to link resources to outputs remain a key part of government strategy but as Butler (2000) argues this view is too simplistic and 'there has been a tendency, particularly once again by the Treasury to grossly underestimate the complexity of police work as an activity' (Butler 2000 : 314). There also may be a failure to take account of other factors that could affect the police's ability to achieve certain outputs such as detecting crime. One example is that of Eastbrook Constabulary where there was a recruitment shortage, although this has been resolved by obtaining more front-line officers. One respondent noted that they had a large number of probationers who had yet to obtain the skills to adequately detect crime, meaning it was unlikely that the detection rate of the force would improve in the next couple of years. This might lead to the government using crude measures to view the force as inefficient.

It is likely that demand on policing will continue to rise. The question about whether resources will increase is questionable. Recent reports suggest that levels of public spending will actually decline. The Conservative Party have lately stated that if they are re-elected they will aim to reduce public spending by about 30%

(Daily Telegraph 17 February 2004). While they have argued this will not come from key services, it is likely that this will mean continued scrutiny on the police to ensure that they are efficient. As emphasised by some respondents in the study there is only so much money that can be saved and the police service is already struggling to work within current resource levels. It is also doubtful that it will be able to meet all the requirements set out in the National Plan if funding is capped further. As stated in the Westfield Constabulary Local Policing Plan 2003-2004:

‘The fact that Westfield Police has for a number of years been making significant improvements to implement performance and contain successful budgetary reductions, clearly means that the scope for future efficiency improvements will be limited. This applies particularly to cashable gains.’

Achieving Organisational Change

One of the primary objectives of managerial reforms and in particular the Best Value regime was to lead to organisational change including modifying occupational culture. As noted previously, changing the organisational culture of the police service is difficult. There are a number of reasons for this. First of all it was identified that there are distinct subcultures within the police service and that all police officers do not necessarily hold the same views about the organisation or its role in society. Second, aspects of the police culture are grounded in strong traditions, making them hard to challenge. The concept of ‘Constabulary Independence’, maintained and upheld within the police service for a number of years, provides the chief constable with a protective shield around the decision-making. Another well-known aspect of policing is that of front-line discretion, which is applied away from the direct observation of supervisors.

It was illustrated by previous research that within the tripartite structure of policing Police Authorities have been kept out or have played a limited role in governing the police. In addition Police Authorities were viewed as not having appropriate knowledge or understanding to adequately make decisions on policing issues. Best Value sought to resolve this and the responsibility to ensure that the policy being implemented was left to Police Authorities. It was clear from the research that in some ways Best Value had led to improved relationships between the police

service and the authority. Police Authority members believed that Best Value had enabled them to gain a better understanding of what the police service did and some of the dilemmas they faced. It was also apparent that structures were put in place to ensure that the authorities were included in the decision-making and strategy-forming process. On the other hand it became clear from speaking to other respondents that this integration of the Police Authority and police service was superficial at times. It was found that in reality decisions were made by the Chief Officers and if they did not believe that the Police Authority should have involvement in certain decisions regarding policy or recommendations the Authority was excluded. There have been attempts to alter the organisational culture of the police service both by the government and the police service itself. For example the police have encouraged senior police officers to become managers and encouraged to appreciate management philosophies. Leadership courses include modules on managing resources and in how to set performance targets and objectives.

Another element of the Best Value policy was that it should filter throughout the organisation and that all staff should be engaged in the process. On some levels this did occur. It was clear from considering how Best Value was implemented and talking to respondents that efforts were made to consult with staff and gauge their views. In contrast some respondents did suggest that although they had been consulted there were questions over the validity of this. They felt that a central agenda would mean that their opinion in reality would not count. Some respondents did not believe it was necessary to notify staff of all that was going on while others felt people needed to be better informed. Not appropriately advising staff of changes could serve to reinforce different cultural views within the service. As noted by Chan (1997: 236), numerous reforms within the NSW Police from the top failed to change the views of those at the operational levels, confirming the view that there is a certain level of disenchantment towards management by front-line staff. This is an area that needs further research. There is little information available on the awareness and knowledge of front-line staff on managerial policies or how these affect them and how they work.

Best Value did not only promote changes in occupational culture, but it encouraged the decentralisation of policy making towards a local level. One of the key findings in a number of the Best Value reviews was that key objectives of the government often feature in the recommendations or proposals for change. The most obvious example was that of the National Intelligence Model. It was proposed in Westfield's and Eastbrook's reviews on Detecting Crime. The introduction of this model is promoted within the National Policing Plan and sets out a focused approach to gathering criminal intelligence (Loveday and Reid 2003). It is expected that all forces will implement the model. This requirement to apply the model does not account for the possibility that it may not be appropriate to all forces. For example as Loveday and Reid (2003) point out it aims to introduce 'intelligence-led' policing where the police act on information and analyse crime patterns and direct resources accordingly. It was reported that the Intelligence Model directed attention toward larger, more strategic, issues such as cross-border crime or more serious offenders at the expense of local lower-level crime and was not necessarily viewed favourably by the public (see Loveday and Reid 2003). It was stated in Chapter Six that some respondents believed that adhering to central targets did effect what they did in their BCUs and that whatever was outlined in Best Value reviews would then be overtaken by other initiatives anyway.

Recent debates in Parliament indicate that there could be a move towards localised policing. As stressed by Loveday (2003) the recent Green Paper (Home Office 2003e) on policing outline proposals, 'pertaining to new 'local' accountability structures, are of immediate interest as these are likely to impact on both future police relationships with local government and the local 'governance' of police' (Loveday 2003:1). This focus on Local Policing is not just promoted by the Labour Government but is a popular political consensus among other parties. A recent document produced by the Conservative Party (2003) also reflects the growing attraction of Localised Policing structures and supports the development of local governance structures.

In contrast, as examined above, central control is likely to remain through the introduction of strategies such as the National Policing Plan and performance

agenda. How these apparent tensions between local and central priorities will evolve in the future is still uncertain. The growing concentration on local accountability and devolution of responsibility to BCU Commanders is being played out against a backdrop of plans from the centre. Moreover, it is not just a case of local versus centre—there are more complex patterns of governance at work (Crawford 1998, Johnston 2000). This has already been demonstrated by the interplay between Police Authorities and their police forces, the police forces and central government, BCUs and police headquarters. There are also other agencies such as the HMIC which are responsible for inspecting the police and Best Value and were instrumental in encouraging a specific or preferred model of implementing Best Value. In addition the police in the past also had to provide information to the Audit Commission and are now also subject to inspection and intervention by the Police Standards Unit. Plans to amalgamate police forces into regional units will further complicate this issue. The central concern is whether local problems can be effectively dealt within future multifaceted arrangements.

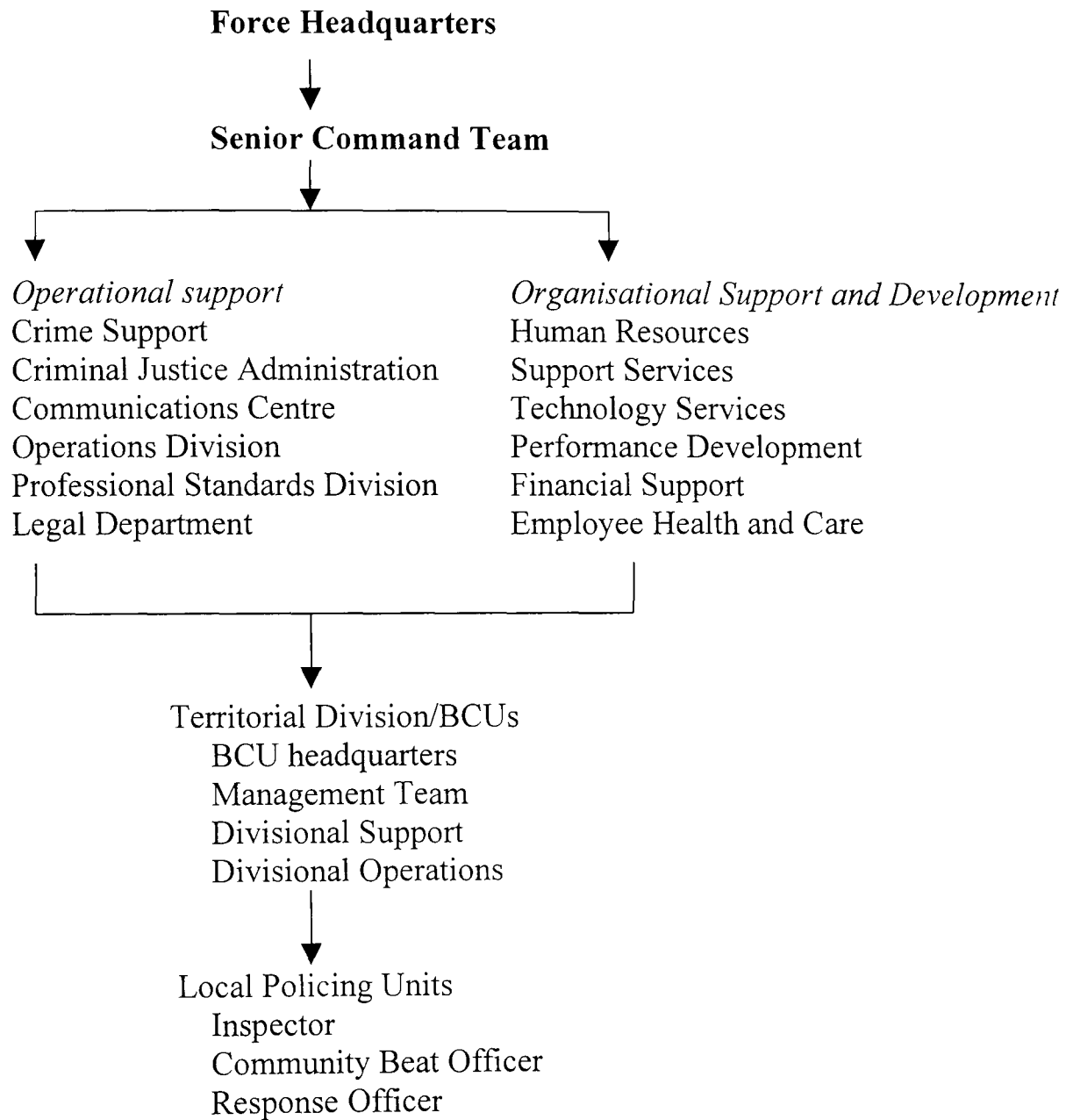
The Future of Best Value

The future of Best Value legislation itself is uncertain. Respondents in this study believed that the policy was beginning to lose momentum and no longer appealed to the Government. This could be due to the time taken for the policy to be fully implemented and the slow and incremental nature of change that the policy has brought. Although presented as a long-term policy over a five-year period the government tend to favour immediate results and when these are not achieved the policy could be viewed as a failure. In reality change may only be achieved in the longterm. In order to assess whether or not Best Value can accomplish this, there needs to be appropriate evaluation of the outcomes of the policy over an extended period of time. Whether the police service will be given time to prove it is making the types of changes that Best Value requires is still a matter for conjecture. As yet the Secretary of State has not intervened or taken over any police services but this is still a real possibility. There is also likely to be increasing scrutiny over how the police are operating, what services are being delivered and how they are being provided. It is probable that rational management policies such as Best Value will continue to form part of the police discourse. In some ways management policies

have made the police service examine whether it is offering the most effective service and meeting the needs of the public. In contrast, management policies have actually increased levels of bureaucracy and required a substantial number of resources, which can undermine the Police Authorities' ability to provide better services. It is unlikely that the police service could continue to achieve the types of change the government expect within the parameters that have been set.

Although New Labour emphasised that they were moving beyond the reforms of the previous administration, many of the core elements of NPM have been retained within New Labour's own reform agenda. Commentators (McLaughlin, Osbourne and Ferlie 2002, Power 1997) have argued that NPM and the key components of this doctrine including audit and inspection, performance managements, separation of provision between diverse providers, meeting consumer needs and the emphasis on cost-effectiveness are likely to continue to dominant agendas of public service administration. What is important is that the effects of this prevailing ideology are assessed. It is essential that we continue to evaluate and provide empirical evidence on how and in what ways managerialist principles shape public services.

The Structure of a Typical Provincial force in England and Wales



Adapted from Mawby, R.C and Wright, A. (2003)

Interview Schedule

Core questions/issues

How is Best Value being implemented within your Constabulary?

What issues/problems have been experienced in implementing the policy?

In what ways has the four C's methodology been applied in the force?

What are your views on the BVPI's and has Best value led to improved performance within this police force?

In your opinion has Best Value led to service improvements within the force (examples /illustrations)?

Do you think that Best Value has led the constabulary to make efficiency gains?

Do you think that the relationship between the Police Authority and force has changed since the introduction of Best Value? In what ways has it changed?

Has Best Value changed the way that the police service deliver their services?

Do you have any other comments to make about the Best Value policy?

What is the future of the Best Value policy?

Date

Appendix C

Respondents address

School of Social Sciences
Middlesex University
Queensway
Enfield
EN1 4SF

Dear Chief Constable xxxxx xxxxx

I am currently a doctoral research student at Middlesex University in the Criminology Department. The subject of my thesis is 'Initiating Change: Best Value and Police Service Delivery'. The aim of my research is to examine the introduction and impact of Best Value in the police service. A brief outline of the research is attached to this letter

I am approaching Chief Constables in England and Wales who may be interested in participating in this research. The research process would include, an analysis of Best Value documents including Best Value reviews and performance data, carrying out interviews, observations and distributing a questionnaire to frontline staff.

I would be grateful if you would consider taking part in this study. The interview would last about 30 to 45 minutes. All information would supplied will be treated as confidential and will be used for research purposes only.

If you require any further information about the research please do not hesitate to contact me at either my e-mail address d.x.martin@mdx.ac.uk or on the following number 0208 411 5764.

Yours sincerely

Denise Martin
Research Student
Middlesex University

Westfield Police
Performance Improvement Pro forma Highlight Report

Title of Best Value Review:...Crime Recording.....

Management Commitment			Accountability		
Name of Recommendation Owner (s)			Police Authority Members involved		
Name of Lead Officer (s)					
Monitoring and Review					
From:		To:		Next Report due:	
Status Assessment (refer to key)					
Time	Cost	Deliverables	Benefits	Overall	Generally the Overall marking will be equal to the least positive of any one of the others
G	G	R	A	R	
<p>R(Red) Recommendation will not deliver the agreed business benefits / end-products or will exceed the authorised budget / timescales and action required immediately by the Action Owner to bring it back under control.</p> <p>A(Amber) Recommendation will not deliver the agreed business benefits / end-products or will exceed the authorised budget / timescales, but the Action Owner is dealing with the variance.</p> <p>G(Green) Recommendation will deliver the agreed business benefits and end-products and is not at variance from agreed timescales or costs.</p>					
Recommendation (s)					
Description of Recommendation	Recommendation No: 1 A 0800 freephone number is piloted within a division to ascertain the validity of using this facility before the introduction of Airwave				
Description of Benefits <small>(agreed recommendation benefits as identified in Best Value Review)</small>					
Benefits Enabled	Cashable		Non-Cashable		
Amount	Will cost £35k per year		Saving in officer time		
Description of Financial Benefits			Accurate information first time, Timely information and intelligence quality, increase detection rate		
Non-Financial Benefits					
Description of Action(s)					
1	Project Board commissioned feasibility study 14.6.02.				
2	Meeting to decide 24.7.02				
3					
4					
Highlights this month					
A clear narrative of all actions which have been progressed since the last period of reporting See attached report.					
Potential Problems					
Any current or potential issues [Note: just because its on a Highlight Report it doesn't mean that something will be done. Recommendation owners need to action each of these issues directly]					
None at this time					
Outlook for Next Period					
Progress expected during next reporting period					

Appendix E

1. Recorded Crimes for Police forces in England and Wales between 1999-2000
2. Level of Recoded Burglaries per 1,000 Household in England and Wales 1999-2002
3. Level of Recoded Vehicle Crimes per 1,000 Household in England and Wales 199-2002
4. Percentage of Recorded Crimes Detected in Police Forces in England and Wales 1999-2002.
5. Percentage of 999 Calls Answered in Target Time in Police Forces in England and Wales 1999-2002
6. Levels of Satisfaction with response to 999 Calls in Police Forces in England and Wales 1999-2000
7. Levels of Satisfaction with response to Violent Offences in Police Forces in England and Wales.
8. Levels of Expenditure in the Police Service in England and Wales 1999-2002

Performance Indicator	Recorded Crime per 1,000 Population		
	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
Force			
Force 1	98.8	99.4	118.4
Force 2	96.1	88.3	93.9
Force 3	95.5	88.8	95.3
Force 4	65.6	64.4	72.3
Force 5		1374.2	1585.0
Force 6	117.2	115.8	129.5
Force 7	76.6	66.8	75.9
Force 8	87.9	83.8	91.9
Force 9	70.4	65.5	63.9
Force 10	75.7	72.7	79.3
Force 11	80.3	73.7	82.7
Force 12	50	47.6	49.7
Force 13	67.0	66.0	69.5
Force 14	91.5	88.7	89.3
Force 15	146.3	141.0	147.3
Force 16	107.9	101.9	84.2
Force 17	76.7	75.0	75.7
Force 18	59.8	61.6	64.2
Force 19	137.5	125.1	133.3
Force 20	79.3	80.9	75.2
Force 21	76.3	82.5	96.4
Force 22	101.8	92.5	94.3
Force 23	73.8	71.4	78.5
Force 24	105.1	101.7	107.1
Force 25	136.9	136.6	143.5
Force 26	74.6	71.9	73.3
Force 27	99.5	91.3	96.6
Force 28	99.8	95.0	98.4
Force 29	67.9	72.5	82.3
Force 30	72.6	69.0	78.5
Force 31	132.7	135.5	154.3
Force 32	102.5	89.5	94.2
Force 33	101	96.1	103.5
Force 34	93	98.7	110.6
Force 35	64.6	65.7	74.3
Force 36	58.8	58.7	57.3
Force 37	90.1	90.4	88.7
Force 38	92	88.8	92.6
Force 39	76.2	72.8	82.8
Force 40	74.6	68.7	89.1
Force 41	138.8	138.9	142.1
Force 42	123.1	122.4	141.4
Force 43	63	59.9	63.4
England and Wales	90.4	98.1	104.4

Data for all tables provided directly by the HMIC and adapted from HMIC Annual Report 2000/01.

Level of Recorded Burglaries per 1,000 Household in England and Wales 1999-2002

Performance Indicator	Recorded Burglary Per 1,000 household		
	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
Force 1	21.3	19.7	25.1
Force 2	16.3	14	15.7
Force 3	17.9	14.5	15.4
Force 4	14.2	13.4	14.5
Force 5	*	*	*
Force 6	33.7	31.2	35.8
Force 7	10.9	10	10.1
Force 8	15.7	14.9	16.4
Force 9	10.4	10.6	10.3
Force 10	11.6	10.7	11
Force 11	16	12.5	15.7
Force 12	3.5	4.1	3.6
Force 13	9.9	8.1	8.2
Force 14	18	13.1	14.2
Force 15	38.7	37	36.2
Force 16	13.5	11	11.3
Force 17	10	9.1	9.6
Force 18	9.8	10	11.4
Force 19	35.7	26.8	29.8
Force 20	12.7	12.5	11.4
Force 21	12.7	18.2	20.4
Force 22	18.1	17.7	17.3
Force 23	20.6	14	14.3
Force 24	17.5	21.7	24.8
Force 25	23.6	22.5	23.2
Force 26	26	10.4	10.6
Force 27	11.8	14.6	15
Force 28	19.7	20	18.5
Force 29	20.6	7.9	8.9
Force 30	8.3	12.5	15.1
Force 31	15.9	26.5	33.1
Force 32	27.9	13.7	13.6
Force 33	17.2	28.8	29.5
Force 34	31.7	17.6	18.7
Force 35	21.2	7.4	8.6
Force 36	9.8	9.3	8.2
Force 37	14.7	12.8	11.4
Force 38	19.1	15.5	15.5
Force 39	15.3	13.7	14.4
Force 40	11.9	10.2	12.9
Force 41	34.4	29.3	29.5
Force 42	33.7	34.3	39.1
Force 43	8.8	8.4	9.5
England and Wales	20.7	18.4	19.4

Performance Indicator	Recorded Vehicle Crime Per 1,000 Population		
	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
Force 1	23.1	21.5	27
Force 2	25.9	22.4	22.9
Force 3	17.3	15.7	17.5
Force 4	12.4	12.5	13.7
Force 5	*	*	*
Force 6	23.4	24.6	25.6
Force 7	11	8.7	9.1
Force 8	18.7	16.2	16.7
Force 9	13.8	12.8	11.1
Force 10	16.5	13.9	14.2
Force 11	15	13.3	12.6
Force 12	4.6	4.4	4.3
Force 13	13.3	12.2	12.8
Force 14	18.4	15.1	14.4
Force 15	34.1	31.3	28.9
Force 16	16.3	14.6	12.6
Force 17	13.2	12.5	12.2
Force 18	14.3	14.3	13.7
Force 19	24.4	22	24.2
Force 20	14.3	15	12.9
Force 21	14.6	14.3	14.7
Force 22	20.4	17.3	17.4
Force 23	11	10.5	10.7
Force 24	23.9	21.6	21.3
Force 25	22.8	23.1	23.6
Force 26	13.2	12.3	12.2
Force 27	19.9	18.4	18.1
Force 28	18.4	15.8	14.4
Force 29	11.4	10.9	11.7
Force 30	11.6	10.1	10.8
Force 31	24	24.8	27.6
Force 32	26.7	21.1	20.9
Force 33	22.6	20.3	22.1
Force 34	16.6	15.2	16.9
Force 35	9.7	9.3	10.2
Force 36	9.5	9.1	8.7
Force 37	16.8	15.7	14
Force 38	24	20.3	19.6
Force 39	17	14.6	15.7
Force 40	13.9	11.6	11.4
Force 41	29.3	25.6	24.3
Force 42	27.6	27.4	31
Force 43	10.6	8.6	8.6
England and Wales	19.9	18.4	18.6

% Crimes Detected	Year		
	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
Police Service			
Force 1	21.8	21.6	14.3
Force 2	24.5	27.5	24.7
Force 3	25.3	23.8	22.5
Force 4	30.8	29.7	25.6
Force 5		27.3	
Force 6	21.6	21.4	20.4
Force 7	39.3	34.2	32.5
Force 8	27.8	25.7	24.7
Force 9	35.1	34.3	31.5
Force 10	25.8	24.8	26.5
Force 11	32.2	34.0	32.7
Force 12	64.2	62.8	64.1
Force 13	29.7	26.0	26.1
Force 14	30.5	31.4	29.9
Force 15	23.5	22.2	20.9
Force 16	52.8	56.7	55.4
Force 17	37.7	28.7	29.5
Force 18	26.8	23.8	24.3
Force 19	18.6	21.0	19.8
Force 20	32.8	27.8	28.2
Force 21	29.3	27.0	26.1
Force 22	30.4	28.1	28.3
Force 23	28	24.6	27.3
Force 24	26.1	27.9	23.8
Force 25	15.8	15.0	14.1
Force 26	30.4	25.8	25.0
Force 27	32.6	32.7	31.2
Force 28	30.5	31.3	31.5
Force 29	35.5	31.0	27.6
Force 30	31.1	30.1	25.9
Force 31	21.5	19.8	17.6
Force 32	30.8	32.4	32.6
Force 33	24.6	25.5	23.4
Force 34	22.5	22.8	23.7
Force 35	35.8	35.1	32.5
Force 36	32	27.9	24.9
Force 37	24.9	23.0	25.5
Force 38	20.2	22.3	24.5
Force 39	22.5	22.4	25.1
Force 40	28.7	27.3	29.4
Force 41	27.2	28.1	28.9
Force 42	25.1	22.7	19.3
Force 43	33.3	29.8	30.2
England and Wales	29.5	24.4	23.4

Police Service	% of 999 Calls answered within target		
Year	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
Force 1	90.1	90.0	81.3
Force 2	77	84.7	93.2
Force 3	89.9	88.8	85.9
Force 4	83.6	86.0	92.9
Force 5	*	*	*
Force 6	91.9	79.2	66.6
Force 7	98.5	92.0	77.0
Force 8	92	94.5	92.4
Force 9	86.1	84.5	80.5
Force 10	80.1	79.6	72.6
Force 11	98.2	98.7	*
Force 12	92.3	90.5	86.1
Force 13	86.2	91.8	89.7
Force 14	95.3	94.6	91.6
Force 15	85.4	89.6	88.3
Force 16	92.7	93.5	93.5
Force 17	80.4	73.6	73.0
Force 18	83.2	84.5	87.5
Force 19	93.7	96.2	94.7
Force 20	94.6	84.5	76.9
Force 21	91.9	86.3	78.6
Force 22	90.3	90.1	87.4
Force 23	92.4	*	90.9
Force 24	89.5	88.6	74.8
Force 25	71.5	83.6	73.6
Force 26	93.4	91.4	83.8
Force 27	95.4	89.2	89.5
Force 28	79.7	79.5	87.5
Force 29	87.8	91.6	94.4
Force 30	85.7	84.8	*
Force 31	89.8	90.3	74.4
Force 32	80.7	85.6	87.4
Force 33	87.7	90.0	90.6
Force 34	82.2	82.9	85.7
Force 35	94.9	93.7	88.8
Force 36	86.3	86.2	87.5
Force 37	81.4	90.0	84.8
Force 38	88.6	88.2	91.2
Force 39	91	91.2	88.2
Force 40	92.7	92.3	93.9
Force 41	96.8	97.5	96.2
Force 42	85.6	86.4	74.7
Force 43	96.3	88.4	91.5
England and Wales	88.6	87.1	82.5

Police Service	% of the public satisfied with response to 999 calls		
Year	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
Force 1	80	74.1	65.6
Force 2	83	78.5	69.3
Force 3	*	84.2	73.1
Force 4	85	83.3	75.0
Force 5	*	*	*
Force 6	80	75.7	74.7
Force 7	89	82.2	78.1
Force 8	77	72.0	73.6
Force 9	88	82.9	78.6
Force 10	*	78.9	79.8
Force 11	*	75.0	75.0
Force 12	87	88.8	97.0
Force 13	80	71.6	69.4
Force 14	97	93.9	95.1
Force 15	83	85.1	83.9
Force 16	*	*	75.3
Force 17	78	76.9	79.2
Force 18	84	82.9	82.6
Force 19	78	80.3	91.0
Force 20	86	92.4	85.8
Force 21	75	78.7	76.4
Force 22	81	76.3	67.9
Force 23	88	75.2	77.7
Force 24	74	65.3	*
Force 25	91	78.9	79.2
Force 26	88	89.1	87.7
Force 27	87	75.7	84.1
Force 28	90	75.9	72.1
Force 29	85	85.8	84.7
Force 30	82	83.2	95.2
Force 31	71	75.0	72.8
Force 32	*	86.1	64.0
Force 33	83	84.3	80.1
Force 34	70	83.1	95.1
Force 35	80	72.6	73.4
Force 36	79	84.0	77.4
Force 37	73	71.0	76.0
Force 38	77	74.1	71.1
Force 39	79	79.7	80.4
Force 40	79	78.2	77.9
Force 41	93	89.6	91.3
Force 42	84	81.5	77.5
Force 43	82	83.3	*
England and Wales	82.3	79.8	79.7

Police Service	% Victims of Violence Satisfied		
Year	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
Force 1	70	70.4	70.2
Force 2	68	67.0	67.8
Force 3	56	68.8	66.7
Force 4	82	81.7	78.8
Force 5		70.6	87.5
Force 6	89	86.1	72.2
Force 7	82	81.7	80.1
Force 8	78	67.7	70.4
Force 9	68	65.4	64.4
Force 10	*	70.9	77.1
Force 11	*	78.5	71.0
Force 12	90	64.1	76.6
Force 13	*	79.3	82.8
Force 14	86	89.4	85.1
Force 15	82	87.2	86.8
Force 16	*	*	72.9
Force 17	82	84.2	77.4
Force 18	85	82.3	81.5
Force 19	72	73.5	75.5
Force 20	88	87.0	82.9
Force 21	69	78.0	81.9
Force 22	88	85.0	75.1
Force 23	87	66.7	68.0
Force 24	74	72.0	76.7
Force 25	86	74.4	72.7
Force 26	80	75.5	62.9
Force 27	88	78.6	74.6
Force 28	89	82.0	81.7
Force 29	83	83.8	82.5
Force 30	67	52.6	77.2
Force 31	71	74.4	69.0
Force 32	*	88.0	75.2
Force 33	73	81.2	79.4
Force 34	79	75.9	73.3
Force 35	76	75.2	78.1
Force 36	78	71.4	75.6
Force 37	73	73.9	75.0
Force 38	79	75.1	78.6
Force 39	87	81.8	84.9
Force 40	76	76.1	77.3
Force 41	79	90.2	89.8
Force 42	85	75.0	63.4
Force 43	74	64.5	72.6
England and Wales	78.9	77.1	76.3

Police Service	Year		
	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
Force 1	169,963,000.00	181,210,000.00	194,595,000.00
Force 2	63,307,000.00	64,603,000.00	71,807,500.00
Force 3	74,384,000.00	78,814,000.00	84,131,000.00
Force 4	110,660,000.00	112,304,000.00	120,533,000.00
Force 5	57,228,000.00	*	60,941,000.00
Force 6	82,773,000.00	88,865,400.00	92,394,000.00
Force 7	64,169,000.00	*	70,487,135.00
Force 8	105,392,000.00	109,992,054.00	121,690,000.00
Force 9	175,222,279.00	174,429,857.00	203,604,000.00
Force 10	76,060,000.00	77,165,000.00	85,272,276.00
Force 11	80,559,000.00	79,591,691.00	87,589,000.00
Force 12	55,712,757.00	59,025,095.00	62,558,898.00
Force 13	169,688,000.00	186,693,000.00	190,298,000.00
Force 14	66,195,000.00	67,977,000.00	71,138,000.00
Force 15	378,732,000.00	391,975,000.00	432,769,000.00
Force 16	71,176,000.00	75,297,000.00	79,491,000.00
Force 17	196,786,000.00	208,598,000.00	216,200,000.00
Force 18	103,696,000.00	132,005,000.00	130,005,000.00
Force 19	113,131,000.00	118,901,851.00	128,205,904.00
Force 20	182,427,000.00	194,441,000.00	212,092,000.00
Force 21	177,991,000.00	183,692,000.00	197,083,000.00
Force 22	105,913,000.00	102,973,000.00	113,124,000.00
Force 23	68,975,000.00		* 76,054,000.00
Force 24	245,093,000.00	268,683,000.00	272,500,000.00
Force 25		* 184,675,700.00	2,128,386,000.00
Force 26	86,578,000.00	91,683,000.00	98,400,000.00
Force 27	66,875,000.00	69,979,744.00	77,060,000.00
Force 28	202,937,000.00	212,369,000.00	221,697,000.00
Force 29	80,505,000.00	83,711,000.00	89,451,000.00
Force 30	75,545,089.00	85,318,000.00	95,000,000.00
Force 31	128,100,000.00	133,013,000.00	140,825,000.00
Force 32	165,653,000.00	175,812,000.00	190,643,000.00
Force 33	171,321,000.00		* 189,480,266.00
Force 34	127,650,109.00	126,838,194.00	132,268,329.00
Force 35	69,607,752.00	72,255,486.00	76,934,000.00
Force 36	91,437,000.00	123,581,484.00	122,050,641.00
Force 37	161,341,000.00	183,944,000.00	183,875,000.00
Force 38	222,422,704.00	231,599,000.00	251,799,000.00
Force 39	54,830,000.00	56,567,000.00	60,474,000.00
Force 40	116,218,000.00	121,509,000.00	135,164,000.00
Force 41	372,475,000.00	396,500,000.00	413,600,000.00
Force 42	283,569,000.00		* 328,699,800.00
Force 43	69,069,000.00	72,000,000.00	75,540,000.00
England and Wales	5,542,350,267.00	704,672,836.00	8,385,909,749.00

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