

# Citizen Focus and Community Engagement

A Review of the Literature

Kate Lloyd and Janet Foster

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Kate Lloyd and Janet Foster, February 2009

# Foreword

## **Ian McPherson, Chief Constable, Norfolk Constabulary**

I was pleased to be given the opportunity to write this foreword for a report that is part of Norfolk Constabulary's goal of achieving truly first class citizen focus and community engagement in Norfolk.



Norfolk Constabulary has undergone a challenging two year journey of transformation, where tangible change and progress has been achieved. None of this has been change for the sake of change, but instead is about a new way of thinking and working, introducing a culture of community engagement across the entire organisation in which the philosophy of customer focus becomes paramount.

These changes have involved a cultural shift unprecedented in an organisation which has traditional roots, and a radical re-structuring of the Constabulary, focusing resources to maximise their effectiveness, and delivering a new model for policing to deliver excellent local services where people are our priority. These improvements have their basis in evidence from the community following extensive consultation and academic research to establish the factors and indicators that really matter to our communities. This report forms part of that process.

We are still on this journey, and with determination and focus we can deliver what our communities really want from us, and I am indebted to Dr Janet Foster for her part in taking us closer towards this goal. The value of the Police Foundation and the ongoing work that Janet is doing and that Kate Lloyd did for this Review is incalculable.

This Literature Review was a key element in our change process, and provides best evidence in citizen focus and community engagement. I know it will be of significant use to those planning or embarking upon the same journey.

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# Executive Summary

This Review examines the key factors from the research evidence on public perceptions of the police, factors associated with satisfaction and confidence, elements of community engagement and the key challenges to the successful implementation of citizen-focused policing.

Four major themes emerge from the Review:

- *The importance of police attitude and conduct*
- *A lack of understanding about citizen focus and community engagement*
- *The prevalence of citizen focus, community policing and community engagement activities and approaches being 'bolted on' to existing policing structures, rather than transforming the ways policing is delivered across the board and;*
- *How aspects of policing culture can shape officers' behaviour and approaches to their work, and potentially block or undermine the possibilities for change*

As Sherman (1998) commented the police create their own 'risk factors' for crime, not only by inconsistent and in some cases poor service delivery that is preventable, but also through a lack of skill, knowledge, or in some cases willingness to work *with* communities to empower them and help them assume greater responsibility for the problems in their neighbourhoods.

Citizen-focused policing requires *all* staff to understand the vital importance of Mastrofki's (1999) six principles of policing:

- *Attentiveness*
- *Reliability*
- *Responsiveness*
- *Competence*

- *Manners*
- *Fairness*

Mastrofski's principles, all of which are based on robust evidence, lie at the heart of providing a good policing service, and provide the best means of enhancing customer satisfaction. They also provide the underpinnings for community engagement.

As the discussion in this Review indicates, the ingredients for achieving citizen-focused policing are well-documented, as are the requirements for its successful implementation. Successful implementation depends on police services understanding the concepts behind citizen-focused policing and how best to achieve it, and ensuring that everyone in the organisation plays their part in this potentially transformative process. Without such commitment and a corresponding consistency in service delivery in all areas of policing activity, victims and communities who may be in vital need of policing services may not get the standard of service they require.

# Introduction

This Review was commissioned by Norfolk Constabulary to provide an evidence base for an action-based research project on citizen focus and community engagement in four neighbourhood policing areas, and to support broader developments and organisational changes in the force.

The Review involved a comprehensive search of empirical data on:

- *public perceptions of, and confidence in, the police*
- *critical success factors in community engagement and community/neighbourhood policing initiatives*
- *approaches to improving confidence and satisfaction in the police*

In order to provide a high quality service to communities, police forces need a good understanding of what the public want from the police, and the issues that shape their perceptions of policing. Despite receiving higher public ratings than other criminal justice professionals, public confidence in the police has declined significantly in the last 25 years. In 1982, for example, 90% of respondents in the British Crime Survey felt the police did a 'very or fairly good job' (Jackson and Sunshine 2007:218). By the mid 1990s, 64% of respondents believed the police did 'a good or excellent job', a figure that declined to 47% in 2001/02 and is currently at 51% (Nicholas and Flatley 2008:69).

Unlike other public sector services where satisfaction tends to increase with contact (Blaug *et al.* 2006a:46), those who have had contact with their local police are generally *less* satisfied than those who have had no contact at all. While there are important differences between the functions that the police and many other public services perform, as we describe here, much of the research suggests that the reasons for dissatisfaction with the police are frequently related to *how* people are treated, not the role the police perform. Therefore, enhancing public confidence and satisfaction with the police can:

- *Improve police effectiveness and enhance legitimacy (Tyler 2004)*
- *Make police work 'easier and more effective' (Skogan 1998:183, 2006:118)*
- *Encourage the public to report victimization, act as witnesses, provide intelligence and give more proactive assistance with crime prevention activities (Reisig 1998:547)*
- *Make members of the public more likely to comply with the police and accept their decisions (Tyler & Huo 2002, McLuskey et al 1999)*

Public confidence has also 'become the government's shorthand for trust, legitimacy and consent in policing with all three features underpinning public endorsement in a police service that 'serves' (Bradford *et al.* forthcoming:4).

Concerns about public confidence have been linked with trends towards a more consumer-oriented approach to public service delivery, where levels of customer satisfaction provide a means of measuring the responsiveness and effectiveness of public service (see Blaug *et al.* 2006a:34 and Skogan 1998:195). Both trends are reflected in the concept of 'citizen-focused policing', which emphasises the importance of addressing the needs and expectations of individuals and local communities, involving them in decision making, and improving service delivery and practice (Home Office 2006:3).

In this Review we tackle two distinct elements of the research on customer focus and citizen expectation:

1. *Work that explores the experience of service users or 'customers' - who predominantly come into contact with the police either as victims, witnesses, suspects or offenders, and ensuring that the service meets, and is appropriate to, their needs;*
2. *The literature on the police's broader public reassurance remit where the aim is to reduce fear and enhance confidence, irrespective of whether these individuals or groups have had any contact with the police.*

## CHAPTER ONE

# Contact, Satisfaction and Confidence

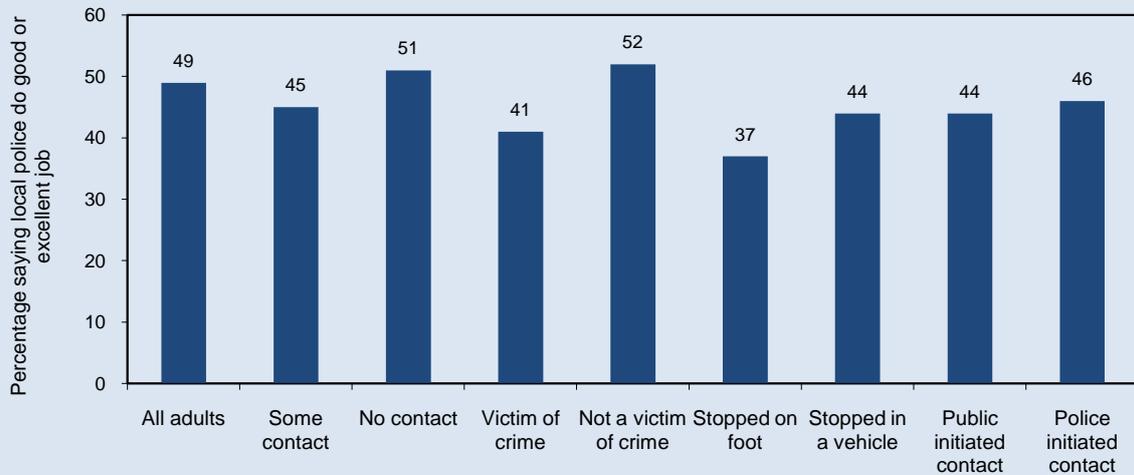
### ***Public perceptions of the police***

Research suggests that public perceptions of the police fall into three broad categories: those who are 'pro-police', those who are 'passive sceptics', and those who are 'highly disengaged' (Wake et al 2007:v). People who have little or no contact with the police, including the elderly, white, and affluent, tend to have positive attitudes, and appear to value the police's law enforcement, order maintenance and social service roles (Wake *et al* 2007:10). 'Newly-arrived migrant groups' also seem to have positive attitudes of the police at the outset, although these are often 'based upon preconceptions about the police in the UK' rather than linked with 'direct contact' (Wake *et al* 2007:11). However, as we describe in this chapter, the picture is rather different among those individuals and groups who have had some contact with the police.

### ***Contact with the police***

Approximately 44% of the public have contact with the police each year and evidence suggests that the type and quality of these individual encounters shapes judgements about policing in general (IPCC 2005:24). For example, British Crime Survey data suggests satisfaction is lowest amongst those who have been stopped by officers on foot, and that those who initiated contact with the police - including victims of crime – are less likely to rate the police positively than those who had no contact (see **Box A**).

### Box A: Rating of local police by type of contact



Source: Allen *et al.* 2006:16

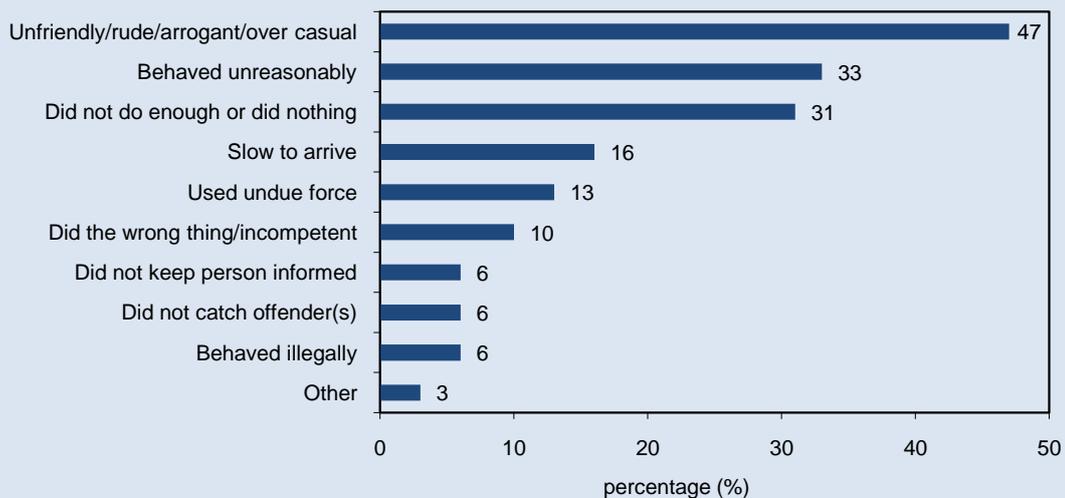
Given the complex operational environment in which the police work it might seem self-evident that police initiated arrests, or stops and searches, are less likely to be positively rated as these encounters can be confrontational and are often undertaken on unwilling participants. The nature of police work also means that officers have to take control of dangerous situations quickly and safely and make sense of conflicting information. These actions may result in demands and questioning that can seem curt and impolite to a member of the public. In fast paced situations officers may not actively think about how people will perceive their actions, decisions, or even the tone of their voice. However, all of these encounters generate the potential for miscommunication, anger and resentment (Berger 2000:9) and ‘can deeply influence people’s views’ of police ‘performance and even legitimacy’ (Skogan 2006:99).

British Crime Survey data also suggests that the percentage of public-initiated contacts with the police has declined significantly over the the last 25 years. For example in 1981, 43% of the public initiated contact with the police (most frequently to ask directions). By 2005/06 this type of contact had declined to 27%. The Casey Review (2008:21) suggests that ‘less contact, and less informal contact, may be a factor in lower public confidence in the police’.

## Quality of contact

Although ratings of local police differ by type of contact, research suggests that 'it is not contact *per se* which leads to lower confidence in the police. Rather, it is *subjective assessments of the quality of the encounters* which impact on levels of confidence' (Bradford *et al* forthcoming:23) where police behaviour or attitude is the most frequently cited reason for annoyance with the police (**Box B**).

### Box B: Reasons for annoyance with police behaviour



Source: Allen *et al.* 2005: Table 2.19 <sup>1</sup>

The reasons for annoyance with police behaviour also make up the most common types of complaints made against the police. Almost half of all complaint allegations relate to incivility, being impolite, intolerance, other neglect, or failure of duty (Gleeson and Grace 2007:vi). As Sherman notes:

*One of the most striking recent findings is the extent to which the police themselves create a risk factor for crime simply by using bad manners. Modest but consistent scientific evidence supports the hypothesis that the less respectful police are towards suspects and citizens generally, the less people will comply with the law. Changing police "style" may thus be as important as focusing police "substance." Making both the style and substance of police practices more "legitimate" in the eyes of the public, particularly high-risk*

<sup>1</sup> Unweighted base: 92. Based on respondents who had been really annoyed with police behaviour in the last 5 years.

*juveniles, may be one of the most effective long-term police strategies for crime prevention (Sherman 1998:8).*

Research in the United States suggests that negative encounters with the police have a greater impact on levels of satisfaction than positive ones because more weight (between four and fourteen times) is given to negative rather than positive experiences (Skogan 2005/2006:298,100/106/112). This situation means that 'at its worst, the police may get essentially no credit for delivering professional service while bad experiences can deeply influence peoples' views of their performance and even legitimacy' (Skogan 2006:99).

Analysis of UK statistics also establishes a link between quality of police contact with the public and overall trust and confidence in the police. There is also a small amount of evidence indicating that well-handled police contacts with the public can impact on trust and confidence, and that a series of positive encounters can have a greater effect (Bradford *et al* forthcoming:24). However, researchers found trust and confidence improved among those with already favourable opinions, rather than those with more neutral or negative ones and that 'the social, cultural and emotional 'baggage' people brought to an encounter with the police may have a determining role in how *both* process and outcome were interpreted. Positive encounters might not result in improved overall assessments because they were either expected (by those with previously positive views about the police) or viewed as one-off occurrences (among those with previously negative views). By contrast, unsatisfactory contacts could challenge previously positive views and reinforce previously negative ones' (Bradford *et al.* forthcoming:7).

### ***Victim experience***

British Crime Survey data suggests that while 60% of victims and witnesses were very, or fairly satisfied with the way the police and the criminal justice system handled their issue (Nicholas *et al* 2007:105), only 41% of victims felt their local police did a good or excellent job (Allen *et al* 2006:16). Lower levels of victim satisfaction are, to a certain extent, understandable - victims may be scared and frustrated as a result of their experience and, due to the overlap between victimization and offending, a significant proportion are also likely to have

encountered the police as a result of their own offending (and therefore may be more predisposed to negative views). However, if victims are distrustful or feel the police have not provided sufficient support and information, they are less likely to co-operate with the police and prosecution process (Skogan 1998:188-9).

American research suggests that police demeanour plays a vital role in victim satisfaction because victims 'are less *outcome* ... than ...*process* oriented' with police being 'judged ... by what physicians would call their "bedside manner"' including their abilities to demonstrate concern, to be polite, helpful and fair, as well as showing a willingness to listen, share information and give advice (Skogan 1998:187). Very similar findings have been reported in a range of victim surveys and are reflected in the positive responses of those who felt they had received a good service, or were connected with someone who had. As the following comments demonstrate: 'My friend got beaten up, he was in hospital, but the police, they really did try to help him ... and they were trying their best to find out the real ... suspects' (Bangladeshi women, quoted in Wake *et al* 2007:10).

Research also suggests that making, and adhering to, an agreed time both in emergency and non-emergency situations shapes satisfaction levels. If a higher level of service is promised and not delivered, the public may be more dissatisfied than if their expectations had never been raised in the first place. This highlights the need for police forces to deliver on their promises and not to promise what they cannot deliver.

In 2006, a code of practice was introduced for victims that seeks to address some of the issues outlined above. Victims rights include: access to victim support and other information about help available; to be regularly informed about progress on their case (monthly) and when arrests or other decisions are made (for example to discontinue a case); to be told the outcome of any trial, and the sentence given, as well as any subsequent appeals (Casey, 2008:14).

### ***The nature of police work and cultural factors***

The nature of police work and some of its cultural features (solidarity, action-oriented behaviour, cynicism, isolation and suspicion, Reiner 2000:90) impact on police officers' perceptions of those with whom they come into contact. Sunahara (2002:2,9) identifies the effects of 'corrosive street experience' on individual police officers where 'frequent and often unpleasant contact with society's marginalised members' form part of the 'social markers' officers respond to in their daily encounters. These 'social markers' can sometimes be more important than an individual's behaviour.

The research literature provides a plethora of examples in which these 'social markers' become working stereotypes that shape officers' interactions with certain sections of the public and negatively impact on the service they provide (Bucke 1997:1, Fielding & Innes 2006:139; Bradford *et al* forthcoming:8). What the research evidence does not explain is why some officers appear, under similar cultural pressures, to act more professionally than others and, as yet, whether PCSOs and other police staff develop similar world views.

Research in a variety of different countries and policing settings suggests that police officers frequently perceive themselves to be under threat and that the police organisation is predisposed to being inwardly rather than externally focused. O'Connor (2005) describes police officers' 'world view' as one where they see themselves as 'we' and others, including the public, as 'they' and for officers to designate those with whom they come into contact into certain 'types' of person, i.e. 'law abiding citizens', 'criminals', or those who are 'pro' or 'anti' police. This presents some obvious challenges to a citizen-focused approach, as we outline in Chapter 6.

### ***Ethnicity, gender, age and socio-economic status***

Ethnicity, gender, age, socio-economic status and geographical location are important factors in police officers' 'social markers', as well as being important factors in public perceptions of, and confidence in, the police. Statistics suggest that ethnicity is the most significant factor, with people from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups being most likely to expect the police to treat them poorly. In the

Citizenship Survey for example, 27% of Black and Minority Ethnic respondents said they expected the police to treat them worse than people of other races, compared with just 6% of white people (Reza & Magill 2006:27).

Research suggests that for BME groups, past experience, a history of racism, poor police-community relations and low levels of trust can generate a continuing expectation of racism and insensitive policing within BME communities (Foster *et al.* 2005: 64-5). Whether these perceptions are founded or not in terms of an individual encounter can make little difference because the *collective perception* and experience is so powerful. For example, whilst individual stops and searches on young black males may generally be appropriately and professionally conducted, the cumulative effect of such stops may be disproportionate, and perceived to be racist (Foster *et al.* 2005:66), particularly in a climate where black people are seven times more likely, and Asian people twice as likely, to be stopped and searched by the police than their white counterparts (Jones and Singer 2008:23).

Qualitative research shows that encounters between the police and marginalized groups can also be shaped by mutual stereotyping that form a back-drop to interactions. For example, research on the impact of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry suggested that police officers frequently resented accusations that they were racist in their encounters with young black men without appreciating the lack of trust that underpinned these experiences - this lack of understanding could negatively affect the type and quality of service officers' provided. Equally young black men anticipated police disrespect and this shaped their perceptions even of positive encounters (Foster *et al.* 2005:64).

A qualitative project that explored public perceptions of the police complaints system suggested that the 'highly disengaged', predominantly young men, black and Asians, and people from the traveller community, felt 'their relationship with the police was ... almost exclusively antagonistic' (Wake *et al* 2007:7). Participants reported 'verbal abuse', multiple stop and searches, and 'were highly sceptical' about police attitudes. This group 'believed they were personally targeted' and 'unfairly stereotyped as troublemakers, or people that commit crime' (Wake *et al* 2007:7). These perceptions were not always the result of personal experience but the cumulative impact of

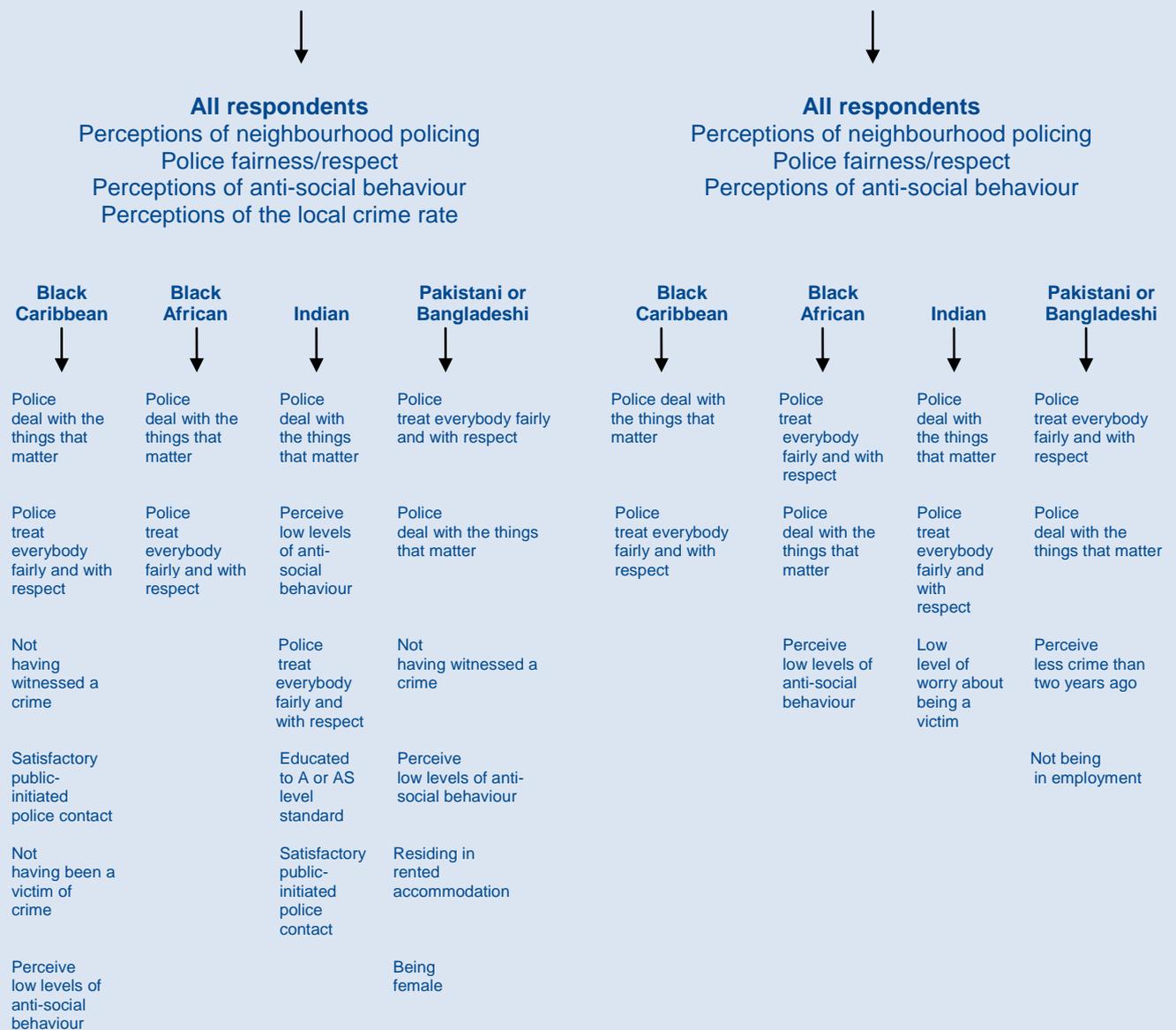
reported negative incidents with the police over time, sometimes formed through 'indirect contact' via family members, friends and others (Wake *et al* 2007:12).

British Crime Survey data suggests that there are different levels of confidence in the police within and between different BME groups and different factors that generate confidence (see **Box C**).

**Box C: Factors associated with higher relative odds of being confident in the local police, by ethnicity**

**Taking everything into account, how good a job do you think the police in this area are doing?**

**Taking everything into account I have confidence in the police in this area**



Source: Myhill and Beak 2008:16

For example, although Black Caribbeans express lower levels of confidence in local police than their white counterparts, other black and Asian groups reported higher levels of confidence than their white counterparts (Myhill and Beak 2008:14-15), (see **Box D**). However, the data also demonstrated that Pakistani and Bangladeshi respondents who had come into contact with the police via police-initiated encounters had less confidence in the police than those who had had no contact even if they had graded their contact with the police as satisfactory (Myhill and Beak 2008:15).

**Box D: Public confidence in the local police (alternative measure), by ethnicity**

'excellent' or 'good job'	Percentage (%)	Number (n)
All	63	47,431
By ethnic group		
White	63	44,644
Black	65	1,691
Asian	68	2,858
By ethnic sub-group		
Black Caribbean	58	828
Black African	73	795
Indian	70	1,350
Pakistani and Bangladeshi	66	1,139

Source: Myhill and Beak 2008:15<sup>2</sup>

Those from poorer socio-economic groups tend to have more contact with the police both as victims and offenders, as well as being more likely to reside in higher crime locations. Therefore, it is unsurprising that research also suggests that confidence in the police is greater among those who had not 'witnessed crime or anti-social behaviour', who felt 'safe walking alone after dark in their neighbourhood', and had university levels of education (Myhill and Beak 2008:8). British Crime Survey data also suggests that confidence in the police correlates with newspaper readership, with tabloid readers being the least confident - (Myhill and Beak 2008:8).

<sup>2</sup> Figures based on analysis of 2005/06 BCS data, undertaken by authors

### ***The importance of how police treat people***

Despite the importance of the socio-demographic characteristics discussed above, survey data suggests that when the way individuals are treated by the police during an encounter is taken into account, these characteristics no longer have a significant impact on satisfaction.

The demeanour of officers and the quality of service perceived to have been rendered, particularly in terms of fair and equitable treatment, are the key factors in how people relate to an encounter with the police (Jackson and Sunshine 2007). For example the majority of people who make a complaint against the police after having been stopped on the street are not critical of having being stopped, but of the officer's manner in dealing with them during the encounter (Maguire and Corbett 1991, Fielding and Innes 2006:139). This trend is reflected in research from a number of countries.

In the United States for example, Skogan suggests that the most important determinant of people's attitudes and assessments of policing is the *quality of service* rendered during routine police-citizen encounters (2005:298). In the UK, research also suggests that citizens place greater emphasis on procedural justice, in terms of fair and equitable treatment during an encounter with the police, than they do on getting a favourable outcome, and that fair and unbiased treatment can lead to an increase in trust and confidence (Bradford *et al.* forthcoming:6). As Myhill and Beak (2008:17) concluded: 'Perceiving that the police treat everyone fairly and with respect' is 'associated with higher odds of being confident. This suggests that, in order for gains in confidence to be realised, officers must be seen to conduct any police work that involves interaction with the public, including response policing and investigation activity, in a fair and equitable way'.

### ***The key principles of customer satisfaction***

By using what we know about public perceptions and expectations of the police, and the reasons for dissatisfaction, it is possible to set out some basic principles that reflect what the public want from the police, and ways to enhance customer satisfaction.

Mastrofski (1999:2) identifies six key characteristics that must be present if police forces are serious about delivering 'policing for people':

- *Attentiveness*
- *Reliability*
- *Responsiveness*
- *Competence*
- *Manners*
- *Fairness*

The factors above are also reflected in the structural, procedural, and behavioural elements that drive customer satisfaction across all public services (see **Box E**) (Cabinet Office 2004).

#### **Box E: Drivers of Customer Satisfaction**

##### **Key Drivers**

##### **Main Elements**

Delivery

- The final outcome
- The way the service kept its promise
- The way the service handled any problems

Timeliness

- Initial wait
- How long it takes overall
- Number of times had to contact the service

Information

- Accuracy
- Comprehensiveness
- Being kept informed about progress

Professionalism

- Competent staff
- Being treated fairly

Staff Attitude

- Polite and friendly staff
- How sympathetic staff were to your needs

**Source: Cabinet Office 2004:3**

A body of research is also beginning to highlight that police attitude and treatment is vital not only to satisfaction but for public confidence in the police too. Research suggests that the extent to which the police represent community values and morals, particularly in terms of 'the dignity and fairness with which they treat people' are key variables in public confidence (Jackson and Sunshine 2007:214).

Research also indicates that the public look for key behavioural characteristics during their encounters with the police, which, if absent, result in public dissatisfaction and complaints (Blaug *et al* 2006a). There are also suggestions that treating offenders with dignity and respect can have a positively reinforcing effect too (Tyler 2004, Sherman 1998).

***Summary: The key principles of satisfaction and confidence with the police***

- *Satisfaction with the police is influenced by the level and quality of contact.*
- *Ethnicity, gender, age, socio-demographic status and geographical location are important factors associated with confidence in the police.*
- *Satisfaction of victims is shaped by police demeanour and the extent to which the police deliver on their promises.*
- *There are characteristics, such as attentiveness and reliability, which the public want from the police and are important to enhance customer satisfaction.*

## CHAPTER TWO

# Policing Communities

In this chapter we describe what the public want from policing, the various approaches to community policing that have been tried and the critical success factors identified from these initiatives.

### ***What do the public want from policing?***

Neighbourhood or community policing seeks to promote a style that reflects the behaviours and activities the public say they want from the police (see **Box F**).

#### **Box F: The top ten policing approaches the public said they want to see are:**

- **A service that takes action** – responsive, approachable, coming out quickly when called to incidents, acting on, following up and feeding back on progress to members of the public when they report crime and anti-social behaviour
- **A visible, uniformed police presence**, with police freed up from unnecessary red tape and health and safety restrictions, fewer constables and PCSOs taken off patrols to perform 'administrative' tasks, and there when needed, not just nine-to-five service
- **PCSOs who are clearly distinguishable as part of the police service**, with uniforms, equipment and powers that match their role in patrolling communities. Supporting local police and tackling anti-social behaviour
- **Named contacts** and clear information about who is responsible for what locally, and how to contact them in both emergency and non-emergency situations
- **Face-to-face access** at a police station, a surgery or a street meeting
- **Continuity in the local policing team**, with officers and PCSOs serving a minimum of two years in the neighbourhood so that they get to know areas and communities well and gain communities' respect and trust
- **A better service for victims** of crime, especially repeat victims, returning regularly to check they are alright and help minimise further victimisation
- **Sensitivity over reporting** crime and giving evidence, protecting anonymity
- **Good engagement with the community** to identify their priorities for action and to give feedback on action and outcomes on cases of greatest community concern
- **Clear leadership from the police on crime** – with the backing of other organisations like the local council, the courts and probation services

Source: Casey 2008:26

The key ingredients for policing identified above are not new. In fact neighbourhood policing, its latest iteration, forms part of a far broader tradition of community policing initiatives developed in a number of countries over more than three decades. In Britain, its roots go back to the original foundation of the 'modern' police in the nineteenth century and the notion of 'policing by consent' on which it was founded (Weatheritt, 1988). These values have a powerful symbolism, differ substantially from the more military policing traditions of a number of countries across the world, and help to explain positive perceptions of the British police among newly arrived migrant groups (Wake *et al* 2007:11).

### ***What is community policing?***

Community policing has been referred to as a 'chameleon concept' (Fielding 2005:460), as it can be difficult to define and has been operationalised in a number of different ways. Essentially:

*Community policing is the delivery of police services through a customer-focused approach, utilising partnerships to maximise community resources in a problem-solving format to prevent crime, reduce the fear of crime, apprehend those involved in criminal activity, and improve a community's quality of life (Morash et al, 2002:278).*

Research suggests that the benefits of community policing are:

- *the mobilisation of communities*
- *improved social and physical environment*
- *improved police/public relations*
- *increased officer job satisfaction and*
- *a reduction in crime and fear of crime*

Source: Segrave and Ratcliffe (2004:6)

Community policing has philosophical, strategic, tactical and organisational dimensions all of which are fundamental to its implementation (Myhill, 2006, see **Box G**). It also requires sufficient time, organisational capability and dedicated resources, operated by staff who have emotional intelligence, a knack for solving

problems, good inter-personal skills, and the ability to be 'authoritative rather than authoritarian' (Lumb and Breazeale 2002:96).

### Box G: Key Characteristics of Community Policing

<b>Philosophical Dimension</b>	<b>Indicating a move away from the professional model of policing</b>
Citizen input	Using a number of different methods.
Broad police function	To include non-enforcement tasks, social service and general assistance.
Personal service	Tailored policing based on local norms and values and individual needs.
<b>Strategic Dimension</b>	<b>The key operational concepts that translate philosophy into action</b>
Reoriented operations	Less motorised patrol and more face-to-face interaction. Less rapid response to low priority calls to save time & resources to devote to community activity.
Geographic Focus	Shifting unit of patrol from time to place; emphasising permanency of assignment of beat officers to neighbourhoods.
Prevention emphasis	More proactive work; less reactive crime fighting; looking beyond individual incidents for underlying problems; raising the status of crime prevention' more of a social welfare focus, especially working with youth.
<b>Tactical Dimension</b>	<b>Translates philosophies and strategies into concrete programmes</b>
Positive interaction	Offset negative contacts (e.g. arrests, stops) with as many positive trust building interactions as possible. Provide quality service and identify problems during routine calls. Use initiatives & take opportunities to interact during routine patrol.
Partnerships	Actively solicit input and participation from citizens. Engage in community organising if required. Mediate disputes if there are community factions.
Problem-solving	Maintain traditional enforcement, incident handling and investigation, but focus on underlying problems. Use a model for problem solving and involve all levels of officer. It should be empirical and based on systematically gathered information.
<b>Organisational Dimension</b>	<b>Surrounds community policing and affects its implementation</b>
Structure	Decentralisation to allow more independence; 'flattening' to remove unnecessary layers of bureaucracy; despecialisation to devote more resources to community activity; creating teams to allow joint working; civilianisation to cut costs & more effective use of sworn personnel.
Management	Develop concise 'mission statement'; strategic planning to ensure adherence to core values, coaching & mentoring instead of restricting roles; empowerment of employees to take risks; selective discipline with distinction between intentional and unintentional errors.
Information	Reform officers' performance appraisal to focus on community activity; evaluate programmes on effectiveness and efficiency; assess police agency's overall performance on a wider range of indicators; collect information on wider functions than enforcement & call-handling; provide timely crime analysis for specific geographical areas, inc. use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

Source: Myhill 2006:1<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Myhill's typology is based on Cordner's (1998) 'Four dimensions on community policing'.

## ***Community policing in Chicago***

In the United States a community policing programme referred to as CAPS (Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy) sought to respond to a number of crime and disorder problems by coordinating the work of police, housing and social services. The programme resulted in a 20% increase in resident satisfaction with the police and a focused and coordinated strategy for dealing with problems identified by citizens (Skogan *et al* 2000). The programmes impact on crime reduction and anti-social behaviour, however, was less clear-cut because although the CAPS sites experienced declines, so did other parts of the city where CAPS was not operating.

## ***Problem-Oriented Policing***

In the last three decades community policing has developed alongside, and become interlinked with, Problem Oriented Policing (POP) (**Box H**). This first emerged in the USA (as developed by Goldstein) in the 1970s and was later applied by some British Chief Constables in the 1990s (Savage 2007:208).

### **Box H: Problem Oriented Policing**

Problem Oriented Policing (POP) encourages the police to work with communities and local partners to identify and resolve local problems. Rather than focusing solely on law enforcement responses to crime and disorder, that ignore their wider social and economic causes, ... POP takes a more holistic, and long term view, identifying the causes of crime and disorder and attempting to find preventative solutions. ... Problem solving ... is central to the neighbourhood policing agenda (Read *et al.* 2007:18) and requires police officers to be multi-skilled and multi-functional, and to perform a number of roles including:

- **Researcher:** gathering data and information on problems and processes
- **Analyst:** making sense of and interpreting crime and other data, identifying the causes of the problems confronting communities, identifying possible courses of action, and conducting post-response evaluation of their impact
- **Mobiliser of the Community:** officers should harness community resources and use them to further community cohesion

**Source: Savage 2007:207**

## ***The Reassurance Policing Programme***

In Britain the Reassurance Policing Programme (RPP) used both community policing and problem-solving principles in an effort to improve public confidence in policing by involving local communities in identifying priority crime and disorder problems and working in partnership with other agencies to tackle them (Tuffin 2006:1). The programme drew on the concept of 'signal crimes' developed by Martin Innes, which suggested that public perceptions of insecurity are often triggered by 'signal events'. These events could be serious crimes like the impact of a murder in a locality, but may be linked to disorder, vandalism or graffiti. The theory suggests that these signal events, that differ from area to area, have a disproportional impact on residents' perceptions of their neighbourhoods, can engender fear and avoidance behaviours, and while central to perceptions, may also differ from the picture of neighbourhood problems provided by recorded crime data (Morris 2006:2).

In the sites selected for reassurance policing, research was undertaken to identify the signal crimes in each area (which varied considerably). Responses to these problems were introduced using problem solving techniques, in partnership with local agencies, community organisations and individuals (Innes, 2005:161-2). A Home Office evaluation of the reassurance policing programme concluded that it had:

- *a positive impact on crime*
- *improved perceptions of crime and antisocial behaviour*
- *increased feelings of safety*
- *improved public confidence in the police*

Source: Tuffin *et al* (2006:ix)

However, the results were more varied in terms of community engagement as we describe in Chapter 3.

## ***Neighbourhood Policing***

In England and Wales the latest iteration of community policing is neighbourhood policing where a dedicated team have responsibility for a given geographical area (see **Box I**).

### **Box I: The Neighbourhood Policing Programme (NPP)**

Neighbourhood Policing is provided by teams of police officers and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), often together with Special Constables, local authority wardens, volunteers and partners. It aims to provide people who live or work in a neighbourhood with:

**Access** - to local policing services through a named point of contact

**Influence** - over policing priorities in their neighbourhood

**Interventions** - joint action with partners & the public

**Answers** - sustainable solutions & feedback on what is being done

**Source:** [www.neighbourhoodpolicing.gov.uk](http://www.neighbourhoodpolicing.gov.uk)

As with its predecessors, The Casey Review (2008:23-26) found a wide variation in what neighbourhood policing was called; the type and names of public meetings police had; how teams were resourced; and that the public were unable to differentiate between neighbourhood policing and other types of policing. Despite this confusion more than half of those surveyed by the Home Office in 2008 knew about neighbourhood policing, and the figure rose to 60% after an awareness campaign later in the year.

### ***Working with people***

Community policing depends on close contact between police and public where police are familiar with and responsive to local communities' desires (Fielding 2005:460), and where the police's authority depends on the ability to interact, negotiate and persuade, rather than to coerce (Innes 2005:157).

The ethos of community policing is based on the belief 'that, together, police and public are more effective and more humane co-producers of safety and public order than are the police alone' (Skolnick & Bayley 1998:1). These sentiments are encapsulated in the neighbourhood officer's comments below:

*A lot of good community interactions stem from just time, just being there every day and helping out with life's little problems. And if you can get that*

*bond developed around these little things, then when a big crisis develops, they're more and more willing to help...[!]t's so much easier for people who are afraid of bureaucracy – or the criminal justice system – to deal with someone they know, taking away the anonymity factor (Miller 1999:147).*

The quality of community engagement is a vital element in successful community policing and this is discussed in Chapter 3.

**Summary: The key factors in community policing**

- *Community policing initiatives utilise a style of policing that the public want*
- *Community policing should be based on listening and responding to communities' needs*
- *Familiar, capable, and committed staff are required to undertake community policing initiatives*
- *Community policing utilises problem solving approaches to tackle crime, anti-social behaviour and fear of crime*
- *Community policing should empower communities to help themselves*
- *Community policing should work in a 'joined-up' way with partners*

## CHAPTER THREE

# Community Engagement and Participation

### *What is community engagement?*

Community engagement has a number of different dimensions and like community policing, can be understood in a number of different ways.

Myhill (2006:iv) defined community engagement as: 'The process of enabling the participation of citizens and communities in policing at their chosen level, ranging from providing information and reassurance, to empowering them to identify and implement solutions to local problems and influence strategic priorities and decisions' (Myhill, 2006:iv).

There are a variety of different types of community engagement as **Box J** illustrates.

#### **Box J: Types of Engagement**

1. As a victim, witness, suspect or defendant, or otherwise as the object of legitimate police powers.
2. Structured participation: as an attendee at an event or participant in the process with a planned objective (e.g. attending meetings, police attending 'their' organisation's meeting, filling in a questionnaire, receiving a consultation visit or phone call).
3. Unstructured participation: with fewer pre-planned objectives (e.g. providing regular information to the police or engaging with young people, police surgeries).
4. Informal contact (e.g. saying hello, chatting or similar contact in a non policing context).

**Source: Matrix 2007:7**

### ***Are the public interested in engagement?***

Although police services often feel that there is public apathy and a lack of willingness to be actively involved in policing, The Casey Review (2008:75-6) suggested there is 'an untapped resource in communities'. In a survey conducted for the Review, 75% of adults 'said they would be willing to give up some spare time for activities that would help tackle crime. Even if this were only half true that would be equivalent to an army of over 15 million community volunteers across England and Wales'. However, the report also noted that there 'was an understandable lack of knowledge on the part of the general public about how to get involved that may hold them back in taking up a role in tackling crime' (The Casey Review 2008:75-6).

### ***The importance of informal contact***

Public perceptions of community engagement are intrinsically linked with *informal* contact which is 'arguably the key face of police-community relations' (Jones and Newburn 2001:20). Yet, the police tend to focus on *formal* engagement through consultative frameworks (Matrix 2007:14) despite evidence spanning more than two decades suggesting that these consultative forums tend to be unrepresentative, insufficiently independent and unsuccessful (Bowling and Foster 2002, Jones and Newburn 2001, Myhill 2006, Newburn and Jones 2007), although recent evidence suggests that Independent Advisory Groups may have had more impact in some areas of the country (see Foster *et al* 2005).

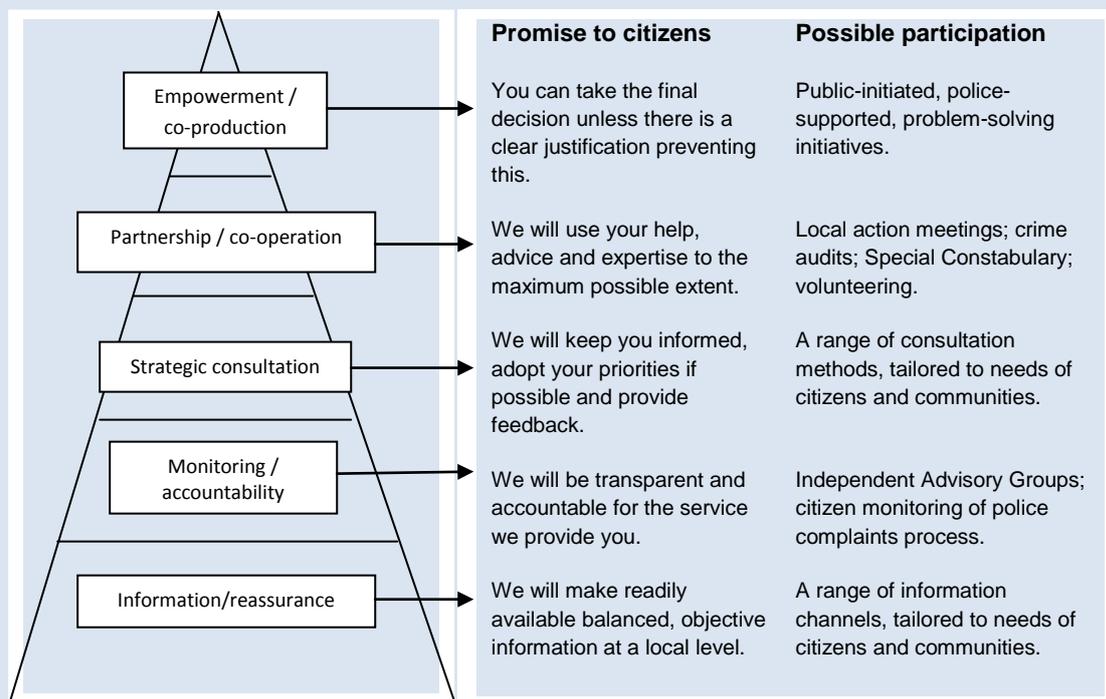
Given the importance of contact with as many people as possible, not simply the minority who attend public meetings, neighbourhood teams should 'make every effort to reach every household' (Home Office April 2007). This is a formal requirement for neighbourhood officers in Japan who visit households at least once a year. These visits provide an opportunity to make new contacts, ask if residents have any concerns or issues that they might want to discuss and provides a 'known' and potentially trusted person whom residents can contact in the event of problems as well as opening up possibilities for intelligence.

Given the public emphasis on informal contacts, service delivery needs to be consistent, and customer focused at all times (Matrix 2007:7). As Sir Ronnie Flanagan put it in a forensic context -'every contact leaves a trace' and has a consequent effect on perceptions of, and confidence in, the police.

### **Levels of engagement**

It is vital that police organisations understand the *type* of engagement that is most appropriate in any given situation, the implicit contracts that these establish with those involved, and how the type of engagement influences what it is possible to deliver (see **Box K**). Without the type of engagement being clearly defined there is considerable room for misunderstanding and assessing the success of initiatives is problematic (Mistry 2007:4).

#### **Box K: Levels of Community Engagement in Policing**



**Source: Myhill 2006:7**

The philosophy of community policing and citizen engagement is based on a belief that residents, businesses and individuals will want to participate in, and take some responsibility for, community crime prevention. Inevitably, some communities and individuals will be more willing to engage than others and it is often the hardest to reach groups with whom the police most need to engage.

Work in the United States suggests that in high crime areas: 'residents may not appear to appreciate Neighbourhood Police Officers' efforts until they feel the benefits, such as decreased fear, increased autonomy, a decline in visible drug dealing, and more stability and program development' (Miller 1999:144).

### ***Engagers and non-engagers***

**Box L** provides a typology of engagers and non-engagers that can help local police officers profile the types of engagement in their neighbourhoods, identify engagement priorities, and develop tailored engagement strategies. For example - encouraging entry to engagement, consolidating involvement of individuals who are intermittently engaged, maintaining the involvement of individuals who are already well-engaged and deciding how much time to invest in converting the non-engagers (Matrix 2007: 8-9,15).

## Box L: Typology of engagers and non-engagers

### Types of engager

The vulnerable	Individuals and groups with a high probability of victimisation or with high fear of victimisation deriving from their physical, cognitive or emotional state
Offenders and potential offenders	Those regularly in contact with the police because of their past, present or potential offending behaviour. These individuals carry back important messages to their often wide networks of non-criminal associates about the quality of law enforcement. Also, today's 'young tearaway' can be tomorrow's active citizen
Active citizens	Individuals who are already formally engaged in community activity
Concerned network members	Individuals who have a shared concern or informal social network to a particular issue, regardless of whether that issue has been the subject of police attention
Community anchors	Individuals who are trusted by particular communities although they have no formal representative status

### Types of non-engager

Dismissive, disengaged and uninterested	Individuals who have made a decision to distance themselves from the police and are not prepared to elaborate or explain
Time limited	Those who said, either to excuse themselves or as a genuine explanation, that they were unlikely to have the time to engage
Fearful	Individuals who described fear of reprisals, or fear of incriminating themselves, as reasons for non-engagement
Alienated	Those distanced from the police and the community by individual or group characteristics or physical circumstances, who have made no specific decision not to engage

Source: Matrix 2007:8

In Northern Ireland the need to improve confidence in the police, and secure community involvement across the religious divide following 'The Troubles', led to the creation of local District Policing Partnerships (DPPs), with elected community representatives. DPPs can call their local police commander to account, monitor police performance and work with the police to prevent crime (DPP, 2006:1). A large-scale survey conducted by the Northern Ireland Policing Board suggested that despite the creation of DPPs the majority of respondents were not confident about them as a vehicle for addressing local policing problems. Over 70% of Catholic and Protestant respondents were unable to say whether they were doing a good job, and satisfaction with local policing remained static with only 34% of the Catholic and Protestant communities saying they were very satisfied or satisfied with the police

(DPP 2006:23, 9). However, between 2004 and 2006, the percentage of respondents who expressed their *lack* of confidence in DPPs 'helping to address local policing problems' declined by 6% amongst the Protestant community and by 3% in the Catholic community (DPP, 2006:23), demonstrating a small but potentially encouraging improvement in a context where decades of conflict and inherent problems in police/community contacts had existed.

### ***Police attitudes and approaches to engagement***

The Northern Ireland findings outlined above highlight the difficulties in shifting perceptions and demonstrate that engaging communities is no easy task. However, other British research highlights that the failure to impact significantly on public perceptions may be linked with *how* the police engage. For example, in the Reassurance Policing Programme (see Chapter 2):

- *Four of the ten sites questioned the effort police put into finding out what people think*
- *Only half the sites felt the police 'were very or fairly effective at working with the local community', and:*
- *Only two of the ten sites felt the police 'were very or fairly willing to respond to people's views*

Source: Morris 2006:4

The Reassurance Policing Programme appears to suggest, as does the literature on contacts with the police, that officers' attitudes and approach to engagement is crucial. The Reassurance Policing Programme work also highlighted:

- *the importance of a robust methodology for canvassing residents' views*
- *the need for officers to enhance their consultative and communication skills; and*
- *that **responding** to communities' and working **with** them is vital for improving community engagement*

British Crime Survey data revealed that a perception 'that the police were dealing with things that matter to communities' was a principal factor in determining BME groups' confidence in their local police (Myhill and Beak 2008:12-13).

### ***The benefits of community engagement***

Research indicates that community engagement can help to create stronger communities by supporting the development of informal social controls, improving police-community relations and making police work more effective (Rogers and Robinson 2004:1).

The Reassurance Policing Programme also suggests community engagement can 'help trigger [neighbourhood] recovery by providing a basic level of neighbourhood security that creates the conditions in which communities themselves can develop better informal social controls' (Innes and Jones 2006:3). These aspirations form part of a broader 'civil renewal' agenda - that emphasises the importance of developing 'social cohesion' and 'social capital' within neighbourhoods - where responsibility and ownership of neighbourhood issues is vested in communities themselves (Blaug *et al* 2006b:7). It is thought that such approaches help to break the mutually reinforcing and spiralling relationship whereby 'crime fosters mistrust, which undermines community cohesion, thereby eroding social or informal controls, resulting in more crime' (Roberts 2006:5). Innes (2005:159) suggests community policing programmes are well placed to break this spiral and have the potential to galvanise ownership, capitalising on public concern about crime and disorder to generate a community of shared interest in safety. However, this depends on residents and businesses being *actively* involved in planning and prioritising so they feel a sense of shared ownership over the process (Myhill 2006:vi).

### ***Enhancing community engagement***

Thiel (forthcoming) examines the ways in which community engagement might be improved, particularly in relation to hard-to-reach groups. Drawing on a range of different research he suggests:

- *Widely advertising community engagement schemes in various languages and through Black and Minority Ethnic media*
- *More fully utilising existing community organisations and groups to advertise through and engage with*
- *Targeting 'quiet groups' through posting letters, knocking on doors, street talking and beat engagement (including 'adopt a block/street' schemes for*

*individual officers) and using Key Individual Networks (i.e. accessing hidden groups through influential and well connected members of the community)*

- *Recruiting local volunteers to assist with communication, conducting reassurance 'call backs' and administration*
- *Setting up stalls in busy areas like shopping centres, markets, or centres of trading in community-specific goods and utilising local supermarkets where both workers and customers reside locally*

Source: Thiel, forthcoming, adapted from Neighbourhood Team Guide [www.neighbourhoodpolicing.co.uk](http://www.neighbourhoodpolicing.co.uk) and Centrex 2006

Thiel (forthcoming) adds that it is also important to:

- *Encourage the community to take ownership of the problems and build up community driven practical solutions to them*
- *Identify and engage various service providers to facilitate community-driven solutions (for example local councillors, councils, housing officers, landlords, local employers, religious, community and youth representatives etc.*
- *Formulate clear checklists of what has and has not been resolved with a clear accountability structure so that everyone knows who to hold to account when problems are not being addressed or resolved*

### **Summary: The key ingredients of community engagement**

- *The public are more interested in engaging than police officers often believe but in the poorest and most challenging areas sustained work may be needed before residents will participate*
- *Informal rather than formal contacts work best*
- *Finding ways to engage those individuals and groups who do not get consulted and whose needs might be ignored should be a priority*
- *Being clear about what type of engagement should be undertaken and what promises are implicit in it is very important*
- *Police attitudes towards engagement are vital – a lack of commitment or interest is recognised by the public and reduces satisfaction and confidence*

## CHAPTER FOUR

# Community Justice

### ***What is community justice?***

Community justice encompasses a range of different approaches that promote partnership between criminal justice agencies and the community. Whilst traditional criminal justice agencies are considered 'faceless, unresponsive and punitive', dealing with crime in isolation from the victims, witnesses, offenders and communities that are affected by it (Rogers 2005:1), community justice emphasises the local delivery of criminal justice services by working directly with the public to 'reduce crime, resolve disputes and repair the damage done by crime' (Rogers 2006:5). Community justice schemes sit within the framework of multi-agency partnership approaches to dealing predominantly with low level crime and disorder at a neighbourhood level.

### ***Restorative justice***

Restorative justice, 'a process whereby parties with a stake in a specific offence collectively resolve how to deal with the aftermath of the offence and its implications for the future' (Marshall 1999:5) is one of the best known forms of community justice. The approach seeks to:

- *address the needs of victims*
- *prevent re-offending*
- *enable offenders to take responsibility for their actions*
- *recreate a working community that supports the rehabilitation of offenders and victims and avoids escalation of legal justice*

Source: Marshall 1999:5-6

In the UK, Restorative Justice practices are used within the Youth Justice System and victims have the opportunity to meet the offender in person. In the late 1990s, Thames Valley Police piloted a 'restorative cautioning' project that was evaluated by

researchers at the University of Oxford, and is still being used. The project involved face-to-face 'restorative conferences' for individuals affected by an offence each time a caution was given (Hoyle *et al.* 2002). The evaluation suggested that restorative cautioning was a potentially more effective means of reducing re-offending than traditional methods, and improved relationships between the public and the police.

The theory behind Restorative Justice (RJ) is that:

- *People who commit crimes often believe, or convince themselves, that they are not acting immorally*
- *RJ engages such people in a moral discussion about whether crime is wrong*
- *An RJ discussion can lead offenders to redefine themselves as law-abiders, and to agree that they are not the kind of people who would do immoral things*
- *The RJ discussion can result in the conclusion that what they did was in fact immoral, and that they should therefore not repeat such behaviour*

Source: Sherman and Strang 2007:15

### ***Does restorative justice work?***

In a robust and comprehensive review of the evidence on restorative justice in the UK and abroad, Sherman and Strang (2007:8) found that: 'Restorative Justice works differently on different kinds of people' and that although 'rigorous tests of Restorative Justice in diverse samples have found substantial reductions in repeat offending for both violence and property crime', other research suggests that successes cannot always be replicated (Sherman *et al.*, 2000). Sherman and Strang's (2007:8/9) review concluded that face-to-face meetings benefit the victim, and that restorative justice, 'seems to reduce crime more effectively with more, rather than less serious crimes', and that it appears to work better for violent than property crime. As the authors note: 'These findings run counter to conventional wisdom and could become the basis for substantial inroads in demarcating when it is 'in the public interest' to seek Restorative Justice rather than Criminal Justice'.

## ***Community sentencing***

Other community justice initiatives encouraging communities to work in partnership with criminal justice agencies include community sentencing, which involves offenders making amends to victims and communities by carrying out their punishment within the community (e.g. unpaid work or drug treatment programmes) and the development of Community Justice Centres, that as well as housing a community court, act as a 'one stop shop' for local people to report, gain information and be consulted on community safety issues in their area (Community Justice National Programme 2007) (see **Box M**).

### **Box M: Case study - North Liverpool Community Justice Centre**

The first of its kind in England and Wales, the Community Justice Centre, in North Liverpool, was set up in 2004 and is based on the success of the Red Hook Centre in Brooklyn, New York. The centre works closely with local people to understand and tackle the causes of anti-social behaviour and crime as well as crime itself, combining the powers of a courtroom with a range of community resources, available to residents, victims and witnesses, as well as offenders. It also organises and supports activities involving local residents and, in particular, young people.

**Source:** <http://www.communityjustice.gov.uk/northliverpool/index.htm>

## ***Restorative process in police complaints***

Restorative principles are also useful in the police complaints process. The majority of complaints are still dealt with by police forces, either via local investigation, or through the Local Resolution process. This enables complainants and police officers to resolve the complaint quickly and provides an opportunity to express their views, or provide an explanation, in a non-adversarial environment (Dobry 2001:11-12). The process relies predominantly on a conciliation model, in which the Investigating Officer acts as a mediator between the complainant and the officer (Hill *et al.* 2003:17). Interviews with complainants and police officers suggest that this process could be mutually beneficial:

**Complainant:** *"At least I could have asked him question for question in front of somebody and that's all I would have said to him, 'Why did you go off on one? Was it a bad day?' If so I can accept it and we can both apologise to each other, shake, and walk."*

**Officer:** *“I think once he sits down and he speaks to me as an individual and doesn’t see the uniform, seeing the person he’s talking to, I’ll have more of an opportunity to explain in more depth why I have done what I’ve done, and he may go away with more understanding.”*

Source: Hill *et al* (2003:29 & 33).

The IPCC want to see more imaginative and innovative ways of settling complaints, including the use of mediation and restorative conferences (Herrington *et al.* 2007:4 and IPCC 2005). There is as yet little evidence to suggest that increased monitoring and/or use of face-to-face mediation or restorative conferencing is taking place. One possible reason for this is officer resistance and a reluctance to take part, particularly when it is sometimes unclear who the ‘victim’ is (Dobry 2001:11). Whilst some commentators believe that such a low level of independent oversight is unacceptable, it has also been argued that too great a level of independent investigation of complaints undermines the police’s responsibility for ensuring direct accountability to individuals and communities. McLaughlin and Johansen, (2002:647) for example, suggest that responsibility for police misconduct should take place at a local level in order to build public confidence in the system, and enable communities to play a more effective role in improving police performance and accountability.

### ***Summary: The key elements of Community Justice***

- *Community justice emphasises the local delivery of criminal justice*
- *Restorative justice addresses victims’ needs and is beneficial for the victim*
- *Research suggests that restorative justice appears to be more effective in reducing more serious crimes, and works better for violent than property crime*
- *Making more use of restorative principles in police complaints could be beneficial*

## CHAPTER FIVE

# Patrol, Reassurance and Fear of Crime

### *Visibility and patrol*

As well as looking for key behavioural characteristics during their encounters with the police, the public consistently refer to their desire for a visible, accountable and accessible *style* of policing. This style of policing, based on responsiveness to local problems and needs (Fitzgerald & Hough 2002:1 and Home Office 2005:3), is generally associated with foot patrol and the fictional Police Constable in the 'Dixon of Dock Green' television serial, who personified a 'golden age' of post war policing where the local 'bobby' formed an integral part of communities (Wakefield 2006:12, Reiner, 2000).

Research has consistently challenged the Dixon mythology (Reiner 2000), which has demonstrated that increased foot patrols have only a 'marginal impact on the incidence of crime and disorder', and that as a method of crime detection are 'extremely inefficient and ineffective' (Sharp 2005:450).

Although foot patrols may not be very effective crime prevention aids they do play an important part in reducing fear of crime. Skogan (1998:189-90) cites research from the 1980s where police visibility increased satisfaction as 'recent sightings of the police gave citizens the impression that the police are routinely engaged in their protection and crime prevention functions'. Similar responses have been observed in a number of other studies, including the Reassurance Policing Programme (Innes 2005:160).

### ***Policing rural neighbourhoods***

Rural areas have received very little attention in the research literature (Dalglish and Myhill 2004: 57). Although this may, in part, be due to their generally lower levels of crime, it may also be due to the fact that the mechanisms of police visibility and accessibility implemented in urban contexts are difficult to transfer to a more rural setting, especially given the public preference for more resource intensive foot patrols. Devising more appropriate mechanisms for fostering public reassurance in rural areas is an important issue (Dalglish and Myhill 2004: 57). Furthermore, there is also a danger that hidden pockets of deprivation, and with it crime and victimisation, may be less visible in some rural areas (Norfolk Rural Community Council, 2006) and that the police may therefore fail to meet important needs if they have little or no presence in such areas.

### ***Falling crime but continuing fear***

There may be a connection between the lack of police visibility, fear of crime, decreasing confidence, and perceptions that crime is increasing (Johnson *et al* 2005:3). Despite sustained reductions in recorded crime over more than a decade, fear of crime has remained high (Herrington and Millie 2006, Fielding 2005:464-5). This 'delivery paradox' is reflected in the public sector more widely, where improvements to service delivery do not necessarily result in increased customer satisfaction (Blaug *et al.* 2006a:36). Ineffective communication of service improvements, insufficient orientation to customer satisfaction and unrealistic public expectations of services (Blaug *et al.* 2006a:36) have all been cited as reasons for the 'delivery paradox'.

Recent changes in the composition of the policing family have ably demonstrated that visibility and accessibility can be achieved by a number of different providers, not simply police officers (see (HMIC 2001, Wakefield 2006). The introduction of Police Community Support Officers as key players in Neighbourhood Policing Teams has done much to improve visibility and a national evaluation suggests that PCSOs 'are providing a much wanted service' (see Cooper *et al* 2006). However, research also suggests that despite seeing community engagement as a core activity (Cooper *et al* 2006) (which may be beneficial to their attitude and approaches to their work),

PCSOs' contacts tend to be 'passive' (based on patrol and informal conversations), and rarely involve proactive work, or extend to hard-to-reach groups (Rehman 2005). In this respect PCSOs approaches to their work mirrors police officers' practice and suggests that in their training, and 'on the job' learning, little emphasis is placed on the importance of extending community engagement activities or on finding creative means of empowering 'hard-to-reach' communities.

***Summary: The key points on patrol, reassurance and fear***

- *Police visibility plays an important role in reducing fear of crime*
- *Despite declines in recorded crime, fear of crime remains a concern*
- *PCSOs have been a welcome addition to the 'policing family' but their roles are insufficiently proactive and their activities rarely extend to hard to reach groups*
- *Devising more appropriate means for fostering public reassurance in rural areas need to be considered*

## CHAPTER SIX

# The Key Ingredients for Successful Implementation

To successfully deliver citizen focus and community engagement, police organisations must undergo significant organisational, procedural and cultural change.

Citizen-focused policing, like community policing, exploits the ‘social service’ elements of policing, rather than the police as the enforcement arm of the state (Faulkner 2003:297). This approach fundamentally challenges the traditional ‘crime fighting’ model that appears to be deeply rooted in many (street level) police officers’ perceptions of their role, no matter how unrepresentative this is of their day-to-day practice.

Yet, research in the U.K. and abroad (Innes 2005, Miller 1999) suggests that policing *with* communities can be just as, if not more, successful in achieving crime reduction aims.

Furthermore, an American study suggests that community engagement is a ‘win-win’ scenario because once officers had worked in neighbourhood policing roles their approach to the law enforcement aspects of their job changes:

*Officers mentioned over and over that they undertook these routine law enforcement duties in a more caring way, which could ultimately pay off by decreasing hostility, suspicion and distrust between citizens and the police. Both male and female [Neighbourhood Policing Officers] believed that their*

*more informal personal styles meant better law enforcement results (Miller 1999:145).*

There are significant challenges to the successful implementation of community policing, citizen focus and community engagement activities, some of which are outlined below.

### ***Community policing involves everyone***

Many of the problems with community policing initiatives across the globe relate to its use as 'a bolt on extra' that is seen to be 'the concern of a small number of officers' (see Millie and Herrington 2004:11-12), rather than employing it as *the* philosophy and approach for delivering policing that is as relevant to the work of counter-terrorism officers as it is to neighbourhood policing teams. Frequently, there is also a disconnection between the strategic commitment to the values and philosophy of community policing and the view and attitudes of officers on the ground where this approach can often be seen as 'soft' and ineffectual (Bennett 1994, Reiner 2000, Fielding 2002, Innes 2006).

### ***Identifying 'communities' and their needs***

'Community' is a rather over-used and ill-defined concept. Although residential communities are the most commonly recognised, as these are where 'end-user services are delivered and in which social relationships are formed and maintained' (Blaug *et al.* 2006b:13), the geographical areas or neighbourhoods commonly referred to as 'communities' are often diverse in their composition and characteristics (e.g. rural/urban, affluent/deprived) and change over time.

People's experience of their 'neighbourhood' will differ according to age, ethnicity and gender, and the extent to which they feel attached to a place by length of residence, shared interests or activities (Willmott 1986). Community engagement should reflect these different (and sometimes potentially conflicting perspectives) and needs to be flexible and tailored to meet the needs of different types of environments, not a 'one size fits all' or 'best practice' approach that fails to reflect local situations (see Myhill 2006:29, 49).

### ***Potential exclusion***

Roberts (2006:5) suggests that the rhetoric and strategy of community policing can undermine itself, by encouraging suspicion within communities, and the targeting of particular groups as 'undesirable'. These processes may marginalise and further exclude certain groups, for example young people (who are particularly prone to being pathologised as troublesome and difficult). It is important that neighbourhood teams do not take the easy option by engaging with 'the usual suspects' and excluding other 'harder-to-reach' groups, as this generates inequitable outcomes (Myhill 2006:25). Neighbourhood officers also need to be prepared for an unenthusiastic initial response and understand that time and effort must be invested to overcome barriers and find solutions to resolve them (Walker *et al.* 1992, cited in Segrave and Ratcliffe, 2004:8).

### ***Information and feedback***

In order to set meaningful local priorities communities need to be provided with clear, timely and accessible information about crime and disorder problems in their locality and how local policing and community safety is responding to these issues (Home Office, April 2007, Flanagan 2008:27-8). Research suggests that as well as the police acknowledging the importance of participants' input (Myhill 2006:vi), feedback about engagement activities enables them to assess if the time and effort is worthwhile and if future investment would be well spent (Matrix 2007:63). It is also important that what is happening in neighbourhoods is widely publicised so that those who are not engaged are kept informed. 'A culture of setting and meeting expectations of feedback' must become embedded in neighbourhood policing, and different types of feedback should be used to match different types of engagement in order to reach as wide an audience as possible' (Matrix 2007:64-65).

Among the ten hallmarks of good local policing the use of creative material to capture attention is emphasised, including 'images' of 'local people and places, not just the police (a sure indicator of citizen focus); tips and advice; contact details for local officers, help in solving crimes, maps, and the use of small snippets of information' (Home Office April 2007).

Bradford *et al* (forthcoming) suggest, on the basis of work undertaken for the Metropolitan Police, that the extent to which residents feel informed about the policing of their neighbourhood influences levels of confidence in the police and perceptions of police effectiveness more generally (cited in Myhill and Beak 2008:10).

### ***Local priority setting***

The localised nature of priority setting, whilst positive in terms of attempting to listen and respond to local community concerns, also has a number of difficulties, particularly if the variety of different and sometimes conflicting ‘community needs’ are not properly represented (Segrave and Ratcliffe 2004:9). For example, hate crime and domestic violence may only be experienced by a minority, but these issues should be high policing priorities. Furthermore, although giving local communities a voice is important, public expectations are not always realistic or informed and intense media coverage of single cases has the potential to negatively impact upon public priority setting. It is vital therefore, that officers assess the relative importance of different priorities and exercise their discretion in order to ensure that certain issues continue to be addressed even if they do not match local concerns. It is equally important that neighbourhood teams explain why these priorities have been pursued, why in the process others may not be met and that such decisions are evidence-based.

### ***Multi-agency partnerships***

Partnership offers the most effective way to tackle neighbourhood crime and disorder, in part because many of the problems that the police deal with are ‘symptoms of other problems’ that are the responsibility of other agencies (Innes 2005:165). Guidance on partnership working emphasises the benefits of co-location, with agencies working together in the same place with established information-sharing protocols, in order to facilitate joint problem solving and effective communication (NPP 2006:30).

Although the need for partnership work is widely recognised, and legislated for, research suggests that multi-agency collaboration can be undermined by ‘the

competitive framework' of 'the voluntary sector's involvement with local government', and 'the prevailing managerialist or audit ethos' that 'constrains the potential for staff to exercise discretion based on established working relationships' (Roberts 2006:6).

There are also problems between partnerships at a strategic level and the realisation of these visions and decisions on the ground; differences in occupational cultures, and perceptions of the problems that need to be tackled and the best means to combat them (Crawford 1997, 1998, Bullock 2007).

Evidence also suggests that the police often dominate multi-agency activities by taking an action-implementation approach before a co-ordinated response has been agreed, and seeking short-term interventions in an attempt to 'fix' the problem and move on. This suggests that greater exposure to community related indices of effectiveness and the links between crime and social welfare problems, as well as agencies who have different ideologies and conceptions of the 'client' group, could be beneficial for policing (Fielding and Innes 2006:141).

The Casey Review (2008:36) suggests that 'The public want and deserve a more seamless service; and work to achieve integration needs additional focus and pace'. The Review reported numerous problems in 'the local delivery of joined up services – agencies blaming each other for failing to engage or respond to problems, multiple public meetings and engagement covering similar issues but saying different and even conflicting things, members of the public left feeling they were pushed from pillar to post with no agency taking responsibility and no real action' (Casey 2008:57). The Review concluded that: 'public confidence and engagement would be improved significantly if the police, local government and other criminal justice agencies took action together and presented a more united and seamless front to local communities on crime' (Casey 2008:58).

### ***Internal resistance***

Research spanning several decades suggests that one of the main barriers to implementing successful community policing is resistance from police officers (Skogan 1998:195). Studies in a number of countries suggest that street level officers have obstructed or sabotaged past attempts (Bennett 1994, Fielding 1995,

2002, 2005, Myhill 2006:31, Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux 1998) and that despite its advantages community policing is often regarded 'with disdain', as it 'challenges the ... orthodoxy of what constitutes *real* police work' and 'tends to result in significant tension and oftentimes implementation failure' (Innes 2005:157,165).

The separation of community policing and 24/7 emergency response roles appears to 'reinforce [the attitude] that community policing is not 'real' police work' (Segrave and Radcliffe, 2004:7). The difficulties associated with the separation of policing roles and their impact on communities, is apparent in a variety of ways. For example in proactive enforcement operations heavy-handed and coercive tactics undermine the positive relationships and authority built up by neighbourhood officers. When response officers fail to treat people with fairness and respect they can 'destroy many hours and many days of really good work – just by an inappropriate response' (Chief Inspector in Millie and Herrington 2004:11). It is vital therefore that all staff, whatever their role in the police organisation, understand *what* citizen focus and community engagement involves and *how* it impacts on their daily practice. Where there is a widespread lack of knowledge about these issues, the quality of community engagement and service provided will be affected.

### ***Organisational commitment***

Citizen-focused policing requires organisational change and the full support of middle and senior management, as well as commitment from front line officers. Without it citizen focus and community engagement will not be mainstreamed. This point was reinforced by Sir Ronnie Flanagan's *Review of Policing* (2008:73, paras 6.31-2) in which he stated: 'The central bodies that support policing, such as the Home Office, APA, HMIC and the NPIA, and individual forces must focus on promoting and supporting the visibility, engagement and problem-solving that are central to successful Neighbourhood Policing'. The Review also highlighted the importance of problem solving and 'the significance of ensuring the right people with the potential to acquire the appropriate skills are recruited'.

It is also vital that the way in which performance is measured and rewarded reinforces the philosophy and principles of citizen focus and community engagement (Myhill 2006:vi). For example in one police department in the United States,

neighbourhood policing, which began as a project enthusiastically pursued by minority officers (in terms of gender, sexuality and ethnicity) who felt that traditional policing methods were not meeting community needs, came to be seen as so central to the Department's work that eventually more 'traditional' officers with little inclination for this work felt they needed to serve in the unit if they wanted to gain promotion (Miller, 1999). This example also highlighted the importance of police personnel being actively involved in the change process (Myhill 2006:33).

Appropriate resources for capacity building and training for police officers, partner agencies and communities, is also required to ensure that aims and roles are clearly defined and that staff have the appropriate skills to ensure successful outcomes (Myhill 2006:vi, Millie and Herrington 2004:12). Without this philosophical and practical commitment, cynicism and apathy may lead to ineffective engagement and generate counter-productive outcomes.

Research also highlights the importance of 'bottom up' as well as top down strategies where the role of senior management is to facilitate and support initiatives conceived and developed by staff on the ground (Miller, 1999). This approach depends on empowered management structures and a strong communication framework and contrasts significantly with the prevailing performance regimen where the focus has been on standardised performance indicators in particular crime groups. Staff may need support, encouragement and reassurance to work in a different and more creative way.

### ***Leadership***

Although empowerment is a vital element of citizen focus and community engagement, so too is strong and determined leadership. In major change programmes in Australia (Chan 1996, 1997) and South Africa (Marks, 1999) for example, both depended on firm leadership in which standards and expectations were clearly communicated and sustained (see **Box N**).

### **Box N: Leadership and cultural change case study – New South Wales, Australia**

Chan (1996,1997) describes how the climate for corruption, which was once endemic and accepted in the New South Wales police department, rapidly changed as managers were forced to acknowledge the impact of corruption scandals and to enforce a focused (and effectively 'zero-tolerance') anti-corruption strategy. Officers were left in no doubt that the Department would not tolerate this behaviour. By contrast their handling of the equally public and damaging scandals connected with the treatment of aboriginal and Island people was very different. Instead of targeted strategies for tackling the problems of 'racism and abuse' among officers head on, generalised crime prevention and community policing programmes were introduced by management and ignored by rank and file officers who remained unconvinced about the need to change their approach (Chan 1996:123-6). In other words neither the external climate nor the management response was sufficiently strong to lever changes in racism and discriminatory practice (Chan 1996:130).

**Source: Chan 1996 cited in Foster, 2003:220**

Leaders at all levels need to be vigilant and ensure that those whose behaviour does not correspond with expectations are tackled. A recent report by HMIC on front-line supervision (HMIC 2008a) suggested that sergeants were pivotal 'leaders and guardians of excellence in service delivery'. However, the report also highlighted problems nationally in the skills, capability and training of front-line supervisors.

Another HMIC report on neighbourhood policing and citizen focus (HMIC 2008b) found that the ratio of front-line supervisors to neighbourhood staff varied greatly (from 1:8 to 1:33). Where the ratios of staff to supervisors was high concerns were raised about their 'impact on the ability to identify and respond to community needs and the capacity to supervise effective community engagement and joint problem solving' (HMIC 2008b:24).

### ***Measuring success***

Current performance measures are inadequate for capturing the many dimensions of community policing practice (Fielding and Innes 2006:127) as they are 'crime-centric', focus on relatively easily quantifiable factors such as detections, arrests and response times (Innes 2005:166, see also Flanagan 2008) and in some cases undermine the principles of neighbourhood policing (Maguire and John, 2006). They may encourage quantifiable activity (for example stops, searches and arrests) at the expense of 'engagement, protection and diversion' (Thiel, forthcoming). The desirable effects of community policing can be 'virtually invisible' and it is hard to measure the success of work in identifying and resolving community concerns,

detering people from crime, using discretion to resolve incidents of disorder without resorting to arrest, gaining community intelligence as a result of effective community engagement, diffusing neighbourhood disputes before they escalate, increasing feelings of safety, as well as the intrinsic values of community policing principles and processes (Fielding and Innes 2006:129). Nevertheless, it is on these types of interventions that police officers, not just those within a specific community policing roles, spend much of their time. Without introducing more qualitative measures that can capture the successes of community policing activities it is also harder to reward the actions and performance of individual officers, and to motivate them to undertake community engagement and problem-solving activities (Myhill 2006:33). As Fielding and Innes (2006:143) argue: 'If we want to reassure the public, we need "indicators" that bring police work alive, give people memorable stories that function as moral emblems and whose principles are transferable to related, but not identical, circumstances. These will not be stories about numbers, but about engagement, negotiation and shared interests.'

Fielding and Innes (2006) suggest other means of assessing police performance in a community policing context. For example focusing on levels and success of engagement, partner relationships and the level of citizen influence through sampling notebooks, creating Key Informants Networks (KINs) and looking at the possibilities of measuring the wider impact of policing on society using surrogate measures related to local economic decision making (e.g. house prices) (Fielding and Innes 2006:135-7). These approaches help to shift the focus from output (numbers) to outcome (effectiveness) (Williams 2003:127).

### ***Focusing on the customer***

A police focus on the customer is pivotal and 'needs to inform all areas of policing activity' (Flanagan 2008:85, para7.24). A bespoke service that is responsive, mindful of need, conducted in a way that makes people feel valued, felt by those on the receiving end to be appropriate and helpful in the case of victims, and proportionate and fair in terms of offenders, is what the police service must aim for. As the evidence in Chapters 1 and 2 indicates the dividends of a citizen-focused

approach are that it enhances satisfaction and confidence and also improves police accountability (see Flanagan 2008:85).

### ***Being realistic and honest about performance***

Being realistic and honest about performance is pivotal to community engagement (Home Office April 2007), neighbourhood teams, and the broader police organisation. The tendency for every project to be 'doomed to success' (Tilley and Laycock, 2002), and a lack of evaluation or detailed audit of the positive and negatives lessons from interventions in policing, means that vital learning is not extracted. Staff need to be encouraged to discuss the problems they are experiencing, analyse the reasons for them and then seek to resolve these issues without feeling that they are being cast as 'failures' or becoming part of a 'blame culture'. However, generating a level of confidence where staff feel they can speak freely may be difficult.

### ***Summary: The key elements for successful implementation***

#### **Internal**

- *Citizen-focused policing involves everyone – it is not the job of a single department, but the work of a whole organisation*
- *All staff, whatever their role, need to understand what a citizen-focused approach and community engagement involves, and how they impact on their daily practice*
- *Police officer resistance is a key inhibitor to the successful implementation of community policing as the culture does not value this style of policing*
- *Citizen-focused policing requires organisational change and the full support of middle and senior management, as well as commitment from front-line officers. Change must include the development of, empowered management structures and a strong communications framework*

- *Leaders at all levels need to lead by example and be vigilant, to ensure that those whose behaviour does not correspond with expectations of citizen-focused policing are tackled*
- *It is vital that the way performance is measured and rewarded reinforces the philosophy and principles of citizen focus and community engagement  
Current performance measures are inadequate and in some cases undermine the principles of neighbourhood policing*
- *Staff at all levels must be willing to learn from mistakes and be realistic and honest about performance*

## **External**

- *Citizen-focused policing requires a bespoke service that is responsive, mindful of need, conducted in a way that makes people feel valued and is perceived to be appropriate, helpful, proportionate and fair*
- *Communities need local, timely and accessible information about crime and disorder problems and how local policing and community safety initiatives are responding to them*
- *Community engagement needs to be flexible and tailored toward meeting different types of needs – rather than a, ‘one size fits all’*
- *Neighbourhood teams need to engage widely and proactively - seeking to engage hard to hear groups whose needs might otherwise not get addressed*
- *Partnership offers the most effective way to tackle neighbourhood crime and disorder problems but issues relating to the different cultures, lines of accountability, and finding the most effective means to work together, need to be tackled*

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