Police Resource Allocation: what do the professionals think?

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Note: as far as possible this summary is based on the words of our respondents. Although we have interviewed respondents in a wide variety of force areas, we cannot judge how representative the opinions expressed here are of all forces.

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In total, the 43 Policing areas in England and Wales spend over £11 billion a year. This paper provides information regarding the decision making and resource allocation processes used by Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and Chief Constables (CCs), to determine how to allocate budgets to specific programmes and geographical areas across a number of police forces. The introduction of PCCs in 2012 moved the responsibility for budgetary decisions from Police Authorities to PCCs. How PCCs and Chief Finance Officers (CFOs) divide the budgets across police priorities will be discussed.

Methodology

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with a number of individuals in 11 police forces in England and Wales. In total 20 people were interviewed, of which seven were PCCs, 10 were CFOs or Accountants. The remaining three individuals held a variety of roles in Performance and Partnership teams. Participation was voluntary and all responses will be kept anonymous. Although we have interviewed respondents in a wide variety of force areas, we cannot judge how representative the opinions expressed here are of all forces.

Main demands and recent changes

Most police forces agree that neighbourhood policing is still the main demand. "*The public continue to want to see a high uniformed presence, not because they want to see more crime*, *but for the reassuring presence*" and (apparent) deterrent effect. Police figures show that crime has gone down but forces are now dealing with more complex and IT savvy crimes. This change has resulted in officers facing a different pattern of crime. New drivers of demand include terrorism (although not a new concept it has changed in nature), cybercrime, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), the volume of historic sexual abuse which require investigation, and "*other complex crimes including: vulnerability, issues around domestic violence and complex safeguarding which means new specific challenges such as modern slavery, honour-based abuse and violence*". More crime now occurs online and behind closed doors; with significant impact in terms of types of incidents, the complexity of those incidents, and the resources required to investigate them. Demand varies depending on the geography and demography of the forces, PCCs need to balance resources across the entire police force area. Forces are considering the issues around specific sites in terms of demand, for example most cities are growing which brings more challenges in itself; changes in their demographics (much younger and more diverse than ever before) and often growth is unevenly distributed. All these factors are important when considering '*What does that mean for neighbourhood policing*'?

As a result of demand analysis carried out by most forces, target operating models are changing as forces begin to assess what the best way is to deliver services effectively with fewer resources. Also as technology is improving, old investigations are re-opened because of more sensitive scientific techniques (e.g. DNA). This has resulted in a "*curious service model as there are* […] *cost implications from current business which is happening today, and business from the past*".

More strategically, at a round table discussion with five forces it was suggested that demand can be assessed in three strands:

- The volume or the bulk (which always has been and always will be there), including response policing and some elements of neighbourhood policing.
- The new issues emerging from an increasingly technology driven world, there is more demand in the dark web than there is that can be physically seen or touched.
- The political demand, which includes aspects of neighbourhood policing. "*The amount of resource that are put into neighbourhood policing would not be justified on the grounds of a cold, hard analytical view in terms of demand and return on investment. This has been driven by a strong political demand for visible reassurance policing*".

Some focus has been on demand reduction; focusing on the frontline to reduce the demand of police time, working with neighbourhood officers to target Antisocial Behaviour (ASB), etc. Some forces are also merging the reactive response teams and neighbourhood policing teams together as well as working with the community to consider suggestions for improvements. For example, after consultation with the community in one rural force, the development of a play park reduced incidents of ASB by young people by over 60% and removed linked areas of demand.

PCCs have to balance frontline and specialist approaches with local needs to ensure "*there is sufficient funding in place to meet what local people have elected them*" to do. Low level (in policing terms) issues such as dog fouling, parking, speeding, fly tipping, and ASB are often the community's greatest concerns in many suburbs, villages and towns but low on the list of priorities on a more national scale. Consequently, the Police and Crime Plans often reflect these issues considerably; this is something that has become much more visible since the introduction of PCCs.

Forces facing legacy issues are dealing with extra pressures and demands; a lot of resources are being eaten up by these cases and the perpetrators of these historic crimes may not even be alive anymore to create further risk. Public inquiries into past events require forces to divert resources from current crime and prevention. The uncertainty around the (financial) scale of these issues are having an effect on the amount of resources available for general Policing.

Neighbourhood policing means different things to different forces. Smaller, more rural forces are able to ensure that each of the boroughs and districts in their area "*have* [their] *own command,* [their] *own Chief Inspector based in a property within that area*". Other areas have had to abandon previous models of separate neighbourhood policing teams and response teams, and combining them, cutting out supervision costs and giving them a neighbourhood focus, while new technology such as tablets and handheld computers means officers can stay longer in the communities. In practice this "*means that as incidents come in and everybody goes to manage these incidents, the neighbourhood bit may be lost except for Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)*". Police forces have offered up suggestions for savings but it is important these correspond with the PCCs' promises to the public. In one force stabilising PCSOs to ensure a strong neighbourhood presence has been one way of doing this.

Forces find it "*very difficult to measure or to estimate what* [the] *demand is going to be except that in the age of everybody else cutting costs the demand is probably increasing*". There is some speculation that "*partners are actually mining that, they know that if they withdraw from the race, create a vacuum, the police have to flood into that*". As other services, especially county council services, are being pulled back, social services, mental health service and even health services from about 5pm on a Friday to about 9am on Monday are the Police. "*It isn't new* […] *that if you have noisy neighbours, the first people that get phoned are the police. Environmental health, who actually have the responsibility for it, normally work 9-5. If you find fly tipping, they* [the public] *will dial 101*". The area of public welfare is a growing area of demand; significant amount of overspill was experienced on Friday afternoons from social services by some forces. "*Talking to the people who call, who know how to work the system to get what they need, to understand the pressures they face can begin to alleviate that*". In dealing with mental health issues, most forces have implemented a triage scheme and can provide data on how many young people and adults with mental health difficulties they've had in custody over a period of time (in most forces this number is dropping because of improved partnership working).

Staffing and demand

The shrinking police budget means forces are having to do "*different things with less resource*". As almost 80% of budgets are allocated to staffing, this is where most savings have come from during times of austerity. All forces have reduced their numbers, of both officers and staff. There is evidence that the number of uniformed officers in cities has increased (despite reducing resources) and the number in county divisions has reduced. Forces offered voluntary redundancy schemes to make savings and reduce numbers very quickly. There wasn't "*any science behind it; redundancies fell where they fell*", although there may have been mechanisms in place to ensure whole units of people weren't wiped out, but "*it was pretty crude stuff*". In one force this resulted in the majority of the redundancies falling in the

call centre (which employed 20% of the workforce), consequently affecting the 101 call system. PCSOs were temporarily drafted in to "*plug the gaps*". Other areas of policing were also affected.

New crimes such as fraud and cybercrime require specialist staff with technical expertise to help tackle these issues. However, police culture means pay grades would not entice professionals. "*There is no money in policing to pay for these expertise, and their services can be expensive*". Currently, specialist services are only bought in for large cases (e.g. analysis of sim cards and mobile devices for major cases) as buying in expertise regularly would use up police resources very quickly. Development of collaboration with local IT companies and universities with aid from Home Office funding may provide incentive to consider this seriously. Analysis has been carried out to identify where more expertise may be needed and what the uniform officer to staff mix should be in order to get the best use of the money that is available more effectively. "*Recruiting specialist civilian investigators into some of the serious crime teams, for example, is a far better way of using our money*".

Some forces have been able to prioritise certain areas by significantly increasing the capacity of serious crime teams, establishing new cybercrime teams and training police officers about online grooming, and evidence and intelligence gathering for day-to-day work. Further changes include reorganisation of teams into smaller neighbourhood based hubs, i.e., individuals (police, local authorities, health, etc.) within an area allowing flexibility for solutions that are neighbourhood based and directly impact on the local community.

These hubs are often used to deal largely with volume crime, freeing up more specialist resources to deal with the complex issues (e.g. vulnerability and domestic abuse), allowing uniformed response officers to go out and respond to "*day job policing*". Specialised neighbourhood teams can include uniformed Police officers, detectives, PCSOs and volunteers such as Special Constables. They are responsible for patrolling, investigating local crime, gathering local intelligence, working with – and responding to – the concerns of local communities. Neighbourhood teams are complemented and supported by specialist teams with expertise in areas such as serious crime, counter-terrorism, forensic investigation, communications and public order.

National demands introduced by government and Home Office also impact forces. Requirements to implement more trained firearms officers have been negatively received, as the Home Office do not pay their wages, just the training and equipment. The investment in individuals is also extensive as the training takes a long time and there is high failure rate (approximately 10% of people that apply actually qualify).

Other more comprehensive restructuring has looked at the RAND business model, reducing the number of higher ranking grades to levels that are feasible, as well as forming strategic alliances and therefore saving money by aligning staff with demand (e.g. only one Chief Constable and one Assistant Chief Constable per police force area). Analysis of the workplace

mix determines whether certain forces are over-provided against other forces for certain ranks of officer (e.g. sergeants, inspectors). In one force this has resulted in a saving of nearly half a million pounds in a single financial year through a promotion freeze.

However, the demand for neighbourhood officers continues to be important. The example given by one respondent states that, in "*more affluent areas, the argument about how much service you get is more vested in ability to pay than it is in services consumed*". If a house is burgled in an affluent area, it is likely that the perpetrator comes from a more deprived neighbouring area. The sensible policing response to protect this from happening is to put more resources into the deprived area. However, the demand, consistently from more affluent areas, is for a PCSO or a uniformed police officer to carry out foot patrols to reassure owners and deter offending. This continues to support the notion that the public want to see 'Bobbies on the Beat', even if they are not considered as effective as other preventative measures.

Forces are working hard to keep resources in frontline teams. Most forces have undergone considerable staff losses, and have ensured that the number of officers in frontline teams has remained stable. However, questions need to be asked whether "*having people policing the street is the best use of resources*". This proposes a traditional tension around why police numbers are so important; one suggestion is "*because they read well in the press*".

In order to begin to streamline processes, forces are looking at the balance between frontline activity, specialist work, back office and support activity for the organisation. Most forces have realigned their internal geographic boundaries in terms of Basic Command Units (BCUs) and neighbourhood hubs or wards so that forces can invest more in those (fewer) wards, look at specific issues in those wards, consider complex issues like vulnerability more directly and invest in partnerships and schools.

Many forces have also implemented mobile working processes (body worn cameras and tablets) making officer more productive and safe because they can get information quickly and are able to respond better to the victim. In one force the improvement in productivity was estimated to be "*somewhere between 15-22%, just by being able to be out there and responding to incidents*". Tasking is done remotely and officers can go into a situation with the data that they need (e.g. mental health issue, domestic violence flag).

Most forces are interested in collecting data on how frontline officers and others spend their time. Hand-held devices and on-board computers for vehicles make gathering this information much easier. Most officers can be tracked in real time individually, or via GPS locations of their vehicles. Previous use of diary sheets, which officers filled out after each incident, were time consuming and unpopular with officers. Handheld devices allow officers better freedom of movement and reduce the amount of time required filling out paper work, with rough figures indicated that mobile working frees up at least one hour of an officer's time a day.

However, in order to utilise this information, people who can actually do the analytical work on the data being collected are necessary. PCCs have questioned how they can sensibly allocated resources without reliable and accurate demand data; decisions should be based on data, "*not on hunches*".

Many forces are working in collaboration around specialist units (e.g. Dog Units). Analysis of the demand for dogs was carried out in three neighbouring forces in the south of England and it was identified that not each force needed its own dog team. However, forces didn't really know what the police officers were actually doing, many of these 'dog officers' wore a double hat (e.g. they do response work as well as specialist dog work). The unintended consequences of sharing dog units could result in the loss of a vital, community based police services. However, the activity data didn't exist, so forces were not able to look at it and understand what these officers were doing on a day-to-day basis.

PCCs in some areas are not interested in collecting and analysing officer activity data. In one force the PCC looked at how officers are deployed but no other data is collected. This force works on a level of trust that the officers will spend their time productively, but there is no record of what they spend their time doing. The focus areas for officers are determined by community feedback, force priorities and the Police and Crime Plan and officers make their own decisions and are overseen by their peers on a very basic level. The PCC is not interested in setting targets, officers get on with their jobs. Hourly activity based costing per staff did not provide useful information so is no longer carried out. This suggests that forces are living on anecdotes about what is happening.

Some forces have equipped frontline patrols with personal radios with ARLS (automatic resource location software), which allows the communications department and supervisors to see where an officer is at any time. In this way, the force incident manager in the communications department can see all available resources (e.g. officers trained and equipped with firearms or tasers), on a map so that they can locate and dispatch the nearest and most appropriate officer to an incident.

Four forces nationwide have implemented the Mobile Assets Utilisation Deployment System (MAUDS) which is a real time system that tracks where all of the resources are. Combined with the mobile working solution, this system will result in police officers being tasked more efficiently than is currently possible. Details of the job will be sent directly to the officer's mobile device, they will attend, note the outcome of the incident and the information will go straight back into police systems and the officer moves onto the next job. "*That is transformational*".

However, a certain aspect of generational resistance and police culture also needs to be considered. The younger officers born into the world of modern technology are "*delighted with the machine he takes in his hand*" and wonder why this wasn't done years ago. An older beat officer, who may be less technologically capable, is less enthralled with it as it requires a

real cultural shift for him. Other officers miss the security of going back to the station, as they are uncomfortable with sitting in a café in public and having lunch.

Similar to views on collecting daily activity data, respondents' views on performance management and target setting were mixed. Some PCCs did not look at targets, which was linked to the victim centred service delivery change. Forces use performance management frameworks which include "*quantitative measurements, indicators that explain what's happening followed by the qualitative approach which asks 'Why is it happening? What are the cause and effect?*'" The CSE issues in Rotherham have been suggested to be linked to the force being "*so busy chasing targets, that other crimes took a back seat*". Other PCCs believe targets are important, as long as you agree local targets. "*One of the things the government has historically been good at is setting national targets. Less so on a more local basis. You need to sit down with groups of people and say what are the issues before us and how are we going to solve them*?" Examples include work around alcohol, drugs, domestic violence which involves a lot of co-commissioning with other bodies.

Process for allocating budgets

All the funding is owned by the Commissioner but most PCCs tend to utilise some form of board or executive group in order to allocate resources and budgets. The board, executive group or 'select committee' approach allows transparency and public review of any proposals put forward. Membership of the board varies but often includes the PCC, the Chief Constable and the Assistant Chief Constable, which allows the team to drill down on issues as well as gain public consultation. The high level of communication supported by this means the PCC can be informed in much more detail of changes that need to be addressed. The chief executive makes decisions on the major strategic issues facing the organisation which shapes how different challenges are approached. The PCC may still have executive decision making power (within the constructs of the governance scheme) but practically decisions tend to be made collectively.

Money that is available to the forces comes from a number of different budgets and a high proportion (approximately 80%) is pre-allocated to staffing, leaving a relatively small sum where flexibility of spending is possible. This appears to suggest limited links running between demands, response, results, appraisal, setting of targets, and priorities, from the PCC side. It confirms that resource allocation takes place at different levels, and for different purposes such as geographical or programme allocations, but that the front line decisions are possibly the most significant to the overall outcome. Yet these decisions are the ones which the least is known about.

Decision making is influenced by the relationship between PCC and the Chief Constable. In some forces budgets are agreed by the PCC and Chief Constable in full consultation, in others

the PCC tells the Chief Constable what his allocated amount is and what the priorities are which he has to meet (the outcome or outputs of the budget). How the Chief Constable translates the budget into staffing and resources is an operational decision left to him in most forces. The Chief Constable is told "*what the funding is, what is available to them and he has to go and work out*" what can be done with it to meet the priorities and work-streams in the Police and Crime Plan. And emerging crime types may influence how staff are split. In one force the Chief Constable is allowed to employ a specific number of police officers and he must not depart from that figure unless specific approval is obtained from the PCC. In this force "*the Commissioner controls the actual number of officers, PCSOs and staff and it's not the devolved responsibility for the Chief Constable simply to move the numbers around as he or she sees fit*". However, this does not appear to be the norm.

Arriving at a budget usually starts in the middle of the year when there is a forecast of what the next financial year and the years beyond will look like. This focuses on the funding gap, and how best to achieve a balanced position. Proposals are sought from the force "*as to how that budget can be balanced in the medium term, given the fact that the bulk of the budget goes on employees*". Consequently, a lot of the focus has been on how to achieve or to cope with reductions in the number of officers or PCSOs. Guidance to that is set by the PCC, the objectives are set out in the policing plan which also lays down the red lines (e.g. no reduction in PCSOs).

Most PCCs have removed the commissioning process that the police used to do themselves from the police service because they weren't considered to be very effective and have brought in specialist teams to deal with that. This has "*professionalised the way in which support services are commissioned and ensure that it is integrated with the police service so that they go hand in glove with each other*".

Other pots of money are used to develop Victims Commissions to research and resource at neighbourhood level to deal with victims. Victims commissioners are locally based people who have the geographical knowledge of the areas and have identified a number of local themes for Commission meetings. They can now carry out an objective assessment of needs and provide the PCC with a degree of delegation in a team that works in a non-bureaucratic manner.

One force has implemented a Strategic Commissioning Board (SCB) which looks at the larger amount of money that the Commissioner has to commission services, "*the 'and Crime' bit of the portfolio*". It involves Chief Executive level representatives from the health service, the fire and rescue service, registered social landlords, Government observers, the voluntary sector, probation services, community rehabilitation companies, local charities, etc. The board gives recommendations to the Commissioner about where to spend these bigger chunks of commissioning money. Community services bid into the pot of money and the SCB recommend where the money goes.

There is political pressure for OPCCs "*to be cheaper than Police Authorities, but deliver significantly greater responsibilities and work*". Most forces have undergone a change delivery programme. These look at where designs should be in terms of servicing the priorities against demands. This includes designing IT systems to make processes as efficient as possible, with as few hand-offs as possible; ensuring that the designs are centred on the customer experience, making them straightforward and individual.

Forces have carried out significant reviews of areas, departments, work-streams, and often have led to significant reconfiguration of forces. However, the vast majority of the money allocated to the force is based primarily on historic allocations. Zero-based budgeting, linking resources, demands and budgets is not being done; a lot of it is marginal and moving it around. What hasn't yet happened is a linking of the force delivery plan and the budget; a 'costed delivery plan'.

The Police and Crime Plan

The Police and Crime Plan is the main statutory document which the Chief Constable has to deliver and whose delivery the PCC has to oversee. Some forces have complained of the lack of robust, analytical work that went into its development. In order to address this, one force carried out a detailed analysis of a victim's needs assessment, pulling in external research partners in order to help shape all of the different victim services required. This "*identified a load of issue around vulnerability and a comprehensive process to consult and formally research the requirements of specific user groups and communities*". Data from the police service around victims and incidents was combined with data from the community safety partnerships in local authorities and fed into the Police and Crime Plan. So the Police and Crime Plan reflects not only the sort of strategic force wide priorities but also the needs of communities, both physical communities such as towns as cities but also specific cohorts of people (e.g. people with mental health problems or domestic abuse victims). It is the Chief Constable's job to allocate the resources and to deliver the plan.

Police and Crime Plans are quite clear about what the big issues are to the community, and "*that should be what drives spending*". The Police and Crime Plan has outputs, outcomes and objectives and the budget is aligned with that. Sometimes however, delivering the Police and Crime Plan objectives against the reductions necessary and the savings proposals is difficult.

This starts to pick up on getting a balance between the budget for policing and budget for 'and crime'. More is being pushed onto PCCs through victims, community safety and various other elements of the Criminal Justice System (CJS), however there are no more resources available to deal with it. "*Victim services have become the responsibilities of PCCs, however funding is reducing whilst the demand is going up, and now PCCs are in the process of actually employing people because other services are pulling out*". PCCs provide crime and reduction

grants, for instance and are increasingly seeing significantly more national charities looking to the OPCC to provide support. Forces are "*dealing with the whole cornucopia of penny pocket organisations, all of which have their own little bureaucracy*".

> "*So there is this really complex dependency that starts to happen,* [organisations] *end up living hand to mouth and the OPCC ends up having to give them three or four years funding because otherwise they just go under straight away. But what it ends up as is a completely finance driven process about moving a decreasing amount of funding around the place so that you can't actually see that the amounts decreased very much. So you just end up shifting air around the balloon all the time.*"

Knowledge of the impacts of changes in resource allocation are not widely known. Areas of improvement are highlighted (by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary or elsewhere) and resources go in, however nobody asks the questions of what happens. "*You'd just give yourself a headache. You can't magic up money or human resources, you know it will have an impact but you don't really want to know too much*".

Information sources available on which to base decision and review processes

The process of making decisions and allocating specific projects with money has been shown to be unclear. Forces admit that some decisions are based on "*professional judgement*" or "*gut feel*". However, this could be used "*as an excuse for not having the right data and evidence*". Demand information – analysing and understanding what the demand is – is becoming more widespread across forces. This is not just the volume and type of crime but everything else the police deal with, which is recorded and changes in demand can be mapped. Financially, it is relatively straight forward, it is easy to map what the impact of the cost is. However, the social value and the community impact is trickier to measure; "*you've taken resources away from one particular area and demand is going back up again*". Balance and justification of these actions are often not based on sound evidence.

Officers are trained from the moment they join the academy to live in the moment. It is hard for officers to default to planning over a time horizon, as they are trained to be reactive. "*There is a problem here now and I'll sort it now. And then when tomorrow becomes today, I'll sort that as well. It's rare to find a police officer that actually looks forward*". This could partly explain why policing hasn't, until very recently, understood what the demand is, even though it is a public sector commercial business.

Some PCCs have explained that they don't readily have information available, they need to ask the force for information. The OPCC needs to "*dig information out of the cops*" because the information is contained in their systems. PCCs are able to get what they need, sometimes with a bit of resistance but the information is shared. Part of the 'political' problem is that

PCCs have to demonstrate low costs, which affects the level of staffing in the PCC office. "*In an ideal world, I'd employ more staff and I'd be able to quiz the force*". Most forces and OPCCs don't have the capacity to do their own research but commission work as they see fit, for example with the local universities and organisations. Most of the research is done externally, a mix of academia and specialist organisations.

Tensions exist between the needs of rural and urban areas. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the public found the service in rural areas unsatisfactory. However, until the development of the National Rural Crime Network (NRC) there wasn't any concrete evidence available. The Threat Risk and Harm mantra allocates resources on an incident basis rather than a strategic one. The NRC is a collaboration of 31 PCCs who have large rural constituencies. The self-selecting sample provided 17,000 responses and identified considerable variances between what people said they got in the rural areas versus the urban areas. This was used to launch the Rural Crime Taskforce. Forces need to look at the broader needs of the different communities within their Police Force Area.

PCCs spend a lot of time listening to people, "*because what people say doesn't always mirror what the force is saying*". This involves meetings with different groups and communities, online surveys, focus group work carried out by professionals, council's resident surveys, etc. Performance can also be measured using victim satisfaction and police satisfaction rates and looking at how these can be improved. PCCs look at satisfaction levels, about trends, about issues the public want to see, about whether they'd want to pay more for policing going forward which is done on a quarterly basis. Then there are also some surveys which are required by the Home Office that feed into the British Crime Survey. This means PCCs do a lot of surveying and they are out there in the public picking up day-to-day feedback. Some forces don't look very much at financial data; others give it greater focus.

Budget cuts in other public sectors

Forces are not used to looking to other sectors for inspiration and guidance for allocating resources. Information from other police forces is often shared, but influence is not usually taken from third or private sector organisations. One force has gone to John Lewis for customer satisfaction guidance (the company is often rated high) as well as the local county cricket club for tips on improving teamwork. This has been a reciprocal relationship whereby these companies have also had the opportunity to find out how things are done within the force. The PCC considers this to be an important means of educating and learning.

However, the continued budget cuts in other sectors are very much having an effect on policing. Close connection with the local health boards, the probation services and others in the area are needed to provide good services. However, overall it appears partnerships are pretty difficult to achieve, "*people are their own legal entities with their own funding, they're*

making decisions in isolation; there isn't proper joining up of decisions". Often the OPCC contributes a relatively small amount towards community safety partnerships and other local authority groups; "*it's an interesting thing where you end up talking about £2-3m, out of a budget* [of approximately £200m] *being vitally important but we're only a small contributor to all the other partners who are supporting these things*".

The dysfunctionality of demand and resources, funding and cuts is more apparent now because it is easier to concentrate on the interface between one service and another. When policing was part of local government in the form of Police Authorities, there wasn't a single individual who could be held accountable. "*Members of the Police Authority board were able to hide behind each other, strength in numbers and weather situations better*". Now PCCs must answer to the public and the Home Office.

Partnership working is easier when boundaries are coterminous with other agencies including health, fire, county council. Complexities arise when project receive disproportionate funding from one sector agency and other agencies are getting the majority of the benefits. Relationships have to be mature enough to look beyond simple 'number of pounds in'. The real issue when working in a diverse public sector is about how organisations and agencies are held to account for the spending of third party money and where the benefit might be. This requires a mature focus on the best way to deliver a public service.

Combining policing and fire is currently being reviewed, and PCCs may be given greater oversight of the fire service. Most fire stations are within one mile of a police station, and working closely together could see police and fire based in the same buildings and sharing the same assets, perhaps selling both estates and buying one, or moving onto one site. Similarly, from an economic perspective, it has made sense for forces to co-locate with local council offices, which has also liberated some town centre sites.

Forces already working well in partnership will need to look further at pooling and sharing resources. If for example it turns out that an area needs fewer PCSOs but more mental health workers, the position needs to be mature enough that those resources can be transferred without a major debate.

The changing crime mix and 'non-crime' demand

The College of Policing's demand analysis finds that only 20% of police time is spent on crime related activities (College of Policing 2015[1]). However, the public face of target is the reduction in crime – "*that's what everybody's obsessed with*", although the police spend more of their time on community safety aspects, which is actually what people want to pay their

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[1] College of Policing (2015) "College of Policing analysis: Estimating demand on the police service", http://www.college.police.uk/News/College-news/Pages/First-analysis-of-national-demand.aspx

money for. "*Most people want to avoid criminality and want to avoid someone getting hurt, so actually getting the police out in that preventative area or in that public safety area is far more the realm of where the public want the police to be*".

Demand analysis has changed the working practices of policing, "*a lot of the conversation is around place-based working where money is invested by the police and who benefits from various investments are linked to patterns of crime and demand for police services*". Most forces have been through reviews and changes of their operating model, which involve "*stopping doing things and doing other things instead*", the basis for which has basically been around the volume demand. In most areas when the public see the police (patrol car, helicopter etc.) they assume the incident is about criminality, which it normally isn't. "*Forces break down more doors because there is a call for care, someone hasn't been seen for a few weeks and there is concern from neighbours, than because there is suspected drug* [or criminal] *activity*".

Due to the generic categorisation of crime types it is difficult to determine resources needed for each incident until the investigation begins. "*We all know that one burglary could take three hours to investigate or a week and a half*". Also, with certain other incidents such as extremist marches, the police are not there to stop the marching, but to protect free speech and safety. But this still requires police resources because the council or the local authorities don't have the powers to move marches away from city centres to open rural areas.

Data on police activities is often used to explain to the public why fewer police officers are patrolling the street than they used to. However as elected officials PCCs are taking what the public say and feeding that back into what the constabulary are doing, or those other agencies they have influence over. The PCC is "*holding the constabulary to account by saying 'the public are saying they want us to do this but this is what we're actually doing, why is there a difference?'*" It is not about what the police are doing but '*what do we require the police to do*'. Most forces use the data around demand and police time spent dealing with crime activities to say "*look you're not seeing a bobby on the beat because we're actually dealing with x/y/z instead. This area is quite safe and these aren't the current demands and we can prove our officers are doing other things*", demand is more about the complex crimes.

"*You've got the fire services with spare capacity caused by less fires and less road accidents because people have safer vehicles. You've got PCSOs who are in the community, the council have got neighbourhood wardens in the community but they are not always in a common neighbourhood structure. What is needed are multi-task people*". For example, the fire service are moving to a more retained fire model, these other community safety people could be retained as fire officers which could being to alleviate the capacity issue. But currently each service is in a separate box, all incurring costs about staff and resources. Neighbourhood policing is still the most important thing for the public, so a sensible suggestion would be to train multi-purpose officers. Individuals who can do a little bit of crime prevention, fire

prevention (go and check smoke alarms) as well as intelligence gathering for other complex issues (e.g. domestic abuse, child neglect).

Some PCCs are giving considerations to the structure of their control rooms and whether all public services need their own control room. All emergency services could be controlled from a point of contact, without requiring a huge number of additional staff. This notion works towards the idea that there is "*one team of public servants who go to everybody's door*".

New and emerging issues, horizon scanning and future proofing

Policing is often reactive in nature, and therefore issues that arise are dealt with immediately and some "*months later someone would look at what the consequences of the finances were*". Similarly, an analysis of the impact of the movement of resources from one focus to another is not carried out consistently. Forces are aware of the need for change so that when the latest issue arises, the latest public inquiry, etc., it can be filtered to a management board who go through the conversation around how to react, how to meet the outcomes, how to deploy different types of staff, whether to resource internally or externally and what the risks are. Dealing with unknown or new issues which suddenly require resources needs careful consideration. Previous sections have outlined how moving resources to deal with competing demands has involved little impact analysis.

For example, in one large metropolitan police force the Home Office sponsored an initiative for a number of year to dismantle organised crime networks. The success of the programme has meant that even though the Home Office funding has now ceased, this initiative has now become business as usual and it is fully funded by the force itself and other agencies. However, when it comes to determining where these resources to fund this program came from, it becomes complex. "*For what it does, it's not actually a big cost and it wasn't big deal to continue to fund it. It's an incredibly fluid situation so it would be very difficult to say that that money came from a reduction elsewhere.*" It was also considered important not to see this initiative "*as a separate thing*". Efficiencies from elsewhere (e.g. forensics, mobile working) free up resources which are used to cover the costs of this scheme.

If unexpected costs occur, forces would use reserves in the short term, but these can only be used once. So there then has to be discussion about what to give up to deal with the new demand. There may be spending in the current year that weren't expected or planned for, where to date the easy option has been to dip into reserves. Forces will always need some sort of contingency for unexpected issues. Requirements and expectations of police forces continue to increase, "*things don't drop off, they go up but it doesn't lock back* [down] *again*".

Other more rural forces state that a well-crafted budget should be able to cope with a new demand; it should be able to continue "*business as usual*". When things occur which aren't

business as usual forces are able to call on the Bellwin Scheme centrally (Sandford, 2015[2]). *"When you've been policing for 175 years what sort of demand you are going to have"*. There will be certain changes over time, there wasn't any *"cybercrime 50 years ago but that's because there was no cyber to be criminal about* [....] *but people were still fraudulently taking money off others"*.

Where demand analysis is done it's projected to varying levels of sophistication. It is often base on what has happened in the past *"but the past is no forecaster of the future"*. So forces have to start to do some environmental scanning looking for what's going on around to try and work out what the impact might be.

Considering the marginal impact of allocating resources to one project as opposed to another was not consistently addressed. *"I am not certain that very low level of project A versus project B makes a great deal of difference"*. Forces consider the list of financial pressures which they can do *"nothing about"* (e.g. changes to national insurance and pensions), then they consider the new investment where both the force and the OPCC will put together a list of new investment opportunities and the conversation is had around *"what is affordable"* and the impact is assessed in terms of benefits for victim satisfaction, workload reduction for officers and so on. Comparisons at a very low level can sometimes have unintended consequences. Sometimes very small differences have a disproportionate impact and those need to be recognised. However, that isn't done in a *"forensic way"*. *"Part of the problem is that it is difficult to demonstrate what effective policing really is; what best practice policing is"*.

Many forces state that the budget decision in November 2015 very much affected their ability to make decisions regarding spending. Money which was allocated to particular projects (e.g. vulnerability) has an impact on the amount of money and resources available, and has a *"serious knock-on effect in other areas of the business"*. Work was being carried out to look at how that impact could be minimised and a number of changes were considered that would've freed up some resources. Now there is exponential demand growth in rape, child sexual assault, neglect, grooming which require prioritising over other issues (e.g. keeping police stations open because the public want them open). Most forces have carried out comprehensive analysis of demand in police stations– *"why people go in there, how many people go in there, what time of day do they go in there"*.

Assessment of current police demand also involves managing and reducing demand. Considerations need to be given to the differences between crime prevention and demand reduction. *"Crime prevention is a tactical response to try to prevent certain types of crime (e.g. locking your house to prevent a burglary), whereas demand reduction is far more strategic and long-term"*. Crime prevention is considered important by all forces but finding the resources to do it can be difficult. Forces will say reduce -> prevent, the OPCC says prevent

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[2] Sandford, Mark (2015) House of Commons Briefing Paper "The Bellwin Scheme", Number CBP00643

-> reduce. Community safety and prevention are key priorities for most forces and often involve a multi-agency approach. The key aim is to prevent individuals entering the police system. "*If you are a victim or a perpetrator something has failed to bring you into the system. It's pointless starting to count you when you come into our system, we'd rather prevent you coming in in the first place*". So managing demand is about working in partnership and identifying agencies who might be better at prevention than the police; trying to show that if you work together you can tackle and reduce crime.

This is also about "*supporting grass roots organisations for active citizenship and neighbourhood funds*"; youth aspiration is linked to prevention. It involves diverting people from higher models of delivery which provides savings. Keeping people in the community rather than in institutional care produces big savings. Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) are the critical link to troubled families, and reducing demand. However, at the same time as PCCs are supporting YOTs, the Ministry of Justice is asking for 30-40% cuts which is considered a fragmented approach to a critical group. "*It just looks to be a little bit of a false economy really to try and pump money away from something which is going to try and support the people who are just about to get in on the brink of criminality*".

One large urban force is part of a large European fund working with locally based major corporations (e.g. National Express), to take people on who have had difficulties in life (most have been offenders of some sort). National Express has taken on a number of individuals on apprenticeship schemes (half are ex-offenders and half are victims) in order to provide them with opportunities to get out of the crime circle. This is linked to an economic strategy which runs through the Police and Crime Plan. This force has also taken on 25 young apprentices in various roles for a year. It's about developing the area and providing opportunities for young people.

Crime prevention is part of most Police and Crime steering groups or part of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs). A large urban force is in the process of awarding £900,000 to third sector organisations working in partnership, with organisations that support prevention as well as encouraging community cohesion, community interest and neighbourliness. These are the intangible benefits that would be really hard to demonstrate using a simple cost-benefit analysis. This includes more measure of social value: "*what is the benefit of neighbours speaking to each other?*" etc.

Crime prevention initiatives are now predominantly funded by the community safety grants which have become the responsibility of PCCs from local authorities. Some PCCs have subsumed that money into the police budget, but others have ring-fenced it for crime prevention activities. Previously there was "*no accountability around that money or any understanding of how effective it was being*", because it was syphoned through the Police Authority and granted out. PCCs now need to make sure they are receiving a return on investment and are making local agencies bid formally for funding, around priorities that have

been jointly identified in the Police and Crime Plan. The commissioning team contract manages that spend and works with the CSPs and local delivery groups to ensure that that money is delivering on what it said it was going to deliver in their bid.

Funding

The budget process starts with an analysis of the known pressures that the force is facing including what new investments must be made. This provides "*the gap*" (between income and expenditure), which outlines what needs to be saved so forces can live within the money received from grants and the precepts. "*That leaves a number of choices to be made about where those savings come from*".

The overall consensus was that the police allocation formula[3, 4, 5, 6] was not representative of demands and drivers being faced by forces, it wasn't fit for purpose. Part of the consideration given to moving funding away from local authorities was to get away from all the specific grants and make the funding more fluid so that forces don't have to manage lots of little pots of money. Overall the formula was considered to be too complex and didn't consider the right factors. A degree of it should be based on levels of crime, on levels of deprivation, on population etc. but it was felt there needed to be some flexibility in the formula which allows each force to address its biggest demand and actually reflects the needs of an area. It is considered "*archaic and old*", however the main issue is that it isn't based on robust evidence. Data on demand and needs wasn't being collected anymore, and therefore proxy measures and indicators were developed to try to indicate what demand is. Further questions were raised whether the statistical model that they used was the most effective model.

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[3] The police allocation formula is essentially a calculation that uses various data sources (such as population density) to share money between police authorities in England and Wales. It is not a calculation of absolute needs, that is, it does not estimate how much each force needs independently of other forces. Instead it shares out the amount of money designated for police funding between forces based on their relative needs compared to each other. The formula is used to divide the majority of the money available for total police funding between forces. The results of the formula have a significant impact on how much money a force will receive in order to police its local area. (Home Office, 2013 "Guide to the police allocation formula", available from https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guide-to-the-police-allocation-formula)
[4] "Police commissioner slams "flawed" funding formula reform" 2015, Public Finance, available from http://www.publicfinance.co.uk/news/2015/11/police-commissioner-slams-%E2%80%9Cflawed%E2%80%9D-funding-formula-reform
[5] "Views Sought on Changes to Police Funding Formula" 2015, Public Finance, available from http://www.publicfinance.co.uk/news/2015/07/views-sought-changes-police-funding-formula
[6] "Police funding: a modest proposal", 2016, Public Finance, available from, http://www.publicfinance.co.uk/opinion/2016/07/police-funding-modest-proposal

However, getting a funding formula that would "*make everybody happy*" is also not realistic. The funding formula needs to be simpler but have more clarity by containing a high level of detail, have permanence and actually be implemented "*correctly*" (without damping down[7]). Furthermore, the lack of consultation with forces was also considered negatively. If greater cooperation is the ultimate aim the funding formula has to work for them, it needs to consider the socio-economic mix of the population and the demands of local areas.

Consideration should be giving to metropolitan areas that also face similar demands to London, e.g. party political conferences, football matches, international airports and visitors as well as localised issues such as EDL marches, the policing for which constitutes a further, additional drain on the police budget which may not be completely budgeted for or the costs fully anticipated. These risks are currently being met by the force's reserves.

The cap on council tax precepts, the inability to raise it by more than 2% without requiring a referendum, was also considered to be impeding local control and responsibility of PCCs. "*Local people should make local decisions, local services ought to be paid by local people*". Up until now the government have been pushing hard on a freeze on the council tax. Now the situation has become increasingly difficult whereby forces feel if they don't increase council taxes they will be penalised in the funding as the government will be assuming that the precept will be raised to the maximum. Precepts depend on the council tax bases in police force areas, where some forces have fewer properties falling within the higher bands. Consequently, in some forces a rise in the precept has minimal effect. Many police force areas are getting benefits from increase in the number of properties council tax can be collected from. "*Even with the precept increase, it doesn't make up for the grant reduction*". PCCs should able to increase the council tax by whatever is appropriate on the basis that as an elected individual, if the communities object they will "*get rid of me*".

One force argues that the ability to raise local taxation has resulted in the force becoming a more expensive force. "*The more money available means the more money that can be spent*". This is reflected in costings per head of population, which may be high in some forces due to the fixed costs within forces (e.g. the OPCC has a chief of staff, a chief finance officer, the PCC, the deputy PCC, etc. which is spread over a relatively low population). However, raises in council tax are now incorporated into the base figure and any "*future increases are increases on an increase".*

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[7] When the funding formula is allocated, each police force is assured a minimum percentage increase in grant each year. This is known as 'the floor'. Those forces that get less than the minimum percentage based purely on the formula are topped up to the minimum percentage. In order to pay for this, any force receiving an increase based purely on the formula that is greater than the minimum percentage has its grant scaled back by a standard proportion. This process is commonly referred to as 'floor damping' or 'damping'. (HMIC, 2014 "Responding to Austerity", available from http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/policing-in-austerity-meeting-the-challenge)

The funding formula needs to be looked at in the context of wider police reform in England and Wales; there needs to be a more "*strategic approach to funding the police service*" which doesn't consider the funding formula in isolation. Too many forces are currently reliant on the government grants. "*A more radical solution would be to distinguish what local policing really was, so that ultimately it is paid through the local precept*". So "*instead of looking at the amount of money that is allocated to police forces and divvying it up, a look is needed at how policing is organised and then divvy it up in a different way*".

Forces also argued that, when funding is increases there is usually the expectation that more is delivered for it, so there are more outcomes or outputs that need to be delivered as a result of that. However, if the funding is reduced there isn't the same reduction in expectations. Over the past six years, approximately 20% of funding has been reduced in real terms, but there is no evidence of the impact of this. To this point, this has been achieved through improved efficiency, however at some point you get beyond being able to reconcile any more through efficiency.

As the overall size of the public sector goes down and the funding with it, organisations are trying to deliver services in collaboration in an overall environment that is increasingly unhelpfully competitive. "*Everyone goes into the meeting thinking they're going to make savings at the expense of someone else, the other lot. So they are all coming in with the same mind-set and people have got to get past that*". The relationship needs to be mature enough to understand that in one instance group A may have to carry a bit of the financial burden in order that group B can help, but that is a very difficult conversation to have.

Forces are also able to earn money by raising precepts and often have some reserves (3-5% of the total revenue budget) available to them to deal with specific risks. Reserves can be achieved through income, through capital sales, or through taking savings more swiftly than anticipated. Finding the right people can be slow, and the vetting process, and the difference between what the capacity is and what current FTE numbers are will translate as a difference between income and expenditure which can then be rolled up into reserves. Knowing the position in terms of establishment/capacity and setting the budget for that level means that rather than saying '*this is theoretically where we are going to be*' but then having senior officers and the resources director saying '*yes that is theoretically where we're meant to be but this is the level we are* [actually] *working to*'.

Where forces have reserves they can be earmarked for specific functions. Some forces earmark reserves to support some of the collaborative work which they are involved in with neighbouring forces and to support short-term fluctuations. Some of the reserves are being used to support the capital programme, because collaboration might not happen quite as quickly as anticipated to minimise the risk. Forces that are less reliant on central government funding haven't been affected in the same way as other forces. A higher proportion of local

taxation funding the force in comparison to government funding means some forces are in a relatively good financial state.

Understanding of PCC decision making and funding allocation seems unclear to forces. Evidence from one force identifies that "*when the PCC makes a decision involving expenditure or funding, there is an assumption within the force that the OPCC will be providing the funding; like its additional funding*". The PCCs are the custodians of the public purse and therefore they are expected to have a few questions about whether they are comfortable spending public money in a certain way (e.g. priority based budgeting model). "*PCCs might agree to lots of things but it doesn't mean they're providing additional money for it*".

Specific investment opportunities have been realised. One PCC has committed to investing more money into the systems thinking approach to support the place based working in each burgh, "*a broader approach which is moving into the public service reform world*". It involves a one-off investment in terms of educating and training people in that approach and then as public service organisations, their leadership role is to co-locate or encourage and empower their staff to work with other organisations.

Constabularies are harnessing opportunities for additional funding and income generation which are contributing to financial viability and improving how demand is managed. "*Strong financial controls, a good understanding of current and future risks and taking action mitigate and reduce these risks*". Forces have a good track record of robust financial management, accurate budgeting and achieving planned savings. The forces regularly review costs and spending, and invests in areas that will lead to reductions in demand, increase problem solving and improve workforce skills.

Forces have started to map all the resources (not just policing) that are aligned to the Police and Crime Plan. This involves a process of interviews with all the Community Safety Partnerships, to ask how much money they are putting in. Including the staffing for the community safety partnerships, the drugs and alcohol services, domestic abuse centres, the youth offending teams, housing, health, other services, the CJS to determine what the total spend for the Police and Crime Plan delivery is. This allows questions to be asked such as "*What are the risks associated in terms of funding cuts coming down the line for other people? What are the gaps in funding? What are the duplication areas in funding?*" It is easy to see how the half a billion from the police could easily turn into three quarters of a billion.

Others are using outside advice around the theme of prevention. *How much are the police and OPCC spending on prevention and how much are other partners spending?* This required local authority partners and the police to work in collaboration to identify the sums of money being spent collectively. The striking result of that piece of work was although a force was putting in about £3m through various community safety initiatives, the NHS was spending £55m because the demand was predominantly linked to alcohol and drugs. Developing strong partnerships with local authorities is not as difficult as building relationships with the NHS

because of the changes they've gone through, the purchase of providers split has proved extremely difficult.

Contributory analysis looks at how much is contributed to a matter of concern, a public issue. "*What's your contribution and how does that impact on the contribution of other organisations who might be looking at the same issue, perhaps from a different perspective?*" Looking at just "*the funding allocation* [means] *you're missing eight tenths of the battle*". However, this process is not being used sufficiently or robustly. Public sector organisations, other sectors as well, don't actually look at the contribution that they put into something. One sector will go in and deal with something and pull back out, then the next sector will come in, pick something else up and pull back out, and so on. If everyone went in together, a better more effective impact might be achieved, and the pooling of resources might also be cheaper.

Forces also raise the question: what's your outcome and how do you measure it? From a policing perspective it is linked to victim satisfaction (because they receive a service) and community engagement (because that is the wide community perception of this force). This covers not only victims, but also the rest of the community who will have opinions on the police service also. Most of the questions asked are vague and subjective: '*How confident are you in the police?*' '*What's your perception of the police?*' There could be a number of indicators around both of those two primary indicators, which mean nothing because predominantly they are about day-to-day management. But in terms of public facing, victim satisfaction, public engagement, or public confidence; the victim satisfaction survey gives one, and Crime Survey England & Wales gives the other. They are national barometers. However, both of these surveys aren't applicable at the force level or the sub-force level, so forces have to do a significant amount of work locally. This links back to the primary demands in an area.

Mental health is being looked at closely to try to get a more accurate picture of that demand across the area. Significant funding was obtained from a local University to develop an 'Insight Hub'. This involves the big data aspect, getting all the information from all the sources and understanding how that feeds into a service that isn't just police based. "*I had this sort of utopian vision of everybody providing all of their information and having analysts that could analyse it all and come up with something sensible*". This process has taken a long time but has required an outside body (e.g. academia) to monitor and manage this process.

Twenty percent of demand on policing is mental health related. Responding to people with needs is a shared responsibility across the police, ambulance service, local authorities, mental health trusts, primary and secondary care services, the fire service and housing providers. New joint mental health triage services reduce demand for crisis services and in-patient admission. Crime is not evenly spread across force areas: in one force 6% of the force area creates 25% demand. This 6% consists of 31 "*priority areas*" that generate high demand for

policing and other public services. The areas are involved in longer term problem solving through multiagency partnership delivery plans.

However, even where there is a close liaison between the Police and Crime Community Safety partners and performance information is collated at a larger level with Local Authorities, there doesn't appear to be any feedback at strategic level which says '*If we did this and were more joined up then we might have a better impact*'. The information does not seem to go anywhere.

Forces need to look beyond just crime figures, and overlay these with deprivation and other information available in areas. Then in areas where there are emerging issues it may be possible to assess what that profile looks like using this information which has come from a number of sources. Building this data set using public sector information and sharing that information is something that needs to be developed. This would create a picture of that particular locality through data, data which is sense-checked with local people and councils. This then allows smaller scale issues to be addressed more cohesively. The platforms are there to pull that together in quite quick form, but there needs to be a mutual desire to do something with this information.

Value for Money

Considerations around value for money could focus on costs, benefits or a mixture of the two. Many PCCs indicated they perceived value for money as looking beyond costs, "*it's not just about results, it's about quality as well*"; outcomes for people. "*A load of accountants can sit together and do all the stats they want but it won't show value for money.*" Considering value for money from this perspective focused more on victim satisfaction and the confidence in policing. The police have always historically been better at quantitative measures than qualitative measures. PCCs invest a lot of time talking and listening to people, setting up commissions to look at what needs to be done. Policing is about a service to the public and not about making money. "*Persuading the force that they are a public service and that they have got a set of customers has not always been the easiest of discussions*". Consideration is needed who the customers actually are; the offenders or the victims.

Looking at the HMIC Value for Money profiles, assessing effectiveness and efficiency, provides areas for benchmarking against other forces. This allows Chief Finance Officers to make an assessment of whether the force is economic, whether the information and metrics are out there for them to make a judgement call. Efficiency is more difficult to assess, "*Have I got the resource in the right place doing the right things*?" There is little information on efficiency and how much waste there is. Some Lean Thinking type analysis is being used by some forces where everything has been process-mapped, all the waste has been reduced and everything has been re-engineered in every department.

Looking at value for money *"other than at a really macro level"*, using data from HMIC and league tables of what is spent, can be used to indicate *"who is getting the best value in the country for every policing pound"*. However, proving that is very difficult due to differing crime levels and different socio-demographic factors between different force areas. So although the units measured are often the same, there will be difference between forces simply because forces are different and have different problems. A rural force, which has one of the lowest crime rates in the country and one of the highest victim satisfaction rates measures value for money from a numerical/cost perspective.

Tensions arise when the perspective of value for money differs between PCCs and Chief Constable. Analysis would be carried out whether forces were buying resources at the cheapest price after a quality requirement was met. The most economically advantageous evaluation criteria would differ between a set of pens and a more strategic asset. However, where the resource or product is a service, the concept could be completely flipped around and say, '*well actually I can afford £1m, what I am looking for is the best quality service that you can give me for £1m*'. At this extreme the whole of the competition is based on the quality.

Partnerships and commissioning

Government has driven the notion that police forces must work more cohesively in partnership with other forces as well as local authorities, councils and public sector agencies. This has occurred in a number of different ways: from working with the health sector and triaging mental health issues, to regionalisation of specific functions and departments, to sharing of resources and specialist capabilities and many more. Demand reduction, cost savings and the provision of a better service are the main expected outcomes. *"We've got to a point where people are saying we can't go on like this. We've got to change, and we've got to change radically and fundamentally"*. One example includes building stronger regional alliances in areas such as procurement and back office work which reduces costs by cooperation. The formation of these alliances could lead to *"ultimately doing one thing instead of three things and save money using best practice"* (e.g. £62m over three years in one force). Although there is currently no political will to merge forces, some PCCs are open to the idea of Regional Police Forces.

Mergers and collaboration are predominantly driven by geography and government geography; neighbouring forces tend to be the starting place for things such as road, dogs, firearms, etc. Broadly it is thought there are four types of collaboration:

1) Collaboration with neighbouring forces. This is still likely to drive new savings in the short-term (e.g. savings around HR, around IT systems, around contact and control rooms).

2) Regional collaboration (e.g. Dogs, Firearms and Roads Policing Unit).
3) National collaboration. The nationalisation of the IT company and so on which provides another area for savings.
4) Blind collaboration/Outsourcing. The control room of the organisation you have outsourced to may not be based in the police force area receiving the service.

Collaboration is easy when no one loses anything and everyone gains a little bit of savings. For example, if back offices and HR become aligned or merged, where previously nine individuals were required to run payroll for three forces, a third of expenditure can be saved if the numbers are cut to six people across the area and "*no one notices the difference in services*". However, if the collaboration and merging involves more specialised services such as dog units, this may change the service that is provided (e.g. when a dog unit is deployed).

PCCs work with forces to ask questions around '*clearly this is an issue, how do we work together and get properly funded*' rather than '*let's now move that across to the other agencies*'. It's about showing leadership across the whole public sector. Issues which are about whole public sector need to be looked at collectively to identify how demand can be reduced across the public sector rather than specifically in police and then work out the funding implications afterwards.

However, the difficulty is about ownership and trust, understanding that other partners are equals. The relationship has to be mature enough for mutual cohesive collaboration. Understanding the different level of budgets between forces and county councils and sharing information is more fruitful than "*coming in and saying I want to work in a partnership and this is what you've got to do*". The idea that everyone can do their own things in different ways has got to change. Working in isolation, in silos is not always the best use of resources.

The police have a natural arrogance where the officers think it's them to take the decisions and sort out whatever the problem may be. This doesn't help in conversations around collaboration and partnership. The onus appears to be one the police to cooperate with everybody else, they are told '*you the police need to work with the partners*'.

The commissioning side of the PCC role requires some questions around 'how much do I get in return for every £1 I invest'. The Commissioning Strategy implemented by one force works on three levels, where Tier 2 is the Partnership Fund, an annual fund of £250,000 a year which puts money back into community groups. "*There is anecdotal evidence that for every £1 put in, an £8 return was received working in partnership*".

Effective partnerships have to be enabled and established at a very senior level. Some forces have implemented Multi Agency Problem Solving teams (MAPS), neighbourhood-based teams which are co-located with other sectors (e.g. charities, social services, fire and rescue, ambulance services). Evidence is available that indicates forces can save significant money by co-locating with other sectors (one force states they have saved £120,000 a year by moving

out of the police station and joining up with the district council). The implementation of MAPS is hoped to address the significant proportion of police demand that is related to health.

The knowledge base across policing indicates that forces are generally well-sighted on what's happening in other forces. The idea to look at outside of policing, particularly for specialised and ground-breaking use of technology, big data, analytics etc. is not happening anywhere in the public sector. There is always a tension between the service, looking at what the service does and therefore joining up services, police force to police force; against the issue '*is it more coherent to actually collaborate for an area with all of the partners that operate in that area*'. There is a greater understanding now of the interconnectedness; the interconnectedness of policing is on a much bigger scale with local partners than it is professionally with a force that is geographically proximate.

A semi-urban force also looks at the other sources of 'earning' money. The Proceeds of Crime Act earns the force approximately £100-£150,000 per annum, the Police Property Act (bikes and cameras in police stores which are never claimed and auctioned off by the force) raises about £50,000 a year, and the OPCC tops up this fund with £100,000. All of this Partnership Fund money is put back into the community. Community sector organisations apply for funding; tell us in 300 words how the project will benefit the community or divert youths away from crime (depending on what the theme is). On average the bid is between £250 and £10,000, a maximum of £250,000. The force hosts a multi-partnership day where all the partners are called – the Youth Forum, the BME community, a representative from the Police and Crime Panel, etc. – and all the bids are sifted through. All the ones through to the second round are assessed in quite a rigorous approach. The money is allocated and project is evaluated at the end of it to assess the outcomes (site visits and financial audits).

Forces are at different stages of developing strategic partnerships or working in collaboration. Therefore, the amount of money involved in our partnerships varies. A lot of forces have quite a lot of money in the HMIC POA evaluations, returns that are in those partnership boxes because forces are delivering services in partnership, police to police and with external agencies. Other forces may collaborate with people but have no shared budgets. Often "*there is an awful lot of things that are done in collaboration*" but it's not quite that mixed or joint commissioning. Work is being carried out on police force budgets where individuals are volunteered as a collaborative resource.

Other priorities the government/Home Office/HMIC should be focusing on

A number of other issues were identified which were deemed important for consideration at a more national or strategic level. HMIC inspections were generally positively received by forces, however their focus was considered too wide. A call was made for HMIC to focus on four or five issues specifically at any one time and not take on far too many tasks at once. It

was calculated that in the time frame between December 2015 and April 2016 there had been eight HMIC reports about one police force in one form or another. Resources are so limited that hard choices have to be made and forces "*can't be best in the class on everything*".

HMIC also look at forces on a "*very two-dimensional landscape*". If HMIC utilised contributory analysis, an informative methodology which can determine that "*when you put 5p, this is how much you are going to get back*". Contributory analysis would be a good model for HMIC to consider because it looks at the wider contribution. However, this is very much dependent on their capability to look at other partners, not just police.

Police reform can't happen in isolation. An understanding is needed of how all the complex constituent parts work with each other in a far more coherent way. There is money to be saved but also more streamlined, more efficient processes can be put in place to improve these services. Consideration has to be given to the diverse views, demographics and make-up of different police force areas. Previously, this type of strategic reform has been largely focused around the large metropolitan police forces. The issue around streamlining roads policing needs to be considered from a more rural police force where "*those sort of policing teams do not just deal with the type of crime that they might deal with*" in another force area. It's a different model in different forces and it needs to be able to consider the impact that it has. There is concern that these resources will be taken away and will need to be replicated locally because the diversity of what those teams actually do is not understood. The data on this is incomplete and the development and utility of an evidence base is vital in this. "*You cannot make these decisions without understanding the knock-on effects and consequences of what it is that is being proposed*".

The inspection regime was deemed inappropriate and unhelpful. The money that is top sliced from police funding for the inspections was thought to be better pumped into the police services. When money is tight, government and forces need to make the amount of oversight much smarter, to maximise service delivery. A high percentage of spending (up to 85% in some forces) is to be focused on the frontline but the system as a whole needs to be analysed to push that money down to the frontline.

Most local authorities are told their funding amounts for a three-year period, however policing is restricted to year on year information. In order to provide more stability in terms of longer term planning, more clarity is needed about what precisely forces are going to get for the next three years. The current financial situation has even resulted in individual forces and PCCs being able to increase the council tax by more than would normally trigger a referendum, so the council tax could increase by £5 or 3.3% for 2016-17. But forces don't know if that going to apply in future financial years and there is no certainty or clarity about that. The difficulty is that having put up the council tax one year by 3.3%, how many years can this continue without the electorate complaining.

> *"After years of being told by central government you've got to keep it down and we'll penalise you if you don't, now suddenly all, not quite all restraints off, but now we want you to put it up because we will assume you do. And if you don't then don't come to us for additional funding."*

Comparisons occurred between education and policing. "*If a force really gets into the area of, in education terms, 'special measures', if it really gets a bad Ofsted report, it's very hard to get out from under that.*" It was suggested that HMIC utilised a more informal inspection service, similar to "*school inspectors who didn't do an Ofsted on you*" but instead identified where the strengths and weakness were and provided guidance for improvement and provided the help to do that. Once forces get labelled 'inadequate' all resources rush to addressing that issue and that can be "*very destructive*".

This was also picked up on by another police force who suggested that an organisation like the former Audit Commission, focused on highlighting problems and suggesting solutions, was more helpful than HMIC. HMIC is an agency that is pure inspection, without providing much scope for help. "*There is a school of thought that says, pure inspection is either too late because you've found that it's an absolute disaster or it's valueless because you haven't found anything wrong.*" There needs to be a good relationship ('*a marriage*') between the operational entity which is a police force and the multi-million pound multi-faceted business which is a police force, and there is currently no institution that has an overarching view or remit.

The impacts of the decisions made by HMIC at a local level needs to be considered. HMIC are managing or inspecting against their own criteria. The local policing priorities which the PCCs have set and consulted on are not in line with that. There appears to be an imbalance between what is being looked at and being delivered locally and HMIC criteria. HMIC "*don't start their inspections from the Police and Crime Plan, and so to an extent the measurements that are made are not relevant to PCCs*". HMIC inspections produce a lot of interesting, and logical outcomes, but don't necessarily reflect the Police and Crime Plan. "*I think there is a fundamental misunderstanding of the role of the PCC in HMIC.*" There needs to be more thought going into what is happening at the national level in terms of how can bridges be built locally to pull these things together. It's easy to say cut 10% of the budget, but can forces still deliver an effective service without that 10%. "*How much risk do you put into the system because you have cut back that particular service?*"

Forces have got to get much better at multi-dimensional decision making; choices have consequences.

> *"It is often celebrated that policing is really good at decision making and the frustration of working with partners is that they don't make decisions. What we don't often spend enough time reflecting on is that of the 20 decisions that we*

> *took, 19 were to sort out the mess we made in that first decision that we rushed. But we take loads of decisions."*

Summary & Conclusion

Overall police are coping best they can with the challenges they face. The main consideration is that they have to continue to adapt as new demands and issues are thrown at them. Forces are moving to a culture of supporting some of the safeguarding issues, to a more victim focused perspective. The challenge is in responding to all of those challenges with the correct level of expertise and multi-agency approach.

PCC generally have good evidence of how resources must be allocated and use this information effectively to determine where money goes but there is no evidence of how specific decisions are made in terms of analysis of cost and benefits and understanding the optimum benefits.

Despite attempts to nationalise certain processes and systems across all 43 police forces, many differences continue to exist. "*There's nothing that defines policing like a difference*". What forces actually do in terms of pure resource allocation and analysis of the impact is very different. Forces seems to be getting better at understanding the balance between service standards, business risks, and costs or savings. What is still difficult is assessing this all in context; "*putting the whole picture on the lid of the box on the table and actually making judgements*", actively moving resource from one area into another.

For most PCCs their starting point for determining demand and allocating resources is their Police and Crime Plan. The balance must be reached between '*this is what resources are needed to deliver the plan*' compared to '*this is what people are willing to pay for policing*'. Budget allocation processes depend on the relationship between the PCC and the CC in terms of the level of control and influence. Where the relationship is relatively close, the PCC has more leverage in terms of shuffling money around to meet strategic demands. Financial analysis and performance measures are not universally applied or utilised. Some PCCs have no interest in setting targets and measuring performance of police officers on the frontline, even though this is where some of the demand can be determined and assessed. New technological advancements can improve data collection; however analytical staff must be available to assess this information. Daily demand is difficult to assess unless specifically considered and the hidden demand or dark figure remains unknown (e.g. internal phone calls to reception).

PCCs need to balance reactive and proactive aspects of policing. Police culture determines they are predominantly reactive and therefore not very good at forward planning or thinking beyond the current and this is reflected in resource allocation – jump from crisis to crisis. "*Down the ages as the funding is cut significantly for policing experienced professional police*

officers could hear the mantra coming round and round 'We just need a crisis'". After a crisis, resources are immediately available. However, PCCs need to plan over a four-year period and deal with the longer term issues – which may not be crisis material for the force but are important to the public who elect PCCs. PCCs can plan over a longer period of time but need to have a collegiate relationship with their Chief Constable.

Forces called for a bit more national political ownership around what the priorities are. There isn't enough "*air cover*" for individual PCCs or Commissioners to defend their decision making and people are vilified for not going out to every burglary or whatever may be considered a priority. There is a failure of accountability if the rhetoric continues to be at a national level, where nationally this is the funding that is being put against a service that is growing. "*Either the money has got to go up or the aspiration and the expectation comes down*". Nationally there is £12b put into policing, and a certain expectation of what you get from that. HMIC measures need to more realistically reflect PCC objectives and priorities. Measurements of effectiveness and efficiency begin at a different base level than Police and Crime Plan. PCC priorities may not be what HMIC is interested in but some assessment of PCC impact may be beneficial.

This summary has reported the results of interviews with a number of PCCs and senior police staff. Any conclusions drawn are tentative, as the survey was designed to cover a number of forces of different characteristics but is not representative of all forces. Nevertheless, we have found that:

- The needs of a force (as seen by the professionals) differ widely from its needs as seen by other players (such as voters or journalists)
- The institution of PCCs has focused thought on value for money in some areas (such as how to maximise output given human and technical inputs) …
- … but less so in others (such as moving from crime detection to crime prevention; the opportunity costs of investigating crimes committed by deceased individuals; adaptation to cybercrime).

Further research is needed to put numbers on these impressions, and to pursue value for money into the domains where it is more difficult to pursue.