

How to run a country: Crime and policing

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Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Police demand	1
2.1	Falling crime	1
2.2	High harm crime	2
2.3	Increasing non-crime demand	3
3.	The legacy of the Coalition	3
3.1	Improving accountability	3
	3.1.1 Police and Crime Commissioners	4
3.2	Reforming the workforce	4
	3.2.1 Workforce composition	4
	3.2.2 New talent	5
3.3	Delivering increased efficiency	5
	3.3.1 Procurement	6
4.	The next phase of police reform	7
4.1	The policing model	7
	4.1.1 The police service operating model	7
	4.1.2 Force operating models	8
4.2	Public service integration	8
	4.2.1 Preventing (re)offending	8
	4.2.2 Mental health	9
	4.2.3 A single point of access for non-emergency services	10
4.3	The role of non-state actors	10
	4.3.1 Cybersecurity	11
5.	Conclusion	11

1. Introduction

Crime has been in decline since the mid-1990s and continued to decline throughout the last Parliament, confounding two widely held beliefs: (a) that crime increases during a recession and (b) that fewer police officers would mean more crime. The burning platform of austerity drove forces to deliver efficiencies, and the Coalition Government's overhaul of policing bodies led to greater transparency and accountability. There remains however significant scope for reform. Indeed the National Audit Office (NAO) recently argued that "overall many of the savings so far could be characterised as tactical or efficiency savings, rather than service transformation."¹

Policing reform in this Parliament should be based on three key objectives:

- reducing high harm crime;
- creating a smaller, smarter and more flexible police service capable of meeting changing demand; and
- integrating policing with other key public services.

Criminal victimisation has a direct impact on physical and mental health,² as does the anxiety caused by fear of crime.³ Within this, different crime types have differing levels of impact. High harm crimes such as homicide, rape and child sexual exploitation (CSE) have devastating and enduring consequences. In public policy, high harm crime types should carry greater weight than offences such as theft, criminal damage and drug possession, and the reporting of crime rates should reflect this.

Tackling high harm crimes will require much better integration between the multiple services that offenders are often in contact with. This is fundamental to any strategy aimed at preventing (re)offending. Additionally, an approach which tackles the drivers of criminal behaviour will have the greatest benefit for people living in disadvantaged areas due to their higher likelihood of victimisation.⁴ This means that the benefits of lower levels of crime will be felt most acutely by those who have lower levels of wellbeing to start off with.

2. Police demand

2.1 Falling crime

Central government police funding was cut by 20 per cent over the last Parliament.⁵ The total number of police officers (excluding the British Transport Police) fell by just under 12 per cent, and police staff numbers dropped by 18 per cent.⁶ At the same time, crime has continued to fall. The number of offences reported in the Crime Survey of England and Wales (CSEW) has fallen by 26 per cent over the Parliament,⁷ meaning thousands fewer people have experienced the trauma of being a victim of crime.

1 National Audit Office, *Financial Sustainability of Police Forces in England and Wales*, June 2014.

2 Victims of crime are more likely to experience a high level of worry about crime and more likely to experience a high level of worry about crime. (Office for National Statistics, *Crime Statistics, Focus on Public Perceptions of Crime and the Police, and the Personal Well-Being of Victims 2013-2014*, March 2015).

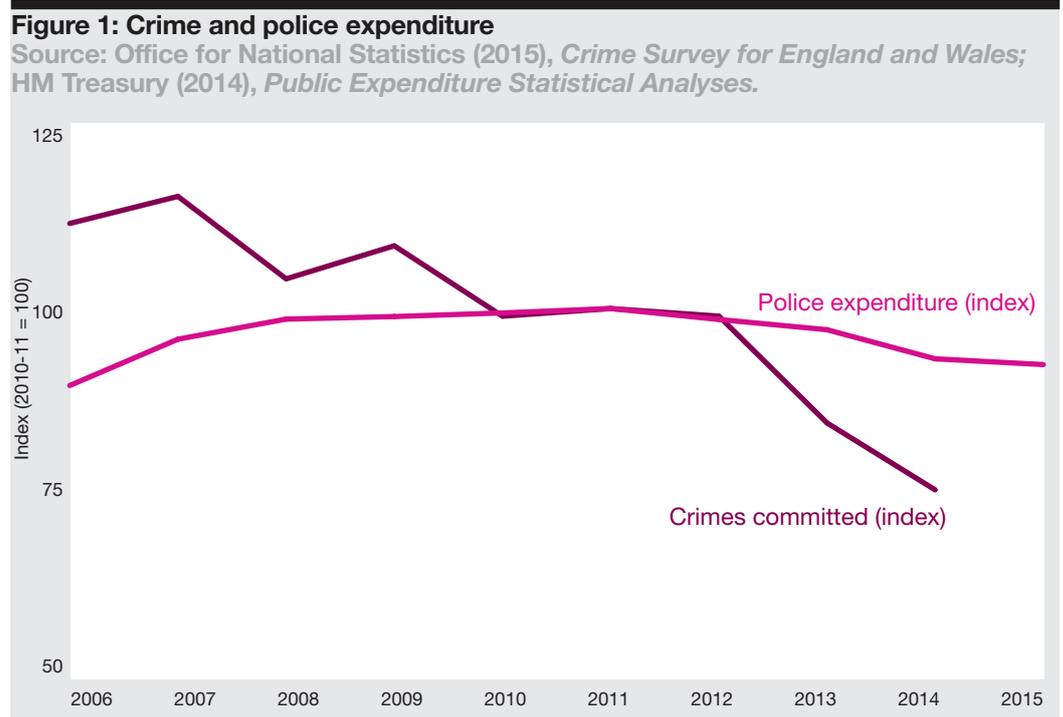
3 OECD, *How's Life? Measuring Well-Being*, 2011.

4 Department for Work and Pensions and Department for Education, *A New Approach to Child Poverty: Tackling the Causes of Disadvantage and Transforming Families' Lives*, April 2011.

5 HM Treasury, *Spending Review 2010*, October 2010.

6 Full time equivalents between 2010 and September 2014 (Home Office, *Police Service Strength England and Wales*, 31 March 2010; Home Office, *Police Workforce, England and Wales*, 30 September 2014).

7 Office for National Statistics, *Crime in England and Wales, Year Ending September 2014*, September 2014, Appendix Tables.



2.2 High harm crime

However, as discussed above, not all crime types are equal in their impact. For instance, the Office for National Statistics has found that victims of violence with injury report lower personal wellbeing than victims of violence without injury, and a Dutch study found victims of violent crime suffer more psychological distress than victims of property crimes.⁸ From a public policy perspective, assessing trends in *high harm* crime types is crucial.

The CSEW incidence rate per 1,000 adults for violence has reduced by 29 per cent between 2008-09 and 2014 – violence with injury dropped by 36 per cent – continuing the decline of previous governments.⁹ Health service administrative data also shows a drop in violent crime.¹⁰

Unfortunately, the CSEW does not record incidences of sexual offences and police recorded data over the last Parliament has been impacted by changes to recording processes (also applicable to police reported violent crime) and high profile operations.¹¹ It is therefore difficult to make an assessment of what has happened over the last Parliament. In addition, historical cases of abuse are an increasing part of police demand. However, the focus on encouraging victims to come forward and improving the investigation and recording of sexual offences, including CSE, is itself positive.

Professor Lawrence Sherman has proposed the use of a Crime Harm Index which “give[s] each type of crime a weight that represents how harmful each type of crime is”, arguing that this would be “the best way to measure what matters in valuing police effectiveness”.¹² This approach would enable police to identify ‘harm spots’, rather than using the more traditional aggregate crime ‘hot spots’, and thus better target their resources on those crimes that (a) have the greatest impact on people’s wellbeing and (b)

⁸ Adriaan Denkers and Willem Winkel, “Crime Victims’ Well-Being and Fear in a Prospective and Longitudinal Study,” *International Review of Victimology*, Vol. 5, No. 2, January 1998.

⁹ The total number of incidents has also decreased (Office for National Statistics, *Crime in England and Wales, Year Ending September 2014*, April 2015).

¹⁰ Office for National Statistics, *Chapter 1: Violent Crime and Sexual Offences: Overview*, February 2015.

¹¹ Office for National Statistics, *Crime in England and Wales, Year Ending December 2014*, April 2015; HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, *Crime-Recording: Making the Victim Count*, November 2014.

¹² Lawrence Sherman, “The Rise of Evidence-Based Policing: Targeting, Testing, and Tracking,” *Criminal and Justice*, Vol. 42, No. 1, August 2013.

have the highest system costs. It would also ensure that governments and citizens were able to assess progress against the crime types that people most care about.

Recommendation

The Government, in conjunction with the National Statistician, should develop an index of high harm crime to be incorporated into national crime statistics. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary should report on incidences of, and responses to, such crime. Online crime maps should be presented as 'heat maps' weighted by harm.

2.3 Increasing non-crime demand

Crime rates, however, do not paint the full picture of police activity. Analysis by the College of Policing highlights the increasing strain placed on the police by 'public safety and welfare' activities.¹³ Missing persons, animal welfare, crowd control and road traffic incidents are some of the non-crime issues that police are expected to respond to.¹⁴ Indeed 83 per cent of command and control calls in 2011-12 were for non-crime related incidents.¹⁵

Mental health related incidents are a particular area of concern for forces. The College of Policing reports this as a growing issue.¹⁶ They note that whilst forces consistently flag around 2 per cent of incidents per year as linked to mental health, analysis by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) suggests a figure closer to 15-20 per cent. Nationally 20 per cent would equate to almost four million incidents. A 2015 report on vulnerable people by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) also flagged this as a particular issue, noting that "[p]eople with mental health problems and children were taken into custody by the police because they were unable to secure the help they needed from health or social care services." This has a "detrimental impact on their health and wellbeing, and in many cases is the wrong approach."¹⁷ The police service is picking up the pieces where other public services are failing to act.

3. The legacy of the Coalition

The Home Secretary, Theresa May, set one objective for the police, "to cut crime",¹⁸ and made the case that this could be achieved whilst making significant cuts to police budgets. This was accompanied by a "radical reform agenda"¹⁹ that sought to deliver greater accountability and professionalisation through the overhaul of existing institutions, reform of the workforce and a focus on identifying what works. In a 2014 speech to *Reform*, the Home Secretary said "we have been able to make these changes not despite spending cuts but because of them".²⁰

3.1 Improving accountability

The Coalition Government placed increasing accountability at the heart of its reforms. This took two forms: direct accountability to the people through Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and indirect accountability through making the Inspectorate more independent of both government and the police. In addition, independent reviews of the Association of Chief Police Officers and the Police Federation led to reforms being undertaken to improve the transparency of their operations and increase accountability. Whilst these reforms were in part a response to the Government's reorganisation, they were also driven by a series of revelations about police malpractice. It is hoped that overhauling these institutions will contribute to increased public trust in the police.

¹³ College of Policing, *College of Policing Analysis: Estimating Demand on the Police Service*, January 2015.

¹⁴ HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, *Taking Time for Crime: A Study of How Police Officers Prevent Crime in the Field*, 2012.

¹⁵ College of Policing, *College of Policing Analysis*.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, *The Welfare of Vulnerable People in Police Custody*, March 2015.

¹⁸ Home Office, *A New Approach to Fighting Crime*, March 2011.

¹⁹ Theresa May, "The Police Must Change and so Must the Federation," 21 May 2014.

²⁰ May, "Lessons of Police Reform," July 2014.

3.1.1 Police and Crime Commissioners

The introduction of locally elected PCCs was intended to improve the accountability of the police to the public they serve, to break down institutional silos and identify opportunities for reform. In 2012 *Reform* argued that the PCC role is best placed to deliver criminal justice system integration and that responsibility for areas such as youth offending and probation should be devolved to them to enable this to happen.²¹ The outsourcing of probation services undertaken by the Coalition Government as part of its Transforming Rehabilitation programme could have supported this process. However, instead of involving PCCs in the commissioning process, Community Rehabilitation Companies are now completely separate entities. With criminal justice services in dire need of better integration, the Coalition missed a key opportunity to work towards this.

Turn-out for the PCC elections was low at around 15 per cent. However, in its assessment of PCC progress the Home Affairs Select Committee found that “PCCs have provided greater clarity of leadership for policing within their areas, and are increasingly recognised by the public as accountable for the strategic direction of their police force.”²² This is clearly positive. In addition, the Committee records instances where PCCs are indeed using their powers to drive collaboration and efficiency, thereby securing better value for local communities.²³ However it also notes that this is not happening on a large enough scale.

3.2 Reforming the workforce

In addition to the sizeable workforce reductions, an independent review of police pay and conditions conducted by Sir Tom Winsor resulted in reforms to remuneration policies and policing structures. Police pay is being reformed to reward performance and skill level rather than length of service. The Coalition Government established the College of Policing to set professional standards and work is underway to review police leadership, with a view to stripping out unnecessary levels and improving culture.²⁴

While it is too early to assess the overall impact of the Coalition’s reforms, the objective of creating a more professional police service which is better equipped to deal with changing demand and targets resources effectively is right. Not only does this mean that forces should be better at tackling crime, but also that the public should have greater confidence in the police.

3.2.1 Workforce composition

Home Secretary Theresa May argued: “what matters is not the total number of officers employed, but the number of officers deployed, and how effectively they are deployed”.²⁵ This is absolutely true, but in retaining the focus on officers she does not go far enough. As Chris Sims, Chief Constable of West Midlands Police (WMP), has stated “the familiar cry of ‘protect the frontline’ should not be about maintaining numbers of uniformed officers” but ensuring that demand is met in the most appropriate way, which means removing the “artificial ring-fencing of the front line”.²⁶

Chief constables need to be able to shape their workforce to best serve their communities and the national need. This may mean getting rid of officers and retaining, or even increasing, police staff with relevant specialist skills. The Winsor Review notes that the inability of forces to remove officers has meant high levels of compulsory redundancy for police staff:

“In many cases, this has been the only option available to Chief Constables, but it represents poor value for money for the taxpayer, who faces paying higher salaries to

21 Andrew Haldenby, Tara Majumdar and Will Tanner, *Doing It Justice*, October 2012.

22 House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, *Police and Crime Commissioners: Progress to Date, Sixteenth Report of Session 2013-14*, May 2014.

23 Ibid.

24 College of Policing, *Leadership Review: Interim Report*, March 2015.

25 May, “Police Reform.”

26 Chris Sims, “Frontline Policing,” National Police Chiefs’ Council, 11 April 2011.

police officers to do jobs which could – and should – be done at lower cost by more able and experienced police staff.”²⁷

HMIC records that forces have voiced concerns about the dangers of a “static and ageing workforce”, noting that constraints on recruitment mean they are not “able to become representative of the communities they serve or to keep pace with a changing society.”²⁸

3.2.2 New talent

The Coalition Government also made opening the police service up to new talent a key plank of its reforms. The implementation of Direct Entry as a way of bringing in “high ability people...who have perspectives and experience which the police service lacks in sufficient measure, and needs” is a positive step.²⁹ The scale and pace of delivery, however, has been insufficient. Of the first cohort of 1,849 applicants, 105 went through to assessment and just 43 were recommended for the 83 vacancies.³⁰ The bar for entry must, of course, be set high, but the College of Policing has suggested that the programme could benefit from greater clarity of who it is trying to attract.³¹

Police Now, introduced in the MPS in late 2014, is also aimed at attracting talent to policing, specifically to work in the “most challenged and disadvantaged communities”.³² Modelled on the Teach First programme it seeks to recruit high-performing graduates to bring about “social change”.³³ As highlighted earlier, communities suffering from high levels of deprivation also experience the highest levels of crime. Targeting talent in these areas therefore stands to make the greatest impact.

Recommendation

The Government should implement Sir Tom Winsor’s 2013 recommendation that compulsory severance be introduced for all police officers, giving chief constables the flexibility to create a modern workforce that best meets demand.

In conjunction with the College of Policing, the Government should also consider how to increase the number of Direct Entry superintendents, to achieve the goal of diversifying the experience and talent base within the police service as quickly as possible.

The College of Policing should work with the Metropolitan Police Service to evaluate Police Now and, if it proves successful, support its roll out nationally.

3.3 Delivering increased efficiency

The budget cuts over the last Parliament provided a burning platform for forces to seek efficiencies. This led to cross-force and blue light collaborations, greater use of technology, and partnerships with the private sector. However, despite steps in the right direction, in the areas of procurement and technology the Government did not go far enough.

In addition there remains significant scope to increase productivity through better understanding the demands on police time. A recent NAO report on the financial sustainability of the police service stated: “most forces do not have a thorough evidence-based understanding of demand, or what affects their costs” and there is “limited data on police productivity”.³⁴

Forces must develop a clearer idea of what officers are actually spending their time on in order to identify processes and activities that can be eliminated or streamlined. Such

27 Thomas Winsor, *Independent Review of Police Officer and Staff Remuneration and Conditions Final Report: Volume 1*, 2012.

28 HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, *Policing in Austerity: Meeting the Challenge*, National Report, July 2014.

29 Ibid.

30 House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, *Evaluating the New Architecture of Policing: The College of Policing and the National Crime Agency*, Tenth Report of Session 2014-15, February 2015.

31 College of Policing, *Leadership Review*.

32 Lawrence Spencer, Matt Lloyd and Lydia Stephens, *Police Now: The Case for Change*, 2014.

33 Ibid.

34 National Audit Office, *Financial Sustainability of Police Forces in England and Wales*, June 2015.

analysis would also powerfully highlight the inefficient dependencies on other criminal justice agencies that reduce police productivity – for example the hours of officer time spent on calls to the Crown Prosecution Service or waiting around for court appearances.

3.3.1 Procurement

The Coalition Government introduced the National Police Procurement Hub with the aim of delivering significant savings. To date the Hub has failed to meet expectations.³⁵

Instead, nine joint procurement arrangements have developed amongst forces. Unfortunately, a lack of “agreed common specifications for many types of goods and services” is reducing “their ability to make savings.”³⁶ In its analysis of police procurement the NAO found, for example, that the price paid by forces for standard police boots ranged from £25 to £114 and £20 to £100 for high visibility jackets.³⁷ For uniforms, forces disagree about design requirements such as the number of pockets.³⁸ This is a completely avoidable waste of taxpayer resources. Standardisation and greater use of collective purchasing could drive significant savings and this is a prime example of where national mandation is needed.

The Home Office has recognised this and announced plans to make use of the National Police Procurement Hub mandatory, but it has failed to spell out what this means in practice.³⁹ It should rectify this immediately.

Recommendation

The Government should mandate all police forces to purchase standard items such as handcuffs, boots and uniforms through a national framework.

3.3.2 Technology

Technology is expected to revolutionise public service delivery, enabling better outcomes for much lower costs. However in policing, as elsewhere in the public sector, forces have barely scratched the surface of its potential. Instead, forces largely remain burdened by legacy ICT systems and integration between forces and across criminal justice services is hampered by the lack of interoperability between their different systems. Innovations such as facial and voice recognition technology, and predictive analytics are yet to be leveraged on any scale.

The drive to make officers more mobile through the use of modern devices and connectivity is also in its infancy. Eliminating unnecessary trips to stations would increase police productivity, maximising time on the beat and thereby enabling forces to get more ‘visible hours’ from fewer frontline staff. Analysis by HMIC found that “out of the 19 basic technology operating systems [such as email or sending images] now required by a constable to carry out frontline roles away from police stations, only one was consistently available”.⁴⁰

As early as July 2011, Home Secretary Theresa May highlighted the failure of police ICT systems stating “[t]he way we do things now is confused, fragmented and expensive. We know, for example, that one supplier now has over 1,500 contracts across all the forces.”⁴¹ To address this she announced the creation of a National Police ICT company. Having formally been established a year later, by summer 2014 the company was still not in operation.⁴² Continuing discussions led to the Home Office passing control to a board

35 By January 2013, just 2 per cent of essential police items had been bought through the hub, some distance from the Home Office’s target of 80 per cent by 2015 (House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts, *Police Procurement, Twenty-First Report of the Session 2013-14*, September 2014).

36 National Audit Office, *Police Procurement: Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General, Session 2012-13*, March 2013.

37 Ibid. Fig 5

38 Ibid.

39 Ibid.

40 HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, *Taking Time for Crime*.

41 May, “Police Reform.”

42 Charlotte Jee, “Police ICT Company Still Not Operating Two Years after Launch,” *Computerworld UK*, 30 July 2014.

of PCCs and police agencies, with the Police ICT Company finally becoming operational in March 2015. However the projected annual £400 million savings are yet to be realised.⁴³ Getting this right must be a key focus for policing going forwards, but added to this must be a focus on ensuring interoperability between the ICT systems used by the different criminal justice services.

4. The next phase of police reform

4.1 The policing model

Whilst the reforms of the Coalition Government realised significant savings across policing, meeting the challenges of the new Parliament will require a much more fundamental transformation of police operating models. This means setting out a clear vision for the police service – its purpose and priorities, and the outcomes it is seeking to achieve – from which appropriate structures can be built.

4.1.1 The police service operating model

As discussed, budget cuts placed considerable pressure on forces to deliver efficiencies in the way they do business. This has led to increased questioning of the sustainability of the 43 force model.⁴⁴ Indeed, in late 2014 the Chief Constable of Lincolnshire Police wrote to the Home Secretary stating: “a smaller, forward looking and innovative force that has embraced change, Lincolnshire Police in 2016-17 will be, on the basis of current financial projections, on the edge of viability.”⁴⁵ Writing in *The Guardian* in December 2014, MPS Commissioner Bernard Hogan-Howe said: “How many forces do we need? No more than nine, certainly, based on regions.”⁴⁶ Writing for *Reform* in March 2015 Lord Harris, Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Policing, argued that “[i]t is not sustainable to continue with 43 forces”.⁴⁷

Unfortunately, despite continuing criticism there is no consensus about what should replace the 43 force structure. This is perhaps because the focus is wrong: restructuring should be the by-product of a clear vision for how a modern police service should operate, not an end in itself. Whilst there may be particular geographical areas in which the merger of several forces may be sensible, there is no neat geographical division of all forces. Moreover, creating a smaller number of very large forces would likely make integration with other public services even more challenging, and it is this integration that is likely to deliver the greatest value. A more sensible approach may be to track with the devolution agenda, using the proposed mayoral model, in place of PCCs, to drive integration and implement a robust multi-service problem-solving approach to high harm locations.

As well as the question of force numbers, there is a growing discussion about the level at which different police functions should sit. HMIC has argued that “there is now a pressing need for greater clarity as to which policing services are best provided by forces at the local, regional or national level.”⁴⁸ Some specialist functions are already separated from universal local policing activity. Counter-terrorism, for example, has been built around hotspot areas and capability sits within lead forces. This appears to be a sensible model and one that may appropriately be extended to other functions requiring specialist skills, for example complex CSE, undercover or cybercrime capabilities. In the latter example in particular, the technological investment needed to tackle more serious and complex cases would be prohibitive at an individual force level. Specialist teams sitting within lead forces could instead be deployed to other forces, when appropriate, to deal with specific incidences on a pay for service basis. This would make more sense than creating artificial regional entities which are likely to increase costs and have no obvious lines of accountability.

43 Gary Mason and Ian Weinfass, “Police ICT Company Operational,” *Police Oracle*, 12 April 2015.

44 See for example Independent Police Commission, *Policing for a Better Britain: Report of the Independent Police Commission*, November 2013.

45 Neil Rhodes, “Letter to the Home Secretary,” 21 November 2014.

46 Bernard Hogan-Howe, “Cuts without Reform Put the Public at Risk,” *The Guardian*, 14 December 2014.

47 Reform, “New Frontiers of Criminal Justice Reform,” 10 March 2015.

48 HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, *Policing in Austerity*.

Recommendation

The Government, in conjunction with the National Police Chiefs' Council, should as a matter of priority review how best to deliver specialist policing functions in the most cost effective and accountable way.

4.1.2 Force operating models

Individual forces should likewise review their operating models. Police demand is changing and traditional policing models must change with it. Declining overall crime levels combined with rises in non-conventional crime types, and an increasing focus on high harm crimes such as CSE, requires a different operating model. Workforce changes are, as discussed above, one element of this, but the structures within which that workforce operates is equally vital. With a greater proportion of police time spent on high harm public protection issues, a cross-public service approach will be key (see below). Chief constables must review the adequacy of their current operating model, based on a thorough understanding of local demand and with a view to expected future trends in demand.

WMP is a case in point, partnering with the private sector to design and implement 'WMP2020'. Its blueprint seeks to create a "smaller, faster, smarter service"⁴⁹ through organisational restructuring, multi-agency partnership working, technological transformation and taking an asset-based approach to communities. The NAO has highlighted the approach taken by WMP, stating: "its new operating model is based on extensive work done over several years to build its understanding of demand and costs. This work provided a foundation for deciding on priorities and operational structures to provide better services at lower cost."⁵⁰ Other forces should learn from WMP. In partnership with their PCC they should review their force operating models to ensure they are best placed to meet demand in the most efficient and effective way.

4.2 Public service integration

Whilst there are notable examples of new partnerships (such as the cross-force collaborations highlighted above), public service integration remains inadequate. The multi-agency teams that have long been used to try and tackle complex challenges such as gangs and safeguarding children are simply not sufficient and questions have been raised about how traditional service boundaries can be overcome. Encouragingly, many forces are actively working to integrate with other public services, but this will require considerable cultural as well as structural change.

4.2.1 Preventing (re)offending

This is particularly important in prevention, a key focus for most police forces. Preventing (re)offending requires a more sophisticated understanding of risk than most forces currently have. Traditionally risk has been quantified within individual service silos, for example allocating offender risk profiles based on the contact that individual has had with the criminal justice system. However, this offers limited insight. High harm offenders are likely to be known to multiple agencies. A truer assessment of risk would, therefore, incorporate information from the education system, social services, health services and so on. This requires effective data and intelligence sharing between agencies, something which remains a considerable barrier to integration.

Preventing (re)offending also requires an integrated service model that ensures the right interventions are delivered in the right sequence at the right time. There are a few examples where this type of approach is already in place. The Coalition Government's Troubled Families programme is delivering an integrated response to a complex problem, with a particular focus on crime, education and employment. The Department for

49 West Midlands Police, "WMP2020 - West Midlands Police," 5 January 2015.

50 National Audit Office, *Financial Sustainability of Police Forces in England and Wales*.

Communities and Local Government (DCLG) claims that of the 117,910 families who had entered the programme by February 2015, 105,671 have been “turned around”.⁵¹ However a full evaluation of the programme is not due out until the end of 2015 and DCLG’s figures have been criticised by one of the organisations involved in the full evaluation.⁵² Nonetheless, the principle is correct.

The Scottish Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV) is another example. It seeks to replace “bureaucratic divisions” with a “truly multi-disciplined approach focused on clear outcomes”.⁵³ The second year report on the programme found that, on average, gang members involved in CIRV saw a 46 per cent reduction in violent offending, and a 56 per cent reduction amongst those most intensively engaged in the programme.⁵⁴ However despite these examples “[c]ollaboration between forces, public and private sector organisations remains patchy, fragmented, overly complex and too slow”.⁵⁵

Recommendation

The College of Policing should identify best practice examples of collaboration and integration as part of their What Works repository.

4.2.2 Mental health

Particular attention needs to be given to addressing the current inadequacies in dealing with people with mental health issues. As discussed above, the police service is increasingly responding to mental health related incidents as the service of last resort. This is placing unacceptable strain on police resources, but more importantly is damaging for those individuals suffering from mental health problems. As HMIC’s report stated, the lack of alternative is leading to “vulnerable adults and children...being criminalised unnecessarily”.⁵⁶

The Department of Health is currently funding pilots using mental health street triage vehicles as a way of tackling this. Whilst it is early days for the scheme, initial evaluations have been promising, with a 40 per cent reduction in the use of Section 136 of the Mental Health Act by some forces.⁵⁷

Encouragingly there are examples of innovation in this area, with many PCCs piloting new ways of working. In Northamptonshire, following the initial success of a triage pilot, PCC Adam Simmonds has just extended the use of triage cars to 4pm - 2am at the weekend. He believes the additional time will enable more vulnerable people to be reached out of hours and reduce the demand on traditional services on Friday and Saturday nights. In Norfolk, PCC Stephen Bett has introduced a Mental Health specialist within the Norfolk Police Command and Control Room.⁵⁸ This allows ‘real time’ support to be provided to vulnerable individuals and for the most appropriate services to be engaged reducing unnecessary police involvement.

However at the system level criminal justice services and health remain entirely separate, regardless of the considerable crossover. Despite multiple crime-related indicators in the

51 For a family to be considered “turned around” at least one adult in the household needs to have moved into work, for children already in school to have had fewer than three fixed term exclusions and less than 15 per cent unauthorised absences in the last 3 consecutive terms, for those not in school to have moved into school or alternative provision, a minimum of a 60 per cent reduction in ASB in the last 6 months and a reduction in reoffending by those under 18 in the household of at least 33. (Department for Communities and Local Government, *The Troubled Families Programme: Financial Framework for the Troubled Families Programme’s Payment-by-Results Scheme for Local Authorities*, March 2012).

52 Jonathan Portes, “A Troubling Attitude to Statistics,” *National Institute of Economic and Social Research*, 15 March 2015.

53 Violence Reduction Unit, *The Violence Must Stop: Glasgow’s Community Initiative to Reduce Violence*, 2011.

54 Ibid.

55 HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, *Policing in Austerity*.

56 HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, *The Welfare of Vulnerable People in Police Custody*.

57 Section 136 allows the police to remove those experiencing mental crisis to a place of safety for treatment or care. House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, *Policing and Mental Health, Eleventh Report of Session 2014–15*, May 2014.

58 Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk, “PCC Secures Share of £20m,” Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk, 16 January 2014.

Public Health Outcomes Framework,⁵⁹ neither PCCs nor police chiefs are mandated to sit on Health and Wellbeing Boards, leaving it up to Boards whether to include them. This needs addressing.

4.2.3 A single point of access for non-emergency services

The police are too often the service that citizens turn to when they do not know who to contact or how to contact other services, placing inappropriate demand on forces. Whilst 101 was introduced as a non-emergency number for reporting crimes, this does not solve the need to divert citizens away from defaulting to the police service for non-crime concerns and queries. In 2003 New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg introduced the 311 Customer Service Centre to provide a single, non-emergency number for citizens looking to access public service information. In 2009 a focus on self-service saw 311 online launched, enabling citizens to access more than 3,000 services in the 311 system.⁶⁰ Between 2003 and 2009, 311 contributed to a reduction of around 4 million 911 calls and has exposed areas where multiple services were duplicating activity.⁶¹ Integrating public service information and access in this way has the potential to reduce inappropriate demand on police resources as well as improve citizens' experiences.

4.3 The role of non-state actors

Regardless of increased efficiency and improvements to the workforce, the burden of crime reduction cannot fall to police forces alone. To ensure that public funds are deployed to best effect, non-state actors must take a greater role in crime prevention and promoting safer communities.

Reform's 2014 publication, *The Expert Citizen*, advocated engaging communities as a key way to reduce demand.⁶² At a basic level, citizens who take steps to keep themselves and their property safe are less likely to be the victims of crime and therefore require police services (the success of vehicle and house alarms stands testament to this).⁶³ This also applies to businesses, as highlighted in the *Reform* report, *The police mission in the twenty-first century*.⁶⁴ Business Crime Reduction Partnerships can, for example, facilitate the sharing of intelligence between businesses, better enabling them to prevent crime.

Beyond this, an approach that sees communities as assets could lead to further demand suppression and, importantly, help to tackle some of the more high harm crimes. "Asset based community development initiatives empower citizens to use their practical skills and social capital, and encourages public, private and third sector organisations to contribute resources towards the aims of health and well-being, community morale and ownership, and cooperation to reduce crime."⁶⁵ An asset-based approach has, for example, been used to tackle gang violence in America through projects such as the Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence,⁶⁶ and Scotland has successfully deployed this model via their Violence Reduction Unit. Importantly, such an approach not only has the potential to reduce crime and make communities safer, but puts communities themselves at the heart of policing.

Recommendation

The College of Policing should review the evidence on asset-based policing and provide information on best practice models as part of its What Works repository.

59 Public Health England, *Public Health Outcomes Framework: May 2015 Data Update*, May 2015.

60 "The NYC 311 Story...", http://media.govtech.net/GOVTECH_WEBSITE/EVENTS/PRESENTATION_DOCS/2009/GTC_East/NYC_311_Story.pdf, accessed on 9 June 2015.

61 Accenture, *Transforming Customer Services to Support High Performance in New York City Government*, 2011.

62 Clare Fraser, Camilla Hagelund, Katy Sawyer and Myles Stacey, *The Expert Citizen*, July 2014.

63 Ibid.

64 Stephen Greenhalgh and Blair Gibbs, *The Police Mission in the Twenty-First Century: Rebalancing the Role of the First Public Service*, April 2014.

65 Fraser et al., *The Expert Citizen*.

66 In the two years after the implementation of CIRV there was a 16.3 per cent reduction in total homicides and 10.1 per cent in total shootings (University of Cincinnati Policing Institute, *Implementation of the Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence: Year 2 Report*, November 2009).

4.3.1 Cybersecurity

With cybercrime on the rise, this too is an area where 'expert citizens' and proactive businesses can help ensure that police time is spent on high harm offences. In 2013, GCHQ argued that up to 80 per cent of cyber attacks on businesses could be stopped through basic information risk management by users.⁶⁷ Simple actions such as implementing better privacy settings and installing anti-virus software can help prevent phishing and identity theft, but remain underused. Polling commissioned by the Home Office found that 18 per cent of frequent internet users and 37 per cent of less frequent users did not use security software on all devices, and only 43 per cent of users said they would check a site was secure.⁶⁸

The Home Affairs Committee has argued that domain owners and software developers also have a role to play. Design flaws and programming errors within software can make even some considered behaviour unsafe and software developers should be incentivised to provide better protections for service users.⁶⁹

5. Conclusion

The Coalition Government made considerable progress towards delivering a more transparent, accountable and efficient police service. The scope and need for further reform is, however, considerable. Police reform in this Parliament must focus on building a police service that is smaller, smarter and more flexible, and one that is part of an integrated public service response to communities at risk of high harm crime. This will require a much better understanding of police demand, both in terms of crime and non-crime incidences and the day to day allocation of police time. It will mean prioritising increases in productivity and capability as well as integration with other local services. This means shifting the debate from 'how many forces should we have?' to 'how can we best meet changing demand?' Delivering these reforms will lead to better outcomes for citizens.

67 Government Communications Headquarters, *Countering the Cyber Threat to Business*, Spring 2013.

68 Home Office, *Cyber Crime: A Review of the Evidence, Summary of Key Findings and Implications*, October 2013.

69 House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee, *E-Crime, Fifth Report of Session 2013–14*, July 2014.