Counting what Counts in Community Policing

Count what counts and not what can be counted

Albert Einstein

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Outline of Presentation

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  - Social and Political Context
  - Organisational Context

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  - Police Role
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  - What is Measured and What is Not

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  - Performance Management
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  - Performance Culture

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- Performance Management Process
- What Needs to be Measured
- Ripe for Reform

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# Research Context

- **Research Commenced in 1998**
- **Based in three English Forces of varying sizes**
  - Took Inspectorial Approach using combination of:
    - Grounded Theory
    - Realistic Evaluation
    - Systems Analysis
  - Quantitative Analysis of Qualitative Data
  - Subsequently linked with Partnership Working
Systems Approach to Community Policing

The Basics: A Continual Process …..
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Policing Style

Policing evolves over time

Reactive
Proactive
Coactive

Change of style is influenced by
External Driver
Internal Drivers

Fashions Fade but Style is Eternal
Yves Saint-Laurent

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Coactive Policing Style

A coactive policing style reflects a policing strategy based upon the police and other agencies working cooperatively.

The aim will be to identify the conditions that need to be addressed to improve community safety.

Police work with other agencies together to define and design the response to those conditions that threaten community safety.

The organisational structure is likely to be highly decentralised.
Social, Political & Organisational Context

**Political** – Police Reform as part of the wider ‘Modernising Government Agenda’

**Social** – Policing and Crime are consistently ‘top of the polls’ in terms of public concern …. but

**Organisational** – Police forces are beginning to put mechanisms in place … but ….
A New Policing Order?
Police Reform and Community Policing

Building Communities, Beating Crime: A Better Police Service for the 21st Century’ was published (HMSO 2004)

This has been described as;

“...an ambitious agenda for sustainable improvement in policing. The government is aiming for the spread of neighbourhood policing, with improved responsiveness and customer service and greater involvement of communities and citizens in determining how their communities are policed. The government has also given its commitment to working with the service, police authorities and their partner agencies in delivering safer communities across the country.”
Social Context - Trust

Veracity of Professions - Trends

Q. Would you tell me whether you generally trust .... to tell the truth or not?

<table>
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<td>Politicians</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
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% Trust

- Police: 61, 51, 60
- Teachers: 79, 84, 83
- Civil Servants: 25, 36, 47
- Politicians: 18, 14, 20

Compared well to others ...

Source: MORI 2000, Public Attitudes to Policing, Association of Police Authorities Conference

Base: c.1,000/2,000 British Adults aged 18+

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Social Context - Trust

Veracity of Professions - Trends

Q: Would you tell me whether you generally trust .... to tell the truth or not?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Police</th>
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<td>2000</td>
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<td>20</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Base: c. 1,000/2,000 British Adults aged 18+

Source: MORI 2000, Public Attitudes to Policing, Association of Police Authorities Conference

But is Declining ....
Do the Police Matter?

Universal Services: Satisfaction v Salience

Source: MORI 2000, Public Attitudes to Policing, Association of Police Authorities Conference

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Organisational: Closing the Gap

• Police Service needs to adapt for the 21st Century

• Basic Command Units and Neighbourhood Policing provides solid local platform; but

• 30 year old, 43 force structure does not
Closing the Gap .. Cont ..

- Little work done on the public’s identity with police forces; but
- Some partners/local politicians identified with district and BCU
- Study¹ in 2002 showed that people identified strongly with discrete neighbourhood with named local officer

¹ National Reassurance Policing Project, HMIC 2002.
Performance Regime

What Police Do & How they Do it

**Police Role**
Prevention, Detection or What?

**New Performance Management**
From FMI (Financial Management Initiative) to PPAF (Police Performance Assessment Framework)

**What is Measured and What is Not**
Political, Social or Organisational Priorities?
Research Findings

Performance Management

- Do the measures actually measure the priorities that the politicians+/or public want or none of these?

- What is not measured that should be?

- Do the performance management mechanisms result in increased and improved accountability?

- Is there a performance culture and - if so - does it help or hinder a coactive policing style?
Research Findings

Performance Planning & Review

- Priorities reflect National rather than Local concerns and there is little evidence of active community engagement.
- Main emphasis on performance planning was in relation to enforcement activity rather than prevention or quality of service.
- Police Commanders and their officers were not routinely held to account for targets.
Research Findings

Performance Culture

The Performance Culture was very closely related to the Leadership Style.

The Culture was almost exclusively quantitative rather than qualitative and reflective of reactive/proactive styles.

Officers ‘on the ground’ wanted to focus on quality of service but did not have the capacity and support to do so.
Conclusions

Performance Culture still has a long way to go in supporting Coactive Policing

Specific Performance Management Process can be identified

Police Reform is both an opportunity and a threat

The Opportunity is through the wider government focus on localism and the aim of neighbourhood policing by HO specifically

The threat is represented by the proposal to create much larger and more strategic forces

Need for radical changes to what the Performance Regime Measures
Winning Hearts and Minds
It can be Done

In a Second Field Study to One Police Force
18 months after first,
(and following the implementation of a new policing structure)
A Beat Constable stated:

I have been in the job for 20 years.
Since the 1st April,
it has been a breath of fresh air
and I am now enjoying coming to work again.
I saw a change in the first week. We have more time available"
Some
Selected
Examples &
Comments
Process of Performance Management

Governance

Organisational Objectives
(How the Core Business is Delivered)

Operational Objectives
(What is Delivered)

Accountability

Individual Assessment & Development

Organisational Assessment & Development

Vision & Values

Strategy & Plans

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Under the Police and Magistrates Courts Act of 1994, the Home Secretary sets National Key Objectives for all Forces in England and Wales. These have been reflected within our own targets. The Home Secretary is urging local police forces throughout England and Wales to make tackling problems of drugs, violent crime, burglaries and young offenders their priority.
In response to a question as to whether he had a strategic plan
A divisional commander replied
“Yes - on the board”
and pointed a whiteboard covered with data
(the board listed all arrests, crimes recorded and detected on a monthly basis).

He described how this gave the operational focus.

When asked about his commitment to crime prevention
and working within multi agency partnerships,
he was not able to point to any data.

When asked why his division was ‘performing’ well
(particularly in relation to crime detections)
he stated that officers were

“all singing from the same song sheet -
constables were going to the Magistrates Courts
and swearing out warrants for drug dealers”.
We are autonomous and left to manage,
But are accountable through
The operations conference
Chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable

There is pressure from sector inspectors.
Accountability now sits firmly with them
And they will bear down on us
Leadership Style #1

Divisional Commander (Average Performance)

The setting of hard achievement targets (at a sector level) is difficult given the absence of historical data,

i.e. the force target to reduce burglary by 4% is reflected on all sectors.

There is a danger in setting targets at sector level, one reason being that the establishment (the number of officers) may not be right.

A Sergeant on the Same Division

Senior management had abrogated their responsibility in moving to sector-based (neighbourhood) policing. He said that it was a case of “Now it’s your sector - sort it out”.

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Leadership Style #2

Divisional Commander (Highly Performing)

He described the two main drivers –
firstly he had issued ‘a memo’ as to how achieve targets
and secondly, he described how he adopted a ‘hands on approach’
through one-to-one meetings with Inspectors.
When he was asked how he ensured that the performance
was genuinely improving, he said “I dip my toe in the water regularly to see what’s happening”.

A Sergeant on the Same Division

The general emphasis is about crime –
Particularly the detection of crime
and figures examine the number of prisoners that we have arrested
..... Performance is on everyone’s lips
The Reality

A Sergeant

“The force is performing well, but the culture is one of 'we must get the figures' then we will problem solve.”
“Sectorisation has not really increased the amount of time walking – the emphasis is on prisoners and detections. Most of the time is spent responding to calls as a sector officer manning a core policing vehicle – it is a case of moving from 'job-to-job-to-job'. The operation of the beat system was better under the old system”. 
Reality of Time?

A Sergeant

A common concern on sector [local policing area] is that time would pass and staff will meet with community representatives, identify problems and do something that you can get passionate about and then find that you are pulled back into the shift.

We cannot get involved in long term projection of problems and partnerships, let alone measure the impact.
A Sergeant

"I am concerned that we are not selling the job right for potential PCs
- they are still being attracted by the sexy part of the job
  - 'blues and twos'.
- We need to recruit people who work in the local community
  - solving problems and forming partnerships
and who understand the chief’s (chief constable) philosophy."
Why is Performance Management a Process?

A Constable

“If the managers tell them (1) (operational officers) how they are performing (2) - if the figures are up (3) they can tell them they are doing well (4). The way we are led by PIs is subtle (5) - boards are everywhere (6) Whether people admit to pride is another matter (7).”

(1) The ‘physical process’ of telling someone
(2) The ‘mental processes’ of making them feel good/bad
(3) Showing success or otherwise in relation to achievement
(4) Inter-related objective of motivation
(5) Critical element – doing what is ‘seen to be important’
(6) Emphasizing its importance.
(7) Developing a Culture
Change in Focus of Performance Regimes
And Measure how the Police/ Home Office:

(1) Work in a cooperative way

(2) Identify community problems

(3) Define responses to those problems

(4) Measure the impact on community safety and satisfaction

(5) The extent to which the police organization is decentralized but accountable

Ripe for Reform?

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