

BSc (Hons) Professional Police Practice

LEVEL 4 - 40 Credits

Workbook title: Competency Based Workbook 2 (PCDA)

**(SOUTH WALES POLICE, GWENT POLICE AND
UWTSD)**

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FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMME

Module title: Policing in the Workplace 2 (PCDA)

Workbook Guidance

Please read these notes carefully; they provide essential information.

What is the workbook for?

The purpose of this workbook is to enable learners to demonstrate and provide evidence of how they meet the learning outcomes set by the College of Policing, for the BSc programme. Essentially, you are being asked to outline your experiential learning based upon your theoretical understanding in a range of operational situations.

This workbook covers the two components from your module descriptor 4001D, Policing in the Workplace 1.

There are two identified learning outcomes:

1. First learning outcome relates to component 1; is 3600 words, contributing 60% to the overall mark – ‘developing your policing practice and reflecting on your learning experience’.

It is a portfolio focusing on the first 5 elements listed below, covered by Task 1, Task 2 and Task 3.

The nature of your police work will no doubt have exposed you to elements 6 to 10 so don't be afraid to touch on these in component 1.

2. Second learning outcome relates to component 2; is 2400 words, contributing 40% of the overall mark – ‘demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a particular subject related to your professional practice and assess the actual and/or potential impact of applying what you have learned’.

This assignment covers Task 4; whilst this focusses predominantly on elements 6 to 10, again the nature of your police work will undoubtedly see some overlap and there may well be some duplication of the first 5 elements.

Areas of Professional Practice covered by both components (also known as elements) :

1. Wellbeing and Resilience
2. Vulnerability and risk
3. Understanding the police constable role
4. Communication skills
5. Conducting investigations (Interviewing suspects)
6. Decision making and discretion
7. Public protection
8. Problem solving
9. Evidence-based policing
10. Policing communities

You may wish to use the same incidents as you've outlined in the Occupational Competence Portfolio.

How should the workbook be presented?

Blank electronic copies can be found on Moodle of this workbook. You must submit this document electronically therefore it is important that you save your work regularly and upload the final typed version through Turnitin on Moodle.

Word count policy can be found in chapter 7 of the Academic Quality under section 7.7 (this applies to presenting work above and under the specified word count).

(https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/academic-office/aqh-chapters/chapters---en/Chapter_07_Assessment-Taught_Programmes_Pages_72-79-UPDATED-05-11-2019.pdf)

Reflective practice is a core aspect for your workbooks and although there is a variety of useful resources on Moodle, there is one particular book, that is specifically based on reflective practice in policing, here is a link to one chapter from Selina Copley's Reflective Practice for Policing Students:

https://moodle.uwtsd.ac.uk/pluginfile.php/298870/mod_resource/content/1/Reflective%20Practice%20for%20Policing%20Students%20-%20Selina%20Copley%20Chapter5.pdf

How is the workbook assessed?

Advice and support about the completion of this workbook will be provided by university staff as part of your initial training day. Your tutor constable and in-force training staff will not be involved in assessing or marking your workbook after it has been submitted.

Dates of workbook submission will be made available during the initial training day and posted on Moodle.

Once submitted your workbook will be assessed and marked independently.

Confidentiality

It is important that no individual can be identified either directly or indirectly from the information in the workbook. Therefore, you must:

- adhere to guidance in the Student Handbook about unfair practice and plagiarism;
- not identify individuals including witnesses, victims or offenders by name;
- not write information that enables any individual to be identified indirectly through the description you provide. This includes references to names, colleagues, places (including hospitals, schools, town, villages, streets) specific incidents which were high profile and could be identified due to past publicity, other professionals or any other personal information including medical or other conditions;
- take personal responsibility for adhering to confidentiality rules.
- not include any dates of any incidents or anything that specifically identifies an actual incident.

NOTE

Your workbook will be submitted electronically via Turnitin on Moodle. Guidance on this is in the Student Handbook.

Remember that the workbook is YOUR responsibility you must not rely on the assessor or anyone else to pick up any confidentiality breaches as this is your work and you must accept full responsibility for confidentiality. Meeting all the confidentiality requirements is very important.

Dyslexia and other special circumstances

If you have any condition that you feel may affect your ability to deal with any part of the programme, please see the Student Handbook for further guidance. The University has a Student Services Unit that may be able to help but ***it is the learner's individual responsibility to contact them.***

Guidance:

- Your workbook must contain the items specified in the table below (clearly identified and in the order given);
- You should use this particular document to insert your text / answer within each section of this workbook;

Contents

Workbook	Area of Professional Practice	Word count
Component 1 60%		
Task 1	Wellbeing and Resilience	600
Task 2	Vulnerability and risk, understanding the police constable role, communication skills, decision making and discretion, public protection.	1500
Task 3	Conducting investigations (Interviewing suspects), communication skills, decision making and discretion.	1500
Component 2 40%		
Task 4	Problem solving, evidence-based policing, understanding the police constable role, policing communities and decision making and discretion.	2400
	Confirmation of the completion of your Occupational Competency Portfolio (OCP)	
	Bibliography	
	Confirmation of Confidentiality and Plagiarism	

Task 1 (Component 1)

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum: Wellbeing and Resilience

Guidance:

Focussing on your tutorship, reflect on the coping strategies you have applied to develop resilience and minimise stress when adapting to your role as a constable within the workplace (e.g. nature of the work, organisational culture, shift pattern, pressures of work and joining a new team).

600 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section)

ANSWER:

Stress is defined as “a state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or demanding circumstances.” (Oxford English Dictionary). Resilience is defined as “the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties” (Oxford English Dictionary). Since becoming an operational officer, there has been an increase in the demands placed upon me. I have needed to utilise effective coping strategies to develop resilience and minimise stress. These techniques include the building of effective peer support networks and effective time management.

One coping strategy I applied to develop resilience and minimise stress is to establish and maintain a strong peer support network. The mental health charity Mind highlight the importance of peer support in the development of resilience (Mind, 2017). Since becoming an operational officer, I have formed close bonds with my new colleagues. I have also maintained the strong relationships I developed during my initial learning phase. I have faced many stressors such as dealing with unfamiliar complex situations, conflict scenarios and encountered distressing scenes such as those of sudden deaths. Maintaining positive relationships with my former training colleagues has been essential as it allows me to discuss these new encounters with people who are having the same experience. Therefore, we offer each other support and communicate freely about how these incidents have

affected us. Building relationships with my new colleagues has been useful as it allows me to draw on their vast experience at times when I am unsure of what I am meant to be doing. They have offered me advice about better ways to deal with certain situations and tips for dealing with my workload. These networks have allowed me to minimise stress and develop emotional resilience.

Another strategy that I have used to minimise stress is to ensure I spend time outside of work doing hobbies that I enjoy. Since becoming an operational officer, I have encountered long shifts with lots of overtime, complex social issues and a demanding workload. The National Health Service highlight having “me-time” as one of their top stress busters (NHS, 2020). As such, I have ensured that once my shift is finished, I spend time participating in hobbies that I enjoy. This includes getting frequent exercise and playing video games. By doing this, I feel I have developed a healthy work-life balance and am able to separate my working life and my home life. Therefore, I prevent myself from dwelling on my work and this in turn has helped reduce stress considerably. The mental health charity Mind also lists finding a work-life balance one of their key steps for building resilience. (Mind, 2017)

Another key strategy I have needed to minimise stress and develop resilience is effective time management: “Good time management is essential if you are to handle a heavy workload without excessive stress.” (Stress Management Society, 2016). Since becoming an operational officer, I have more work than ever to complete. This includes both in the workplace and academic assignments at home. Efficient time management has been essential in preventing this workload from becoming overwhelming and ensuring I meet deadlines. By planning my academic work ahead of time as much as is possible, I have been able to set aside time to complete my tasks and ensure I stay on schedule. This has prevented a build-up of stress preventing my workload from accumulating and ensures I do not have to worry about the potential impacts of failing to complete them on time.

In conclusion, I have tried to maintain and adapt many of the stress reduction methods I applied in my initial six months training. While all of the methods I used have maintained their usefulness, some have taken priority over others. Taking frequent exercise is now less prevalent as I have had less time due to longer working hours and due to lockdown restrictions. Effective time management has become more relevant than ever. As such, going forward, I will continue to maintain and adapt these methods.

(657 Words)

Task 2 (Component 1)

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:

Vulnerability and risk, understanding the police constable role, communication skills, decision making and discretion, public protection.

You must choose **a policing incident** in which you played a role with an offender/service user/victim and reflect on what happened.

Give a brief description of the incident including social and legislative contexts and any relevant cultural, ethnicity and language issues.

Review the fundamental elements of effective communication used (verbal, non-verbal, active listening skills, open and closed questions, building rapport and negotiation skills).

Explain your considerations in relation to vulnerability and your responsibilities for safeguarding individuals involved. Outline the police role in managing these factors to reduce risk. (Consider the personal vulnerabilities of the individuals involved, including situational/environmental factors that can result in risk or harm).

Your reflection must illustrate your understanding and application of core principles of ethics, equality, diversity and human rights, as well as any relevant Code of Practice considerations, culturally sensitive practice and language preference.

1500 words (+/- 10%: *include your actual word count at the end of each section*)

ANSWER:

In my response, I will be describing an incident where the victim of crime was deemed to be vulnerable. Vulnerability is defined as “The quality or state of being exposed to the possibility of being attacked or harmed, either physically or emotionally.” (Oxford English Dictionary)

This is further expanded on by College of Policing which states that “A person is vulnerable if, as a result of their situation or circumstances, they are unable to take care of or protect themselves or others from harm or exploitation.” (NPCC, 2020).

I will also be reflecting on my communication skills and my responsibilities in relation to detected vulnerabilities. During my response, I will be using Borton’s reflective tool.

During the late hours of a night shift, I received a call via my personal radio, alerting me to a disturbance that was occurring nearby. The reporting person stated that a male who was known to him was trying to break into his home. I recognised this caller as a male who had rang for help a couple weeks previous after being assaulted by the same suspect. We attended the address and spoke to both parties. The suspect insisted that he was just visiting a friend to make sure he was okay and insisted he had a positive relationship with him. On the other hand, the victim stated that the suspect had attacked him previously and had caused damage to his home on this occasion. After checking police record management systems, I arrested the suspect for assault occasioning actual bodily harm and criminal damage. This person was conveyed to custody by my colleague while I stayed and supported the victim and took statements.

In this case, I initially considered any potential barriers to communication in order to utilise the most effective communication techniques. Firstly, the time of day was very late. This could potentially affect both the victim's and my own concentration on what is being said. Secondly, from previous knowledge of the victim, I was acutely aware that he had substance misuse issues and alcohol dependency, and was possibly under the influence of unknown substances during the incident, although he assured us this was not the case. He also had known health issues, having suffered two strokes relatively recently, and he appeared to be in a state of emotional distress. Subsequently, I attempted to adapt my communication style to support this.

Most of the techniques that I applied were based around the effective use of tone, pace, and the content of my speech. I spoke to the victim using simplistic language and spoke slowly and clearly. This was for several reasons. Firstly, I had prior knowledge that the victim had a simplistic vocabulary and somewhat lower functioning. Secondly, I was aware he had just been through a potentially terrifying incident and he may have issues concentrating on what

is being said. As a result of this technique being applied, the victim understood what was being said and asked of him with minimal confusion.

Another technique that I applied was the use of active listening skills. This involved sending out the correct nonverbal communications, such as nodding when the victim was talking and maintaining eye contact. I believe this was essential in showing the victim that I am paying attention to what he is saying and indicating that I care. "Non-verbal communication by the listener can communicate to the talker that you're Interested and concerned about his thoughts and feelings." (Patrick Oliver, 1991, p.44). By being consciously aware of my own listening, I also ensured I was able to focus on the message being passed. I will continue to use these skills in all future instances.

A third technique used to facilitate effective communication was establishing good rapport with the victim. During my conversation with him, I started to believe that there was more going on than was being disclosed. The victim alleged that the recent incidents had occurred due to him causing accidental damage to the offender's carpet. This story did not ring true to me. As such, I attempted to build rapport with the victim in order to gain further information. I believe that this positive and well-mannered approach may have encouraged the victim to see me as a professional. Subsequently, the victim disclosed information he may have otherwise been unwilling to share, which included that the incident had occurred due to a drug debt. This approach clearly achieved the desired outcome. Building rapport also has other benefits. A study by Kieckhaefer, Vallano and Schrieber (2014) indicates that building rapport with an adult eyewitness can have a positive effect on their memory recall. During my incident, I built a good level of rapport with the victim. This was indicated by the overall change in his demeanour after my arrival. He displayed relaxed body language and was making jokes toward the end of our encounter. However, the victim still had significant inability to recall information from both the incident that had happened on the day and the one that had happened weeks previous. Going forward, I will continue to attempt to build

rapport with victims of crime. I believe this approach put the victim at ease and calmed them down after the serious incident. I do not, however, believe that our level of rapport had any positive effect on his recall in this situation.

The police service and partner agencies have significant obligations and responsibilities regarding vulnerability. This involves not only identifying the vulnerability but also providing appropriate safeguarding to reduce the risk of harm. The first responsibility of frontline officers is to conduct a vulnerability needs assessment. This involves considering what risk and protective factors are in place. People can be vulnerable in many different ways and each of these can need different types of safeguards put in place. In my incident, I conducted an assessment and noted the following: my victim suffered with alcohol and substance misuse, had significant health problems and also interacted with other people who were involved in criminality. I deemed that each of these factors made this individual vulnerable. I also believed that the male's substance misuse placed him at increased risk of exploitation from those who he associated with who were also involved in criminality and who may wish to exploit him.

Once certain vulnerabilities are identified, police have a responsibility to introduce safeguards and offer support to reduce the risk of harm. Such vulnerable persons are also entitled to an enhanced service under the victim codes of practice. Police forces as well as other agencies have both a moral and statutory obligation to act.

An adult at risk is anyone who is "Aged 18 years or older who: is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect, has needs for care and support and as a result of those needs is unable to protect self against abuse or neglect or the risk of it." (*Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014*). In my incident, I was satisfied the victim qualified under this definition due to the nature of his vulnerabilities and the abuse he is suffering.

Section 128 of the same act puts a legal duty on relevant authorities to report any incident involving an adult at risk. In order to satisfy the demands of this act and also to be able to introduce safeguards, police submit a public protection notification (PPN). This is one of the primary ways police can support vulnerable people. It is a document that collects information on the circumstances of the person which is then shared, with permission, with partner agencies such as social services, NHS, probation service and others. This ensures that these agencies are then able to put in their own safeguards, which they may be better suited to implement than the police. While lots of the issues making my victim vulnerable would require intervention from other agencies, I was able to offer some initial safeguarding. I achieved this by arresting the offender and removing them from the scene. I ensured the door to the property which suffered minor damage was able to be fully secured before leaving. By making my PPN referral, I also ensured that the victim was offered support for his alcohol and substance misuse and partners were made aware of his situation. At the time of leaving the address, I was satisfied I had adequately reduced the risk of any harm to well within acceptable standards and done all I could do to manage that risk.

In conclusion, I applied many different communication techniques to effectively facilitate communication. As a result of this incident, I can now see the importance of maintaining a positive relationship with both victims and witnesses and the effects that can have on their willingness to share information. I also believe that by putting them at ease, they will be better able to relax and therefore may be able to concentrate more on the fine details. In future instances, while dealing with victims and witnesses, I will endeavour to adopt the same approach wherever appropriate. While considering vulnerability, it is important to realise lots of the issues at hand have no instant fix. While arresting the perpetrator and repairing the door offer short term relief, lots of vulnerabilities require long term fixes. Since interacting with this male and other vulnerable people, I can now see the importance and benefits of information sharing with partner agencies. Without it, we would be unable to safeguard people to the required standard and would leave people at risk. I will continue to

submit public protection notifications every time a vulnerability is identified to ensure the best support is offered.

(1604 Words)

Task 3 (Component 1)

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:

Conducting investigations (Interviewing suspects), communication skills, decision making and discretion,

You must choose **a suspect interview** that you have **been involved** and reflect on what happened.

Give a brief description of a relevant incident including social and legislative contexts and any relevant cultural, ethnicity and language issues.

Outline your considerations when planning and preparing an interview (e.g. gathering evidence, suspect vulnerability and legislation). Explain and reflect on your responsibilities when conducting the interview in accordance with the PEACE interview process. Evaluate your performance in the interview and its effectiveness in the investigative process.

Illustrate how policing values were engaged, as well as any other considerations including culturally sensitive practice and language preference.

1500 words (+/- 10%: *include your actual word count at the end of each section*)

ANSWER:

Suspect interviews are a key component of any criminal investigation. In my response, I will be discussing a suspect interview where I was the lead interviewer. I will explain my responsibilities when conducting a police interview and reflecting on my own performance. In my response, I will be using Borton's reflective tool.

Over the last few months, an incident occurred where a male was assaulted by an unknown male in the street during daylight hours. This male suffered actual bodily harm because of this, in the form of a chipped tooth and a fractured nose. A possible suspect was identified through witness descriptions. I arranged for this person to attend an interview on a voluntary basis. I then interviewed this male in relation to the offence of assault occasioning actual bodily harm.

Police interviewing has developed considerably over the course of the last few decades. The new PEACE model has been utilised, which is a change in culture from old school interviewing. It was developed as a “model of investigative interviewing which provided a more efficient and ethical alternative to the up-to date practice.” (Vladimir, 2016, p.161). This is the model I used during this interview. The first stage of this is to plan and prepare the interview. “This is one of the most important phases in effective interviewing. The success of the interview and, consequently, the investigation could depend on it.” (College of Policing, 2013). There are several considerations to make in relation to this stage. In my investigation, I ensured I had gathered all known available forms of evidence prior to the interview. This was significant as it is important to have as much information as possible to ensure a full understanding of the circumstances and to be able to challenge any discrepancies within the suspect account.

Another important preparatory step was for me to consider the circumstances of the suspect in relation to their vulnerability. The code of practice for interviewing insists that, where such vulnerabilities are identified, an appropriate adult (AA) may be necessary. (PACE, 1984, Code C). The role of the AA is to support the vulnerable person by helping facilitate communication and safeguard the rights and entitlements of that person. The suitability for this person was assessed by me and by the voluntary attendance sergeant. This was important as any interview conducted without consideration for the relevant vulnerabilities may completely discredit the interview. In this instance, there were no vulnerabilities detected and no appropriate adult was necessary. I also had to consider the suspect’s language choice in case an interpreter was needed and whether they would have a legal representative. After this, it is important to prepare for the interview itself. This involves the preparing of relevant interview topics and questions, preparing disclosure for the legal representative as well as ensuring all exhibits and statements are prepared to be used in interview. Ultimately, this was a largely stressful portion of the interview due in part

by strict time pressures. There were many exhibits to prepare, statements to summarise and interview questions to develop. This was exacerbated by the fact that the interview was due to take place early into the start of my shift after only arranging it the shift previous. This made me stressed and anxious that I would not be able to successfully develop my questions to the required standard. Going forward, I will ensure that I set aside enough time to plan my interview, without causing myself this level of undue stress as it had a negative effect on my outlook towards the interview.

The second part of the PEACE model is to engage with the suspect and explain the procedure. This is the stage where I attempted to build some rapport with the suspect in the hope it may put them at ease and help encourage communication in the interview. This began when I initially greeted the suspect in a polite and respectful manner. "Adopting a conservative and non-threatening manner will improve the chances of the interviewee cooperating" (Bryant and Bryant, 2019, p,566). Then once we were in the interview room, I explained the procedure to them to ensure they understood the process. I hoped they would speak more freely with someone they had built positive rapport with. This also helped ensure I was treating the suspect in a fair manner and remaining professional whilst doing so. Personally, I found this stage difficult due to the fact that I was aware of the alleged conduct of this person. I was mindful that this may affect my opinion and attitude towards the suspect. By being aware of these feelings, I was able to actively negate them, thereby ensuring that I did not accidentally create any communication barriers between the interviewee and myself. To jeopardise the rapport that was being built would be abhorrent. This understanding is essential as an interview can be one of the most important stages in an investigation. In future interviews, I will continue to regulate my emotions to maintain some level of rapport.

Once explaining the process was complete, we began the interview. Further explanation was given in the form of my opening memo card. I find using the memo card effective to

ensure I inform the suspect of everything they have a right to know, with no omissions. The next stage of the PEACE model is to retrieve an account of the incident from the suspect. During this stage, it is important an interviewer is actively listening as the account of the suspect can open doors into further topics that need probing. The suspect may also give supporting evidence to witness accounts or be able to provide alternative lines of enquiry. In my interview, the legal representative of the person involved provided a prepared statement on behalf of their client. The statement denied responsibility for the offence and the conduct accused. This is effectively the suspect's account. At the time, I felt positive about this, as I was quite nervous about being a lead interviewer and I had adequately prepared for a no comment interview. However, in review, the account would have been vital in placing this person at the scene and identifying them as the person involved. In future interviews, while I have no way of ensuring a suspect provides an account, I now have a much better understanding of the importance of a suspect's account.

Had the suspect provided an account, I would have been able to ask further probing questions into the topics raised. Once the questioning of the account is complete, I would have asked my relevant question surrounding the topics I needed to discuss. As my suspect provided such a limited account, I asked these questions from the start. As an interview nears its natural end, I would have used that time to challenge any inconsistencies in the account given by the suspect against what I already know. However, I had truly little to challenge due to the lack of information presented by the suspect.

The penultimate stage of the PEACE process is closure. This is where the I am responsible for bringing the interview to a close in a structured and organised manner. I checked to ensure that the suspect had nothing they wished to add. They confirmed they did not, and I brought the interview to a close by announcing the date and time and turning the recording off.

The final stage of the process is evaluation. As in any part of policing, professional reflection is a core part of development. At the time, I conducted a post-interview analysis with my tutor. This stage is therefore invaluable in ensuring continual professional development. Going forward, I will continue to assess my own performance to make sure I can better assess my strengths and weaknesses.

An assessment of my performance in the interview can be broken down into each individual stage of the PEACE process. In the planning stage, I failed to allocate the correct amount of time so that I could complete all my preparation without stress. Despite this, I still made effective use of that time and created a large quantity of effective questions and topics to discuss. I can now see the importance of preparing these questions in the event of a no comment interview, as had I not prepared, I would have struggled to ask the relevant questions. Therefore, I will take this knowledge going forward and make sure I prepare enough questions for the event of a no comment interview. During the engage and explain portion, I believe I created a reasonable connection with the suspect. I explained everything I needed to by using a memo card and then checked his understanding. Therefore, there could be no doubt whether the process was being understood by the suspect. I cannot accurately assess my performance in the account stage due to the fact the suspect provided a brief prepared statement. The closure and evaluation stages were also completed well and there is nothing specific to note.

The effectiveness of the interview in the investigative process cannot be overstated. It is the first opportunity for a suspect to give their account of what happened, provide their own version of events and offer a defence.

In conclusion, I followed the PEACE model throughout the process as it is the current methodology for achieving best evidence. I find this interviewing model to be beneficial as the strict structure of the interview ensures I cover every relevant area and say all that needs to be said. Each stage of the process is important and I am satisfied that I engaged with

each step well. I believe that as I gain more experience in investigative interviewing, my confidence will increase and I will find the experience less daunting.

(1625 Words)

Task 4 (Component 2)

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:

Problem solving, evidence-based policing, understanding the police constable role, policing communities and decision making and discretion.

You must choose **an incident** that you been involved in with an offender/service user/victim and reflect on what happened.

Give a brief description of the situation including social and legislative contexts and any relevant cultural, ethnicity and language issues.

Consider how the anti-social behaviour impacted the local community and what constitutes effective and appropriate police action.

Outline your responsibilities when responding to anti-social behaviour (including enforcement, prevention activity and partnership activity).

Illustrate how policing values were engaged particularly through an **analysis** of the potential impact of bias on the decision-making process.

Considering your experience to date, reflect on any aspect of problem solving, evidence based policing, decision making and discretion which may impact upon wider police community relations.

For example:

How has your experience of policing the night time economy influenced your perception of the wider community?

Other examples relating to your experiences would be equally valid.

2400 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section)

ANSWER:

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) is partly defined as “conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to any person” (*Antisocial Behaviour Crime and Policing Act, 2014*). The incident I will be describing is both an anti-social behaviour issue and a breach of COVID-19 regulations. I have chosen this specific incident due to the

current worldwide social climate regarding COVID-19. While there has been a recent decrease in COVID-19-related deaths in the UK, between 28th February 2021 and 6th March 2021 there were still 1,542 deaths within 28 days of a positive test (GOV.UK, 2021). I have also used this incident because many COVID breaches are also anti-social behaviour issues and the topics are closely linked. I will be outlining my response using Borton's reflective tool.

During the start of a morning shift, I received a call via my personal radio alerting me to a COVID breach and anti-social behaviour issue. The reporting person claimed that a number of people inside a flat were having a party that had started the night previous. The people in this flat were alleged to be playing loud music, drinking and shouting all night long, which the reporting person stated was causing her distress. I attended the address in the company of a colleague and knocked on the door. The door was opened by the flat owner who allowed me entry into the property. It was apparent there was between 10-14 people inside the address. None of the residents could provide a reasonable excuse for being at the address and all those present were issued with fixed penalty notices for gathering with other persons without reasonable excuse. Once enforcement action was complete, I disbanded the party and instructed all non-residents to leave the address. While these people were leaving, an unknown member of the group had sworn at an elderly neighbour while leaving the address, causing them alarm. This was not witnessed by my colleague and I, but the victim complained to officers about the conduct of the persons at the party and stated that it was a constant and ongoing problem with that particular household. Unfortunately, the victim was unable to identify which member of the group had said the words and there was no means of identifying which member of the group was involved.

When considering how this behaviour impacted the local community, the specific concerns need to be broken down into the different aspects of ASB shown. Firstly, there was a house party that had continued throughout the night. This house party consisted of loud music,

shouting and drinking during anti-social hours when other residents were trying to sleep. This had clearly affected the reporting person who called the police multiple times after enduring the disruption for many hours. Secondly, there was a COVID regulation breach. This particular behaviour can cause significant alarm and upset to residents due to the prospect of the coronavirus being transmitted in the block of flats where they reside, putting them at increased risk. Thirdly, one member of the group directed abusive words at the elderly resident who came out to complain. When I spoke to the victim of this abuse, it was clear that she was upset by this behaviour and stated that it was an ongoing issue. All three of these different aspects of ASB can affect the community in different ways. Therefore, a different approach to dealing with each aspect would be necessary.

There are a number of variables that should be considered when considering an efficient response to ASB. Firstly, it is important to determine whether any offences have been committed. Naturally, if an offence has occurred, this provides officers with additional options for dealing with the behaviour and its culprits. In this instance, the COVID-19 regulation breach provided officers with both a power of entry into the address but also a suitable disposal method with fixed penalty notices. Secondly, one of the other most important considerations that needs to be made is assessing the impact on the victim/s. If this person is a repeat victim of anti-social behaviour and is vulnerable, additional actions may be necessary for safeguarding and support. This behaviour can have a dramatic effect on the mental health and wellbeing of the victim. Ineffective police action in dealing with the behaviour can have dramatic effects. This can include a drop in public confidence in the police and can have devastating effects on the mental health of the victim. The relevant considerations around threat, risk and harm need to be made before any decision on action should or can be made.

The case of Fiona Pilkington highlights the importance of dealing with ASB robustly, especially in cases where there are high levels of vulnerability. The case of Fiona Pilkington

relates to a female who resided with her daughter who had significant disabilities. This family was targeted by local youths who perpetrated ASB and harassment against this family. This behaviour continued for a decade before the stress became too much for the family. Fiona ended up committing suicide as well as killing her own daughter by setting the car they were in ablaze. The IPCC report concluded that there were a number of failures from the police included failing to identify the victims as a vulnerable family unit and failing to deal with the criminal offences that were being committed amongst other things (IPCC, 2011). This incident shows the importance of treating ASB incidents seriously and ensuring the correct support is in place. It also shows the potential effects ASB can have on repeat victims. An individual incident of low level ASB may appear as a waste of time to an officer, however it could be having serious consequences to the victim.

In my incident, when considering what effective action from ourselves would be, I assessed the following. The house party, while anti-social, and while having a potential effect on other residents, was not behaviour that was being targeted at any individual. Furthermore, I had checked the relevant record management systems and concluded that this address had not been reported as the subject of previous ASB issues in many years, despite what the other resident had stated. Thirdly, I was aware that the COVID breach being committed allowed me to take greater action than if the regulations were not in place. Finally, I assessed the vulnerability of the victim of the abusive language and deemed her not to be vulnerable, despite her being clearly upset by the behaviour.

With consideration of these factors, I deemed that in this instance it would be appropriate to disband the party and issue all the people present with fixed penalty notices for the COVID regulation breach. I believed this was an efficient and balanced reaction as it allowed me to effectively deal with the complaint about the house party as well as provide a reasonable punishment for the COVID regulation breach. While the swearing at the other resident could

constitute an offence of causing intentional harassment, alarm or distress (Public Order Act, 1986), there were no means of identifying the culprit and as such any further investigation was not possible.

Having been an operation officer for the last three months, I have gained a greater deal of understanding in relation to the importance of the powers bestowed by COVID regulations. The associated power of entry if a breach is suspected is an incredible tool in combating criminality. There has also been benefits due to the fact that it is an offence to do a number of things, such as gathering with others. Since lockdown began, lots of anti-social behaviour is now also an offence under the coronavirus legislation. This means that that has been additional powers in place to deal with this behaviour. Going forward, I will continue to consider these powers in every relevant incident.

Police officers and their forces have a great deal of responsibility when it comes to dealing with anti-social behaviour. As such, there are number of procedures and policies in place to ensure that these responsibilities are met. Firstly, South Wales Police use the GETOUT mnemonic for all ASB incidents. All officers are to follow this when attending. Essentially it is the responsibility of the attending officer to contact the victim or reporting person, assess their vulnerability and needs and gather details of all other witnesses, offenders and suspects. That officer should then offer advice and contact details, update the occurrence log and take some form of immediate action. By following this structure, officers will ensure they provide at least a base level of service and set a good footing for follow up action to be taken. Since becoming a constable, I have used this structure to complete all anti-social behaviour calls. This can be used for all crime and non-crime ASB incidents. Once the GETOUT mnemonic has been followed, any further action that is taken is largely dependent on the individual circumstances of the anti-social behaviour.

While some ASB issues are one off, others can require a dedicated and organised response to combat them. The responses to these issues can be broken down into enforcement, prevention activities and multi-agency resolutions. Low level ASB is often perpetrated by youths with a small or non-existent criminal history. Consideration must be given to this when deciding on a balanced and justified course of action. Early enforcement action against these offenders usually consists of verbal or written warnings. These are restorative justice methods suitable for one-off or low-level incidents. These resolutions are ineffective against repeat perpetrators as there is no punishment for continuing with the undesirable behaviour. If further escalation is needed, police forces will often engage in acceptable behaviour contracts. This is a written agreement between the police and the offender, prohibiting certain behaviours. Once again however, there is no punishment for failing to adhere to it. For the most serious of ASB issues, there are a few resolutions for the most persistent offenders. Civil injunctions or criminal behaviour order (CBO) can be obtained through the courts, which prohibit certain behaviours, and most importantly, in the case of CBO's, it is an offence to breach them.

Besides enforcement action, another valuable method of reducing ASB is to engage in prevention activities. Every police area will have a neighbourhood policing team who prioritise community concerns. These departments will often conduct patrols of hot spots to prevent further incidents from occurring. Police and other agencies can also try to divert offenders away from their current course of action by getting them involved in community activities such as attending at youth clubs.

Without a doubt, one of the most effective ways to control ASB, is to engage in a multi-agency response. Some of these agencies include housing associations, landlords, councils, schools, youth centres, charities, and others. By communicating with these other agencies, police can ensure that information is shared with all relevant parties. This can help share the burden with these other agencies, and in lots of cases these agencies may be better suited to dealing with the behaviour. For example, housing based ASB can often be dealt with more

efficiently by the local council and the housing associations. This is due to the fact they have far wider powers in this area than the police. This joint approach is essential to achieving a best outcome. "The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 established the statutory obligation for the police and other agencies to work together to reduce anti-social behaviour." (Bryant and Bryant, 2019, p.160)

In dealing with my incident, it was important I made fair, justified, and proportionate decisions in relation to the enforcement action taken. When making any decision, officers need to be aware of the potential impact certain biases may have. There are two types of bias, conscious and unconscious. Unconscious bias affects all officers and indeed all people in some fashion. Therefore, it is important officers are aware of any such biases they may possess in order that they can ensure they do not let it affect the decision-making process. "Biases distort and disrupt objective contemplation of an issue by introducing influences into the decision-making process that are separate from the decision itself." (LumenLearning, 2018). Objectivity is one of the key policing values and allowing biases to void this objectivity can have dangerous results. In my incident, it was important I made the decision based off the facts and not allow my own views on the matter, or my views of the people involved, to influence my judgement. This also ensures that any action taken is fair and not disproportionate to the behaviour/offence.

Policing COVID-19 regulations has been a massive challenge both for police forces and for me individually. I believe there has been a noticeable change in community relations, that is especially true since enforcement action hit its peak. Studies have shown that "there is frustration at the poor performance of the criminal justice system during the pandemic and a concern that this could impact on public confidence in the police." (Crest Advisory, 2020). The risk of this is that, once we recover from the pandemic, there is the chance that community perception of the police service may have been irreparably damaged. I also

believe there has been a divide among the community as people have drastically different beliefs on how the pandemic should be handled. Policing the community during this time period has had a negative overall effect on my perception of the wider community.

In my three months of being an operational officer, I have attended many calls relating to COVID-19 regulation breaches and anti-social behaviour. The first thing that has surprised me about this is the volume of these breaches that are occurring. I find it particularly interesting that those committing the breaches are often those who would not commit other offences and their criminal record would often indicate such. I cannot be sure of the reason why these “ordinary” people are committing these breaches, but my experience leads me to believe that many people appear to be tired of following the extremely strict guidelines that have been in place for a substantial length of time. Secondly, many people seem to be not following the rules simply due to the fact they do not agree with the restrictions in the first instance. I have spoken to many members of the public, both in COVID breach incidents and outside of them, who have questioned me on whether I believe it is justifiable for police to be enforcing these rules and many people have indicated to me that they believe that the current regulations in place are a breach of their human rights.

In conclusion, anti-social behaviour is a widespread and difficult issue to combat. It often requires a dedicated problem-solving approach which is not something that I can easily engage in due to my role as a response officer. To date, I believe I have been fortunate that the current COVID-19 situation has reduced the amount of ASB that I am witnessing as well as also providing me a means of a disposal option. What I have found it particularly frustrating is the number of non-crime ASB incidents I have faced with perpetrators under the age of 18. These circumstances can make it very difficult for me to resolve as an individual, especially if no offence has been committed. Going forwards, I will continue to attempt to resolve each ASB issue with a victim focused mindset and continue to make the relevant ASB referrals.

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All information provided in this workbook complies with the guidance on confidentiality. I confirm that all work is my original work and has not been copied. Plagiarism is taken very seriously by the University and the programme.

Signed: Jake REYNISH (Learner)

Date: 7th March 2021

Confirmation of the progress on the Occupational Competency Portfolio (OCP).

I confirm that I am progressing with the Occupational Competency Portfolio (OCP) in accordance to the regulations.

Signed: Jake REYNISH (Learner)

Date: 05/03/2021

Signed: [Signature] (Tutor Constable)

Date: 06/03/21

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