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Academic Assignment 1

Cohort 3/21

Essay one:

During this essay I will outline how misconduct and malpractice have influenced current professional policing policies, and discuss how these policies have influenced community confidence in the police. Misconduct is defined as "a breach of the Standards of Professional Behaviour that is so serious as to justify disciplinary action" (The Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020). There are a number of examples in recent history that evidence police misconduct or malpractice, including the Hillsborough disaster of 1989.

The disaster resulted in 95 deaths, and according to the initial inquest the cause of these deaths was found to be accidental, blaming the behaviour of fans at the event (IOPC, 2021). Families of victims spent 20 years advocating the findings, claiming the verdict was influenced by the media's representation of fans from the day, and information being withheld and misrepresented to the public (IOPC, 2021).

Examples such as this highlight why there was 'a growing perception that the public had lost all confidence in the English criminal justice system' (Lawteacher, 2019), and policies such as PACE and the Code of Ethics have been introduced to improve professional standards, holding police accountable for misconduct and malpractice.

As summarised by Fresco, The Police and Criminal Evidence ACT (PACE) was introduced in 1984 'to establish a balance between the powers of the police in England and Wales, and the rights and freedoms of the public' (Fresco, n.d.). There are 8 codes of practice set within the Police and Criminal Evidence Act; these codes ensure that suspects apprehended by police are given the correct treatment and ensures that police have followed the procedures throughout the investigation and evidence gathering stage. A breach of one of the PACE codes may not necessarily mean an officer will be prosecuted, however it will ensure the fair treatment of the suspect throughout their trial.

The introduction of the Code of Ethics developed by the College of Policing in 2014 set out nine policing principles and ten professional standards, providing clear guidance on the behaviours expected from officers on or off duty (College of Policing, 2014). The underlying aim for setting standards of policing practice and for identifying, developing and promoting ethics, values and integrity, although it could be argued that such standards have been introduced too late, with the police being one of the last public sector services to introduce their code of ethics. Code of ethics have been vital in many public sectors for decades, for example the British Association of Social Workers first adopting theirs in 1975 (BASW, 2014).

The Code of Ethics sets out the principles and expected behaviours that members of the police force must adhere to, including (but not limited to) honesty, fairness, openness and objectivity. Since being introduced, the principles allow for a higher standard of professionalism within the police, and allow for a proper legal basis for a complaint should they be breached as suggested by the Association Against Abuse of Police Powers and Privileges (n.d.). Providing a clearer line for the public and legal representation to establish misconduct or malpractice. The majority of complaints are dealt with by the local police force via a professional standards department (PSD), however to help restore public

confidence within the organisation, independent bodies were formed to review complaints away from the police control.

Independent services such as the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) allow for impartial complaint handling and monitoring of police perception in the public eye. The IOPC are directly involved with complaints along with appeals from members of the public who are dissatisfied with the way a PSD has managed their complaint. The IOPC are completely independent, they are not influenced by police or the government. Local police forces must refer the most serious cases to the IOPC including; a death following police contact whether or not someone has made a complaint (IOPC, n.d.).

On the other hand, the HMICFRS do not have any involvement in individual complaints, they do however have a statutory duty to fully understand how local police forces are handling complaints and misconduct (HMICFRS, n.d.). The HMICFRS act as a service that inspect local police forces across, England, Wales and Northern Ireland. As stated by the HMICFRS they "ask the questions that we believe the public wish to have answered" (HMICFRS, 2022).

The introduction of the IOPC and HMICFRS allows for a greater transparency between the police and the public, independent investigations into complaints in which these independent organizations show no bias and base their findings on statistics and data only.

While the introduction and enforcement of policies such as PACE and the Code of Ethics helps to hold police accountable for misconduct and malpractice, public confidence will not be restored until citizens trust that the principles are being followed. There is a clear challenge to consider how police can demonstrate to citizens "their trustworthiness to act fairly, effectively and with the best interests of communities at heart" (Stanko et al. 2012). Bradford et al. 2009 suggests positive community contact and engagement can improve this perception of fairness, evidencing that "seeing regular police patrols and feeling informed" leads to higher opinions of effectiveness. It must therefore be argued that the standards of police performance should consider metrics such as police visibility, approachability and relationships, alongside more traditional metrics like arrest figures and crime recording.

In conclusion, policies such as the code of ethics help hold police accountable to professional standards, and independent bodies such as the IOPC remove any bias or influence that may have occurred in the past if complaints were investigated by the police directly. However, in order to properly rebuild the confidence lost from cases of misconduct, citizens need to start seeing police act with their best interests at heart, and positive community engagement is vital to demonstrate the professional standards in action.

Word Count: 976

Essay two:

During this essay I will review what the term vulnerability means within the police, examine what makes a person vulnerable, and outline why serious and Organised Crime Groups may target these vulnerable persons. I will then evaluate what the police are doing to safeguard and protect these individuals and where improvements can be made.

If you were to search the definition of vulnerability you would find dozens being provided from multiple sources, there is not a single definition of vulnerability. The College of Policing (CoP) has adopted the THRIVE definition of vulnerability, 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.'

(Critchfield, Kennedy and Myhill, 2021,

p26).

As discussed by Critchfield, Kennedy and Myhill the THRIVE risk assessment tool has been implemented by many police forces across the UK as it has been developed as a way for officers and police staff to assess public need, vulnerabilities and other key elements to evaluate risk (2021, p25-26). In addition, it is important to note that Police in the UK regard all children to be vulnerable and this would mean any human under the age of 18 (United Nations, 1989).

A serious or an organised crime group, better known as an OCG is defined within the Serious Crime Act 2015 as a group that "(a) has as its purpose, or as one of its purposes, the carrying on of criminal activities" and "(b) consists of three or more persons who act, or agree to act, together for that purpose" (Legislation.gov.uk, 2015).

Why would a serious or organised crime group target young or vulnerable people? This question can have a multitude of answers and no singular way to answer. However, as mentioned by previous home secretary Sajid David whilst writing an article for the daily mail, the UK faces a major problem that is "devastating communities across the length and breadth of the UK". (2018). Sajid David MP, was referring to what we know as "County Lines". According to The Home Office County Lines is where an OCG targets children or vulnerable adults for use in drug trafficking and drug storage along with the movement of illegally obtained money, often using violence including sexual, coercive behaviour and weapons along with intimidation (2018, p2). When discussing County Lines, The National Crime Agency also refer to a term known as "Cuckooing" (2018).

Cuckooing is known to be where an OCG will infiltrate the home of a vulnerable person in a rural area or small town and create a base to work from. OCG's will often target adults suffering with substance abuse, mental or physical problems, sex workers, or generally those living in poverty, and frequently force these vulnerable adults out of their own home and onto the streets (Crimestoppers-uk.org, 2020). The NSPCC (2022) state that child victims of Cuckooing can be "forced or coerced to stay at cuckooed addresses for long periods of time to deal drugs.". Cuckooing and County Lines in general pose major threats to the whole of the U.K due to the expansion of drug supply network and the devastating effects caused to the children and vulnerable people that are targeted.

The response to combat County Lines falls across multiple agencies, however as police are on the frontline, they are responsible to lead the change, gather information to develop intelligence and work with other agencies for signposting and safeguarding of the victims. County Lines has been a priority of the National Police Chiefs' Council "NPCC", the National Crime Agency "NCA", the Regional Organised Crime Unit "ROCU" and the home office. Due to the severity of the threat that County Lines poses, a National County Lines Coordination Centre (NCLCC) was formed between the NCA, NPCC and ROCU. The Home Office have been investing heavily and prior to funding being provided, Police found it difficult to organise and plan their tactics to combat County Lines and safeguard the vulnerable being abused (NCLCC Silver and Bronze Intelligence, 2021, p2). The NCLCC further state that the funding from The

Home Office has allowed specific County Lines task forces are now operational within the main exporting force areas.

The Police have had to adapt and learn on the most effective ways to eliminate this threat. Previously Police Forces have targeted the drug runners as they can be seen as an easy target, however upon reviewing the wider scale threat the Police have shifted the focus onto the line holders and organisers of the drug supply (NCLCC Silver and Bronze Intelligence, 2021, p12). The Police appear to have prioritised the combat against County Lines with their day-to-day approach along with “Intensification Weeks”. These intensification weeks target the drug traffickers across the country and recent results have shown to be extremely positive with over 1400 people arrested and close to 8000 people being engaged with for safeguarding purposes (National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC), 2022).

As with County Lines, tackling Cuckooing also requires a multi-agency approach. The practices put in place vary depending on the risk posed to the individual, for example, Section 8 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 allows the Police to prohibit access to a property for up to 3 months, allowing arrests to be made if an unwanted person is found on the property (Legislation.gov.uk, 2014). Where the risk isn’t as immediate, the police can work alongside other agencies, informing them of patterns or concerns of cuckooing within a community so they can disrupt this exploitation through a combination of legislation and education (Police Partners Project 2021).

In conclusion, policing practices to target the organisers of the crime, over the individuals themselves (e.g., drug runners), has proven to be a lot more effective in protecting vulnerable members of the community, noting a significant rise in safeguarding numbers (NPCC, 2022). However, while this helps with the immediate risk to a vulnerable person, to make a long-term impact the Police must work in alignment with other agencies, such as health workers and children's services, to recognise patterns of exploitation in a community and work together to disrupt the varying types of exploitation.

Word Count: 1030

Essay Three:

During this essay I am going to look at the importance of multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA), I will be highlighting the positive work that MAPPA has achieved in managing offenders and also reviewing some short comings. I will also be evaluating, police practices within public protection incidents of violent and sexual offences.

Multi-agency public protection arrangements are set out to provide effective management of violent and sexual offenders, better known as MAPPA; this collective set of agencies are designed to share information, risk assess and manage public protection relating violent and sexual offenders. Taylor and Yakeley (2019) note that the Police, Probation Service and Prison Service are the responsible authorities (RAs) for MAPPA. These RAs were established by the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 with further provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 2003. Furthermore, Taylor and Yakeley (2019) explain how a “Duty to Cooperate” clause was introduced by The Criminal Justice Act 2003. The clause was implemented to impose a duty upon further agencies including those covering areas such as education, employment, housing and social care. They are expected to contribute fully in aim of protecting the public and managing violent and sexual offenders.

Every offender that falls under MAPPA is classified into one of three categories and this is what dictates which of the RAs will be the lead agency in the management of that offender. Huson et al. (2014 pp58-59) summarizes each category as the following; category one is registered sex offenders, category two is for violent or other sex offenders not subject to notification requirements, and category three is other dangerous offenders. A formal risk assessment must be completed for each offender and this will determine the appropriate level of management, information sharing, surveillance and monitoring is most suitable for that offender. Craig et al. (2008) have contested the accuracy and appropriateness of this risk assessment however I feel given MAPPA guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Justice is constantly being reviewed and amended, these issues have already been addressed. Amended in 2018 the MAPPA guidance for the risk assessments includes the following;

“Risk assessment is a dynamic process that requires ongoing re-evaluation in the context of the offender's changing circumstances. Risk assessments should be reviewed regularly in accordance with the lead agency's policies and procedures.”

(MAPPA,

2018)

The Police are a responsible authority within MAPPA, they take ownership and have a statutory responsibility to manage those offenders that are classified to be in Category 1. The Police also become the lead agency for offenders that are released from the National Probation Services supervision (College of Policing, 2021). Along with the Police involvement with MAPPA, how do the police manage sexual and violent offenders? This cannot be answered simply and a vast array of tactics and multi-agency involvement is required. Police are placing an emphasis on information and intelligence led investigations, equipping response officers with the knowledge to deal with such offenders.

One of the biggest revelations in managing violent and sexual offenders appears to be the introduction of the Violent and Sex Offender Register database (ViSOR). Previously “individual police forces and probation areas have used a variety of local systems with information that could not be shared by partner agencies.” (Edwards, 2003). The ViSOR database allows Police throughout the U.K to view and process information from other forces. This enables the force to risk assess offenders accurately and minimises offenders being improperly assessed. “ViSOR is recognised as a key tool in the effective management of offenders and other persons posing a risk of harm to the public.” (Home Office, 2021). The information from the ViSOR database is also shared with relevant partner agencies and is allowing for an effective coordinated approach in managing these offenders.

As stated by the Home Office (2021) ViSOR is used as a multi-agency system, however, inaccurate and outdated information or intelligence stored on the database will minimise the benefits on what the database could potentially deliver. I believe this is why the College of Policing (2021) refer to properly recorded observations and knowledge build an intelligence picture allowing the policing and other agencies to manage offenders and the conditions placed upon them. As useful as ViSOR appears to be HM Inspectorate of Probation and HM Inspectorate of Constabulary published an inspection (2015) showing that the police were the only RA out of the three to utilise the database efficiently and accurately. The multi-agency approach has worked well for the police and “It has become established wisdom that neither the police nor any other agency can effectively deal with crime and public safety issues alone” (Higgins, Hales and Chapman, 2016).

MAPPA highlights the importance of responsible authorities cooperating and sharing information to effectively protect the public and manage violent and sexual offenders. Along with the three responsible authorities, those agencies that fall within the duty to cooperate section play a fundamental part in

public protection. The police are responsible for offenders that sit within Category 1, and information and intelligence are key in investigating relevant public protection incidents. From my readings, it's clear that the effective management of offenders and the conditions placed on them relies heavily on knowledge, not only at the start of an initial investigation but for future reviews of offenders. The history of the offender including any charges and previous behaviours must be taken into account when completing the risk assessment. This risk assessment is continuous and under constant review, along with being able to access information from other police forces and multiple support agencies this risk assessment should be informed and accurate. Transparency and cooperation from each agency is therefore vital in this process, and while tools such as ViSOR are in place to facilitate this knowledge sharing, efforts must be spent in encouraging sufficient engagement across all RAs.

Word Count: 967

Essay Four:

Before evaluating impact, I think it's important to outline how early intervention has been viewed through recent history and why a different approach was needed. Early intervention is not the same principle as prevention. Plimmer and Van Poortvliet (2012) note that 'prevention', 'early intervention' and 'early action' are all becoming more prominent in UK policy and legislation however there is no set definition for any.

'Prevention' is about intervening before something becomes a problem; whereas 'early intervention' is about responding where there is already a problem, but trying to tackle it in its early stages." (Plimmer and Van Poortvliet, 2012).

Where there is no set definition of "Early Intervention" it has become a focal point within policing. The shift in focus for the police and the criminal justice systems seems to be that for the better.

"Insufficient attention is given to changing behaviour, to teaching the difference between right and wrong ... Too little is done to change youngsters' behaviour early in their offending career"

(Straw, Michael and Labour, 1996)

The above statement I believe is what the Police and Social services have been trying to focus on for decades as "formal intervention was detrimental and counter-productive" (Haines and Case, 2015). This was in reference to "The labelling theory" first brought to light by Howard Becker 1963. Nickerson (2021) summarised Beckers theory as "deviance is a consequence of external judgments, or labels, that modify the individual's self-concept and change the way others respond to the labelled person."

Essentially many believed that prior to modernizing the early intervention approach, it was causing more harm than good, labelling these young persons as "offenders" was potentially in turn creating the "offenders". Goldson (2007) refers to how the youth justice system in England and Wales became overly focused on policy; Goldson states 97,329 children entering the youth justice system for the first time in one year caused the system to become "bloated and obese".

In regards to early intervention it was proving to criminalise rather than educate. For it to become successful in the goal of helping young offenders to not re-offend a big change was required. When you consider "Children and young people in contact with the justice system have been shown to have poorer health outcomes than children in the general population" (Public Health England, 2019), the impact for

those 97000 children being entered into the youth justice system in one year is only negative. Introducing these young offenders to the court process early on in their criminal career was almost normalizing the process and Police along with the criminal justice system could not keep up with the demand.

Why is it important to educate rather than criminalise? Many social work studies and help guides for parenting state about the negative effects of harsh punishments. "There is no such thing as a magic punishment or consequence that changes behaviour. Instead, focus on teaching your child the skills she needs to learn (Banks, 2019)". It would appear that the government along with the police are following the underlying tone of these studies and have switched the focus on educating and working with children to prevent further offending.

What has this got to do with organised crime and gangs? Theobald and Farrington (2014) present some established reasons for early criminality and the dangers associated with them. The suggestion that a lack of knowledge makes it easier for adults to manipulate the young persons and be persuaded into activities they are not fully aware of. The other suggestion is that young offenders are impulsive and do not consider their decisions or potential consequences, when you combine the two it does lead you to believe young offenders are easy targets for the organised crime gangs.

In a research report commissioned by previous government, Ross et al (2010) highlight what methods of early intervention were proving to be effective or at least showing promising early results along with what has shown not to work. At the time of writing the report the most effective methods of intervention based on evidence were skills-based intervention and family-focused intervention.

Following those the others showing early promising results were community intervention, mentoring intervention and gang specific intervention meanwhile military-style boot camps, discipline based or "scared straight" interventions proved least effective.

There has been a switch over the past few years and the rates of young people (10-17 years old) entering the youth justice system has significantly decreased (Public Health England, 2019). The success appears to be part of the multi-agency and collaborative approach. Known as CAPRICORN a resource for collaborative approach to preventing offending and re-offending by children was introduced.

CAPRICORN sets out a framework to assist local authorities and organisations to prevent young people offending and re-offending. Involved agencies and organisations include the Police, schools, youth offending teams and many more. Providing these agencies with causes for young person's offending along with actions that they and local partnerships can take are having an early intervention with a positive result.

Originally the feedback appeared to be quite negative for what we know as "early intervention". However, given the focus on adapting, growing and discovering what works best to help young offenders it is now showing extremely positive results. It also shows that what may work with one generation may not with the next and the constant dynamic change needs persistent review along information sharing between all agencies involved. The multi-agency approach with guidance from CAPRICORN and Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) are proving to be vital in creating a successful long-term strategy to support these young offenders. Organised crime gangs affect more citizens and leads to more deaths in the UK than terrorism, war and natural disasters combined (national crime agency, 2022). It is paramount that early intervention and prevention take the steps necessary to help safeguard the young generations from being easy targets for these organised crime groups, it is not the sole responsibility of the police and the task at hand requires a shared approach from all local bodies and organisations.

Word Count: 1002

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