

Essay one:

Examine why certain groups might be reluctant to engage with police, and analyse the effectiveness of recent or current neighbourhood policing strategies to improve community engagement. Your answer should be based on academic research, although you may make reference to relevant case studies.

Neighbourhood policing is a policing strategy that works by developing relationships with members of the community. Police utilise a multiagency collaborative approach, coupled with public participation, in order to understand and tackle priority problems identified by the community. (Tuffin et al, 2006, p.i). Integral to the neighbourhood policing strategy, is effective community engagement. British police forces function on the principle of “consent”, which derives from the Peelian Principles, and recognises that effective policing is achieved through a cooperative partnership between police and the public. (Home Office, 2012). Consequently, community policing is an important policing strategy, working alongside problem orientated and intelligence led policing approaches. Effective community policing is not something that is “done to” the community, it is something that involves the community, by promoting community engagement. Community policing, therefore, is an approach that engages the public proactively to cooperate with police, in the prevention and detection of crime and disorder. (COP, 2013) However, certain groups have been identified as more reluctant to engage with the police. In order for neighbourhood policing strategies to be effective, as wide a cross section of the community as possible needs to become engaged, so it is crucial to address barriers to engagement by targeted action.

Groups that may be reluctant to engage with the police include those whose perceptions are that they will not be treated in a fair and unbiased way. This can include persons of black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds (BAME), persons in groups with protected status, such as members of the travelling community, or persons with different genders or sexualities (LGBTQIA+) to name a few examples. Allegations of institutional racism, sexism and misogyny, corruption, and bias by the police undermine the public confidence generally, and specifically those who have pre-determined negative perceptions of the police, leading to lack of “institutional trust”. (Dodd, 2023). If their prior experience of the police has been negative, then it is probable they will have a negative perception of the police - “negatively received contact”. (COP. 2019, p.24). In order to maintain public trust, the police need to be perceived as both effective and fair. Perceptions of fairness are critical, and certain policies, when deemed unfair, can have significant negative impact. Stop and search powers have been controversial, with a disproportionate proportion of BAME persons targeted, causing accusations of unfair practise and racism. Stop and search powers need to be seen to be used with “legality, necessity, proportionality and accountability” to be supported by the public. (COP, 2013). Certain incidents, when combined with significant media coverage, can inflame existing negative perceptions of the police, and can exacerbate relationships in areas of tension – such as the George Floyd and the Black Lives Matters protests (Dodd & Mohdin, 2021), and Wayne Couzons murder of Sarah Everett (Hinsliff, 2021).

Lack of institutional trust undermines police legitimacy and the principle of policing by consent, and community engagement is an essential enabler for effective policing. The absence of community engagement with police, coupled with negative perceptions or experiences, can consequently lead to community alienation. The historic erosion of neighbourhood policing from the 1960s, followed by a reactive approach focused on crime control in the 1980s, led to decreased community participation and collaboration. The Scarman Report, identified that perceptions of bias and lack of fairness, combined with community alienation, resulted in the Brixton Riots in the 1980s. (Cook, 2021). Lack of community engagement can also lead to intelligence voids, evidenced by the 2011 riots, supplanted by negative information about the police, and subsequent erosion in public confidence. (COP, 2013). As early as 1967 fairness and ethics, accountability and transparency were identified as essential to retain the democratic mandate. (U.S. Department Justice and National Institute of Justice, 1967, p.p. 205-207) These concepts are now core principles in the Code of Ethics and Values. (COP, 2014). If public perception is that these are lacking, then “institutional trust” consequently declines. (COP, 2013). Conversely, institutional trust results in a greater respect for law and order, and a rise in social responsibility, leading to a reduction in crime and a willingness to assist police. (COP, 2013).

There is a proven link between community engagement and public confidence in the police. The “confidence cycle” incorporates the three strands of collaborative problem solving, community engagement and community intelligence. Community Engagement generates intelligence on community issues and can be incorporated into policing strategies for those communities. Engagement and intelligence gathering can inform wider strategic processes such as coordination and tasking. It enables neighbourhood priorities to be decided and feed into Collaborative Problem Solving. This addresses neighbourhood problems and increases confidence in the police which builds trust in the police and leads to greater Community Intelligence. This intelligence informs the National Intelligence Model (NIM) identifying emerging issues at the tactical tasking and coordination group and enabling staff redirection. (COP, 2013).

The purpose of community engagement should always be transparent, building trust, listening and responding to needs, and encouraging communities to engage with ownership of problem solving. (COP. 2019, p. 3). Community mapping results in an identification and understanding of the community’s profile, a tailoring of approach to meet needs, identification of barriers to and opportunities for engagement. For example, community mapping may identify a need to change the location or timing of engagement activities, and lead to subsequent raised engagement. It can also manage expectations, clarify realistic objectives and reinforce the partnership process. (COP. 2019, p.p. 3-6). Community policing is a two stage approach which both identifies problems and agrees priorities, involving the community in problem solving as a core principle that enables the identification of the most prominent community problems/ concerns and agrees priorities for action. (COP. 2019, p.6).

Understanding the community, not as a geographical area but as an area of shared interest/ background, is a core part of the neighbourhood policing strategy. Evidence based policing supports this, researching community problems and developing strategies to address them. Engagement strategies need to be bespoke as each community is unique. Neighbourhood profiling assists in identifying vulnerable individuals, community tensions and areas of risk. Community Impact Assessment (CIA) support familiarity with the local situation and incident, allowing the ability to predict tensions and vulnerabilities, identify vulnerable individuals and groups, evaluate community confidence in the police response and develop community intelligence. Once tensions have been identified a response can be planned. The CIA will identify available options and a bespoke solution

should be found based on the Risk Assessment and problem analysis. Solutions can be community led or inter-agency led. (ICOCO, 2010, p.p. 62-65).

Neighbourhood policing needs to ensure community engagement, through a cooperative two-way process, with public choice of the level of participation and engagement, enabling a clearer vision of concerns, priorities, needs, risks and threats. A neighbourhood profile is a baseline picture of a community with a primary purpose of informing and driving community engagement. (NPIA, 2009, p. 23). A variety of strategies can be utilised to increase engagement. Strategies to connect with members of the community who are disconnected from public agencies for a variety of reasons – “reaching wide and deep” – can include outreach and engagement; finding access through community leaders; identifying authentic approaches to engage individuals that include genuine listening; being flexible and innovative in contact approaches; recruiting staff that reflect the community they serve; and involving people in a wider agenda by using Action research. Action research has found to be particularly effective in engaging hard to reach members of the community. (ICOCO, 2010, p.33). By building capacity and developing the skills and abilities of members of the community, this then enables them to take ownership and take leading roles in the development of their community, working towards a shared vision of the local area. Acting together through planned community events promotes belonging by supporting active citizenship. (ICOCO, 2010, p.33).

A further strategy to engage the public is to inform them of police priorities and actions. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act, 2011, also requires police to consult with the public in communities, provide them with information about crime and hold regular public meetings. (COP, 2019, p.4). Beat meetings and neighbourhood surgeries can be a way to engage with public views in the community but they can also suffer from poor attendance, or the attendance can be unrepresentative of all members of the community. Therefore, proactive approaches such as door knocking, surveys, street briefings, social media and online discussions using outreach workers can connect with a wider cross-section of the community. It allows for better targeting to communities with poor police/ public relations, and allows the police high visibility in places such as supermarkets. (COP, 2019, p.p. 5-6).

Evidence based policing provides direction for community policing approaches, for example targeted foot patrol, particularly in combination with other problem solving and community engagement approaches. This serves multiple purposes – the visible police presence strengthening public confidence and perception of the police, while consecutively reducing crime and anti-social behaviour. Response only policing and random foot patrols do not have the same impact. Other “visibility” strategies include targeting and spending time in “hot spots” of crime, anti-social behaviour or low public confidence. (COP, 2019, p. 2). Additionally, foot patrol also offers opportunities beyond boosting visibility, such as building a rapport, relationship and trust with community members, network building, discovering community concerns and problems and intelligence building. Social media is another visibility strategy to provide a platform to raise the public perception and boost public confidence in the police. (COP, 2019, p. 3).

Positive or negative incidents/ experiences in a community can affect the relationship between the police and the public. The NPIA Cohesion Guide highlights how community cohesion work can address the “interpersonal distances” between the police and community. (NPIA, 2009). Crime and Reduction Partnership (CDRP) creates a multi-agency tension monitoring group to evaluate intelligence on community tensions. (NPIA, 2009, p. 12). A number of issues have been identified that affect community cohesion. For example, lack of respect for ethnic differences; the existing population have negative perceptions of migrants; lack of “belonging” or “pride” in the community;

or low levels of trust, to list a few. Some suggested ways to tackle lack of community cohesion are working with local media, through existing groups/ institutions like schools, creating community events, and putting in support for specific groups. (NPIA, 2009, p. 25). Multi-agency approach through Local Strategic Partnerships is effective, as are methods employed by other organisations such as Open Space; Participatory Rapid Appraisal; Learning, Evaluation and Planning Model – LEAP, etc. (Adamson et al, CREW, accessed 18/5/2023).

The effectiveness of neighbourhood policing has been tested by The National Reassurance Policing Programme, which evaluated the impact the programme in delivering positive change in key indicative outcomes in crime, antisocial behaviour, safety after dark and public confidence in the police, as part of a research evidence base. The NRPP use the structure of engagement, patrol and targeted problem solving, ‘systematically targeted towards those problems that really matter to the public’, and therefore have more impact on key issues contributing to insecurity. (Tuffin et al, 2006, p.28). Despite an actual drop in crime, the baseline public perception was that crime was rising. Following the NPRD intervention, public perception changed, considering crime and anti-social behaviour had declined, public confidence in the police rose, and fear after dark fell. (Tuffin et al, 2006, p.p. 40-47). The report also found while the perception of visibility rose through awareness of engagement activities such as public meetings, there was no consequent increase in attendance. Equally, the perception of trust in the community rose, but with no consequent increase in community involvement, e.g. volunteering. (Tuffin et al, 2006, p.p. 61 & 76).

Police need to engage with a process of constant evaluation and response to events, in order for neighbourhood policing to be effective. For example, in response to the Stop and Search controversy, they now use Next Steps, a diagnostic tool used to ensure stop and search is appropriate and effective (IOPC, 2022). Or the case of Fiona Pilkington, who was not identified as vulnerable, with long standing incidents of anti-social behaviour against her not linked or recognised as hate crime, resulting in her taking both her own life and that of her disabled daughter. Now, risk assessments are carried out to identify vulnerable/ repeat victims, with information sharing between the police and partner organisations to create a holistic viewpoint. (COP. 2021).

In conclusion, community engagement needs to be built around an ethical and moral structure and led by core principles – social justice and building a fair and equal society; self-determination where individuals can take collective action; promoting inclusive participation and collective working to achieve desirable change; promoting sustainable communities and supporting them to develop; encouraging participation at a self-determined level; and reflective practise, to learn from individual and collective experience. The current neighbourhood policing strategies need to continue to constantly strive to be relevant and inclusive for all sectors of society, and respond proactively to incidents where public trust declines, in order that they maintain public cooperation and retain the democratic mandate.

Word count: 2164 words.

Essay two:

Critically analyse the role of police within joint emergency services operations, and examine the potential impact of such incidents on officers' mental wellbeing. Your answer must be based on academic research rather than personal experience, but you may refer to examples of high-profile critical and major incidents.

A joint emergency service operation involves an incident whereby more than one emergency service attends – including police, fire and rescue services, and ambulance service. The Joint Emergency Service Interoperability Programme (JESIP) aims to ensure the “blue light services work together as effectively as possible at all levels of command in response to major or complex incidents”. (HMICFRS, 2018). Under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, category 1 responders include the emergency services, local authorities and NHS bodies. (JESIP, 2021, p.6). Each service has its own clearly defined role, while consecutively working collaboratively to produce a joint response. Major incidents inevitably bring exposure to trauma, which can impact negatively on officers' mental wellbeing.

“Blue light” services' responsibilities, are outlined in statute or dictated by need. During major incidents the overriding priority for the police is the saving of life and the prevention of further loss of life, in partnership with the other emergency services. The police normally take on the coordinating and communicating response role during major or complex joint emergency service incidents, calling upon other essential services as appropriate. They are responsible for the security, protection and preservation of the scene, and the subsequent investigation into the incident. To investigate any criminal offences, and to secure and obtain evidence for that investigation, conducting a thorough investigation and establishing documentation teams. To provide traffic management and identify evacuation routes, in partnership with the highways authority and local authority. It is the police's responsibility to recover, identify, reconcile and repatriate the deceased respectfully on behalf of the coroner, collating and disseminating casualty information. To manage and coordinate the media response/ public information, and develop an accurate and coordinated media plan. To apply any necessary counter measures to ensure the safety of the public and prevent escalation of the incident and to restore normality. The police also need to lead the establishment of a survivor reception centre and a family and friend's reception centre. (Northumbria Police, 2022).

JESIP outlines 6 core principles for joint emergency service operations – to co-locate at a single suitable location; to communicate using clear jargon and abbreviation free language; to co-ordinate by agreeing the lead organisation and agree priorities, capabilities, resources etc.; to jointly understand the risk and share information; and to establish shared situational awareness by using M/ETHANE and the Joint Decision Model. (JESIP, 2021, p.11). The Joint Working Between Emergency Services Report, 2022, has also established a Strategic Collaboration Board, with the purpose of identifying and delivering future joint working possibilities. (p.30).

However, despite policies and procedures, certain major incidents and emergencies challenge emergency service operations. For example, terrorist incidents (e.g. the London or Manchester bombings); the worldwide Covid19 pandemic; major fires (e.g. Grenfell Towers); transport crashes (e.g. Paddington rail crash); major floods, (e.g. Yorkshire, Lancashire); chemical attacks, (e.g. Salisbury); or deaths on duty, (e.g. Thames Valley and Manchester). (Hesketh, et al, 2020). The Kerslake Report into the Manchester Arena bombings found key areas where the joint emergency response needed improving, particularly the police coordination and communication role. The police treated the incident as a Marauding Terrorist Firearms Attack, but partner agencies were not fully

informed either of this decision, or its subsequent consequences. In part, this was due to assumptions made by the police that partner agencies understood the implications, and in part by the pressures placed on the Force Gold Commander, who was also concurrently the Duty Strategic Firearms Commander on call. (Kerslake, 2017, p.p. 129-134). While specific to this incident, the Kerslake recommendations apply across forces. For example, the recommendation that a Strategic Coordinating Group update briefing be held within two hours of the declaration of a major incident. (Kerslake, 2017, p.136). Or that the Force Duty Officer be located with Police Headquarters. (Kerslake, 2017, p. 128). Difficulties with casualty data led to the establishment of the Public Portal facility for the Casualty Bureau (Kerslake, 2017, p. 138); improvements to the National Mutual Aid Telephony system, (Kerslake, 2017, p. 141); better information sharing by the Disaster Victim Identification process and that the deployment of Family Liaison Officers to support the severely injured, should be adopted countrywide (Kerslake, 2017, p.p. 144-145). The police came under criticism for misunderstanding the role of the ambulance service during major incidents involving mass casualties. (Kerslake, 2017, p.p. 145-147). Familiarity with partner service policies and procedures and the need for better joint planning was a key recommendation.

Honesty and transparency after major incidents is critically important. The consequences of lack of transparency can be prolonged and damage public trust in the police, as evidenced by the Hillsborough disaster. (Conn, 2023). Social media can add significantly to this. Recently, the Ely riots were sparked by social media reports that a police pursuit led to the deaths of two teenagers. (Williams, 2023). The need to quickly readjust position and policies was identified in the review of the police response to the Covid19 pandemic. Previous pandemic strategies were planned on the assumption that Health would bear the main responsibility, and planning was not as detailed as for other major incidents. Police response needed to be fast paced as circumstances and legislature changed rapidly. (HMICFRS, 2021). Public understanding of the police role in major incidents is also important. Following the Grenville Fire Disaster, it was recommended the public understand the role of police helicopters, as some mistakenly believed they could be used for rescue, and it may have influenced residents to stay put in Grenville Tower. (IOPC, 2022).

These serious incidents, and the events officers are exposed to, can produce trauma. Mind describes trauma as experiencing distressing, frightening or stressful events. Trauma can be emotional or psychological, concerning both experiences that are traumatic and the effects of those experiences. The effects of trauma can be long term, and may emerge immediately or a significant time later. (Mind, 2020, p. 2). Individuals respond to traumatic events differently, and it is common for trauma to induce a freeze, flight, fight, fawn, or flop response. Equally the effects of trauma vary among individuals resulting in physical or mental health problems. Effects include flashbacks, panic attacks, disassociation, hyper vigilance, sleep problems, low self-esteem, grief, self-harm, suicidal feelings, alcohol and substance misuse and feelings of self-blame. Studies have also suggested that trauma sufferers are more likely to develop physical illnesses and chronic conditions. (Mind, 2020, p.p. 5-6) The effects of trauma may be intermittent, and produce difficulties with everyday functioning causing further difficulties with work, or relationships. (Mind, 2020, p.7).

Police officers are exposed to situations and events that are traumatic as part of their everyday working practice. The Emergency Services Trauma Intervention Programme (ESTIP) was developed and is delivered by the National Police Wellbeing Service (Oscar Kilo). ESTIP uses a four phase approach to enable officers to process trauma via an early intervention programme. Officers showing signs of trauma can then be referred for an Early Intervention Meeting (ESTIM). (Oscar Kilo, 2023). The College of Policing's action plan for response to trauma, identifies three groups within the police service in regard to trauma exposure. Front line response officers are regularly dealing with

traumatic events. Police specialists' work exposes them to dealing with specific potentially traumatic crimes. The third group are those in disaster management, which encompasses the events of the previous groups on a larger scale. (COP, 2020, p.7).

COP action plan's response to trauma recognises the psychological risks staff are exposed to, both direct and indirect. It identifies the approach that is most likely to reduce the risk of trauma and any potential impact. Its aim is to ensure processes are in place to ensure that interventions by occupational health or human resources are effective. (COP, 2020, p.7). Response officers and police staff have been identified at a high psychological risk of burnout, stress, traumatic stress and compassion fatigue. In modern policing a high proportion of sickness absence is linked to mental health, in contrast to the past where most sickness absence was related to physical injury. (COP, 2020, p.9). High sickness levels consequently lead to increased pressure on a depleted workforce, by increasing the demands upon them, in order to continue to meet demand with fewer staff. As first responders, response officers and police staff are highly likely to experience primary trauma.

Primary trauma can cause "re-experience" with symptoms of flashbacks, intrusive memories and intense distress/ reminders of the event. It can also result in "avoidance" where individuals avoid persons, places or activities related to the traumatic event. "Arousal" is another symptom of primary trauma causing individuals to become self-destructive, irritable, jumpy, reckless, and unable to concentrate or relax. A further symptom of primary trauma is "negative thinking" which causes self-blame, negative thoughts and emotions, memory lapses, loss of interest in activities and difficulties in experiencing positive emotions. (COP, 2020, p.10). Secondary trauma can also be experienced, by exposure to a traumatic event without witnessing it directly but through working on a case, dealing with witnesses, with statements or even artefacts related to a traumatic event. Secondary trauma symptoms are virtually identical to primary trauma symptoms. (COP, 2020, p.10). In a typical day, response officers and police staff deal with high demand and members of the public who are frequently highly emotional. Compassion fatigue is a high risk when constantly dealing with persons who are emotionally challenging. It can result in difficulties in making decisions or concentrating, high emotionality, loss of self-esteem or trust and a negative perspective. (COP, 2020, p.10). Depression is a common consequence of primary trauma resulting in a range of symptoms ranging from suicidal thoughts, feelings of guilt, hopelessness or worthlessness, through to lethargy, agitation, difficulties with weight or sleep, and loss of interest in activities. (COP, 2020, p.10). Other frequent psychological risks of trauma are anxiety and burnout. Anxiety can cause symptoms of irritability, difficulty in concentrating, feeling restless or on edge, and the mind going blank, and physical symptoms like becoming exhausted or muscle tension. Burnout can cause emotional exhaustion, loss of self-esteem, feelings of hopelessness and incompetence, and depersonalisation where the individual is not willing to engage with other person's difficulties. (COP, 2020, p.10). To counteract these risks to staff the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) stress management guidelines provides assessment tools to help identify major risk hazards, enabling further work with staff at an individual, team or organisational level. Additionally, situational trauma risk assessments are used to pinpoint staff exposed to high risk incidents and offer appropriate support. (COP, 2020, p.11). Police officers and staff often deal with incidents resulting from purposeful intent of harm, rather than accidental, and this can have more emotional impact. For example, the death of a child is always distressing, but is worse when it is caused by deliberate violence or neglect as opposed to an accident or illness.

The predictability of exposure to hazards is the main difference between specialist officers and response officers. Within the specialist role, the exposure is likely to be a single type, for example, viewing child abuse images, and this continual exposure is likely to lead to compassion fatigue,

burnout and secondary trauma. High risk specialist roles include child protection, family liaison and domestic violence, but newer categories are emerging, such as those working in computer science against crimes of fraud, drugs, guns etc. Also included are those in roles of public protection, counter terrorism, scene of crimes, collision investigation, undercover, forensic examination and coroner's officers. These officers can be exposed to extreme trauma, either directly or by secondary exposure to testimony or images of victims or perpetrators. Risk assessments are in place for specialist roles, which examine the common risks associated with that role as opposed to the risks of a specific incident. (COP, 2020, p.p. 17-20).

Officers working in the third group of disaster management, will be involved with joint emergency services operations. These include terrorist and major crime incidents, such as bombings; natural disasters such as extreme weather events or pandemics; transport disasters with multiple casualties; technological disasters leading to radioactive or chemical contamination; and major fires leading to multiple casualties and/or extensive building damage. Every disaster is unique and carries its own hazards. In *Responding to Trauma in Policing*, 2020, the COP suggests mutual aid programmes are planned for with other emergency services, and "screen and treat" programmes are implemented to identify staff at greatest risk. Post disaster trauma interventions and monitoring and evaluating of post disaster interventions also need to be in place. (p.p. 24-26).

In conclusion, evaluation and reappraisal need to be at the heart of joint emergency service operations. Unfortunately, there will always be incidents and events that expose flaws in the current joint operations procedures, as evidenced by the Kerslake Report. An honest appraisal of the events, and the identification of improved responses and procedures to major incidents, is essential. Clarity of procedure, and training to support that is vital, especially from the perspective of multi-service response, with the police having a clear understanding of the procedures of other emergency responders, as well as their own. A clear acknowledgement of the consequences of exposure to traumatic events is also needed, again with procedures and policies being evaluated and reviewed, in order to best support officers to be resilient, in face of the impact of such tragedies upon their mental wellbeing.

Word Count: 2200 words

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