

Essay two:

Choose **one** of the following questions:

- **Community policing** – critically analyse the effectiveness of recent community policing strategies and initiatives. Your answer must be based on academic research.

Word limit: 1000 words.

In this essay I will analyse the effectiveness of recent community policing practices. Community policing is still defined by the Peelian Principles which began modern UK policing in the early 19th century. They deal with the core ideas of policing by consent, public approval, and prevention is better than a cure (Cunneigham, 2022). Whilst the principles Peel set out are still relevant today; some have taken the stance 'a consequence of the Principles' very broad nature, which meant that they placed little by way of specific requirements upon forces' (Heaton & Tong, 2017). I believe the Peelian Principles are still relevant today, they just require modernisation to keep up to date with the 21st century as they are still a core foundation of the modern Neighbourhood Policing model (Stephens, 2023).

When explaining community policing, one cannot forget the Policing Vision 2025. This is an agenda set out by the NPCC to tackle the challenges of modern policing. They set out 5 goals of this reform which cover: the importance of local policing, specialist capabilities, police officers to be trained in digital technologies, partnerships with college of policing to give the work force the skills they need; and the correct business support functions (NPCC, 2016). Overall, this vision focuses on a better service with the public at its heart, giving a modern take on the Peelian Principles to adapt to the sophisticated needs of modern society.

The purpose of neighbourhood policing is to create a two-way conversation between police and the people, addressing their concerns as a community in order to create neighbourhoods that are safe and feel safe (Wood, et al., 2020).

When looking at modern initiatives we can start by considering problem orientated policing (POPS). This is a model that looks at targeting specific issues within a community; one example of which is knife crime (Wood, et al., 2020). POPS works well as it focuses on identifying the key issues and understanding what the root cause of that problem is, which then allows a strategy to be developed to tackle the key issue (College of Policing, 2020).

In line with the above we can consider the initiative of Knife amnesty where 'members of the public have the chance to dispose of a knife anonymously with no questions asked, by simply depositing it into the amnesty bin' (Merseyside Police, 2022).

Modern Knife amnesty re-emerged around 2006 (Independent, 2006) and has been a staple of crime reduction ever since. It has worked to get dangerous weapons off the streets and help communities feel more secure. Positives of Knife amnesty are clear, it reduces the number of incidents of knife crime and helps get dangerous and offensive weapons off the street and into safer hands (Northamptonshire Police, 2022).

One consideration however is, that amnesty bins allow people to dispose of weapons enormously, including those used in the proceeds of crime, which could help potential offenders misuse the bins to discard of weapons they have used to commit serious offences and simply then replace their weapons.

Despite this consideration knife amnesty has been shown to reduce the number of knives on the street significantly with one force showing over 300 weapons handed in from a single amnesty event in 2021 (Gloucestershire Police, 2021). This can be directly correlated to the decrease in knife crime with a 2022 report showing an 8% reduction since pre-covid levels (ONS, 2023). While there are no studies available to show a direct causation, the correlation shows a trend between amnesty and crime reduction, showing this to be a positive community policing strategy and supporting the key Peelian principle of crime prevention.

Whilst considering POPS we can also consider issues such as burglaries and thefts within a community; a modern initiative to deal with this is SMARTWATER. This is a clear liquid used to mark property with unique forensic identifiers more accurate than DNA (Portsmouth City Council, 2023). It has come into use in Gwent Police in recent years, SMARTWATER looks at targeting offender as a deterrent, to them committing an offence, this is supported by research showing 76% of offenders would avoid a property marked in SMARTWATER (McAdams, 2021).

SMARTWATER is a great community policing strategy in line with Gwent Police 'We Don't Buy Crime Initiative' as it looks at the reduction and prevention of crime as well as the manner in which SMARTWATER is handed out is via community engagement events such as crime prevention surgeries which allow officers to engage and build a rapport with the communities they are protecting (Gwent Police, 2022).

One issue we may consider however is that offenders may specifically target properties and businesses without the SMARTWATER branding, but this is negligible in consideration to the positive impacts SMARTWATER can have as a deterrent. The positives of SMARTWATER are clear it helps police detect offenders

and help return stolen property to rightful owners; hence greatly increase the public confidence in the police (SMARTWATER, 2023). When considering neighbourhood policing it shows to be another strategy as it underpins the principles that communities wish to feel safe and secure.

The use of SMARTWATER by community policing has had excellent results with users being highly satisfied with it and a 100% conviction rate where SMARTWATER has been used in court cases (Gwent Police, 2023). Furthermore, it has been shown in some areas to a reduction in burglaries of up to 84% (Portsmouth City Council, 2023).

The two above initiatives follow the key Peelian Principle of crime prevention; although that is not to say they are the only ones that are effective. There are many schemes and initiatives such as the REACH project which is scheme run with local authorities to reduce youth offending rates and engage with youths to help them understand the consequences of their actions (Caerphilly Council, 2022).

Considering this, policing across the UK is complex; with each region facing its own issues. We currently have 45 forces, each with their own complex communities and facing their own cultures and issues. Each area requires its own specific approaches, which is supported by principles of Neighbourhood policing. In recent years, like many professions, community policing has changed, and we continue to have goals to achieve as we look towards the policing vision 2025. However, there never will be a one size fits all approach. A healthy mix of programmes and strategies delivered in the right areas by the right people is the key to effective community policing. Over the coming years this will be greatly supported by evidence lead policing as we discover what initiatives work in the right areas.

Word Count: 1098

Essay three:

Critically assess the effectiveness of processes used to evaluate and analyse information and intelligence in order to mitigate against the impact of personal bias.

Word limit: 1000 words.

In this essay I will look at the processes used to evaluate and analyse information and intelligence (I&I) and discuss how they mitigate against the impacts of personal biases. Intelligence building and dissemination is a cornerstone of policing and helps officers perform their job effectively.

The College of Policing explains I&I in two parts: information being all data recorded or processed for a policing purpose and intelligence as information which has been evaluated (College of Policing, 2023).

The way in which we gather I&I includes but is not limited to: Covert Human Intelligence Sources (CHIS), Direct Surveillance, Interception of Communications, Intrusive Surveillance, and Equipment Interference (ICPO, 2023). Each of these have their own benefits and drawbacks; for example, a CHIS is essentially an inside man for serious crime and give huge benefits as they allow us to obtain I&I which in other ways would be inaccessible. Drawbacks include the risks that the CHIS put themselves under and the chances of corruption. I believe this is an important tactic because it can allow us to gain vital I&I in serious crimes that have a great impact on society. This is supported by an operational case study from the home office; which has shown how a CHIS has been to fundamental in the prosecution of CSE and solicitation of under cases (Home Office, 2020)

The 3x5x2 method is a standardised system used to process information provided to officers and grade the confidence of intelligence (Kirby & Keay, 2021). This process is known as sanitisation and changes information into intelligence (James, 2016). I believe this is an important and well-designed method, as its simple form factor is easy to understand and puts a strict grading system in place that is not easily influenced by personal and subconscious biases; in some ways it takes the fallible human aspect out of the grading system. The positives of this method are supported by the fact it is an evolution on a previous well used model, the 5x5x5, and has managed to overcome some significant shortcomings of this previous system (James, 2016). A criticism that I do support of this model is that due to its simple nature, those who process the data may rely on heuristics to help navigate the complex nature of intelligence; allowing biases to impede on their work

(Palmer, et al., 2014). I believe that whilst the 3x5x2 model is well designed and effective, it can only be seen as fit for purpose but can be improved upon.

After processing by the 3x5x2, the next step is evaluation and analysis of the I&I for implementation for real world use. One method used is the SWOT analysis; a wholistic method used to measure possible outcomes. It does this by mapping out strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats which allow practitioners to consider multiple avenues for prevention or enforcement (Harfield, 2009). I believe strengths of this method is well stated by University of Cambridge (2023) 'an effective strategy is one that takes advantage of the organisation's opportunities by employing its strengths and wards off threats by avoiding them or by correcting or compensating for weaknesses'. However, a flaw in the SWOT method is evidenced in a case study by Memheld; it shows that it is open to cognitive biases of a decision maker (Memheld, 2014). This has been further discussed in FORBES where those carrying out the analysis are able to influence the outcome by omitting certain factors which may boost others through overconfidence (Tsipursky, 2023). I believe this is a serious flaw in this method, especially in policing where the inability to check ones biases methodically can have a serious impact on wider society.

Another method is backcasting which is used for the analysers to identify key points and warning signs of specific future events (College of Policing, 2020). An example of backcasting within policing is the Policing Vision 2025; where a desirable future has been identified based on society's expected needs though I&I and a path has then been identified to achieve this goal.

Backcasting is great when talking about biases in I&I as the Wireless 2030 report states 'starting from the future and working backwards helps get over the human bias for assuming today is permanent' (Government Office For Science, 2023). In my opinion, this will transfer throughout the process and reduce the biases in identifiable steps. I believe a key criticism to make of backcasting is that it is based on closed future-based questions. This means it has the same flaw of a single-tailed hypotheses that they only account for one scenario and have potential to lead to inaccurate results; it more proves correlation and not a causation (Hanna & Dempster, 2012). I believe, the issues with this method in policing is that we must first identify a major concern, then test the causes for it. I believe it is also vital to identify dynamic incidents, which is why no single method can work for policing and a multifaced tool box is needed to adequately use and implement I&I.

In my opinion, biases in policing are one of the most important challenges we face. The issues these cause specifically when looking at ethnic minority groups, can be seen in the raise of popularity of the Black Lives Matter movement in recent years (Cohn & Quealy, 2020). Although biases take all shapes and sizes, they're not only linked to race but gender, disabilities and much more. I believe that in order for

us to give the upmost professional services, these need to be specifically challenged in our decision-making processes so we do not let biases affect our daily duties.

I&I is a corner stone of policing and ensuring it is accurate and non-bias is incredibly important. The consequences of a robust system to mitigate the effects of personal bias are evident by the issues I have identified in methods such as the SWOT analysis. Thankfully, we do have these systems in place such as the 3x5x2 method; whilst they are not fool proof and a person's biases may still be able to affect the quality of I&I, it is reduced by these methods. I believe to further reduce the impacts of theses biases on I&I, we need robust officers who follow the codes of ethics and do not allow ourselves to fall into a culture that is not challenging racism and unacceptable behaviours (MacVean & Neyround, 2012). I believe this will allow us to root out the underlying biases in policing, not only to improve the quality of I&I, but also give the wider public the police services that they deserve.

Word Count: 1098

Essay four:

Critically evaluate the effectiveness of crime prevention strategies in relation to Serious and Organised Crime.

Word limit: 1000 words.

In this essay I will be evaluating the effectiveness of crime prevention strategies. Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) currently have an approximate economic cost of £37 Billion Per annum (National Crime Agency, 2020) and includes a range of offences from drugs and firearms to money laundering.

We have specialist teams to deal with some of these offences such as a SOC team local to Gwent Police. The purpose of this team is to focus on organised crime groups rather than individuals; predominantly drug related offences (Police Jobs Wales, 2022). On a more national basis there is a Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU) who are a team of detectives who specialise in dealing with said offences in partnership with various police forces (National Cyber Security Centre, 2018). The aim of this team is to 'make the UK the safest to live and do business' (National Cyber Security Centre, 2018).

Although there are specialist teams to deal with SOC, there are strategies and contingencies at various level of policing which look at targeting and disrupting SOC. These are carried out daily by response and neighbourhood officers in their daily duties (Wood, et al., 2020). These actions include tackling underlying problems and distribution networks used for SOC, such as cuckooing and county lines by officers gathering intelligence from within their local communities (Lowe & Innes, 2012).

The key principle that SOC is based on is the 4 P's: Prevent, Pursue, Protect, and Prepare. This is based on strategies initially used in counter terrorism, known as CONTEST, and is based around the principles to reduce threat and vulnerability and in turn reduce levels of SOC (HM Government, 2013).

Established in 2003, MAPPA (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements) have been introduced to deal with SOC and requires a variety of agencies to work in partnership to manage these offenders. They work under various management levels dependent on their level of risk and range from sharing of information to housing them in specialist accommodations (Ministry Of Justice, 2019).

MAPPA is shown to have many positives. It not only helps us keep track of the most serious offenders, but it also encourages multi-agency working and the sharing of information to get the most effective services for SOC offenders and therefore provide the greatest level of reassurance and protection for the public.

A current issue with MAPPA is that there is no centrally held database of MAPPA subjects and is instead managed by local police forces. Whilst this may work well on a local level, it does contradict the underlying principle of MAPPA being a multi-agency approach and therefore should be tied to a central data base for national access; especially in the modern era where travel between towns and cities is so frequent (Byrant, et al., 2015).

The 2019 MAPPA report shows a positive outcome for the repeat offending rates of serious offences within the year of 2018/19, showing the lowest reoffending in 6 years. This is even more impressive when considering that there were 82921 offenders managed in comparison to approximately 65000 in 2014. This shows that despite the greater number being managed there is a lower overall percentage of reoffending indicating a clear correlation to the positive effects of MAPPA in relation to SOC (Ministry Of Justice, 2019).

Another crime prevention strategy for SOC is covered by roads policing. They are no longer merely a traffic unit but have a wider concept of policing the roads and are very successfully used to disrupt criminality; a vital corner stone in dealing with SOC (College of Policing, 2019). Starting with the road traffic act, officers get a strong power to stop and identify drivers which can help us build pictures and gain intelligence to look at SOC as a whole rather than just on an individual basis. This can then be coupled with modern technologies such as ANPR to help monitor and track suspected offenders and their routes throughout the British highways (College of Policing, 2019).

Another consideration of the effectiveness of Roads Policing in SOC is that of Project Lantern. This is an initiative alongside ANPR which is 'to provide the UK police service with the capability to perform real time mobile identity checks against the full national collection of 10 prints' (Whitaker, 2021). Simply, it is a mobile fingerprinting device used to identify offenders quickly at the side of the road.

The positives of Project Lantern are clear, it prevents offenders hiding their identities, reduces the demand of officers by increasing the speed of which we can identify someone. When coupled with the technologies such as ANPR it allows us to get a holistic view of the person and deal with them effectively. If the person is involved in SOC the likelihood is that they would be known to police. Using this technology, even if this person was not wanted at the time of the stop, it would act as a key intelligence building tool to crack down on the networks they may be using to elicit SOC.

We can consider issues raised by the advent of these new technologies specifically biometric data which is classified as special category personal data (Information Commissioner's Office, 2023). This means that we would have to consider the data protection act under the processing of this data, and of course, as officers, ensuring that we have a legal basis to take the biometrics, this is currently covered under Section 117 of the SOC Act 2005 (Legislation, 2013). Whilst it does not give the most comprehensive guidance, the grounds for taking fingerprints require almost the same grounds as the Power of arrest which is substantially more than the grounds to stop a vehicle and take details under section 163 and 165 of the Road Traffic Act (Wood, et al., 2020).

Crime is ever changing and just as the strategies used by police evolve and adapt, so do the perpetrators of such offences. Whilst we currently have strategies in place to deal with modern and digital crime; we must remember that with the advent of new technologies and the consideration of VPNs in conjunction with the dark web, crime patterns and the way in which they are committed will change. It is important that whilst we do not neglect the strategies that we have currently developed, we do not stop working towards and developing ways to identify new methods as a means to deal with not yet identified forms of crime. As the technological abilities of the police service advances, so will the technologies available to SOC offenders.

Word Count: 1086

Essay five:

Critically assess the effectiveness of options available to reduce re-offending, and consider how these are informed by evidence-based policing. You may choose a specific type of offence for this answer e.g. domestic violence, anti-social behaviour, knife crime. Your answer must be based on academic research, not personal experience.

Word limit: 1000 words.

In this essay I will assess the effectiveness of the methods at our disposal to prevent re-offending and how Evidence based policing (EBP) has informed these. Due to the range and nature of offences that we deal with, I will specifically be focusing on violence-based offences. I believe these are important to focus on as recent reviews by ONS have shown 2.1 million violence offences in a single year; out of 6.3 million recorded crimes (Elkin, 2022).

EBP is a partnership-working approach in which police and academics work together using the best available evidence to inform and challenge policy (Huey & Mitchell, 2019).

Figures currently show that 29% of adults re-offend, however, for those starting a court order and being released from prison, re-offending rates are 37% and 39% (Taylor, 2022). This shows a correlation between the effectiveness of out of court disposals vs criminalisation. This disparity in the re-offending rates, in terms of the violence offence in 2022, is the difference of up to 210,000 additional people re-offending based upon the disposal method used. This is the start of where EBP is implemented, by reviewing statistics policy makers are able to see what works in keeping offending rates down and can target future schemes and policies to coincide with this evidence.

In my opinion the aim of modern policing is more about crime reduction, and less about criminalisation, this is supported by the Peelian Principles (Cunningham, 2022). The Criminal Justice Act 2003 introduced the adult conditional caution (ACC) as a means of dealing with offences out of court. The ability to issue these meant the offender must show a clear admission of guilt, and it would have a condition attached which is either Reparative, Rehabilitative, or Punitive (CPS, 2022).

The conditions attached to ACCs are what allow them deal with re-offending. Since it can be used for all Summary and Either way offences, it is an excellent tool for those who have committed a violence related offence. The centre for Justice innovation has noted whilst out of court disposals with conditions is starting to show a positive outcome on reoffending rates, there are currently no statistically significant reviews to show the effectiveness of ACCs. When considering how EBP influences policy, it is likely the

explanation to why there is currently not a wider use of ACCs (Centre for Justice Innovation, 2022).

Another option at our disposal which looks to rehabilitation is the Community Resolution (CR). Whilst similar to an ACC in many ways, a key difference is that it is not a criminal conviction and can be used to deal with less serious offences, including low level assaults (Surrey Police, 2021). A CR is a form restorative justice and is a way to teach offenders the consequences of their actions and find a positive way forward (Youth Endowment Fund, 2023). In a review by the College of Policing they have found benefits of restorative justice, which includes lower recidivism rate, and shows that it has an 80% victim satisfaction rate (College of Policing, 2022). This review covers all forms of restorative justice, covering both CRs and ACCs. It shows clear implementation of EBP by form case studies and evidential reviews on their effectiveness.

In my opinion targeting behaviours is the key to dealing with re-offending which is supported by the psychological principles of Operant Conditioning. This is a form of behavioural reinforcement that works to shape behaviour by subconsciously linking positive and negative outcomes; in this form of conditioning punished behaviour is less likely to be repeated (Coon, et al., 2016). In terms of EBP I believe this is a prime example of research influencing policing policies, especially when looking at the likes of ACC's and CR's as these give offences a consequence, through the condition attached them.

A disposal used for targeting re-offending by Gwent Police, which are linked to ACCs and CRs, is Woman's Pathfinders. This scheme looks at *'Enabling women and children in Wales to have opportunities which enable them to live positive, independent, healthy lives'*. In simple terms it is in place to make a positive change for those risk of committing offences and getting engrossed in the criminal justice system (IOM Cymru, 2023). This is diversionary scheme implemented upon principles EBP due to the Justice Select Committee Inquiry into Women Offenders; it has been shown to have a positive impact by reducing reoffending rates by 26% in the pilot study (IOM Cymru, 2023). Again, this shows the implementation of EBP as it shows direct results of academic research informing police policies.

We can also consider the REACH Project within Caerphilly. Much like the previous discussed options this is an out of court disposal, however, this is only for those under 18 and is run in conjunction with the local youth offending service (Caerphilly Council, 2022). REACH is a project in place for youths which targets those at risk of entering the criminal justice system and reoffending, it offers intervention as a primary source of crime prevention, with the bonus of that child not ending up with a criminal record.

It is well documented that having a criminal record for violence offences will directly impact your ability to find work and stable housing (DBS, 2023). I believe schemes like these are informed by EBP because they understand the consequences of these effects. It is shown by Kingston & Webster (2015) that poverty drives crime, which is a direct

consequence of not being able to find work, and I believe shows the implementation of EBP in scheme such as REACH (Kingston & Webster, 2015).

Overall, I believe EBP influences schemes such as this because they are following the principles laid out in EBP. They use a partnership approach and are using data backed evidence to inform decision making. This is clearly evidenced in their latest inspection where it shows the engagement of youths and their positive experiences with YOS and the REACH project (HMI Probation, 2022).

Whilst we can discuss the effectiveness of these options to reduce re-offending rates, I believe there is an issue in recent crime statistics, due to the coronavirus lockdowns, the lockdown restrictions have undoubtedly had a direct effect on crime, as evidenced by the drop in crime recording which directly correlate to lockdowns (Elkin, 2022). Whilst we can show to certain extents the effectiveness of the likes of alternative disposals such as Pathfinders, I believe we will not be able analyse their true effectiveness for several more years till the confounding effects of the Coronavirus pandemic are eliminated or a means to control this variable is implemented.

Word count: 1098

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