

Graduate Diploma in Professional Police Practice

LEVEL 6 - 40 Credits

To be completed by DHEP Detective students only

**Workbook title: Competency Based Workbook 1
(DHEP) 6,500 words**

(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 3 (DHEP)

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 Graduate Diploma programme. Essentially, you are being asked to outline your experiential learning based upon your theoretical understanding in a range of operational situations.

Area of Professional Practice covered, (called elements in your module descriptor):

- Wellbeing and Resilience
- Communication Skills
- Managing Conflict
- Valuing Difference and Inclusion
- Criminal Justice
- Decision making, discretion
- Conducting Investigations
- Criminal Justice (Managing offenders)
- Problem Solving
- Evidence Based Policing
- Maintaining Professional Standards
- Public Protection.

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.

The content of this workbook should be your own work. Do not allow anyone else to see your work or use your work for their own submissions.

Please be aware that any content that is deemed to be inappropriate, disrespectful, or abusive will not be tolerated. Following review of any content of this nature the information will be shared with the employer of the student responsible.

Should any health and wellbeing concerns be raised because of disclosures made by the student within this workbook, the employer of the student will be informed.

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 document to insert your text / answer within each section of this workbook;
- You should upload your completed document as a saved pdf file of this workbook; if this is not possible then a Worddoc file is acceptable. Do not send a scanned file from a photocopier, an apple.dot file or a Microsoft publisher file as Turnitin will not be able to assess them, despite you being able to upload them.

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Task 5	Independent Patrol Status Confirmation	Equivalent 1500 words
	Confirmation of Confidentiality and Plagiarism <i>Confirmed by submission through `Turnitin</i>	

Task 1

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:

Understanding the role of a constable.

Guidance:

Focussing on your initial 6 months of learning and since being attested as a Police Constable, **discuss and compare** the coping strategies you have applied to develop resilience and minimise stress.

1000 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section)

ANSWER:

During my initial 6 months as a police constable, I have used and developed coping strategies to build resilience and minimise stress. The aim of this essay is to discuss and compare the coping strategies. Undertaking a career as a police officer you will be faced with highly traumatic and stressful scenarios that an average person is unlikely to ever experience. Selye 1975 stated (being a police officer) is one of the most hazardous occupations, exceeding even the stress of those involved in air traffic (Mihalcea, 2006, p. 77). Therefore, it is vitally important that I, as an officer, develop coping mechanisms to manage stress and build resilience.

Selye 1976 explains that “stress is the nonspecific response of the body to any demand made upon it” (Selye, 1976, p. 137). This is a wide definition and highlights that there is no atypical response to stress, each individual will have their own triggers and tolerance levels. Selye states that all stress is not unwanted and adapting the right attitude can convert negative stress into a positive one.

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from negative emotional experiences quickly and effectively (Tugade and Fredrickson 2004). As a police officer building resilience is important as resilient people demonstrate flexibility, durability, an attitude of optimism, and openness to learning (Pulley and Wakefield 2001). These are key attributes of a police officer, as if I do not have the mental resilience to deal with the incidents I am faced with, I will be unable to protect and reassure members of the public whom we as officers serve.

In order to assist me with reflective writing I will be using Bortons "Model of Reflection", (Borton 1970). The model incorporates 3 questions, the first question is "what?". This part defines exactly what has happened, namely what has caused stress, the importance of identifying factors that cause stress and building resilience to these is vital to my career as a police constable. Bortons second question is "so what?", this includes an evaluation of the event, allowing me to analyse what methods I incorporated to minimise and manage stresses caused and the impact that these methods have had not only on my policing career but also on my mental and physical health. Thirdly focuses on "now what?" this part of the process allows me to fully reflect on what strategies worked best and what changes I can implement going forward. By comparing I can adapt, to ensure I am undertaking my duties as a police constable to the best of my abilities.

The first method I have adopted to help minimise stress and build resilience is exercise and in particular running. Exercise helps to focus my mind, built a sense of achievement and made me feel good. Academic research suggests, physiological changes through frequent aerobic exercise enables individuals to better cope with anxiety and depression resulting in an increased sense of well-being (Page, 1983).

As my fitness levels improved, I was able to increase my running distances and improve my pace. This reinforced the "feel good feeling" as I was seeing results, this motivated me more. The reason why I experienced stress relief was due to the link between stress and exercise and its effect on the body's stress hormones. Exercise reduces the bodies stress hormones, adrenaline and cortisol. It also stimulates chemicals in the brain called endorphins that are the bodies natural pain killers and mood elevators (Harvard Health, 2020).

Running also helped me build resilience, I was self-disciplined, ensuring consistency by following a structured running programme but also flexible with my training around my busy schedule. Another key aspect was learning from my mistakes such as not fuelling myself properly before running and feeling lethargic and adapting my running style.

However, I noticed that I began feeling a compulsion to exercise, I started using exercise as an escape and a distraction, at times when I began to feel stressed or anxious, I would go for a run as a "quick fix" rather than addressing the underlying cause. This is what Herring et al, (2007) describes as distraction theory. I was using physical exercise as a means of forcing my attention away from negative themes of thought which is why it made me feel

better. However, due to over exercising I experienced knee pain, and I recognised that if I continued, I would cause myself further injury and in turn not be fit for work as a Police Constable and not perform my role to the best of my ability.

Another method I have found helpful to help reduce stress and build resilience is interacting with animals, specifically my two dogs. I have found that cuddling them and the motion of stroking their fur has a calming effect when I feel overwhelmed.

Universities across the UK and USA have implemented programmes involving therapy dogs with the goal of improving the well-being of students. Studies have shown that therapy dog sessions had strong immediate benefits, significantly reducing stress and increasing happiness and energy levels. (Ward-Griffin et al 2018) However, it must be noted that empirical evidence on the effectiveness of studies is limited.

To further reinforce this the South Wales Police introduced an initiative, Wellbeing dogs (OK9 – Oscar Kilo 9). The force has recognised, that the role is often demanding and dangerous, and by interacting with the dogs it naturally lowers cortisone levels and reduces feelings of stress and anxiety (South Wales Police, 2023)

To compare the coping mechanisms, I have found that exercise is more of a short-term impact for stress relief, it gives me an instant mood boost through physical exertion. Whereas interacting with animals has a more long-term impact as whilst being in their company it relaxes me and calms my mind, it enables me to switch off after a stressful day and helps me more in an emotional sense.

Upon reflection, I have adapted my coping mechanisms by combining them to ensure I am managing my stresses and building resilience in the most effective way. I personally have found that the combination of exercise and animal interaction has benefitted me best. By taking my dogs on a brisk walk daily I am not overexerting myself or opening myself up to an increased risk of physical injury and exhaustion. This is key as the role of a police officer can be very physically demanding. Seeing the dogs enjoying themselves in nature brings me a sense of happiness and I feel refreshed and able to manage the stresses that accompanies the role of an officer in a comprehensive way therefore also building resilience.

Word count – 1097.

Task 2

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum: Communication Skills, Managing Conflict, Valuing Difference and Inclusion

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

Critically assess the incident including social and legislative contexts and any relevant cultural, ethnicity and language issues.

Consider the use of effective communication skills that you used within the incident.

Reflecting upon your incident, critically evaluate any theories or models underpinning the causes of conflict within policing interventions. (Examples would include, Betaris Box, The Drama Triangle).

2000 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section)

ANSWER:

Due to the nature of policing, conflict often plays a key role in the incidents officers attend. Incidents can already be volatile prior to police attendance or escalate due to police presence. In responding to such situations, officers not only put themselves in potential danger, but their actions can have an impact on public safety, trust and confidence in the police (College of Policing 2020). Therefore, it is essential that I can adequately deal with volatile individuals, in order to manage and de-escalate conflict situations.

Throughout this essay I will critically assess a policing incident I attended involving conflict and reflect upon my dealings with the incident, and my effective use of communication skills. I will highlight any social and legislative contexts that are appropriate and refer to theories that underpin conflict in policing interventions. To structure my writing, I will be using Gibbs Reflective Cycle (1988), allowing me to consider the six stages of the cycle throughout my writing, these are description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion and action plan.

In relation to the policing incident I will be critically assessing, the initial call received was for a concern for a female. Her partner had made the report stating that she wasn't coping well as her elderly grandparent was receiving end of life care in hospital and had taken a turn for the worse. She had returned home visibly upset and the reporting person (RP) was

concerned as she had made many previous attempts to harm herself after receiving bad news about her grandparent.

From the initial call I was able to obtain the female's details and carry out Police National Computer (PNC) checks. I discovered that the female has substantial warning markers for violence and mental health. This is when I first considered how I would approach the female, I had not dealt with a mental health incident before and naturally felt apprehensive. I reflected upon my initial training and knew that my conflict management and communication skills would be key to dealing with the female effectively. Early police recognition of the possible mental health problems, learning disabilities or suicidal intent of people they encounter is crucial to ensuring an appropriate and effective response (College of Policing 2016). The female also had numerous linked occurrences for similar incidents surrounding mental health. Mental Health Frequent Presenters are defined as people who are mentally ill or disordered consumers with multiple needs who frequently present to emergency services in mental health crisis (Andrews & Baldry 2013). I believe that this was the case in this incident, and I wanted to ensure that I could implement support for the female going forward to ensure she did not relapse and then present repeatedly to emergency services amid a mental health crisis (Andrews and Baldry 2013).

I attended the address with my tutor and upon our attendance we were met by the RP who informed us that the female was intoxicated and had now left the address telling him she was going to harm herself. Due to this new information I dynamically risk assessed the incident considering the impact factors. Impact factors make conflict situations higher risk, for example alcohol increases the likelihood of both becoming aggressive or angry, also being on the receiving end of someone else's temper (Sundin et al.,2022).

Due to safety concerns for the female and members of the public, my priority was to locate her. I was able to use information held on PNC and communicating with the RP to identify areas of interest that she frequented and arranged for further police units to assist us with an area search. Whilst I was on route to one of the locations, I called the female on her mobile, she was extremely hostile and reluctant to engage with me. She refused to disclose her location but stated she had harmed herself by cutting her wrists and stomach. I began feeling under pressure to locate her as I did not want her to harm herself further and felt personally responsible for her safety. However, I put my training into practice and regulated

my own emotions ensuring that I stayed calm and reassuring on the phone to her. My use of emotional intelligence allowed me to keep my own emotions in balance and assisted me in recognising emotions in others, managing interactions and relationships with them and resolving conflict (Magny and Todak, 2021).

Through continued conversation and listening to the female she began to become less irate on the phone, I kept reinforcing that I understood how she was feeling and that I wanted to help her. As a result, she told me her location. When we found the female, she was clearly distressed, she was holding a shard of glass. When we approached her, she became extremely erratic, she was threatening to cut herself and swinging the glass at officers. We backed off to allow the female some space as I was mindful that multiple officers approaching someone in a mental health crisis can appear threatening and overwhelming. I kept referring to the female by her name and introduced myself as the officer that had spoken to her on the phone, reinforcing the rapport we had built, this helped to reassure her and calm her down. I used active listening skills, encouraging her to talk to me whilst maintaining eye contact and nodding to show understanding, this makes the other person feel heard and valued. (Cuncic, 2022). I understood my communication skills would be vitally important, as when dealing with a mental health crisis, officers should interact with a patient in a calm manner to show they are there to help. (Watson et al 2008).

To further demonstrate my empathy towards how she was feeling, I shared my own experience of losing a grandparent. I did this as I wanted to demonstrate that I was real person with emotions, as many people just see a police officer as the uniform, forgetting that we are just “normal” people too. I feel showing this compassion and understanding helped to reduce tensions. Research by Watson and others (2008) found that people who have mental health conditions were found to be more satisfied with police interaction when shown compassion, respect and concern for their well-being. This approach puts them at ease as officers have taken time to talk to them.

Whilst the female was calming down, I was also mindful of the threat she posed to herself and others whilst being in possession of the glass. I made it clear to her that whilst I wanted to help her, I couldn't do this when she was in possession of the glass. In order to achieve this, I implemented the “five step appeal”. When officers apply this to instances involving resistant individuals it gives the person every opportunity to comply before force is used

(College of Policing 2020). Step 1 is the “simple appeal”, I used a calm, non-threatening tone and said “Please put the glass down” ensuring I gave a simple easy to understand request. She did not comply at this point. Step 2 is the “reasoned appeal”, I explained why I made the request, namely that it was dangerous for her to be holding the glass and I didn’t want her to get hurt. I could see the female was starting to comply as she had sat down and lowered the hand holding the glass to the floor. Step 3 is the “personal appeal”, I made the request personal to the female explaining that I wanted to help her get the support she needed in order to keep her safe. At this point she cooperated and dropped the glass. Step 4 is the final appeal which gives the individual a reasonable final chance to comply before action is taken which is step 5. In this instance I was able to de-escalate the incident and achieve compliance using my verbal communication tactics negating the need to use force on the female. This was my preferred outcome as using force and restraining someone in a mental health crisis can pose a life-threatening risk (College of Policing 2020).

Betaris Box is an academic model that illustrates how our attitudes and behaviours directly affect the attitudes and behaviours of those around us (Mind Tools, 2023). The way I conducted myself throughout my interaction with the female portrayed to her how I wanted her to react towards me. Although this model does support how my attitude and behaviour deescalated conflict in this incident, I do not believe it fully explains it. It is a simple model that does not consider alternative factors that can impact conflict scenarios such as physical, emotional or psychological factors.

In terms of the legislative context, under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act (1983) the police have the power to remove a person from a public place, when they appear to be suffering from a mental disorder to a place of safety. The police power is to facilitate assessment of their health and wellbeing as well as the safety of other people around them (NHS 2022). In this incident I enacted this power in order to safeguard the female due to her behaviour and feel this was the most legitimate and proportionate action to take given the circumstances. I was open and honest with the female, taking time to explain to her the reasoning behind my decision and the process of what would happen now, namely that I would accompany her to a mental health assessment unit. This ensured the female understood what was happening and why, therefore keeping her calm and compliant.

The service demand of mental health calls on police has increased considerably over recent years. A report by the commissioner of South Wales Police shows that in 2017 there were 97,796 crimes and 431,060 incidents flagged in England and Wales as involving mental health concerns. However, there are limitations with the data and the actual demand is greater than the total number of incidents and crimes suggest (HMICFRS 2018). Certainly, in my 12 weeks tutorship since the incident I have discussed in this essay, I have attended multiple mental health related calls. This makes the social context very pertinent. It goes without saying that demand on all emergency services is high but due to a lack of availability of medical services the responsibility falls on police to step in. Research has shown that there is a treatment gap where up to 75% of people who were mentally ill received no treatment at all (Docherty and Thornicroft, 2015). Officers felt that the response to many incidents, especially after hours, was that the mental health services were disorganised, poorly resourced or frankly unavailable (Menkes et al., 2014). As a result, the number of Section 136 detentions by police has risen with almost 80% of detentions arising from threats of suicide or self-harm (Thomas and Forrester Jones 2018). With little early intervention help or access to mental health services, people are reaching crisis point leaving the police with little other option but to detain under section 136. Whilst the police detention rate was high for threats of self-harm, the treatment rate from health services was very low (Thomas and Forrester Jones 2018). This means that it is a continuous cycle and section 136 powers are having to be used as a suicide prevention strategy (Menkes et al. 2014).

Upon reflection I am extremely happy with how I dealt with the female in this incident. By taking time to build a rapport with her I was able to defuse a volatile situation and adequately safeguard her going forward. Whilst I was initially daunted by the incident, my use of emotional intelligence ensured that I managed my own emotions. This allowed me to consider the most proportionate way to deal with her considering the facts of the case and adequately risk assess without feeling overwhelmed. I would like to build further on these skills, and this will give me more confidence dealing with similar incidents going forward.

Key to dealing with conflict incidents, especially that where mental health is involved, is to understand the reasons why the person is behaving in that way and adapt the police response accordingly. Whilst there will always be instances where the only way to deal with conflict is to get hands on with an individual and use force, the importance of verbal communication skills should not be overlooked. I believe this incident has highlighted this

and has shown how verbal communication skills, when used effectively, can de-escalate and manage conflict.

Word Count - 2088

Task 3

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum: Criminal Justice, Valuing difference and inclusion

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

Critically explore a policing incident that you have **investigated** and examine how you dealt with competing issues such as legalisation, social issues, culture and language.

Consider the victims code of practice and how it was used to support your victim/witness through the criminal justice system during the **investigative process**.

Your reflection must illustrate your understanding and application of core principles of ethics, equality, diversity and human rights.

1750 words (+/- 10%: *include your actual word count at the end of each section*)

ANSWER:

Being a victim of a crime can be a highly traumatic experience and it must be ensured that victims are supported throughout their journey through the criminal justice process from start to conclusion (Cps 2022). The government recognised this and in 2018 it implemented a new “victim strategy” (Home Office 2018), to ensure that victims are placed at the heart of the Criminal Justice System (CJS). The main aims of the strategy were to encourage victims to report crimes, that they felt understood and supported and for all government agencies to work in partnership to ensure the victim receives the best possible service.

In terms of a policing context to ensure that the governments aims were implemented both operationally and procedurally the College of Policing (2021) released the “victims code”. The code sets out the minimum standard of services that must be provided to victims of crime (Ministry of Justice 2021). The code applies to all criminal justice agencies and as the police are often the first agency that the victim will interact with, it is vitally important that as officers we ensure that victims rights are understood and met.

Throughout this essay, I will be describing a policing incident I have attended and critically exploring how I have dealt with a service user, focusing on how I have supported them and

how I will consider further support as they continue their journey through the Criminal Justice System.

In relation to the policing incident I will be assessing, the initial report came from a neighbour, who wanted to remain anonymous, reporting concern for welfare of their neighbours children. They had reviewed their video doorbell footage and saw the suspect assaulting her children, by smacking them multiple times to the face and side of their bodies. The footage was supplied to police and upon reviewing the video it was clear that the suspect was hitting her children with her fist, the children are clearly distressed and crying. Due to the nature of the report, I liaised with the Child Abuse Investigation Unit (CAIU) as I felt that this was the best approach, to work in partnership and allow me to gain insight and understanding and achieve the best outcome and safeguard the children going forward.

In terms of the legislative context in March 2022 a new law was introduced applying to everyone in Wales, The Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment)(Wales) Act 2020. It is important to note the act does not create a new criminal offence but removed the defence of reasonable punishment of a child. All types of physical punishment against children are now illegal, this includes smacking, hitting, slapping and shaking. It applies to parents, carers and anyone acting in loco parentis in any setting. The objective of the legislation was to make it easier for children, parents and carers, practitioners and the public to understand the law and protect children's rights by sending a clear signal that physical punishment of a child is not tolerated in Wales. (Safeguarding Wales, 2022). However, the defence is currently still available in England, and it is important to note that studies have shown a change in social attitude towards physical punishment of children with 64% of people in England in favour of a legal amendment to end the use of physical punishment against a child, with 36% against. (Nspcc 2022).

I attended the address with my tutor and two officers from the CAIU, 3 children were present, 2 of the children were babies and 1 child was of primary school age. The suspect was not present, and the children were in the care of the suspect's cousin who was visiting from Romania and spoke broken English. I identified that there would be an issue with language and through the facilitation and use of "language line" I was able to converse with the cousin in her native language via a translator. This allowed me to explain the reason for police attendance. The cousin confirmed that the 2 children identified from the footage being

assaulted were the suspects children. When the suspect returned to the address, she was arrested by a member of the CAIU and conveyed to custody. I ensured this was done out of view of the children to try and limit disruption and upset caused to the child victims.

My priority was to ensure the safety of the children, my first consideration was to enact police powers in relation to the protection of children, under Section 46 of the Childrens Act 1989, this allows police to remove a child to suitable accommodation. (College of Policing, 2014). However, as the perpetrator had been arrested and removed from the property and the children's father had returned home to care for them, they were safeguarded, and risk of further harm had been negated. Further to this, upon initial observations, the children appeared happy, smiling and healthy, they were not distressed and had no visible injuries. They were well presented in clean clothes and appeared well nourished. There were no major concerns regarding the condition of the home address, it was clean, tidy, had sufficient food and contained children's toys.

Upon reflection it would not have been proportionate to enact police powers on this occasion. To further safeguard the children and ascertain if they had any injuries from the assault, they were both taken to hospital for medical assessments. My tutor and I accompanied the children with their father. I feel this was the best course of action as even though the children appeared uninjured, as police officers we have a duty of care to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children.

Under the Victims Code, right one is to be able to understand and be understood (Victims Code, 2021). I was particularly mindful of this in respect of the older child as the whole experience was extremely daunting and overwhelming for her. I took time to introduce myself and build rapport, I made effort to make myself less intimidating and a friendly face. I ensured I chose my words carefully and used age-appropriate language, I reassured her and explained that she wasn't in any trouble, and that the police were there to ensure her safety and protect her. Due to the incident involving a child, an enhanced service is an automatic right as children are "vulnerable witnesses" under the Codes of Practice. As such, to further ensure her understanding of the CJS process, she would be entitled to a Registered Intermediary (RI), an RI can assist victims when they are being interviewed and help them communicate evidence to police. An RI is approved by the court and can help to

explain questions and answers so far as is necessary to help the witness. (College of Policing, 2014). In addition, the "Achieving Best Evidence" (ABE) process is also applicable in this case due to the victim being a child. An ABE interview involves a specially trained officer taking a statement via a video interview, this ensures understanding and the victim is full supported when making a statement, allowing best evidence to be obtained.

Right 4 under the Victims Code is to be referred to services that support victims and have services and support tailored to your needs (Victims Code, 2021). In this incident I submitted a Public Protection Notice (PPN). This is a report that records safeguarding concerns and will be shared with support agencies to allow a multi-agency approach to ensure the children are adequately safeguarded and supported going forward (HMICFRS 2023).

In terms of supporting witnesses at court, special measures were introduced by the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 (YJCEA, 1999) to assist witnesses with vulnerabilities giving evidence, if as a result of these vulnerabilities the quality of their evidence is likely to be diminished. There are 11 measures in total that allow support to be specifically tailored to individual needs. As the victim in the case is a child, special measures could allow for her cross-examination evidence to be pre-recorded, this will negate the need for her to be present in the courtroom for trial which is a stressful and frightening experience. There are also measures that require judges and legal personnel to remove their wigs and gowns making the experience less daunting. Victims can also provide evidence via video link or behind screens shielding them from having to come into direct contact with the defendant which is pertinent in this case as the suspect is the child's parent.

The victims code makes other rights available to victims, however due to there being 12 in total I have focused my attention on those most applicable to this incident.

Throughout this incident and my approach to policing generally, the Code of Ethics underpins the rationale against which my decisions are made. The standards of behaviour and policing principles ensuring that everyone in policing feels able to always do the right thing (College of Policing, 2014).

My duties and responsibilities as a police officer were considered throughout this incident. Firstly, I identified that an offence had taken place and that I complied with the principle of authority, respect and courtesy ensuring I used my police powers proportionately and respectfully, considering the rights of all individuals involved. I did not let unconscious biases impact my decision making ensuring I treated everyone fairly and acted objectively using evidence and my best professional judgement to ensure I was acting in the public interest. I made sure I was accountable in my decision making and open and honest with all parties involved ensuring they understood the reasoning behind my actions. I also recognised the vulnerabilities of the victims and ensured they were safeguarded going forward.

In conclusion, I feel that this incident has highlighted the importance of placing victims of crime at the forefront of the investigation and supporting them throughout the CJS process. Overall, I feel that as the first responding officer to the incident I took time to ensure the victims were safeguarded and supported to the best of my ability. The case will be managed by the CAIU going forward but I ensured that I laid a strong foundation, so they continue to be supported as the case progresses. I feel that due to the victims being of such a young age, the experience could be very upsetting and difficult for them to understand, and I was able to protect and reassure them. I hope as they grow older, this will create a lasting impression on them portraying a positive image of police and if they ever require assistance in future they will not hesitate to reach out as they know they will be supported.

Word Count 1773.

Task 4

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:

Decision making and discretion, Conducting Investigations and Criminal Justice (Managing offenders)

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

Critically assess your role during a **police investigation** where you played a significant part with an offender/victim and reflect upon what happened.

Reflect upon your use of the National Decision-Making Model and the Code of Ethics and review how this impacted upon your decision making and use of discretion within the **investigation**.

Critically review your responsibilities regarding the provision of CPIA when conducting this **investigation**.

1750 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section)

ANSWER:

As a Police Constable the ability to make decisions is key. Due to the nature of the job sound decisions need to be made often dynamically and in a fast-changing environment, sometimes based on limited information. The National Decision Model (NDM) is a model to assist officers decision making, it provides a standardised framework to be considered to help officers structure a rationale of what they did during an incident and why and can be applied to spontaneous and planned incidents (College of Policing, 2013).

Discretion in policing is of utmost importance, it is integral to policework and police identity (Charman and Williams, 2021). Officers are encouraged to use discretion when dealing with incidents and deciding the best course of action to take or in some cases lack of action. However, police must use their discretionary powers in line with the Code of Ethics principles ensuring the rationale behind their decisions is justified and proportionate. This is particularly key among certain populations when the application of discretion is considered to be used disproportionately or prejudicially (Myhill and Johnson, 2016).

Throughout this essay, I will critically assess a policing investigation where I played a significant role. I will reflect upon my use of the National Decision Model and the Code of Ethics, which underpinned my decision making and how discretion was used within the investigation. I will also highlight my responsibilities under the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act (CIPA). I will use the NDM to structure my writing as the model will allow me to reflect upon my actions and decisions throughout the investigation.

In relation to the policing investigation I will be assessing, we received a report of an unknown male approaching a young female in school uniform whilst she was waiting for the school bus. The male was making inappropriate comments regarding her appearance and asking her if she was 16 years old. The female told the male she was under 16, the male has then attempted to grab the female but she was able to avoid him and run away.

Following the initial report, the first stage of the NDM, gather information and intelligence, came into play. A full report was obtained from the victim including a description of the male, but officers had not been able to positively identify the suspect. However, a few days later a male has approached another female and conducted similar behaviour. My tutor and I attended the home address of the second victim, from her account I noticed the similarities to the report just a few days before. The description of the male matched (the male has a very distinctive appearance), the incident happened in a similar location around the same time. The modus operandi (MO) led me to believe that the same male could be responsible for both incidents. To gather information, we conducted House to House and CCTV enquires in the locality and discovered that a witness had recorded the incident on their mobile phone. I was able to obtain a photo of the suspect to use going forward with the investigation in order to assist establishing the identify the male. I decided to circulate the image to departments within the police and liaised with MOSOVO (Management of Sexual or Violent Offenders) but results were negative. From the initial stage of the investigation, I had limited information upon which to base our decision making. I had spoken to the victims and witnesses to gain understanding of exactly what had happened but as we had not known the identity of the male, we were unable to form a clear picture of the incident. I decided that further investigation would be required to assist me with my decision making.

As our enquires were ongoing this links into the second stage of the NDM, assess threat, risk and develop a working strategy. When considering the threat and risk, one of the key

priorities was to safeguard the victims and the potential risks to other children. Based on the information, I decided the threat and risk level was high, due to the male still being at large, his identity being unknown and the fact he was targeting vulnerable young females. I also considered the threat/risk to the male suspect himself as it was reported that tensions in the community were rising due to his behaviour, and I did not want any harm to come to the male.

In terms of the working strategy, I decided that key to the investigation was identifying and locating the male. The suspect was included as a key person of interest and his image circulated in team briefings. We orchestrated targeted patrols with officers patrolling the hot area at the times the male had been seen previously in the hope of locating him.

Whilst my tutor and I were undertaking one of the targeted patrols, a male matching the suspect description was sighted. In line with the NDM I considered my powers and policies. I used my discretion and took positive action by stopping and detaining the male in order to establish his identity. Police National Computer (PNC) checks were carried out and allowed us to ascertain his offending history and warning markers, I subsequently discovered he had been involved in similar incidents previously and had warning markers surrounding his mental health. Consequently, I made the decision based on my assessment of threat/risk and professional judgement to exercise powers of arrest. The male was arrested for Sexual Assault by Touching (Sexual Offences Act, 2003). I feel that this was the most proportionate action to take at that moment given the circumstances, it mitigated the risk of harm to both the suspect and members of the public.

The initial interaction with the suspect was difficult, he struggled to communicate, retain and understand information and would not make eye contact. Due to the male's demeanour, and his mental health history I considered that he may have a mental health condition or learning disability. Based on this I used my discretion to change how I interacted with the male, I adopted a non-threatening approach and spoke slowly to ensure understanding. I also decided not to use handcuffs on the male, he was compliant, and the use of force can be frightening for an autistic person who does not understand what is happening and may not be able to communicate their fears in an appropriate way (National Autistic Society, 2020).

Once at custody I discovered that the male had severe autism, before processing the investigation further, I used my discretion and made the decision to assess the male's capacity and understanding, it was subsequently held he lacked capacity and deemed not fit for interview. Based on this I used discretion, and the decision was made to NFA (no further action) the case as it would not be in the public interest to continue with the investigation. Upon reflection I now realise that his behaviour/ actions were in connection with his autism, as these can look similar to what individuals within law enforcement would consider suspicious behaviour (Psychology Today 2020). I believe stopping the investigation was the correct course of action and believe I dealt with the male appropriately considering his behaviour was due to vulnerability rather than criminal intent.

The Code of Ethics is at the heart of the NDM highlighting the importance of the principles and ensuring decisions are made in line with the values and standards that policing is proud of (College of Policing, 2014). In the investigation I considered my duties and responsibilities to all parties involved. I safeguarded the victims by submitting support referrals and attended local schools to speak to safeguarding staff, by showing police presence it would reassure the children and their families.

Even though the case against the suspect was not continuing I considered my duty of care towards the male, it was clear that he was vulnerable. An autistic person might not be able to predict the consequences of their actions or learn from experience. They may repeatedly offend if not offered the correct support and intervention (National Autistic Society, 2020). To mitigate this, I wanted to ensure he was supported going forward, I attended his home address and spoke to his parents to gain a full understanding of his support needs. It was discovered that the male was not receiving any support and was becoming increasingly difficult for them to manage. I submitted a high risk Public Protection Notice (PPN) for the male which would allow a multi-agency approach to his safeguarding.

Due to the sensitive nature of the case, I treated all parties fairly and respectfully. My approach towards the victims was empathetic and supportive and I was open and honest to the victims and their families. I ensured that when conducting the investigation, I did not make promises that I could not keep and explained that due to the vulnerabilities surrounding the suspect the case may not reach prosecution. I also ensured that force used against the suspect was proportionate by not applying handcuff restraints.

I was accountable for my actions and decisions in relation to the investigation ensuring I acted objectively based on the information I had available to me at the time and when new information came to light, and I used my discretion and adapted my decision making to always ensure I was doing the right thing.

The Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act (CPIA,1996) sets out how police officers are to record, retain and reveal to the prosecutor material obtained in a criminal investigation (Ministry of Justice, 2015). It was my responsibility to pursue all the reasonable lines of enquiry (Health and Safety Executive, 2022) and I feel that I did this to the best of my ability.

There are different three categories of material under CPIA, evidence, unused material and non-relevant material. Although this investigation has been concluded under NFA, whilst conducting initial enquires I was mindful of my responsibilities under CIPA. I ensured when conducting enquires, all documentation obtained during the investigation was correctly linked to the incident and stored on the police systems.

In conclusion I am extremely proud with how I dealt with this incident, I received a commendation from the Inspector for my investigative work in relation to the case and I feel this a huge achievement to have received this in the early stages of my career.

Although the incident did not result in a criminal prosecution against the male, I feel that the decisions I made, and my use of discretion led to the correct outcome given the circumstances of the case. The incident highlighted my use of the NDM throughout the investigation and helped to structure my decisions. I feel that I took time to consider the vulnerabilities of both the suspect and victims and ensured they were fully safeguarded, and that I made appropriate decisions based on the information I had available to me at the time.

Word Count – 1815.

Task 5

Independent Patrol Status confirmation – equivalent to 1,500

This compilation of this task shall be confirmed by the employer once independent patrol status is achieved.

Bibliography

The bibliography should only include sources referenced within the workbook using the Harvard referencing system. Information about referencing in written assignments and how to avoid plagiarism can be found on Moodle. It is important that you are aware of the importance of ensuring that the work submitted is your original work.

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