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Working Across Agency Boundaries: A Micro-Institutionalist Perspective on Public

Service Innovation

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CANDIDATE DECLARATION

I hereby declare that:

1. I have not been enrolled for another award of the University, or other academic or professional organisation, whilst undertaking my research degree.

2. None of the material contained in the thesis has been used in any other submission for an academic award.

3. I am aware of and understand the University's policy on plagiarism and certify that this thesis is my own work. The use of all published or other sources of material consulted have been properly and fully acknowledged.

4. The work undertaken towards the thesis has been conducted in accordance with the SHU Principles of Integrity in Research and the SHU Research Ethics Policy.

5. The word count of the thesis is 72,370 words.

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the nature of institutional work performed by frontline public service workers and middle managers as they deliver an innovative service pilot in the North of England through an inter-organisational collaborative team (i.e. the pilot team). It is founded upon a qualitative case study of the pilot team, which adopted interviews, participant observation and shadowing of actors' every day social interactions over a five-month period to capture social action in situ and in vivo. Such an approach is rare within both the institutional theory and public service innovation literatures.

I find that actors engage in two types of institutional work – discursive boundary work and discursive practice work. During two 'turf wars' actors undertake discursive boundary work to legitimise or delegitimise who has jurisdiction to engage in specific activities or practices in the field. Here, pilot team members and outsiders used discursive frames and framing tactics to expand or contract boundaries or jurisdictions to pursue innovation interests or maintain the status quo. Central to discursive practice work is the telling of emotional stories of clients and the use of pathos based rhetorical strategies to mobilise participation in their innovative practice and block negative emotions that could lead to resistance to the practice. In addition, team members act as practice custodians by using emotions to repair any explicit and implicit practice breakdowns to maintain credibility and participation in the innovative practice over time.

Overall these findings contribute to developing the literature on institutional theory, institutional work and public service innovation in different ways. Firstly, it demonstrates the situated nature of institutional work which elucidates the multi-dimensional and overlapping nature of micro-level institutional processes. Therefore, institutional work appears to be much more complex and nuanced than what is often presented in the literature. While the extant literature privileges the role of institutional elites, this study demonstrates how those who lack access to the same position, resources and power, can nevertheless make things happen in a highly institutionalised environment. By developing a heuristic that explicates the antecedents and dynamics of low-power agency, I discuss how field conditions, field position and social conditions enabled some actors to be more successful with their discursive institutional work than others. Significantly, the findings provide a rare insight into a key feature of institutional work – intentionality and effort. In some instances, institutional work is highly intentioned and is "hard" work, whilst at other times, the work has intention but requires less creativity or effort to achieve intended outcomes. This helps us understand the lived experience of actors, an area that has received scant empirical attention. Next, this study contributes to our understanding of public service innovation, as little is known regarding how low-power actors deliver such activity. Using a new typology of resources, field position and status, I show how actors mix different resources (rational, normative and experiential resources) in their institutional work and the important role field position plays in accessing these resources, and achieving intended institutional outcomes (maintenance vs. innovation). In addition, the creation of a relational space (e.g. pilot team meetings) was crucial to maintaining momentum of the innovation as actors developed social bonds, commitment to the practice, and worked to repair practice breakdowns.

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First, and most importantly, I would like to thank the pilot team and the Marion Public Service Innovation Project for participating in the research underpinning this thesis. These individuals gave up significant amounts of their time and let me into their world to view the daily up and downs involved in tackling the wicked problems that exist in society today. I was truly humbled by the work they do and I know they are just a small percentage of the many unsung heroes at the frontline who battle to improve the lives of some of the most vulnerable in society. I am honoured to share their story with others and to develop our understanding of such important, yet challenging work.

Particular thanks are extended to the various members of my supervisory team. Firstly, I thank Professor Penny Dick of the University of Sheffield for helping to secure access to the pilot team and her help and guidance during the early stages of the research. Secondly, I thank Dr. Andrew Johnston for stepping in and providing a critical eye towards the end of the journey. Lastly, I am eternally grateful to Dr. Tracey Coule who has stuck with it over many years, and many "bumps" (understatement of the century) in the road. I could not ask for better supervisor, mentor and friend.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This thesis explores the nature of institutional work performed by frontline public service delivery workers as they delivered an innovative public service of their own design in the North of England. Over a five-month period, I used a mixture of qualitative methods like interviews and participant observation of working practice to gain access to the everyday micro-level action involved in such activity. Here, I shed on the nature of institutional work involved when delivering an innovative public service by exploring the interplay between institutional structures and actor agency (i.e. human action) in this everyday action. Specifically, I focus on how actors draw on the rules and resources in their institutional field (i.e. social structures) and change established organisational routines and practices to support the delivery of their innovative public service.

This introductory chapter provides the background to the study, empirical context in which the research was set, the research questions that guided the study, a brief methodological overview and an outline structure of the thesis.

1.1   Study Background and Research Questions

Public service innovation[1] has been of interest to both scholars and practitioners in the United Kingdom (UK) for many decades (Osborne, 1988; Osborne & Brown 2013).

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[1] Public service innovation is distinctive from more 'typical' forms of innovation, like product innovation, derived from the manufacturing sector (Tether, 2003; Gronroos, 2007; Normann, 2007). Specifically public service innovations involve the co-production of public services where service users, service provider (NPO), commissioners (e.g. public sector) and other stakeholders (e.g. other NPOs, private sector organisations, community etc.) interact to produce services (Alam, 2006; Bransden & Pestoff, 2006). Consequently, such innovations involve innovations to the service, the process by which the service is delivered or the management of innovation within the service organisation (Lekhi, 2007).

Innovation in public services captures the interest of such individuals because it is perceived as a way to: improve the quality of public services (HM Treasury 2002; Cabinet Office 2010), demonstrate the state as a value creating institution (Moore & Hartley, 2008) and tackle the complex social problems facing society today (Damanpour & Schneider, 2008; Vickers, Lyon, Sepulveda & McMullin, 2017). This is particularly so in a context where significant and prolonged programmes of austerity like those experienced in the UK (Lowdnes & Pratchett, 2012) has resulted in the restriction of public services alongside increasing socio-economic problems like poverty, ageing population and homelessness (see Milbourne & Cushman, 2015; Vickers et al., 2017).

For example, between 2010-2018, funding to local government in England was cut by 21% (Amin-Smith & Phillips, 2019) with a projected £8 billion funding gap expected by 2025 (Local Government Association, 2019). Such cuts have resulted in councils' limited budgets being focused on statutory services like children's services and adult social care with limited funding available for other services[2] and preventative measures (National Audit Office, 2018; Amin-Smith & Phillips, 2019; Centre for Cities, 2019; Local Government Association, 2019). Importantly these cuts have not been equally distributed, with cities and more deprived areas - often located in the North of England – experiencing larger and more significant cuts than their more affluent counterparts. Seven of the ten cities with the largest cuts were in the North East, North West or Yorkshire (Centre for Cities, 2019). This is largely unsurprising as poorer households tend to be more reliant on public services and such households are

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[2] On average local council spending on discretionary services like housing, transport, planning and development, cultural and leisure services has decreased by over 40% from 2009-2010 to 20178-18 (Amin-Smith & Phillips, 2019; Centre for Cities, 2019).

concentrated in cities and deprived areas (Hastings, Bailey, Gannon & Watkins, 2015). Using Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council as an example, the programme of austerity has resulted in a £145 million cut in spending, resulting in a 40% reduction in day-to-day spending on services from 2010 to 2018. Equally, their expenditure on social care grew 20% over the same time period, taking up 62% of their overall spending. Therefore, local government organisations and their service delivery partners (private and third sector organisations) face managing significant resource constraints alongside increasing service demand (Ziegler, 2017). Policy makers present innovation in public service delivery as a golden ticket to solving these issues, because it is perceived as the way to provide strategies "*to do more for less*" (Patterson, Kerrin, Gatto-Roissard & Coan, 2009, p.12) through the production of creative responses to austerity and complex social problems (Gillinson, Horne & Baeck, 2010; Lowndes & Pratchett, 2012).

Although public service innovation has long been a buzzword (Osborne & Gaebler, 1984; Osborne & Brown, 2011), scant empirical attention has been paid to this concept (see De Vries, Bekkers & Tummers, 2016), despite many calls to bolster the literature with more empirical, rather than normative insights (see Osborne, Chew & McLaughlin, 2008; Osborne & Brown, 2011: 2013; Hartley et al., 2013; De Vries et al., 2016). The small empirical evidence base upon which we draw our understanding of innovation in public services is plagued by a number of shortcomings. The majority of studies focus on intra-organisational processes over inter-organisational relationships and external (economic, political, and social) factors which is a considerable deficiency given the plurality of the public service delivery system (see Walker, 2014; Bernier, Hafsi & Deschamps, 2015). It is well known that significant societal problems like poverty, wellbeing and worklessness cannot be tackled in isolation (see Rittel & Webber;

Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015). As a result, most service delivery models are dominated by partnership working approaches, resulting in public service organisations and others working across organisational boundaries with actors such as business, users, citizens, and non-profit organisations (Osborne et al., 2008; Walker, 2008; Cabinet Office, 2006, 2010). As a result, we lack insight into innovation conducted using the approach that is normatively advocated for, and practically applied across the board.

Additionally, much existing understanding is largely 'atheoretical', as it lacks links to existing well-established theories like institutional theory (Osborne & Brown, 2011; Hartley et al., 2013; De Vries et al., 2016). For example, the public service innovation literature tends to portray actors in this context (organisations and the individuals within them) as passive recipients of their environment, although institutional theory and a growing number of studies suggest such overly deterministic views of action are inaccurate (see Bernier & Hafsi, 2007; Currie, Lockett & Suhomlinova, 2009; Oborn, Barrertt & Exworthy, 2011; Currie, Lockett, Finn, Martin & Waring, 2012; Coule & Patmore, 2013). Actors within the public service delivery system can indeed transcend legitimated ways of working by challenging or re-constructing taken-for-granted rules and practices to produce innovation in public services. Although these studies, and innovation theory, suggest human action (agency) is important (see Drucker, 1985; Osborne & Brown, 2011), we have two contrasting views of agency. Either it is presented deterministically by focusing on specific individual leadership traits or behaviours (e.g. Jaskyte, 2013; Damanpour & Schneider, 2009) or by employing a hagiographic lens, focusing on people at executive levels who are often portrayed as 'hero-innovators' (Doig & Hargrove, 1987; Roberts & King, 1996; Kingdon, 2003). Such perspectives ignore the crucial role of the environment or the necessity of collective action when operating

in pluralistic environments (Meijer, 2014). Moreover, agency is often explored through surveys or interviews with elite actors based on retrospective accounts of the action (e.g. Jaskyte, 2013; Walker, Berry & Avellanedo, 2015) resulting in little understanding of what actors do in the here and now when pursuing their innovation interests. These insights are important to help guide policy makers and managers in their management of such activities (see Osborne & Brown, 2011, 2013).

In response to these shortcomings, this thesis discusses how an inter-organisational collaborative team of predominately frontline service delivery workers sought to implement an innovative service model of their own design in their local area. Through the adoption of a single interpretive qualitative case study with participant observation, I observed how many different actors pursued their interests in the here and now, over a five-month period. Through the adoption of one of the dominant concepts in institutional theory - *institutional work*[3] (see Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Lawrence, Suddaby & Leca, 2011) - I was able to gain empirical and theoretical insights concerning the purposeful effort undertaken by actors to shape their institutional arrangements when implementing an innovative public service. Specifically, such a theoretical avenue helps to understand how organisational actors change elements of institutions (organisational routines, practices and forms), the types of resources actors draw on in their field, and the degrees of intentionality and effort that is involved in such work. The choice of such a well-developed theoretical tradition not only brings rigour to the study (see Osborne & Brown, 2011; De Vries et al., 2016) but enables the consideration of the role of both human and structural contingencies that underpin this

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[3] Institutional work is defined as the purposeful effort used by actors to create, maintain or transform institutions (Lawrence & Sudday, 2006).

notoriously complex and misunderstood phenomenon. As a result, the thesis aims to redress the imbalance in the public service innovation literature by shifting it from being "*strong on structure, but weak on action*" (Giddens, 1993, p. 4), to one that balances the dynamic interplay of both.

1.2   Research Questions

Against this backdrop, the following questions guide the study:

Research Question 1: What is the nature of institutional work aimed at the delivery of an innovative public service?

Research Question 1a: How do organisational actors draw on the rules and resources in their institutional field (i.e. social structures) to advance the delivery of an innovative public service?

Research Question 1b: How do organisational actors go about changing established organisational routines, practices and forms when delivering an innovative public service?

1.3   Empirical Context – Pilot Team & Marion Public Service Innovation Project

Geographically, the study is situated in Marion[4], an estate with high levels of social deprivation and public service usage in a metropolitan borough in the North of England. This borough, like many across the country, is facing significant reductions in funding due to the central government's programme of austerity (see HM Treasury,

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[4] Marion is the fictional name given to the area the fieldwork was conducted to protect the identity of the research participants.

2011, 2013; Milbourne & Cushman, 2015). Moreover, this borough is one of a number of local authorities that have joined together to form a combined local authority that would receive new financial and legislative powers as a result of the Coalition and Conservative governments' programme of radical public service transformation (see DCLG 2011, 2013; Localism Act 2012; HM Treasury, 2013; HM Government, 2016). At the time of the fieldwork, there was much uncertainty concerning how this would play out in practice. What was certain, was that the demand for services exceeded available funding for services in the borough.

As a result of these pressures, the borough formed the Marion Public Service Innovation Project (MPSIP) [5], which brought together agencies interested in experimenting with new ways of working to reduce demand for services and improve lives of citizens in the area. The Marion estate was chosen as a site of experimentation because of the high level of service usage in the area. One element of the MPSIP work was the creation and implementation of the 'pilot team'. The pilot team was a collaboration between a number of different agencies: police, local council (various services such as social services), health services (including mental health), local housing agencies, probation services, job centre, alcohol and drugs services and volunteer groups working in the area. Here, these agencies sent frontline service delivery actors to work together in the design and implementation of a new and innovative service delivery model aimed at those creating high levels of service demand. The innovative practice was based on the principles of person-centred restoration (see Leplege. Gzil, Cammelli, Lefeve, Pachoud & Ville, 2007) – that is the idea that 'problems' can be solved

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[5] Marion Public Service Innovation Project (MPSIP) is a fictional name given to the innovation project created in the local area to protect the identity of the research participants.

by working with individuals to build relationships and empower them to solve their own problems. The practice involved designated key workers making contact with these individuals, groups or families defined as problems[6], and working to gain access to their lives by obtaining permission from them to work towards improving[7] their lives. Although, person-centred restoration is not necessarily new in some public services, what set this model apart from traditional approaches in the field was the high degree of discretion and latitude given to key workers in the support of their service users.

The pilot team comprised of a team leader, key workers trained in the innovative practice and frontline workers from other organisations who were familiar with the Marion estate, clients and/or particular pervasive problems (i.e. mental health, domestic violence, drug abuse, housing). These actors met weekly and during these meetings, key workers would work with others to define problems to target (i.e. individuals, groups or families who were generally high service users), diagnose the causes of problems, plan interventions to solve problems and report on the effectiveness of work undertaken. Progress on the pilot team's work were reported back into monthly MPSIP meetings. The MPSIP group then regularly reported back to senior executives in the borough to inform decisions concerning service delivery models being adopted for roll out across the borough.

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[6] Generally refers to 'high volume service users'.

[7] The concept or discourse around 'improving' lives of high volume service users will be discussed in further detail in the findings and analysis section.

1.4   Methodological Overview of the Study

With the aim of building insights into the nature of institutional work in the context of the delivery of a public service innovation, the research follows an inductive logic employing an interpretive qualitative single case study. To gain insight into the messy and often mundane activities done in the here and now, a combination of participant observation of meetings and events, interviews and shadowing of frontline workers in the pilot team on the Marion estate was conducted over a five month period. Based on this process, 16 visits to the locale were made, involving 7 pilot team meeting observations, 3 Marion Public Service Innovation Project meeting observations, 14 qualitative interviews, 2 event observations (one internal, one external) and two days of shadowing key workers. Thus, the fieldwork resulted in 21.6 hours of transcribed interviews and meetings, 27.7 hours of working practice observation and nearly 22,000 words of field notes. Data was analysed through a process of recursive cycling between data, concepts within the extant literature, emerging theoretical arguments over time to ensure insights were developed from and situated in, organisational actors' day-to-day interactions. Here, I looked for patterns, relationships and/or processes in actors' 'discourses in action'[8] and discursive practices over the five-month period, to capture the types of institutional work (see Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Lawrence et al., 2013), how actors used this work to change established routines, practices and forms (RQ1b), and how the rules and resources available in the field (RQ1a) like the role of the field (external and internal factors), field position (embeddedness) and social (individual characteristics) conditions facilitated their institutional work.

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[8] Here the analytical focus on what is being said, in what contexts, by whom and to whom, and for what affect.

1.5   Structure of the Thesis

Following this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 introduces literature surrounding public service innovation and institutional theory, which acts as the overarching theoretical lens for the study. The methodology is then outlined in Chapter 3. Following this, the findings from the analysis are presented as two separate and distinct chapters. Chapter 4 presents the discursive boundary work undertaken by actors as they attempted to legitimise or delegitimise who has jurisdiction to engage in specific activities or practices in the field during two observed 'turf' wars. Chapter 5 presents the role of emotions as a significant resource in the discursive practice work that served to create and maintain the innovative practice over time. These findings are discussed in relation to their contribution to furthering the institutional work and public service innovation literatures in Chapter 6. In conclusion, Chapter 7 summarises the contribution to knowledge and consideration is paid to the limitations of the study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Through a critical review of the literature on public service innovation, I discuss how much of the understanding of public service innovation is largely normative and 'atheoretical' in nature. In the few empirical studies that do exist, public sector actors are depicted as passive recipients of their institutional environments who are unable to transcend legitimated ways of working to challenge or reconstruct taken-for-granted rules and practices. I argue that this lack of sufficient attention to the human, as well as structural, contingencies provides us with an incomplete picture of public service innovation. Therefore, to redress this imbalance, I make a case for using institutional theory as a basis for improving our understanding public service innovation. Specific attention is paid to one of the prevalent concepts within institutional theory – institutional work – as a means to explore how institutional fields and organisational practices are created, maintained and disrupted by organisational actors.

This chapter begins with a brief introduction to public service innovation and the limitations in our understanding of this concept generally. Next, I discuss the conceptual clarity institutional theory can offer to further our understanding of public service innovation. Specific attention is then paid to the insights offered by the institutional work literature in regards to how institutional fields and organisational practices are created, maintained and disrupted by organisational actors in relation to delivery of innovative public services.

2.1   Public Service Innovation: An Introduction

Within in this thesis, I focus specifically on service innovation in the public sector, or to put more simply, public service innovation. Public service innovations are defined

as *new* services offered by public organisations to meet an external user or stakeholder need (Osborne, 1998; Edquist et al., 2001; Walker et al., 2015). Broadly, there are three modes of public service innovation (see Figure 1), which are based on the degree of discontinuity, or change, the innovation produces in terms of the organisation's production of the service and/or service's beneficiary group (Osborne, 1998; Walker, 2008). Total service innovations involve developing new services to new users (service and user discontinuity). Expansionary innovations involve providing existing services to new user groups (user discontinuity). Conversely, evolutionary innovations are new services that are delivered to existing user groups (service discontinuity). Specifically, the innovation of interest in this study is an example of an evolutionary innovation (see Chapter 4). It represents the production and testing of a new service delivery model delivered to existing users of public services (high volume police call-outs). But this example of evolutionary public service innovation is occurring against the backdrop of large scale total public service innovation – the devolution of central government decision making and funding to 'whole places' (multiple groups of local authorities) to create place based public services in specific pockets across the United Kingdom (see DCLG 2011, 2013; HM Treasury, 2013; HM Government, 2016).

An important feature of public service innovation is the presence of discontinuity, which is argued to be essential to distinguish between innovation and incremental change (Osborne, 1998; Osborne & Brown, 2011; Walker et al., 2015). This is particularly salient in a public sector context as often innovation is conflated with incremental organisational change or continuous service improvement (Mulgan & Albury, 2003; Hartley, 2005; Osborne et al., 2008). Conflating such concepts underestimates the intricacy and managerial challenges associated with managing

innovation as opposed to continuous change (Brown & Osborne, 2013). For instance, managers delivering change or innovation activity in the public sector face risk, uncertainty and failure – characteristics that do not define continuous service development activity. Even though risk and failure are recognised as part of the innovation process generally (Van de Ven, 1988; Borins, 2001), risk is presented as something that should be minimised, if not avoided altogether in the public sector (Osborne & Brown, 2011; Brown & Osborne, 2013). Moreover, innovation is perceived as normative good, in so much that innovation should be useful and lead to success which is not always the case (see Brown & Osborne, 2013; De Vries et al., 2016). Thus, innovation presents distinctive challenges for those managing and delivering such activities in the public sector that can become lost without this distinction (Osborne & Brown, 2011).

Figure 1: Modes of public service innovation based on the degree of change (Osborne, 1998)

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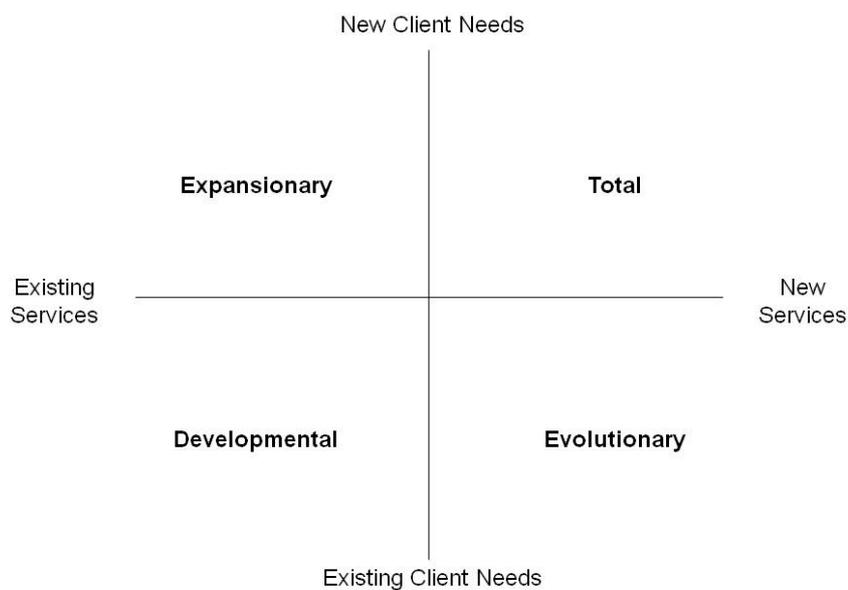
Public service innovation is one of a number of different types of innovation that occurs in the public service delivery system. These innovation activities are categorised into different types to delineate one innovation type from another (Hartley, 2005; Moore & Hartley, 2008). Distinguishing between innovation types is necessary to understand innovative behaviour, as each type has different characteristics or requirements for successful adoption and diffusion (Walker, 2006). In the table below, I provide a summary of the different types of innovation in the public sector. The innovation of interest in this study is reflective of a service innovation as it involves the delivery of a new service designed to support those who cause high volume call outs from the police service to reduce their service usage. Public service innovation is one of the least studied types of innovation that occurs in the public sector (De Vries et al., 2015).

Table 1: A typology of innovation in the public sector (adapted from De Vries et al., 2015)

Innovation Type	Focus of Activity	Examples
Process Innovation	How a service is rendered – focus on management and organisation (Walker, 2014)	Administrative and technological innovations (see below)
Administrative (organisational) process innovation	Creation of new organisational structures, strategies, management practices, working methods	Creation of 'one-stop shop' where citizens can access various services at one location (Bhatti, Olsen & Pedersen, 2011); Personnel innovations arising from changes in employment visas (Fernandez & Wise, 2010); Innovations in workplace succession planning (Teodoro, 2009)

Innovation Type	Focus of Activity	Examples
Technological process innovation	Creation of use of new technologies to deliver services to users and citizens	Digital assessment of taxes (Edquist, Hommen & McKelvey, 2001); Adoption of e-Government practices (Jun & Weare, 2011).
Product or Service Innovation	Creation of new public services or products	Creation of electronic service delivery innovation in Dutch Police Forces (Korteland & Bekkers, 2008); Hospital accommodation supporting those with medium to high risk complex needs (Coule & Patmore, 2013)
Governance Innovation	Development of new forms and process to address specific societal problems	Collaboration with private partners to address societal challenges (Schoeman, Baxter, Goffin & Micheli, 2012); Public innovation through collaboration and design (Ansell & Torfing, 2014); Collaborative innovation (Sorensen & Torfing, 2011; Hartley et al., 2013)
Marketization Innovation	Methods to purchase services and revenue generation	Innovations around contracting, externalisation, market pricing of public services, customer learning orientation (Schilling, 2005; Walker et al, 2015; Salge and Vera, 2012)

2.1.1 Limitations of the literature concerning innovation in public services

Public service innovation has long been a central feature of the delivery (HM Treasury 2002, 2007; Cabinet Office 2010) and transformation of public services (NESTA 2007; Cabinet Office, 2010) in the UK. Much of its prominence lies in its ability to not only 'improve' service delivery but to legitimise the state as a 'value-creating' institution (Moore & Hartley, 2008). Within the current programme of public sector austerity, innovation is increasingly privileged as a means for not only doing more for less, but

essential for producing creative responses to austerity (Gillinson, Horne & Baeck, 2010; Lowndes & Pratchett, 2012). Despite this attention by scholars, practitioners and politicians (see Osborne & Brown, 2011; Walker, 2014), scant empirical attention has been paid to innovation in public services generally (Jaskyte, 2011; Hartley et al., 2013).

The difference is striking when one compares the private and public sector innovation literatures. In 2008 alone, over 1000 papers were published about innovation in the Business, Finance Economics and Management field and over half (52%) were empirically based papers (Crossan & Apaydin, 2010). Beyond a plethora of empirically based papers - general literature reviews, systematic reviews, and meta-analysis abound, as scholars attempt to explain why and how innovation takes place to generate new avenues for theory building and research in the private sector literature (Fagerberg et al., 2005; Crosson & Apaydin, 2010; Perks & Roberts, 2013). In contrast, there is only one example of a comprehensive systematic review in the public sector innovation literature (see De Vries et al., 2016). Instead, most of the literature reviews aim to conceptually (see Osborne & Brown, 2011; Sorensen & Torfing, 2011) or normatively (see Bason, 2010) understand the meaning and importance of innovation in the public sector. A systematic review of innovation in the public sector (De Vries et al., 2016) found only 181 empirically based papers from internationally peer-reviewed journal articles and books from well-established publishers over the past 25 years. Of the 181 papers, only 22% explored service innovation, with the majority focusing on intra-organisational process innovations.

This is of particular importance as innovation in the public sector is firmly located within the open innovation debate (see Chesborough, 2003; Osborne & Brown, 2011). Here, innovation in public services is seen to emerge from interactions between an

organisation and their wider institutional environment (Nelson, 1993; Osborne et al., 2008; Osborne & Brown, 2011). As a result, the structural position and institutional environment influence an organisation's openness to innovation, access to knowledge as well as the shape that innovation will take (Scott, 2003). This is significant as public service delivery is dominated by partnership working approaches, resulting in public service organisations and their agents working across organisational boundaries (i.e. business, users, citizens, non-profits) (Osborne et al., 2008; Walker, 2008; Cabinet Office, 2006, 2010). These boundaries will only further blur as the state withdraws as the primary provider of public services (see Cabinet Office, 2006,:2010; Carmel & Harlock, 2008; Rees & Rose, 2015). Consequently, it is a significant shortcoming that the majority of our understanding of public service innovation focuses on intra-organisation processes over inter-organisational relationships and external (economic, political, and social) factors (see Walker, 2014; Bernier et al., 2015) that are likely to influence public service innovation.

In addition to the dearth of empirically based papers, the public innovation literature is largely 'atheoretical' in nature. The recent systematic review found that the majority of studies did not link to existing theories, although there are many theoretical avenues that could be further explored (De Vries et al., 2016). This is surprising as key scholars like Osborne (see 2006:2010) and Hartley (see Hartley, 2005; Hartley et al., 2013) have long been critical of the public innovation literature for not drawing on established theoretical avenues to achieve more depth and rigour t. Specifically, De Vries et al. (2016) argued that bodies of theoretical knowledge, like neo-institutionalism, should be drawn on in future public sector innovation research to help investigate the influence of the environment on innovation adoption and diffusion.

Beyond the issues of the limited empirical attention, and at times normative nature of the public service innovation literature, much existing understanding can largely be described as deterministic and structural in nature, in so much that, public service innovation behaviour is portrayed as a reaction to the institutional environment (see Aiken & Alford, 1970; Borins, 1998; Light, 1999; Osborne & Brown, 2005; Boyne et al., 2005; Walker, 2008:2014). Thus, innovative capacity is contingent upon the institutional and policy environment rather than an inherent element of these organisations or the people within them. As a result, organisations and actors are depicted as passive recipients of their political or institutional environment, reminiscent of early institutional approaches to organisation analysis, where attention is paid to the conforming behaviour as they incorporate structures and practices to increase their legitimacy, access to resources and overall survival (Scott, 2001). This is, to a degree, unsurprising as local governments are under pressure from central government mandates or their own citizens to adopt policies or innovations to achieve legitimacy (Berry & Berry 1999; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004; Walker, Avellaneda & Berry, 2011). However, it appears to be overly deterministic to suggest public service actors are unable to transcend legitimated ways of working by challenging or re-constructing taken-for-granted rules and practices (see Bernier & Hafsi, 2007; Currie, Lockett & Suhomlinova, 2009; Oborn, Barrertt & Exworthy, 2011; Currie, Lockett, Finn, Martin & Waring, 2012; Coule & Patmore, 2013). This is particularly the case as innovation requires an element of 'discontinuity', in which actors violate prevailing practices and institutional expectations concerning what is appropriate or beneficial to organisations or society (see Tushman & Anderson, 1985; Osborne, 1998). This raises the question of whether structural conceptualisations of public service innovation provide a holistic picture of this notoriously complex phenomenon.

Although the role of agency is widely recognised as an important source of innovation (Drucker, 1985), as well as a necessary condition of public service innovation (Osborne, 1998; Osborne & Brown, 2011), the literature tends to focus on structural factors instead (Meijer, 2014). As a result, most of the empirical studies of public service innovation have aimed to examine innovativeness across a range of organisations (Damanpour 1987; Walker, 2008; Borins, 2014; Walker et al., 2015), the performance consequences of innovations (Damanpour et al., 2009), diffusion of innovations across the sector (Fernandez & Wise, 2010; Bhatti et al., 2011; Walker et al., 2011) or the effects of internal and external antecedents like administrative capacity, organisation size, slack resources or wealth on innovation adoption (see Walker et al., 2014).

In the few instances where actor agency is considered, this is presented from one of two extremes. Either it is presented deterministically, by focusing on specific individual leadership traits or behaviours (e.g. Jaskyte, 2013; Damanpour & Schneider, 2006) or alternatively by employing a hagiographic lens, focusing on people at executive levels (Doig & Hargrove, 1987; Roberts & King, 1996; Kingdon, 2003). Either depiction is largely insufficient for furthering our understanding of the human contingencies that underpin public service innovation. Whilst individual traits may be important, it ignores how these are situated in, and shaped by, the wider external environment (Orlikowski & Yates, 2002). This is contrary to the recursive nature of institutions that dominates our understanding of institutional and organisational dynamics (see Kaghan & Lounsbury, 2011; Lawrence, Suddaby & Leca, 2011; Hartley et al., 2013).

Moreover, when agency is explored, the focus is at the executive level, which ignores the vital role frontline service delivery workers are known to play in such innovation processes (see Lipsky 1980; Bjerregaard & Klitmoller, 2010; Thomann, 2015).

Recently, scholars have argued that in a pluralistic environment like the public service delivery system, innovation activity is not limited to one heroic innovator. Instead, it concerns a large number of people and affects a large segment of the organisation's operations as well as other partner organisations or collaborators (Scott, 2001; Bernier & Hafsi, 2007). Thus, agency is distributed over various hierarchical levels, in different organisations, and in different phases of the innovation process (Currie et al., 2009; Currie & Lockett, 2011; Sorensen & Torfing, 2011). As such, agency in public service innovation is no longer an individualised but a distributed form (see Meijer, 2014). Therefore, some scholars argue the hero-innovator has been replaced by a collection of heroes (see Bernier & Hafsi, 2007; Ansell & Gash, 2012). Whilst this may be the case, there are still few empirical studies conducted which explore this perspective (see Meijer, 2014).

In sum, there are a number of shortcomings in the literature, which lead us to question the appropriateness of the current understanding of public service innovation. Firstly, extant understanding is based on limited empirical examples, of which the majority are normative and atheoretical in nature, limiting our empirical and theoretical knowledge base. Next, largely deterministic and structural explanations prevail with little attention paid to the human contingencies, which underpin public service innovation (Jaskyte, 2013; Meijer, 2014; Gatenby, Rees, Truss, Alfes & Soane, 2015). This contravenes the dominant academic and policy rhetoric that sees both structural and human explanations as central elements of innovation in public services (see Cabinet Office 2006, 2010; Chesborough, 2003; Osborne & Brown, 2011). Moreover, these structural explanations largely focus on intra-organisational processes and ignore the role of the wider institutional environment – a crucial element of public service

innovation (Scott 2003; Osborne & Brown, 2011). Therefore, our understanding of public service innovation needs to be rebalanced to one which is strong on both structure and action. We can highlight the interplay between institutional structures and actor agency in the design and delivery of innovative public services by public sector actors by drawing on a well-developed theoretical tradition like institutional theory.

In the next section, I begin this process by first making a case for institutional theory as a basis for understanding public service innovation. Attention is then paid to one of the dominant concepts for exploring institutional dynamics within institutional theory - *institutional work* (see Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Lawrence et al., 2011) - as a means to explore the purposeful effort undertaken by actors to shape their institutional arrangements as they delivery an innovative public service.

2.2   Institutional Theory, Institutional Work and Public Service Innovation

In this section, I discuss the areas of conceptual clarity institutional theory can offer in terms of furthering our understanding of public service innovation. Specific attention is then paid to the insights offered by the institutional work literature in regards to how institutional fields and organisational practices are created, maintained and disrupted by organisational actors. Before I launch into a debate concerning the linkages between institutional theory and public service innovation it is important that I am clear in regards to what I mean when I use key terminology such as institutions, institutional structures and agency.

2.2.1 Introduction to institutional theory and its key concepts

The theoretical perspective in which this study is situated is that of institutionalism[9]. Or more specifically, organisational institutionalism, as the focus is on applying an institutionalist perspective to understanding how and why organisations and their actors behave as they do and with what consequences (Greenwood et al., 2008). Arguably institutional theory is the dominant theory for studying such organisational behaviour for nearly half a century (Greenwood et al., 2008; Suddaby, 2010; Lawrence, Leca & Zilber, 2013). Central to this perspective are important concepts such as institutions, institutional structures and agency.

Generally, the term *institution* refers to the *"more-or-less taken-for-granted repetitive social behaviour that is underpinned by normative systems and cognitive understandings that give meaning to social exchange and thus enable self-reproducing social order"* (Greenwood et al., 2008, p. 4). The 'structures' that make up institutions are conceived as: widespread social understandings or rationalized myths of appropriate organisational forms and behaviour (Meyer & Rowan, 1977); *"the rules, norms and ideologies of wider society"* (Meyer & Rowan 1983, p. 84); *"the common understandings of what is appropriate, and fundamentally, meaningful behaviour"* (Zucker, 1983, p. 105). Institutions and their underpinning social structures can exist at the individual, organisation, field (e.g. clusters of organisations or groups with defined and legitimated

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[9] I recognize that there are other forms of 'institutionalism' such as rational choice or historical (Hall and Taylor, 1996) but as the research focus is concerned with organisational behavior and the study of organisations – organisational institutionalism is most relevant and appropriate. Convention within organisational behavior and organisational theory literature is to refer to it as 'institutionalism' which is what will be adopted throughout the thesis.

boundaries, identities and interactions), or wider macro societal levels (Scott, 2001;

Greenwood et al., 2008).

The public service delivery system in the United Kingdom is an institution

because it has institutional structures that combined together with associated activities

and resources *"provide stability and meaning to social life"* (Scott, 2001, p. 48). For

instance, the government provide a service to people living within its jurisdiction either

directly or by financing the provision of services (see Brown & Osborne, 2013). Here,

central government provides funding to local agencies that are statutorily obligated to

provide certain services to their citizens (see HM Government, 2016; Amin-Smith &

Phillips, 2019; Local Government Association, 2019). In return, citizens have

expectations regarding the services they receive from government agencies (see Local

Government Association, 2018: 2019; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004; Walker et al., 2011).

The social structures that make up this institution include a number of different,

and often competing, taken-for-granted belief systems and associated practices

concerning: the focus of public services; role of the state, non-profit and for-profit

organisations, citizens and service users in the design and delivery of services; the nature

and role of innovation in public service delivery; what practices are seen as legitimate

response to social needs (Coule & Patmore, 2013). These structures exist at a national

societal level as well as the regional or city level and individual actor level (see Osborne

& Brown, 2013; Coule & Patmore, 2013; Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015) subsequently

guiding the thoughts, feelings and behaviour of individual and collective actors

(Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

It is important to note that institutions are not overtly enforced - their survival

rests upon the more or less conscious action of individual and/or collective groups of

actors in everyday life (Jepperson, 1991). This is made possible by the view that institutions (e.g. social structures) and individual or collective action (agency) are mutually constitutive (Phillips, Lawrence & Maguire 2004; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Mutch, 2007). That is, the social structures that create institutions are not the product of *either* structure or agency - but both. Human agents draw on social structures in their action and at the same time action serves to change or reproduce those same structures (see Giddens, 1984; Archer, 1995; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Mutch, 2007). Thus, institutions and action are perceived to exist in a recursive relationship (Archer, 1995; Barley and Tolbert, 1997; Phillips et al., 2004). Organisations are conceived as semi-autonomous social fields, which can be influenced by institutional rules, norms and forces emanating from the larger macro-field as well as being capable of producing local rules, customs and symbols internally (Holm, 1995). As a result, much of the institutional research is preoccupied with understanding the complex social processes by which institutions are enacted, constructed and changed by organisations, their subunits and individual actors (see Greenwood et al., 2008).

2.2.2 Origins of the study: An institutionalist perspective on public service innovation

As discussed above, a key theoretical concept from institutional theory, institutional work, has emerged out of the observation that institutions are a product of human action (Jepperson, 1991) and as such refocused attention on the role of agency in the creation, maintenance and transformation of institutions (see Lawrence et al., 2011; Lawrence et al., 2013). This 'new institutionalism' (Kaghan & Lounsbury, 2011; Lawrence et al., 2011) is reflected in the research questions and aims in which the focus is squarely on how organisational actors instigate change in both institutional fields and

organisation practices in the context of public service innovation. Below I discuss the synergies between institutional theory, institutional work and public service innovation to make a clear case for adopting such a theoretical lens to improve our understanding of public service innovation from being largely structural, to one, which draws attention to the role of actor agency.

Firstly, innovation generally involves an element of discontinuous change (Roberts & Weiss, 1988); that is to say an innovation instigates changes to the market and/or the organisation in a way that is discontinuous to what has gone before (Tushman & Anderson, 1986). As such a central element of innovation, specifically in a social policy context, is change to the host organisation and/or the wider service delivery system through the introduction of the innovation (Osborne, 1998). By its nature, an innovation will violate prevailing practices and contradict institutionalised expectations concerning what is real, appropriate and beneficial in a give social context (van Dijk, Berends, Jelinek, Georges, Romme & Weggeman, 2011). Therefore, innovation and institutional change are closely related phenomenon.

A number of empirical studies show the usefulness of institutional work in explaining the complex processes of institutional change. For example, Zietsma and Lawrence (2010) study of the role of institutional work in the transformation of organisational fields through a study of the recursive interplay of boundary and practice work in the coastal forestry industry in British Columbia. Ritvala and Kleymann (2012) examine how innovation clusters form in highly institutionalised contexts as scientists act as 'midwives' by performing critical institutional work that allows for fundamental change. Hardy and Maguire (2010) describe how the production, distribution and consumption of texts in an event such as a conference can create opportunities for new

narratives to be produced by actors from less powerful positions, in turn influencing field level change. Moreover, Gawer and Phillips (2013) highlight how the Intel Corporation was engaged in both internal and external institutional work contributing to field-level change while also striving to adapt to this change internally. As these examples show, the institutional work literature provides a well-developed framework for studying institutional change and the understanding of the role of actors in these processes (see Suddaby, Elsbach, Greenwood, Meyer & Zilber, 2010; Zilber, 2013; Lawrence et al., 2013).

Whilst change is a required element of innovation, that is not to say only efforts aimed at instigating change are of relevance to understanding public service innovation. The institutional work literature has recently shown that institutions are not stable constructs but require on-going *maintenance* to establish coherence and stability over time (see Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). As a result, some actors engage in purposeful work to preserve the integrity of institutions (Zilber, 2009; Dacin, Munir & Tracey, 2010; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010; Currie et al., 2012; Lok & de Rond, 2013). Scholars show how this is particularly so for actors who are privileged under existing institutional arrangements, in so much that they may have the power to enact institutional change, but have limited motivation to do so (see Seo & Creed, 2002; Maguire, Hardy, & Lawrence, 2004; Battilana, 2006; Coule & Patmore 2013). As such, institutional actors have been shown to counter the change efforts by others either reinforcing the foundations of existing institutions or repairing disrupted institutional arrangements to re-establish the status quo (see van Dijk et al., 2011; Currie et al., 2012; Helfen & Sydow, 2013; Micelotta & Washington, 2013; Raviola & Norback, 2013).

Public service organisations are highly institutionalised, hierarchical and bureaucratic in nature, as well as being known for being both risk and change adverse (see Brown, 2010; Osborne & Brown, 2011; Brown & Osborne, 2013). Dacin, Munir and Tracey, (2010) and Lok and de Rond (2013) have illustrated how actors in highly institutionalised environments often work creatively and purposefully to maintain institutional stability or their position in the institutional order. As the research is set in the context of a public service innovation that attempts to change long-standing established values, beliefs and practices concerning the way services are delivered to a group of high-risk and marginalised service users, it would be highly likely this would be met with at least some level of opposition from other public service actors who may seek to preserve the normative order. Moreover, the institutional work literature has shown the complex, and at times messy overlap and opposition between transformation and maintenance work that can happen when changes in institutions are being driven (see Helfen & Sydow, 2013; Micelotta & Washington, 2013; Raviola & Norback, 2013). All of this suggests that maintenance work can provide vital insights into our understanding of public service innovation that could be missed if we focused only on change efforts. Consequently, both facets of institutional work can prove useful in painting an in-depth picture of how organisational actors instigate change in institutional fields and organisation practices in the context of public service innovation.

Secondly, the interaction between innovation and the environment are central features of public service innovation. Innovation in public services is seen to emerge from interactions between an organisation and their wider institutional environments (Nelson, 1993; Osborne et al., 2008; Osborne & Brown, 2011). This is becoming increasingly relevant, as partnership working dominates public service delivery

approaches as the state slowly withdraws as the main provider of public services (Cabinet Office, 2006, 2010; Carmel & Harlock, 2008; Rees & Rose, 2015). Here, public service organisations and their agents must work across organisational boundaries (i.e. business users, citizens, service user, non-profits) to design and deliver services (see Osborne et al., 2008; Walker, 2008; Cabinet Office, 2006, 2010). Notably, the interaction between actors (be it individuals or organisations) and their environments (i.e. organisation, organisational field and wider societal levels) is a central focus of institutional theory as well. Much of institutional theory, and institutional work specifically, is interested in understanding how institutions and their structures operate through the influence and agency of individuals (Suddaby, 2010; Suddaby et al., 2010; Lawrence et al., 2011). Largely this is driven by the *duality of structure*, which sees institutional structures as both the medium for and consequence of action and agency (see Giddens, 1984). Therefore, explorations of agency cannot be divorced from the institutions that recursively shape them. Arguably some of the literature has focused on how institutional structures dictate individual behaviour rather than how micro-level activities affect these structures (Bechky, 2011; Lawrence et al., 2011). But recently there has been a renewed emphasis in exploring the role of individuals as "*carriers of institutions*" (Zilber, 2002, p. 234) by considering how individual actors engage with and influence institutions (see Suddaby et al., 2010; Kaghan & Lounsbury, 2011; Lawrence et al., 2013).

In regards to the interaction between institutional structure and action, the institutional literature has showed how the institutional environment can provide exogenous 'jolts' (Meyer, 1982) in the form of regulatory, social or technological shocks that can encourage change (see Garud, Jain & Kumaraswamy, 2002; Lounsbury, 2002;

Rao, Monin & Durand, 2003). These jolts can disturb the consensus by raising the awareness of alternatives, enabling the possibility of change (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999; Scott et al., 2000; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006). Whilst these jolts can be source of institutional change and innovation, endogenous (i.e. agency driven) forms of change are arguably more prevalent (see Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010; Lawrence et al., 2013). For example, contradictions in the institutional environment can function as a trigger for change because they make actors aware of alternatives to their institutionalised, taken-for-granted ways (Seo & Creed, 2002) and motivate them to pursue more favourable alternatives (e.g. Zilber, 2002; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Pache & Santos, 2010; Smets, Morris, & Greenwood, 2012; Van Dijk et al., 2011). Both forms of change are highly relevant to the empirical context in which the research is set as the organisational field is undergoing a significant period of reform (DCLG, 2011). Moreover, both local and national public service delivery systems are rife with conflict and contradictions concerning the nature of innovation and the perceived role of public service actors within that system (see Coule & Patmore, 2013).

Whilst institutional structures can be a source of innovation and change, structures at the macro (field / societal) and/or the micro (organisational) level have been found to constrain actors because often innovations lack legitimacy (Dougherty & Heller, 1994; Vermeulen, Van den Bosch, & Volberda, 2007; Van Dijk et al., 2011). This is because innovation involves violating the prevailing practices and contradicting institutional expectations about what is appropriate and beneficial (Dougherty & Heller, 1994, Hargadon & Douglas, 2001; Vermeulen et al., 2007; Van Dijk et al., 2011; Coule & Patmore, 2013). Vermeulen et al. (2007) investigated how regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive forces at the business unit level combined to form institutional

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templates that either enabled or inhibited incremental product innovation processes in established firms. Dougherty and Heller (1994) found that product innovations in established firms frequently face legitimacy crises regarding connecting new products to firm strategies or structures, collaboration across departments and links between opportunities and market needs which can lead to them being abandoned altogether. That is not to say actors cannot transcend these legitimacy problems and allow their innovations to proceed through the use of creative strategic institutional work (Doughtery & Heller, 1994; Van Dijk et al., 2011). Hence innovations, even radical ones, can occur successfully in highly institutionalised environments (Leifer, McDermott, O'Connor, Peters, Rie & Veryzer, 2000). Consequently, the institutional literature is well positioned to provide insight into the interplay between both structure and agency in the context of public service innovation.

Lastly, the role of agency is widely recognised as an important source of innovation (Drucker, 1985) as well as a necessary condition of public service innovation (Osborne & Brown, 2011; Coule & Patmore, 2013). Yet, the majority of our understanding of public service innovation focuses on structural aspects with little attention paid to the role of human agency in the design and delivery of innovation public services (see Section 2.1.1). But, institutional work as a theoretical concept helps us to explore how public service actors do work, who is involved in the process, and what constitutes as work (e.g. issues of intentionality and effort of actors) (see Suddaby et al., 2010; Lawrence et al., 2013). Of particular relevance is the ability of institutional work to shed light on the everyday lived experience of actors, as they interact at the "*coalface of everyday life*" (Barley, 2008, p. 510). This enables scholars to connect the

macro-worlds of institutions to the micro-worlds of the actors who populate them (Kaghan & Lounsbury, 2011; Lawrence et al., 2011; Zilber, 2013).

As discussed earlier (see Section 2.1.2), agency in public service innovation appears to no longer be the preserve of one heroic innovator but is instead distributed across a collection of heroes from different levels of the organisation that play different roles at various phases of the innovation process (see Bernier & Hafsi, 2007; Ansell & Gash, 2012). The institutional work literature has shown that it is not the preserve of single individuals but can be accomplished through a potentially large number of actors (see Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Lawrence et al., 2011). The notion of distributed agency invites researchers to explore how a collective of actors contribute to institutional change, how actors respond to one another's efforts and how the accumulation of the efforts lead to either change or stability (Gaurd & Karnoe, 2003; Lawrence et al., 2011). For instance, Delbridge and Edwards (2008) highlight the various complementary and contradictory work done by different actors, which led to institutional change in the superyacht industry. Quack's (2007) study of transnational law making shows how recurrent efforts of multiple professional actors to make sense of their legal transactions create working level relationships which support change. Notably, Dorado's (2013) study of commercial microfinance in Bolivia shows that social action is not necessarily an individual-bounded endeavour at the hands of isolated individuals but a group-bounded one. Specifically, these groups are found to motivate, inspire and enable actors to engage in institutional work. Thus, the institutional work literature is ripe to provide theoretical insight not only into the work of individuals but that of collectives and groups as well - all of which is highly relevant to furthering our understanding of public service innovation.

In summary, I have highlighted how institutional theory and institutional work are useful theoretical lenses from which to advance our understanding of public service innovation. In so much that institutional work provides conceptual clarity into micro-processes that underpin institutional change and stability - both of which are firm features of public service innovation. Most significant are the theoretical insights institutional work can provide into the complex and dynamic role of actor agency and its interplay with structures in institutional processes. All of this is highly relevant to the purpose and aims of the research, which are focused around highlighting the micro-level action and processes actors undertaken by actors as they deliver an innovative public service. These insights can combine to help develop a more holistic and nuanced understanding of public service innovation in which institutional structures and actor agency are central features.

In the next section, I discuss in depth the concept of institutional work. This starts with a detailed discussion on how actors maintain and transform their institutional arrangements. Attention is then paid to how agency is conceptualised within the institutional work literature focusing on issues concerning intentionality and effort of actors.

2.2.3 Institutional work and public service innovation

How organisational actors instigate change in both institutional fields and organisation practices through the creation of new institutions (Dacin, Goldstein & Scott, 2002; Maguire et al., 2004; Perkmann & Spicer, 2008;), disruption of existing ones (Oliver, 1992; Reay & Hinings, 2005; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Lounsbury, 2007; Delbridge & Edwards, 2008; Maguire & Hardy, 2009, 2010; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010; Gawer & Phillips, 2013), and – to a lesser extent – maintenance of existing institutions

(Zilber, 2009; Dacin et al., 2010; Currie et al., 2012; Lok & de Rond, 2013; Micelotta & Washington, 2013) - has received much attention from institutional theorists in recent years (see Suddaby, 2010; Lawrence et al., 2011; Phillips & Lawrence, 2012; Lawrence et al., 2013) . This increased attention in 'institutional work' can be seen as a response to critiques of institutional theory's neglect of development and change (Zilber, 2002). Through the lens of institutional work, researchers can highlight how and why actors work to effect elements of institutions and how those actions lead to institutional consequences from an agentic perspective (see Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). As discussed in Section 2.2.1, this is particularly salient to this study given the research context (public service innovation) and the research aim (to explore how actors draw on institutional structures to advance innovation and how actors change established organisational routines, practices and forms).

Institutional work is defined as '*the purposive action of individuals and organisations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions*' (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006, p. 215). The scholarly discussions of institutional work can be divided into three distinct areas: *how* institutional work occurs, *who* does institutional work and *what* constitutes institutional work (i.e. issues of intentionality and effort).[10] In light of the research questions and theoretical interest underpinning the research, this section will begin by summarising the literature on the maintenance and transformation of element of institutions (how work occurs) with consideration paid to who often carries out this work. This is then followed by a discussion how agency is conceived and issues of intentionality and effort of actors within the institutional work literature.

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[10] Please note Lawrence et al. (2013) was the inspiration for the choice of the how, who and what approach of argument presentation.

2.2.3.1 *Institutional work and the maintenance of public services*

The process of institutional maintenance - the "*supporting, repairing, and recreating*" of institutions (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006, p. 230) – is essential to the coherence and stability of institutions over time (see Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). Early institutional theorists regarded continuity and stability as the 'norm' particularly as institutionalised activity is seen as highly resistant to change (i.e. Oliver, 1992). Therefore, institutions were initially conceived as self-replicating and requiring minimal agency (Dacin et al., 2010). However, numerous institutional theorists recognise that "*relatively few institutions have such powerful reproductive mechanisms that no ongoing maintenance is necessary*" (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006, p. 229). Instead, most require sustained institutional work to preserve them over time (Townley, 1997; Zilber, 2002; Dacin et al., 2010).

Where in the past institutional maintenance was seen as unproblematic and routine, recent studies have shown it is not a 'default' action but much more nuanced, complex and purposeful than previously thought (see Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Dacin et al., 2010; Currie et al., 2012; Coule & Patmore, 2013; Lok & de Rond, 2013; Micelotta & Washington, 2013). Early investigations into institutional maintenance found that the work associated with it has both coercive and normative dimensions (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006) that are used to preserve and reinforce existing institutional arrangements. The coercive dimension promotes compliance by: creating rules and standards that support existing institutions (i.e. enabling); ensuring compliance through enforcement, audit and monitoring (i.e. policing); and implementing coercive barriers to deter change (i.e. deterring) (see Holm, 1995; Townley, 1997; Zilber, 2002). Whilst the normative dimension perpetuates existing institutional norms and belief systems by

demonising or valorising existing norms and beliefs (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005), using stories or myths to preserve the normative underpinning of the institution and embedding and routinising institutions by actively reinforcing or infusing institutional meanings and values into day-to-day routines and practices (see Townley, 1997; Zilber 2002, 2009).

Other scholars have developed this area further by drawing attention to micro and macro-level processes that underpin efforts toward institutional stability (Lawrence, et al., 2009; Trank & Washington, 2009; Zilber, 2009; Jarzabkowski, Matthiesen & Van de Ven, 2009; Dacin et al., 2010; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010; Lok & de Rond, 2013). For example, Dacin et al. (2010) in their study of formal dining at the University of Cambridge demonstrate how organisational rituals at a micro-level support the maintenance of an institution at the macro-level (i.e. the British class system). That is, these dining rituals or 'performances' legitimate the concept of social stratification as they transform participants' identities, sense of self and image of others. But most significantly, these performances are then taken away and reproduced in other settings to gain entry to, and flourish in, an elite professional-managerial class. Whereas, Zietsma and Lawrence (2010) in their study of field-level change in the British Columbia costal forestry industry show how incumbents reinforce their legitimacy and reproduce advantageous arrangements through a combination of regulatory and normative (policing, co-opting, and educating) work to thwart change.

These studies show that maintenance work is generally triggered by threats to existing institutional arrangements in which incumbent actors neutralise threats, prevent change, and ensure other actors adhere to "*routine reproductive procedures*" (Jepperson 1991; p. 145) to preserve the status quo. This is largely in line with the conceptualisations of Douglas (1966) and Berger and Luckmann (1967) who highlighted

the instrumental role of power dynamics in institutionalisation. Specifically, they argued that institutional maintenance occurs through dominant actors' ability to monopolise a particular symbol system and successfully impose a set of schemata. As such, institutional maintenance is "*underpinned by power inequalities and relies on the capacity of elite actors to exert authority and eliminate rival symbolic orders*" (Dacin et al.*,* 2010 p. 1395).

Recently, some scholars (see Currie et al., 2012; Lok & de Rond, 2013; Micelotta & Washington, 2013) have shown that maintenance work is a much more creative and multi-layered process than the one-dimensional typology suggests (see Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). Lok and de Rond (2013) demonstrate that even in a highly institutionalised context like the Cambridge University Boat Club, there are regular instances where institutionalised practices breakdown and diverge from the institutional script. Depending on the severity of the breakdown, a combination of different types of normalisation (ignoring or excepting and co-opting), negotiation (tolerating or reversing) and custodial work (reinforcing or self correcting and formal discipline) is undertaken by actors. Here, typical reinforcement and preservation work (i.e. custodial work) was largely ineffective even in a highly institutionalised context where socialisation processes are strong and there are designated elite actors (or custodians) with legitimate authority to enforce rules. Instead, normalisation and negotiation work in various guises were integral to institutional stability. Notably, Lok and de Rond (2013) found that effort and intentionality varied, and was generally less strategic and purposeful than what is commonly thought (see Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Lawrence, Suddaby & Leca, 2009).

Where the Lok and de Rond (2013) study is largely situated in the everyday and fairly mundane activities aimed towards institutional stability, Currie et al., (2012)

consider how elite professionals maintain their professional dominance when threatened by external forces. Their study was set within the context of healthcare reform, in which English National Health Service (NHS) introduced new nursing and medical roles that threaten the power and status of specialist doctors by substituting their labour and reallocating their resources and control. Currie et al. (2012) identified six types of work [theorising, defining, educating, policing, constructing normative networks and embedding and routinising] used by specialist doctors to displace the threat of substitution with the opportunity for them to delegate routine tasks to other actors and maintain existing resources and control arrangements over the delivery of services. As a result of this maintenance work, the planned reconfiguration of services was far less radical than envisaged; in so much that the institutional arrangements stayed virtually untouched and even enhanced the social position and status of the specialist doctors. Like Lok and de Rond (2013), Currie et al., (2012) highlight the multi-dimensional nature of maintenance work. Not only do they demonstrate six types of maintenance work used by actors – which expands far beyond enforcing and preservation work presented by Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) - but that these elite professionals co-opt forms of work normally the preserve of institutional creation for institutional maintenance (theorising, defining, educating, and constructing normative networks). Thus it appears that different types of institutional work can 'blend' to help actors achieve their efforts.

Moreover, Currie et al. (2012) demonstrate that maintenance is not just used to 'maintain' but to 'enhance' institutional arrangements, in so much that "*elite actors are engaging less in 'change resistance' but more in positive action to shape the change trajectory to ensure continued professional dominance*" (p. 958). Similarly, Micelotta and Washington (2013) illustrated how powerful incumbents in the Italian professional

service sector used 'repair work' to reverse changes caused by the Italian government and enable the status quo ante[11] to be re-established. The changes asserted by the government deprived the professions of the privilege to self-regulate and threatened their autonomy. In response to this disruption, actors 'reasserted the norms of institutional interaction', 're-established the balance of institutional powers' and 'regained institutional leadership' to repair - rather than protect or preserve - institutional arrangements. They found that resistance is a necessary but not sufficient condition to successful repair work – incumbents engage in resistance when threatened but will use different types of strategies to re-establish the status quo once arrangements are disrupted.

Given the research is focused on further elaborating our understanding of public service innovation, of which change is a specific requirement, one might question the relevance of maintenance work to such an institutional setting. As the above discussion of the literature shows, institutional maintenance is an ongoing, highly politicised activity that often involve acts of creation and disruption as a means to maintain existing arrangements or adapt and alter them to ensure dominance, power and resources (see Jarzabkowski, et al., 2009). Public service organisations, which are central to the study, are highly institutionalised, hierarchical, bureaucratic and politicised in nature, which leads them to avoiding risk and opportunities for change (see Brown, 2010; Osborne & Brown, 2011; Brown & Osborne, 2013). This risk aversion is exacerbated by factors such as the vulnerability of many service users and the intense media and political scrutiny public services face (see Borins, 2001; Brown & Osborne, 2013). Therefore, deviating from established methods or experimenting with new ways of working presents not only

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[11] Previously existing state affairs or the state before the war (latin translation)

a risk to already scarce public resources but to people's health and well-being (i.e. service user and wider community) and the reputation and legitimacy of a PSO and its staff (Brown, 2012; Brown & Osborne, 2013). As the research is set in the context of an innovative service delivery model that attempts to change long-standing established values, beliefs and practices concerning the way services are delivered to a group of high-risk and marginalised service users, it would be highly unlikely this would not be met with opposition from other public service actors who may perceive these changes as risky on multiple levels (service users, wider public, public service staff).

Likewise, public service delivery (specifically in this empirical context) involves multi-agency partnership working in which different groups of professionals work together to design and deliver services. The public service delivery literature demonstrates that at times partnership working can often be hampered, and even prevented, by mistrust and opportunistic behaviour or the existence of incompatible cognitive or discursive frameworks (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004; Ansell & Gash, 2008; Milbourne & Cushman, 2013). There is enough precedence to suggest professionals often seek to maintain the status quo if not to advance their professional values but to maintain or enhance their position, power and access to resources (see Ferlie, Fitzgerald, Wood & Hawkins, 2005; Trank & Washington, 2009; Sminia, 2011; Suddaby & Viale, 2011; Currie et al., 2012; Micelotta & Washington, 2013). Furthermore, institutional work literature has shown the complex, and at times opposition between transformation and maintenance work that can happen when changes in institutions are being driven (see Helfen & Sydow, 2013; Micelotta & Washington, 2013; Raviola & Norback, 2013). It appears highly unlikely that the public service actors driving transformation in services will not face maintenance efforts from others as they attempt to repair breaches in the institutional fabric (see Lok & de Rond, 2013; Micelotta &

Washington, 2013; Herepath & Kitchener, 2016) and even possibly to engage in maintenance activities themselves (i.e. establishing their practices as the new 'norm'). Thus, maintenance work looks to provide vital insights into public service innovation that could be missed if we focused only on exploring change efforts. Although, maintenance work has been largely neglected over the years, recently there is an emerging stream of research and empirical studies devoted to understanding this pivotal type of work (see Lawrence et al., 2013; Micelotta & Washington, 2013; Herepath & Kitchener, 2016). Consequently, the empirical context of this study is well situated to provide further insight into how actors work to maintain institutions as well as public service innovation more generally.

2.2.2.2   Institutional work and the transformation of public services

If institutions are a set of practices and meanings that have become legitimate and taken for granted (Douglas, 1966) then transformation is when this legitimacy and taken-for-grantedness are called into question (Ahmadjian & Robinson, 2001). When practices and meanings are institutionalised they become well entrenched in existing regulative, normative and cognitive belief systems resulting in them not being easy to change (Reay & Hinings, 2005). Consequently some form of purposive 'disruptive' institutional work is necessary to undermine these practices and their associated meanings (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). Here, actors engage in work that involves "*attacking or undermining the mechanisms that lead members to comply with institutions*" (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006, p. 235). This institutional disruption occurs when existing institutions do not meet the interests of actors who are able to mobilise sufficient support to attack and undermine these interests (see Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005; Jarzabkowski et al., 2009; Maguire & Hardy, 2009; Coule & Patmore, 2013; Smets,

et al., 2012). As a result, this disruptive work is a precursor or a stage in the process of institutional change or transformation (see Greenwood et al., 2002).

The established literature suggests institutional change requires a exogenous jolt (Meyer, 1982) that destabilises established practices be this through events such as legislative change, market pressures, technology changes or institutional crises (see Garud et al., 2002; Lounsbury, 2002; Rao, et al., 2003). These external events can transform actors into change agents (Barley & Tolbert, 1997; Seo & Creed, 2002; Reay & Hinings, 2005) or give less embedded or less powerful challengers the opportunity to instigate change (Greenwood, Raynard, Kodeih, Micellota & Lounsbury, 2011). In recent years, scholars have shown how institutional change can be endogenous (i.e. agency driven) (see Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010; Lawrence et al., 2013). When actors are exposed to institutional ambiguities and contradictions (see Hoffman, 1999; Seo & Creed, 2002; Rao, et al., 2003) they can become enabled to consider different responses to institutional pressures and initiate change (see Reay & Hinings, 2005; Greenwood et al., 2010). This is because institutional contradictions not only trigger a reflexive shift in actors' consciousness but provide alternative meanings, logics of action, psychological and physical resources that allow actors to mobilise, appropriate or transpose meanings and practices to frame and serve their interests (Friedland & Alford, 1991; Seo & Creed, 2002; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

When conceptualising and studying endogenous change such as that postulated by Lawrence and Suddaby's (2006) disruptive work, a central issue is the paradox of embedded agency (Seo & Creed, 2002). That is, how and why do actors – who are shaped and embedded in their institutional environment – decide to transform or de-institutionalise established practices by envisaging and enacting new ways of being.

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Scholars have shown that the position of actors can be used as an explanation for this process. For instance actors who sit at the periphery of an institutional field are posited to be more likely to disengage from institutional practices (see Haveman & Rao, 1997). This is premised on their lack of connectedness to other organisations and field-level processes, rendering them less aware of institutional norms and expectations (North, 1990; Kraatz, 1998) and coupled with the notion that they are often disadvantaged by prevailing arrangements (Phillips, Lawrence & Hardy, 2000; Mutch, 2007). Similarly, actors practicing at the intersections of multiple levels or boundary-bridging locations can develop awareness of, and motivation to adopt alternatives (Suddaby, Cooper & Greenwood, 2007; Smets et al., 2012). More recently studies have shown how 'outsiders' (Maguire & Hardy, 2009; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010; Bertels, Hoffman & DeJordy, 2014) directly assault the validity of long-standing traditions or established activities to bring about change. Yet, the notion that change is more likely to originate from the periphery of a field, however, is not absolute and recent studies have demonstrated that central, resource rich, and highly embedded organisational actors sometimes act as institutional change agents (Greenwood et al., 2002; Greenwood & Suddaby 2006; Gawer & Phillips, 2013). These studies show that regardless of field position, actors can skilfully interpret and exploit contradictions within and between institutional arrangements (Jarzabkowski, et al., 2009; Smets & Jarzabkowski, 2013).

Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) identify three types of institutional work aimed at disrupting institutions. First, is work that involves *disrupting societies' reward and sanction of particular practices, technologies or rules* (Jones, 2001). This is largely coercive work, which involves defining and redefining sets of concepts in ways that reconstitute actors (e.g. identity, role and position) and reconfigure relationships

between actors (see Jones, 2001; Lounsbury, 2001; Hardy & Maguire, 2009; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010; Coule & Patmore, 2013). For example, environmentalists in the British Columbia (BC) coastal forestry industry challenged who had authority over forestry decisions through civil disobedience and legal challenges to make claims that the 'rightful' owners (i.e. people of BC) of the forest were excluded from decision-making (Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). This work enabled challengers to reconstitute the position and authority of actors in the field by breaching its boundary, allowing new entrants and shifting power relationships between these groups. This boundary breaching work was central to enabling further 'practice work' by challengers to disrupt the institutionalised practice of clear-cutting. The second type of disruptive work is when actors *dissociate practices from their moral foundations* (Ahmadjian & Robinson 2001). Here, actors often disrupt the normative foundations of an institution by using an indirect set of practices to undermine, rather than directly attack these foundations. Coule & Patmore (2013) found that non-profit actors seeking to transform a public service did so by working to reject and render the existing practice (e.g. out of area treatment OAT) ineffectual by discursively articulating the damaging effects such treatments had on service users. Similarly, Hardy and Maguire (2009) found that outsiders created texts that categorised the practice of using the pesticide DDT as unethical, undesirable and inappropriate to dissociate the use of DDT from its moral foundations. Lastly, is disruptive work aimed at *undermining core assumptions and beliefs* that stabilise institutions by replacing existing templates to reduce the perceived risk of innovation and differentiation (Leblebici et al., 1991; Wicks, 2001). Hardy and Maguire (2009) highlighted how actors produced texts that asserted DDT had negative impacts on human health and on the environment to undermine existing assumptions and beliefs regarding safety thus problematising DDT usage. Whereas Coule and Patmore (2013) demonstrated how non-profit actors

discursively drew on well-established concerns regarding the cost of out of area services and the risks to service users of such treatment, and then positioned themselves as a cost-effective, safer, and patient centred alternative to commissioners.

What is evident from these studies is that transformation work largely involves actors disrupting institutions by discursively redefining, reconfiguring, problematising and manipulating the social (economic, physical and political location) and symbolic (moral, socioeconomic and cultural) boundaries of institutions (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Lawrence et al., 2009). The important role of language in disruptive work, and institutional work more generally, is largely unsurprising as "*the edifice of legitimations is built upon language*" (Berger & Luckmann, 1967, p. 64). Institutions and their fields are held in place by discourses as they produce widely shared, taken for granted meanings, and practices are preformed in the context of discourse (Phillips, Lawrence & Hardy, 2004). They define "*who and what is 'normal', standard and acceptable*" thereby institutionalising practices and reproducing behaviour (Merilainen et al., 2004, p. 544) and position actors in such a way that not all warrant voice (Hardy & Phillips, 1999). Discourses can involve a wide range of written documents or texts but also forms of talk such as verbal reports, speeches and information communication (van Dijk, 1997; Phillips et al., 2004). Because discourses are always partial and contested (Hardy & Phillips, 2004), actors can draw on them to challenge the taken-for-granted, to destabilise meanings and act as a basis for change (Tsoukas, 2005).

Thus institutions can be created (Lawrence & Phillips, 2004; Maguire & Hardy, 2006) or changed (Greenwood et al., 2002; Rao et al., 2003; Hardy & Maguire, 2010) by the production, distribution and consumption of texts, often referred to as 'discursive work' (see Hardy & Phillips, 2004; Maguire & Hardy, 2009, 2013; Hardy & Maguire, 2010;

Zilber, 2007, 2008, 2009). This discursive approach to institutionalisation is well established (see Zilber, 2008) and shows the importance of texts and discourse in the creation, maintenance and disruption of institutions. As well as the role of discourse, other discursive devices like rhetoric (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005; Green, Li & Nohria, 2009; Brown, Ainsworth & Grant, 2012) and narratives or stories (Zilber, 2007, 2009; Hardy & Maguire, 2010) are receiving growing attention as a tool to be used by actors to drive institutional change.

Studies have shown discursive work is often used by 'outsiders', the 'institutionally marginalised' or those that lack traditional sources of power (e.g. regulatory, financial, cultural) in their field (Maguire & Hardy, 2009; Martí & Mair, 2009; Coule & Patmore, 2013; Yaziji & Doh, 2013; Bertles et al., 2014). This is particularly salient given the empirical context of the research is focused on front-line service delivery agents who are embedded in a professional public-service bureaucracy. Such organisations exert a strong influence upon organisational practices through deeply entrenched regulatory, normative and cultural-cognitive pressures (see Ferlie et al., 2005; Finn, Currie & Martin, 2010). As these actors are positioned at the 'bottom' of the hierarchy they distinctly lack the authority, regulatory power and access to resources normally associated with institutional change agents, yet they are known to influence public services and policies (see Lipsky, 1980; Meyers & Vorsanger, 2003; Thomann, 2015). Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) suggest that actors who disrupt institutions are likely to not be powerful or culturally sophisticated but are those who are capable of being highly original and working in potentially counter-cultural ways. Front-line service delivery agents have been shown to be artful and adept in terms of delivering and undermining public service delivery reform (see Lipsky, 1980; Bjerregaard & Klitmoller,

2010; Thomann, 2015). It has been shown that those actors who lack traditional sources of power make use of strategies that undermine assumptions and beliefs, mainly through contrary practice, using discursive tactics (see Martí & Mair, 2009; Coule & Patmore, 2013).

Arguably the institutional work literature provides a useful template to consider how actors transform institutions but this is not without shortcomings. Although Oliver (1992) first brought the concept of deinstitutionalisation to the attention of institutional scholars, the practices associated with undermining institutional arrangements are not well documented (see Lawrence et al., 2009; Hardy & Maguire, 2009; Smets et al., 2012). Lawrence and Suddaby's (2006) seminal framework is primarily derived from studies that focus on creating institutions that only incidentally discusses the disruptive work done by actors in the same domain. Although it may be the case that an important way in which existing institutions are disrupted is through the development of new ones, that is not the only, or even the dominant process through which disruption occurs (see Maguire & Hardy, 2009). Oliver (1992) argues that deinstitutionalisation is a distinct process with its own antecedents, therefore the disruption of institutions should involve work which is distinct from that associated with the creation of new institutions. Therefore, Lawrence and Suddaby's (2006) typology might only describe a small set of potential strategies available to actors when disrupting institutions.

Moreover, recent research on institutional work and change (see Zietsma & McKnight, 2009; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010; Currie et al., 2012; Herepath & Kitchener, 2016) suggests a need to move beyond a linear and discrete view of such concepts. For instance, Zietsma and McKnight (2009) observe moments where creation, maintenance and change are empirically co-terminus and observe instances of all three during the

creation of an institution. Importantly, Currie et al. (2012) show how institutional work normally associated with creation is not only used to maintain an institution – but that it is more powerful in practice than traditional maintenance work. Often different types of work can be combined to achieve one particular outcome – be it maintenance, transformation or creation (see Jarzabkowski et al., 2009). This suggests that types of institutional work are no longer discrete categorises focused on one type of activity or outcome as initially presented by Lawrence and Suddaby's (2006) seminal typology. By viewing the process by which actors pursue their change interests in a discrete and linear fashion one would miss the inherently messy nature of change, the often important and unintended consequences involved in such activities (see Zietsma & McKnight, 2009; Lawrence et al., 2009; Lawrence et al., 2013).

Indeed, much of the research considering institutional disruption has focused on institutional 'elites' (see DiMaggio, 1988; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Suddaby & Viale, 2011; Gawer & Phillips, 2013) and powerful actors like state organisations (Dobbin, 1994), large corporations (Garud et al., 2002; Gawer & Phillips, 2013) or professional associations (Greenwood et al., 2002). These actors can access significantly more resources (Lounsbury, 2001) and have higher perceived levels of legitimacy (Phillips et al., 2004) in their fields. There is little empirical research that has looked how poorly resourced, less powerful or 'marginal' actors promote institutional change (exceptions include Hardy & Maguire, 2009; Martí & Mair, 2009; Coule & Patmore, 2013). The literature lacks detailed accounts of how when power and resources are concentrated in the hands of a few, change is possible? Significantly, this thesis focuses on shedding light on such processes by exploring how such actors pursue their transformative interests when delivering innovation in public services.

Lastly, our understanding of change remains largely selective because most existing approaches are primarily conducted at a macro-level (Smets et al., 2012). Here studies focus on the broader institutional field or strategically motivated entrepreneurship (Scott et al., 2002; Thornton, 2004; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Battilana, Leca, & Boxenbaum, 2009). This is significant for two reasons. One it largely neglects the idea of bottom-up change although it has been shown that change can occur from the "*individuals at the frontline*" (Reay, Golden-Biddle, & Germann, 2006, p. 979 see also Lounsbury & Crumley, 2007; Smets et al., 2012). Second it portrays change as a dramatic and highly contested process driven by "*organised and purposeful actors*" (Ansari & Phillips, 2011, p. 1596). This largely downplays the importance of everyday mundane work as source of change (see Kraatz, Ventresca, & Deng, 2012; Smets et al., 2012; Lawrence et al., 2013; Raviola & Norback, 2013) leading to what could be considered a simplified view of change (Delbridge & Edwards, 2008). Smets, Morris and Greenwood (2012) illustrate quite clearly how the "*mundane yet pervasive pressure to 'get the job done*'' (p. 880) is an unexplored area of change. The change that emerges from this day-to-day work was shown to transform an organisation and then radiate to the field level to undermine the status quo.

Numerous scholars have long criticised institutional theory for its neglect of micro-processes and individuals when studying institutions generally (see Barley, 2008; Powell & Colyvas, 2008; Lawrence et al., 2011; Suddaby, 2010; Kaghan & Lounsbury, 2011; Lawrence et al., 2013; Smets & Jarzabkowski, 2013). As McPherson and Saunders (2013) argue if we are to fully understand institutional change or maintenance we need to examine the ways in which institutions are negotiated, interpreted and enacted by individuals, as people, and how their practices interact on the ground. If we are to take

claims made by institutionalists seriously that individuals are *"carriers of institutions"* (Zilber, 2002, p. 234), scholars should reconnect institutional theory to the everyday (Barley, 2008).

Whilst there are numerous calls to do such research over the years, there are still few studies that do so (see Lawrence et al., 2011; Lawrence et al., 2013). Lawrence, Leca and Zilber (2013) suggest this is happening because most scholars tend to base their analysis largely on retrospective accounts embedded in interview and archival data. Such methodological approaches, whilst overwhelming popular in the literature, limit our ability to *"uncover and understand the messy day-to-day practices of institutional work"* (Lawrence et al., 2013, p. 1029). However, research methods that can capture social action *in situ* and *in vivo* - like ethnography or observation - are rarely used by institutional scholars (see Locke, 2011; Bjerregaard, 2011). For example, in Lawrence, Leca and Zilber's (2013) special issue on institutional work in *Organization Studies*, only one paper was based on an ethnographic study. Notably, this thesis responds to these calls through the adoption of an in-depth single case study that relies on participant observation, shadowing and qualitative interviews of frontline workers as they deliver a new and innovative approach to service delivery. Here, we focus on the everyday work of individuals as they engage in and are targets of institutional work.

2.2.2.3   Agency, effort and institutional work

As I have discussed in the previous sections, institutional work was developed to refocus institutionalism from primarily structural explanations of stability and change, to those that drew attention to the role of agency in creating, maintaining and transforming institutions (see Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Lawrence et al., 2011; Lawrence et al., 2013). Over the past 10 years, institutional work has grown in popularity

in the literature as means to shine light on the role of human contingencies in institutional dynamics (see Lawrence, et al., 2013). Arguably, the focus on agency is not without its faults. There is a tendency to still present actors as "*hypermuscular supermen*" (Suddaby, 2010, p. 15) who are single-handed, active supporters of change. Moreover such change agents tend to largely be the preserve of professionals, top executives and industry leaders (Lawrence et al., 2013) rather than less powerful, institutionally marginalised or front-line workers (see Bjerregaard & Klitmoller, 2010; Creed, DeJordy & Lok, 2010; Coule & Patmore, 2013). Studies still tend to seek out a single heroic actor over the increasingly more likely collective and distributed forms of agency given the networked nature of our environment (see Lounsbury & Crumley, 2007; Delbridge & Edwards, 2008; Dorado 2013). In the main, the institutional work literature has attempted to confront the paradox of embedded agency and correct a simplified view of agency from one of mindless institutional reproduction or unconstrained agency to one which is more nuanced (see Suddaby et al., 2010; Lawrence, et al., 2013).

One area of recent debate in the institutional work literature concerns the issues of *effort* and *intentionality* of action by actors. The phrase 'purposive action' in the definition of institutional work suggests a high degree of conscious intentionality on the part of actors. A relational, multi-dimensional view of agency as posited by Emirbayer and Mische (1998) - and further developed by Battilana and D'Aunno (2009) - counters this point and suggests "*what those 'intentions' will look like vary considerably depending on the dimension of agency that dominates the instance of institutional work*" (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009, p. 49). Agency is conceived as existing in three dimensions – *iterative*, *projective* and *practical-evaluative*. The *iterative* dimension is the habitual

reproduction of established practices and institutions. The *projective* dimension focuses on the imaginative efforts of actors, which supports planning and future change. Whilst the *practical-evaluative* dimension focus on what actors do and the judgement they exercise in the here and now to get things done (Tsoukas and Cummings, 1997). The majority of studies of institutional work tend to emphasise – "*the purposive strategic actions of foresighted actors who envisage desirable institutional arrangements and pursue them through planned change*" (Smets & Jarzabkowski, 2013, p. 1282). As a result, much of the understanding of institutional work is dominated by studies of projective agency.

Closely linked to the issue of intentionality, is the effort that institutional work demands. For instance, in the past iterative agency was largely considered a mindless and subconscious activity until very recently when scholars have shown this is far from the case as it requires actors to recognise specific situations and select appropriate behaviours from a nearly endless selection of choices (see Jarzabkowski, 2008). Even the habitual or practical everyday acts that are not aimed at social change are have been shown to be an 'effortful' accomplishment (Giddens, 1984; Tsoukas & Cummings, 1997; Jarzabkowski, 2008). Importantly, change may inadvertently arise from such activity (Chia & Holt, 2009; Kraatz et al., 2010; Smets & Jarzabkowski, 2013).

The above points suggest that agency in terms of our understanding of institutional work, appears to be far more nuanced and multi-dimensional than previously envisaged as it is peppered with varying degrees of effort and intentionality (see Lounsbury & Crumley, 2007; Battilana et al., 2009; van Dijk et al., 2011; Smets & Jarzabkowski, 2013; Lawrence, et al., 2013). Insomuch that focusing on planned change or activities that are perceived as effortful by researchers largely limits our

understanding the human action which is central to institutional dynamics. Although there are calls for institutional work to provide "*a broad vision of agency in relationship to institutions*" (Lawrence, et al., 2009, p. 1) by exploring all dimensions of agency, this appears not to be the case as of yet.

As described in the previous section, this programme of research is designed in part to respond to such calls for furthering our understanding of agency and institutions by focusing on the everyday lived experience of actors (Barley, 2008). Both the choice of empirical setting (frontline workers involved in delivering a public service innovation) and research methods (case study with ethnographic elements) is aimed to shift our understanding of agency away from "*dramatic actions of the heroic entrepreneur to the small worlds of maintenance and resistance in which institutionalisation and change are enacted in 'everyday getting by' of individuals and groups*" (Lawrence et al., 2011, p. 57). Thus, providing conceptual clarity into different modes of agency that underpin our understanding of 'work' (Battilana et al., 2009; Hwang, & Colyvas, 2011; Lawrence et al., 2013).

2.3   Summary

In this chapter, I identified and discussed the areas of conceptual clarity institutional theory and institutional work can offer to the public service innovation debate. Firstly, that institutional work is a useful framework for exploring the micro-processes that underpin institutional change and stability - both of which are firm features of public service innovation. Second, and most significantly, that institutional work can provide theoretical insights into not only the complex and dynamic role of actor agency but also structures in institutional processes. All of this is highly relevant to

the purpose and aims of the thesis which are focused around highlighting the micro-level actions and processes that actors undergo when pursuing innovation in public services. This was then followed by detailed discussion of how actors maintain and transform their institutional arrangements. After which consideration was paid to how agency is conceptualised within the institutional work literature, and who primarily does institutional work. In the next chapter I discuss and justify the research methodology, data collection methods and analytical strategy adopted in this study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research design for the thesis. First, consideration is paid to the choice of a single inductive qualitative case study underpinned by participant observation as a means to gain insight into the institutional work carried out by public sector actors as they pursue their innovation interests in their everyday interactions. In light of these choices, the methods and analytical strategy employed are discussed and justified. As methodology and methods cannot be divorced from philosophical commitments (Morgan & Smircich, 1980), the chapter begins with a discussion of the ideological assumptions concerning the nature of reality, knowledge, discourse, agency and the role of the researcher in knowledge construction that frames the research.

3.1   Philosophical Assumptions

As the thesis aims to study the micro-level actions and processes that organisational actors employ when pursuing innovation in public services innovation the lens of institutional theory, it is unsurprising that the research, and researcher, adopt philosophical commitments akin to many 'new' institutional theorists (Phillips et al., 2000; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Mutch, 2007;). Specifically, a realist ontology and subjective epistemology are the overarching philosophical commitments in this study.

The espousal of a realist ontology is employed to avoid the paradox of embedded agency (Seo & Creed, 2002) by accepting there is a reality independent of human cognition, rejecting the existence of purely autonomous human agents. Whilst there is an acknowledgement of a 'real' world, it exists beyond our cognition and therefore is re-created by individuals, through socially constructed schemes and knowledge (Kant, 1791; Bhaskar, 1978; Hammersley, 1992). These, social structures are viewed as "*rules*

and resources, organised as the properties of social systems" (Giddens, 1984; p. 25) that

are constructed by ongoing activities of individuals. The varying dimensions of effort and

intentionality involved in human agency (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998; Battilana &

D'Aunno, 2009) enable actors to choose to reproduce or change these structures, often

influenced by personal and environmental characteristics (see Suddaby et al., 2010;

Lawrence, et al., 2013). In effect, the interest of the research lies not in how the physical

world affects action, but in how socially constructed structures affect social practice and

vice versa (Giddens & Pierson, 1989). Importantly, the realist ontology enables social

structures to not just exist in the here and now, as advocated by Giddens (1984); instead,

they can pre-date individuals allowing for either their reproduction or transformation

by current actors, further enabling and constraining future action (Archer, 1995).

The implications of these philosophical commitments is that structure and

agency are conceived as mutually constitutive, in that social structures are not the

product of *either* structure or agency - but both. Human actors draw on social structures

in their action, and at the same time action serves to produce and reproduce those same

structures (see Giddens, 1984; Archer, 1995; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Mutch, 2007).

This results in institutions being conceptualised as the product of (intentional or

otherwise) purposive action (North, 1990; Jepperson, 1991; Lawrence & Suddaby,

2006), which further enables and/or constrains human action (Giddens, 1984). Thus,

institutions and action are perceived to exist in a recursive relationship (Archer, 1995;

Barley & Tolbert, 1997; Phillips et al., 2004). Here, the effect of institutional field is

neither ignored or denied - it is seen as integral - but instead of focusing on the effect of

institutions and their elements on individual action (see Meyer & Rowan, 1977;

DiMaggio & Powell, 1983), the analytical focus of this research is on the micro level

everyday 'work' carried out by actors when pursuing innovation interests (see Greenwood et al., 2002; Phillips et al., 2004; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Dacin et al., 2010).

Central to this study of 'work' are my meta-theoretical assumptions concerning discourse and discursive practices. This is highly relevant to the research because language plays a fundamental role in the creation, maintenance and disruption of institutions (Phillips et al., 2004; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Maguire & Hardy 2009). Institutions come to 'be' as organisational actors interact and come to accept shared definitions of reality through linguistic processes (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). Therefore, in this study, institutions are not only conceived as social constructions, but as social constructions that are constituted through writing, talking – or *discourse* (Fairclough, 1992; Phillips et al., 2004; Phillips & Oswick, 2012).

Discourses are structured collections of meaningful *texts* (Phillips et al., 2004) or "*symbolic expressions that are spoken, written or depicted in some way so that they take on a material form and are accessible to others*" (Taylor, Cooren, Gioux & Robichaud, 1996, p. 7). Texts are both the building blocks and material manifestation of discourse (Kress, 1995). Talk (e.g. verbal reports, speeches, information communication, conversations) is a kind of text (Fairclough, 1992; van Dijk, 1997) as well as other more traditional forms such as written reports, artwork, pictures, artefacts and symbols (Taylor & Van Emery, 1993; Phillips et al., 2002; Phillips & Oswick, 2012). Saliently, organisational actors use these collection of texts to define "*who and what is normal, standard and acceptable''* (Merilainen et al., 2004, p. 544) by making certain ways of thinking and acting possible and others impossible or costly. Consequently discourses not only "*describe things but also 'do' things*" (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, p. 6) because

they help actors to make sense of the world they inhabit by giving it meaning which in turn can give rise to action (Phillips et al., 2004). Therefore, discourse and action exist in a recursive relationship, like structure and agency (Heracleous & Barrett, 2001). That is, the meanings of discourses are shared and social, emanating out of organisational actors' actions in producing texts; at the same time discourse give meaning to these actions thereby constituting the social world (Phillips & Hardy, 2002).

Discourse can embody two different forms. First, there is '*discourse*' (emphasis on lower case 'd') which refers to *language in use* or the public speech or spoken language used in social practices when people communicate at a micro-level (Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Taylor & van Emery, 1993). Alternatively, there is '*Discourse*' (emphasis on capital 'D') which refers to the '*common usage*' or the coherence of underlying concepts and ideas in sets of texts that share a role in explaining a concept over time which can occur at the individual, organisational field and macro institutional level (Phillips & Oswick, 2012). Regardless of whether the focus is on language in use (discourse), or common usage (Discourse), they are never completely cohesive and instead are partial, contested, fragmented and temporal because we are never able to determine social reality fully (Hardy & Phillips, 2004).

By engaging in *discursive practices*, organisational actors can modify the language that underlies important concepts or objects which in turn influence the social relationships and action that depend on these concepts (see Hardy, Palmer & Phillips, 2000). The act of creating or disseminating texts is political and power-laden as individuals or groups can struggle for power by seeking to control how concepts are understood and treated (see Zilber, 2002; Phillips et al., 2004). These power struggles result in discourses being subject to contradiction and continuous (re)-negotiations as

to their meaning and application (Phillips et al., 2004; Hardy & Thomas, 2014). This is a vital feature of discourse because it allows organisational actors' to challenge the taken-for-granted in order to destabilise meanings and act as a basis for change (Phillips et al., 2004; Maguire & Hardy, 2009, 2013; Hardy & Maguire, 2010).

This is where my meta-theoretical assumptions concerning agency come to the fore. I see both human actors, as well as discourses, as having agency (Latour, 2005). As described above, discourse can be used to represent a subjective construction of a social reality on the part of the agent, which in turn is used to shape action. Here, the agency lies in the agent constructing the discourse. But discourse can also be seen to constitute a concrete reality that then bears down and shapes social action giving agency to discourses.

Against this background, the analytical focus of the research is concerned with the substantive content of the discourse (language in use), discourses (wider patterns of language – see Johnstone, 2008) and discursive practices employed by organisational actors in their everyday, real time social interactions in the delivery of an innovative public service. The interest is not in 'how' the discourse has come to be (Deetz, 1992; Cunliffe, 2008) but instead on what is being said, in what contexts, by whom and to whom, and for what affect. In effect, it is a study of 'discourses in context' in which issues of power and agency come to the fore due to the ideological assumptions shaping the research.

The adoption of these meta-theoretical assumptions shares inherent similarities with interpretivism and social constructionism. In so far as the researcher searches for insight into the meanings and interpretations organisational actors deploy when producing and reproducing social structures (Laing, 1967) with a focus on how actors

use language to construct their reality (Berger and Luckmann, 1967) as a means to understand - not causally explain - human action. Unlike neo-empirical approaches to interpretivism (Van Maanen, 1988; Knights, 1992) or objective approaches to social constructionism (Cunliffe, 2011) - the researcher, in this programme of research, is not conceived as a neutral conduit and presenter of organisational actor's subjectivity. Consequently, the thesis in itself is a social construction (interpretation of interpretations) of what I think is going on, what meanings are being made and used by organisational actors. Drawing on this understanding, the research aims to gain interpretive insights into institutional work to build practical theories concerning how public sector actors, in particular frontline actors, 'work' to advance their innovation interests, rather than to test theories or generalise about human behaviour.

3.2   Qualitative Inductive Case Study of Public Service Innovation

In this sub-section, consideration is paid to the choice of an inductive qualitative case study as a means to address the thesis aims and questions. In light of these choices, the methods and analytical strategies chosen are discussed and dually justified given the aforementioned meta-theoretical assumptions. I start this sub-section by discussing the selection of the case, as this was the catalyst for the research.

3.2.1 Case study site selection

Early into my doctoral journey (circa 2013-14), I had planned to explore the institutional work employed by organisational actors in the non-profit sector as they pursued a programme of public service innovation using an inductive case study methodology. After the first visit, the case organisation was hesitant to let me back in for a second round of fieldwork and withdrew from the research. At the time, the

organisation had taken over a substantial and radical portfolio of service delivery and indicated they did not have the time to accommodate my presence. Unfortunately, the first visit did not provide adequate amounts of data to address the research questions. I then tried to secure another non-profit organisation involved in public service innovation but this was proving unsuccessful.

In early 2015, myself and another researcher were approached by a contact in the Police Service regarding possible research opportunities. They suggested that there was a generic interest on the part of organisations involved in a pilot innovative project – Marion Public Service Innovative Project (MPSIP). These organisations sought to understand how it reduced demand for public services in a specific locale in the UK[12] what were the barriers and facilitators for success and how any successful practices might be up-scaled and replicated in other areas in the city region. It was agreed that the research team would develop and design a research project to address these two broad aims.

In March 2015, we met with key members of the pilot and were briefed concerning the following: the pilot, why the location was chosen (high volume service users), the impacts it hoped to achieve including reducing demand on public services, organisations involved in the MPSIP and the 'pilot team' who were largely responsible for the design and delivery of a new service delivery model. At this point the pilot was in its early stages of delivery (month 3 of a 12 month pilot timeline).

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[12] The specific locale is Marion – an estate with high levels of social deprivation and public service usage in a Northern metropolitan borough. The city region this borough is part of is undergoing a radical transformation as central government is devolving all powers to the city region.

The pilot involved collaboration between the following organisations: police, local council (various services such as social services), health services (including mental health), local housing agencies, probation services, job centre, alcohol and drugs services and volunteer groups working in the area. The pilot was based on principles of person-centred restoration (see Leplege et al., 2007) – that is the idea that 'problems' can be solved by working with individuals to build relationships and helping them to solve their own problems. The initiative involves key workers, who were specific individuals who made contact with individuals, groups and families defined as 'problems'[13] and attempted to gain access to their lives and obtain permission from them to work towards 'improving'[14] their lives.

Whilst the study was concerned with exploring the efficacy of partnership working, the pilot was a prime example of public service innovation. In so much that the way the pilot team collaborated to support the design and delivery of the initiative, the person centred restoration practices employed by pilot front line workers and the experiences of service users was 'new' or discontinuous to what has gone before in terms of the organisations involved, front line workers and beneficiaries. Consequently, this study could serve two purposes:

1) provide insight for the organisations involved concerning the barriers, facilitators and possible replication of their initiative
2) provide insight into the micro-level institutional 'work' carried out by public sector actors (specifically frontline workers) as they pursue their innovation interests

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[13] Generally refers to 'high volume service users'.

[14] The concept or discourse around 'improving' lives of high volume service users will be discussed in further detail in the findings and analysis section.

The opportunity to gain access to the daily working practices of frontline organisational actors early in their public service innovation journey *in-situ* is arguably rare. Most studies of institutional work are retrospective accounts based on interviews or archival data, which limit our ability to uncover the 'messy' day-to-day practices of institutional work (see Lawrence et al., 2013). Particularly when exploring institutional disruption and change, these accounts tend to be provided by institutional elites or actors with significant resources (DiMaggio, 1988; Garud et al., 2002; Greenwood et al., 2002; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Suddaby & Viale, 2011; Gawer & Phillips, 2013). Scant attention has been paid to the work of less powerful or marginal organisational actors like frontline workers (see Coule & Patmore, 2013) even though their role in change activities is recognised (Maguire & Hardy, 2009; Martí & Mair, 2009; Coule & Patmore, 2013; Yaziji & Doh, 2013; Bertles et al., 2014). Arguably, it is easier and more 'sexy', to focus on the strategic players in an organisation but studies have shown bottom up change occurs (Reay et al., 2006; Lounsbury & Crumley, 2007; Lammers, 2011; Smets et al., 2012; Gray, Purdy & Ansari, 2015). Even if institutional change is not bottom-up, the success of change activities hinge on its application at the frontline. Particularly so in the public sector, where frontline workers have been shown to be artful and adept at both delivering and undermining reform activities (see Lipsky, 1980; Bjerregaard & Klitmoller, 2010; Thomann, 2015). Moreover, there are very few empirical examples of public service innovation in the extant literature generally (see De Vries et al., 2016).

Given my interest in institutional work - the micro-action that underpins it, and public service innovation more generally - this case proved ideal to reconnect institutional theory to everyday life (Barley, 2008). Therefore, the thesis fieldwork was

conducted as part of a study aimed at understanding effective partnership working to help up-scale and replicate successful practices across the area. In the next sub-section, I discuss the rationale for adopting a single in-depth case study strategy with qualitative elements.

3.2.2 Single qualitative case study strategy

The philosophical commitments of this research legitimate particular design choices – specifically those which enable access to the organisational actor's construction of meanings and interpretations of the social world within an organisational context. A case study approach is well suited to this purpose as the quintessential characteristic of case studies is that they strive towards a holistic understanding of cultural systems of action (Feagin, Orum & Sjoberg, 1991). This makes the case study approach particularly relevant to this thesis as it enables the detailed exploration of organisations, their evolution and factors that have shaped their history and work. Moreover, case studies are lauded for their ability to shed light on complex, multi-faceted phenomenon (Yin, 2003; Stake, 2006; Eisenhardt, 1989). The context for which the study is situated is highly complex, given the diverse range of business activities and competing processes involved in innovation (see De Vries et al., 2016), and the increasingly fragmented and complex service provision landscape in which public service delivery occurs (Osborne & Brown, 2011; Hartley et al., 2013).

In the past, case studies have been criticised for their dependence on a single case (or small number of cases), rendering it incapable of providing a generalising conclusion or that they lack the rigour of positivistic designs (Tellis, 1997; Yin, 2003). These criticisms lack relevance to this thesis for a few reasons. Firstly, the meta-theoretical commitments of the research are akin to interpretivism and social

constructionism rather than positivism, therefore generalisation to a wider population is not an aim. Instead, it aims to contribute towards theory building, a common approach within case study research (Eisenhardt, 1989; Stake, 2006). Here, the focus is on gaining interpretive insights to inform the construction of practical theories. Secondly, conceptions of validity – defined by the notion of generalisability – are wholly inappropriate quality criteria from which to judge methodological choices within an interpretivist or social constructionist paradigms (Johnson, Buehring, Cassell & Symon, 2006). Instead, issues of validity are replaced with a concern for the rich picture of organisation life and behaviour as well as sense-making and meaning generation in specific contexts (Stake, 2006; Cunliffe, 2011). The inherent flexibility of case study methods enables researchers to adopt multiple methods of data collection from multiple perspectives as a means to gather this rich picture of life (Hartley, 2004). It is precisely this desire to obtain a rich picture that drew me to adopting qualitative methods such as unstructured interviews and participant observation within the case study design.

Participant observation of everyday action was adopted to access perspectives in action or the talk that occurs naturally in an on-going social context (Gould, Walker, Crane & Lidz, 1974). Accessing such phenomenon is highly relevant to this study. Much of the understanding of human action in the institutional work literature focuses on foresighted actors (projective agency) with scant attention paid to what organisational actors do and the judgments they exercise in the here and now to get things done (Tsoukas & Cummings, 1997; Smets & Jarzabkowski, 2013). Additionally, the every-day and sometimes mundane social action carried out by organisational actors have been largely ignored in the institutional work literature even though such activity can be a

source of institutional change (Kraatz et al., 2012; Smets et al., 2012; Lawrence et al., 2013; Raviola & Norback, 2013). Hence, studying perspectives in action is fundamental to gain insight into the ways in which institutions are negotiated, interpreted and enacted by organisational actors, and how these practices interact on the ground.

Another advantage of participant observation is how it enables a researcher to examine how organisations operate as an 'ongoing concern' (Fine et al., 2009, p. 613). What Fine et al. (2009) describe here is the ability to view the daily social interactions, routines and rituals or the 'means' rather than studying the 'ends' of processes. That is, means and ends can have blurred boundaries and often do not occur in conventional linear paths. By observing action over a period of time, researchers can observe work sequences and how change attempts unfold. Thus enabling a research to move beyond a linear and discrete view of institutional change and institutional work, and instead embracing its inherent messiness and unintended consequences as action unfolds day to day (see Zietsma & McKnight, 2009; Lawrence et al., 2011; Lawrence et al., 2013). Moreover, coupling the observation activities with other methods like shadowing and interviews (Weick, 1985) helps immerse the researcher in the domain of interest, enabling the researcher to build this rich picture of life (Cunliffe, 2009).

Here, the reliance on qualitative methods is predicated on their ability to sympathetically engage with the understanding of others' experiences by accessing their meaning and interpretations (Van Maanen, 1998; Alvesson & Deetz, 2000). The use of multiple methods, from multiple perspectives (see Section 3.2.3), specifically brings to light different aspects of situations and experiences to help portray their complexity (Kanter, 1977; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) providing a depth and richness in the data. Additionally, these multiple perspectives help to create authenticity in the research

findings (see Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1993) - a central criterion of interpretivist and constructionist designs – by enabling different members' realities to contribute to the accounts presented. The elements of observation in the study permits access to organisational actors' sense and meaning making in a natural setting providing a further layer of authenticity and richness to the accounts (Brewer, 2004). The design choice of different discursive sites (see Section 3.2.3-3.2.4) within the overarching case organisation provides a degree of accommodation, another quality criteria of interpretivist research (Kincheloe & McLaren, 1994) by drawing attention to relevant contextual variations within the case. The remaining sub-sections now consider the practical application of the design by discussing data collection methods and analytic strategies employed in the research.

3.2.3   Overview of data collection methods

The case study fieldwork involved the observation of meetings and key events, shadowing of frontline workers and qualitative interviews from March to July 2015. The case organisation was theoretically sampled (Eisenhardt, 1989) to provide insight into the nature of institutional work aimed at instigating an innovative public service (see Section 3.2.1). A snowball sampling procedure was employed for the majority of the fieldwork (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). At the first visit, I identified key organisational actors involved in the pilot team. These actors identified other relevant actors and made personal introductions on my behalf. This enabled me to access various meetings, events and opportunities to shadow in an emergent and flexible way over the course of the fieldwork. This process of sampling whereby one participant refers the researcher to another is a legitimate and well-established method in qualitative research (Symon & Cassell, 2012).

Table 2: Summary of fieldwork activity

Visit	Transcript (interview or meeting recording)		Observation of Activity (Observation Notes)		Field Notes
	Time (min)	Word Count	Time (Min)	Word Count	Word Count
1 (12 March)	117 (M)	22,585	117	12,389	2,848
2 (23 March)	120 (I3)	21,436			4,650
3 (17 April)	185 (I3)	32,057			5,425
4 (20 April)	138 (I4)	26,118	120	4,605	*
5 (5 May)	107 (I2)	19,769			
6 (13 May)	118 (M)	22,032	118	7,669	*
7 (18 May)	54 (I1)	10,017	120	3,653	
8 (1 June)			120	9,080	
9 (10 June)	123 (M)	20,440	123	5,909	3,341
10 (15 June)			120	1,800	
11 (19 June)			120 (E)	3,587	2,400
12 (22 June)			120	3,055	847
13 (29 June)			120	2,628	*
14	55 (I1)	6,706	180 (S)	2,673	

Visit	Transcript (interview or meeting recording)		Observation of Activity (Observation Notes)		Field Notes
	Time (min)	Word Count	Time (Min)	Word Count	Word Count
(30 June)					
15 (8 July)	109 (M)	19,524	109	8,276	2,464
16 (20 July)	172 (M)	32,283	172 (E)	2,713	*
TOTAL	1,298 min 21.6 hrs	232,967	1,659 min 27.7 hrs	68,037	21,975

Note: codes as follows: (*) = field notes were included in the observation notes rather than as a stand alone document; (IX) = interview transcript and number of interviews; (M) = meeting transcript; (S) = shadowing key worker; (E) = event

Based on this process, 16 visits to the locale were made (see Table 2), involving 7 operational team meeting observations, 3 strategic team meeting observations, 14 qualitative interviews, 2 event observations (one internal, one external) and two days of shadowing key workers. Thus resulting in 21.6 hours of transcribed interviews and meetings, 27.7 hours of working practice observation and nearly 22,000 words of field notes.

Prior to commencement of the fieldwork, ethical approval for the research project was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the universities employing both the field researchers (Sheffield University Management School and Sheffield Hallam University). Data sharing agreements written by the council were signed prior to our observation of any and all activities. Consent for digital recording was received prior to interviews and other meetings and events. All digital recordings were made on an encrypted recorder and files were stored securely on the University networked storage system in both original and processed formats. To protect the anonymity of the research

participants, fictional identities were created for the location, innovation project, team and individual actors (see Section 3.2.4.1).

3.2.3.1   Qualitative interviews

Interviews were used at the start of the programme as an initial scoping exercise to help me become familiar with the reform agenda (at the local and wider city region), how the pilot innovation programme had come about and what were the long term aims and objectives and current successes of the approach. Interview participants were theoretically selected (Eisenhardt, 1989) based on either a) direct involvement with the delivery of the pilot service delivery model or b) involvement with wider service reform agenda in the locale. The first six organisational actors interviewed were identified at the scoping meeting (visit 1) with further actors emerging through a referral or snowballing process (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981) where after the interview, or during the interview process, interviewees identified those who might be useful to the discovery process.

In total, 14 organisational actors were interviewed providing 659 minutes of interview conversation that ranged from $20 - 120$ minutes (see Table 3). Interviews were conducted face-to-face on site visits, digitally recorded with the permission of participants, and fully transcribed. First, I interviewed organisational actors involved or associated with the pilot team (individuals from different organisations involved in the design and delivery of the innovative service). This involved frontline workers who delivered the new service, frontline workers who collaborated with those delivering the services and team members who operated at a strategic level. Next, I interviewed service leads from the council involved in the MPSIP such as workforce development, complex dependency, including the head of the project. This provided a strategic view

from those external to the team in juxtaposition to those internal to the team. Thus the sample of organisational actors interviewed enabled me to gather multiple perspectives and interpretations[15] on the work of the pilot team.

Table 3: Summary of qualitative interviews

Visit	Interviewee	Job Role	Team Position	Length
		(operational or strategic)	(insider or outsider)	Time (min)
2	'Barbara'	Strategic	Outsider	44
	'Betty'	Strategic	Insider	45
	'Susan'	Strategic	Insider	30
3	'Rosie'	Strategic	Outsider	70
	'Harriet'	Operational	Insider	61
	'Marie'	Operational	Insider	55
4	'Tim'	Operational	Insider	46
	'Steve'	Strategic	Insider	31
	'Dave'	Operational	Insider	43
	Front Line Worker	Operational	Insider	18
5	'Gary'	Operational	Insider	75
	'Amy'	Operational	Insider	32
7	'Claire'	Strategic	Outsider	54
14	Front Line Worker	Operational	Insider	55

[15] Operational perspectives are obtained through interviews with those that work at the frontline of public service delivery. Strategic perspectives are obtained through interviews with those that manage services and report back to strategic partners on their progress. Insiders are core members of the pilot team and therefore have intimate knowledge of the team and the innovative public service. Outsiders are those that do not attend or are not regularly involved in pilot team activities. These individuals tend to run services that are in opposition or competition with the pilot team.

Note: Anonymised identities are used for people that will be frequently mentioned in the findings and analysis. For further details concerning these identities see Section 3.2.4.

Interviews were conducted in an informal and relatively unstructured manner (Kvale, 1983; King, 2004), which allowed organisational actors to share information about their daily lives, concerns and perceptions of the pilot team and general reform activity being undertaken at their choosing. The interviews followed a similar loose pattern. I started the interview started by introducing myself covering such topics as my professional background, my knowledge and understanding of the public service delivery and experience as a field researcher. I then explained the research activity and what this would involve, letting stakeholders ask questions about my presence. This was an important trust building step as it enabled me to be transparent about the research specifically around the purpose, research commissioning, outputs, confidentiality and data management. I then asked actors about themselves and their background. From here conversations naturally shifted to their awareness of public service reform agenda (locally and wider city region) and the pilot service delivery team (e.g. purpose, impact, success, limitations, future).

3.2.3.2 *Participant observation*

The principle form of data collection in the case study was overt participant observation of meetings, events and working practices (shadowing). Participant observation is crucial to the study as it provides a backstage view (Goffman, 1959) of the day-to-day practices of organisational actors as they progress their innovation interests *in-situ* over an extended period of time. Specifically, such observational activity was employed to gain insight into the ways in which institutions are negotiated, interpreted

and enacted by actors in their day-to-day activities (Gould et al., 1974; Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2001).

A distinction needs to be made concerning the overall nature of the observational method and how this was enacted in practice. In practice, the observation took the form of 'observer' rather than participant (Burgess, 1984). In so much that, the highly sensitive nature of the frontline work (pilot team meetings, internal events and shadowing) made it inappropriate for researchers to film, digitally record [16] or participate in discussions but I could take anonymised notes of the action. This was advantageous to a degree as the research is preoccupied with gaining insight into the everyday and sometime mundane practices carried out by organisational actors as they pursued their innovation interests. By standing back and letting the action unfold, I observed what they 'do' in a setting as 'normal' as possible (Waddington, 2004; Fine et al., 2008). Arguably, such distanced approaches could fall foul of ethnocentrism (Seale, 2008). Although I did stand back and observe, I did interact with the people under study. I sat around the table with everyone at the meetings. I had personal exchanges with actors about our families, what they did last weekend, upcoming holidays and reality TV shows. I would also follow up points of interest after meetings. At one point (site visit 4), I stopped introducing myself at the start of meetings as I became part of the institutional fabric. Moreover, I recognise my presence has an impact on what goes on around me (Brewer, 2004; Waddington, 2004) and what I observe is my social construction of others interpretations of reality.

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[16] For strategic and external public events, we received consent to digitally record these events but still remained as observers.

The sites of observation were theoretically selected (Eisenhardt, 1989) based on the ability to shed light on the everyday working practices of organisational actors engaged in public service innovation. Observation of pilot team meetings and shadowing of frontline workers was negotiated during the scoping meeting (visit 1) as these were sites of main operational activity. Other observation sites such as strategic reform meetings and events emerged after time in the field through a snowballing or referral process (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). The flexibility of case study approaches support such opportunistic data collection (Eisenhardt, 1989; Hartley 2004). This was highly salient and fortuitous as these sites enabled the gathering of multiple perspectives on institutional work by observing work undertaken both at an operational and strategic level, and in front of different audiences (internal and external) helping to create a rich picture of life. In an effort to experience more than a "_presentational show_" of activity, I observed numerous and repeated observational sites over an extended period of time thus making it difficult for people to monitor or dissemble their behaviour (Barley, 1990, p. 241) (see Table 4).

Table 4: Summary of participant observations

Visit	Observation	Type	Length	
		(operational or strategic)	_Time (min)_	_Word Count (field notes)_
2	Pilot Team Meeting 1	Operational	120	12,389
4	Pilot Team Meeting 2	Operational	120	4,605
6	Strategic Meeting 1	Strategic	120	7,669
7	Pilot Team Meeting 3	Operational	120	3,653

Visit	Observation	Type (operational or strategic)	Length	
			Time (min)	Word Count (field notes)
8	Pilot Team Meeting 4	Operational	120	9,080
9	Strategic Meeting 2	Strategic	120	5,909
10	Pilot Team Meeting 5	Operational	120	1,800
11	Internal Event	Operational	120	3,587
12	Pilot Team Meeting 6	Operational	120	3,055
13	Pilot Team Meeting 7	Operational	120	2,673
14	Shadowing	Operational	180	2,628
15	Strategic Meeting 3	Strategic	120	8,276
16	External Event	Strategic	172	2,713

Operational spaces (pilot team meetings and one internal event) are where frontline organisational actors (and the occasional strategic actor) get together to discuss the design and delivery of the innovative service. In the pilot team meetings, actors define 'problems' to target (i.e. individuals, groups or families who were generally high service users), diagnose the causes of 'problems', plan interventions to solve 'problems' and report on the effectiveness of work undertaken. Largely, these meetings are inclusive and open to anyone delivering services in the locale with an interest in those individuals and families being supported by the pilot team. Whilst the same core members attended regularly, there were different frontline workers who attended once or on an ad hoc basis over the course of the fieldwork. The only requirement to access the meeting was signing of data sharing and disclosure agreements to protect the identity of those being supported by the team. Generally, the pilot team lead or one of her subordinates chaired the meeting with the team administrator taking notes of

discussion. The team administrator regularly controlled the speed of discussions as she was in charge of recording detail of the different interventions for evaluation purposes. The pilot team lead kept the meeting on the agenda points and members of the group were encouraged to speak on a case-by-case basis. Not everyone who attended the team meetings had the same belief system concerning high demand service users, the nature of their problems, the role of the state in supporting such individuals and families and the role of frontline workers in service delivery (this will be explored in depth in Chapters (4 & 5). As a result, there was often conflict and contestation over meanings in these operational spaces. The internal event was closed to only those individuals who were using the new innovative practice in their everyday practice. Here, individuals shared their experiences of working in this new way with each other. Table 5 provides a chronology of the discursive activity undertaken at each of the operational spaces over the course of the fieldwork.

Table 5: Chronology of action observed in operational spaces

Operational Space	Summary of Discursive Activity
O-1 Pilot team meeting (23 March)	First pilot team meeting I attended. I am introduced to the individuals and families the team are supporting. In particular cause of problems and possible solutions for Smith family and Heather are discussed.
O-2 Pilot team meeting (20 April)	There are potential problems with the Smith family and solutions are debated. Introduced to Sybil and the team debate the cause of problems and possible interventions regarding Sybil. Whilst the meeting is occurring an intervention is being delivered to help Heather.
O-3 Pilot team meeting (18 May)	Introduce new clients and discuss the cause of their problems and solutions. Significant debates around efficacy of existing processes like gas and electric,

Operational Space	Summary of Discursive Activity
	housing induction processes. First time amphetamine abuse is raised as a 'problem' in the area.
O-4 Pilot team meeting (1 June)	Idea of moving the meeting to a location with better facilities (computers, internet access etc.) is debated. Harriet is not there as she is supporting a case. Instead Gary and Roy discuss their cases and debate problems and solutions with Susan. The issue of amphetamines is raised again as well as using PCSOs as key workers.
O-5 Pilot team meeting (15 June)	Harriet discusses her interventions and progress with Heather. Roy discusses his progress with Sybil.
O-6 Internal working practice event (19 June)	Susan, Harriet, Gary and two other frontline workers get together to discuss their experiences of using this new way of working (what works? What doesn't work?) to share best practice and support each other.
O-7 Pilot team meeting (22 June)	The amphetamine debate meeting – Susan and Harriet are not present but a strategic lead from the Drug and Alcohol Team attends and engages in a discursive struggle with pilot members over whether there 'is' or 'isn't' an amphetamine problem and whether their view on service users are legitimate.
O-8 Pilot team meeting (29 June)	The first meeting in the new office. The team comes to grips with working in the new environment. Much time is spent discussing the progress of Heather

Strategic spaces are where managers with responsibility for areas of service delivery get together (strategic team meetings and one external event) to discuss any innovation activity being undertaken on the Marion estate. The previous CEO of the council was supportive of such activity within the locale and created the Marion Public Service Innovation Project (MPSIP) to drive this work. Members of the project met monthly to discuss the successes (and failures but mostly successes) of such work and key learning points to inform future activity. Access to these meetings was limited, only

organisational actors involved in the MPSIP and their assistants attended. These meetings were chaired and followed a typical bureaucratic meeting style with introductions, previous minutes, updates and any other business. In the updates section, each service lead was allocated a slot to discuss their activities and at times these discussions evolved into debates concerning who was responsible for what, what activities were seen as 'legitimate', and what was deemed a success (see Chapter 4). Table 6 provides a chronology of the discursive activity undertaken in these spaces over time.

Table 6: Chronology of action in strategic spaces

Discursive Space	Summary of Discursive Activity
S-1 Strategic team meeting (13 May)	Debate the content of the locality working report for the board. Debate the format of an external event used to promote the work of the pilot team. Typical updates from each of the leads.
S-2 Strategic team meeting (10 June)	Discussion about communication between leads and across the borough. The locality working report and my interim report (Sheffield report) were passed to the board. Circulating this report caused a discursive struggle between Rosie, Betty and Susan. Susan presents findings regarding what works well in terms of the pilot team. Claire has a big meeting with the CEO in regards to innovation across the area.
S-3 Strategic team meeting (8 July)	Discursive struggle over whether the change of the pilot team format was appropriate. Discuss why certain service areas won't get involved with innovation or the strategic team. Claire announces that her post has been removed and the strategic team and MPSIP will be dissolved but the pilot team will remain.
S-4 External event about pilot team (20 July)	An external event attended by various frontline workers in the public sector, charities and citizens in the area. Here the MPSIP discuss the key issues facing the locale; the new way of working (pilot team)

Discursive Space	Summary of Discursive Activity
	highlighting success stories from the perspective of key workers (Gary, Harriet, Tim). The room is broken up into 5 quadrants that brainstorm topics such as how to improve integrated working, communication, breaking down barriers.

Creation of observation notes

All observations were first recorded as initial field notes (Emerson et al., 2001) using paper and pen. I started taking notes at the earliest opportunity (Visit 1) so individuals would be accustomed and tolerant to the practice (Emerson et al., 2001). These initial notes were taken as the action was unfolding (Atkinson, 1992) aiming to provide a running description of "*who, what, when, where, and how of human activity*" (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973, p. 100). This was supplemented by initial impressions of the physical space, individuals, my own personal reactions to action being observed, and any questions I might have had about what was going. For example, all of initial field notes start with a basic description or the concrete sensory details which set the scene (Emerson et al., 2001) such as time, date, who was present at and the fabric of the setting (e.g. who sat where, what the room looked like) and general 'vibe' in the room like were people tense, in a hurry, relaxed, welcoming (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Extract from observation notes illustrating detail of the environment and narrative style

Observation Note – Visit 1, Initial Scoping Meeting, 12th March 2015

P and I both drove over to Marion together. Steve told us to ring him when we were 5-10 minutes away and then they would assist regarding parking and getting access to the building. We were supposed to arrive at 10 but were 30 minutes early. I called Steve and he then passed me to his colleague Tim who would direct us into the building. I was then

rung by Tim who explained how to get into the building and that a PC named Dave would meet us in the parking lot.

Dave took us into the building and behind the help desk to sign in. The building is a newly renovated and is quite airy and open (with light coloured walls and glass panels). Dave and Tim then took us into a conference room up a number of floors. The rooms are have big TV screen you can use for teleconferencing or presentations. They offered us a cup of coffee and P quizzed Dave about his background. He has been in the force for more than 10 years as a PC in Marion. He did a marketing and sociology degree and when he graduated he entered the police service. Tim has been in the force for over 10 years like Dave. He has just switched post after an unsuccessful promotion to work on this project with Steve. This will be his full time job for the foreseeable future. This new job has just started for Tim and he has just started to recruit PCs to work underneath him in this project. Tim thinks this is a 'massively exciting project' as they have never done anything like this before on such a scale. Both officers have done little bits multi-agency working in the past.

Note = the above extract is from the final electronic descriptive field note – not the original notes taken on site. Everyone is anonymised and presented as fictional characters

Given the sensitivities, it was not appropriate to record all talk verbatim. Instead, the notes contained a mix of <u>inscriptions</u> or "*written accounts that represent events or activities in the world*" and <u>transcriptions</u>, some "*representation of social actors' own words*'' (Atkinson, 1992, p. 16, p. 22). For the inscriptions, I produced detailed reconstructions of who said what, to whom and when (see Figure 2 & 3). Sequencing was important to understand the order in which actors spoke, how much certain actors spoke, in what contexts actors tended to speak, and what they primarily spoke about. Where appropriate, I recorded transcriptions or verbatim quotes of actors' talk (see Figures 2 & 3). Here, I focused on distinctive terms, categories, jargon or specific language and the use of any discursive devices (e.g. narratives or stories, rhetoric, metaphors) (Emerson et al., 2001; Dick, 2004; Fine et al., 2008). As well as capturing talk,

I also recorded any body language or physical action such as actors laughing, pass around papers, leaning back in chairs or ignoring other actors and checking emails on electronic devices. If anything seemed peculiar or I didn't understand it, I would highlight it to potentially follow it up with actors afterwards or to consider it during later observations (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Extract from observation notes illustrating use of inscription and transcription

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Observation Note - Visit 4, Pilot Team Meeting 2, 20th April

Susan brings the discussion back to the NEET issue. That is how do people define that and classify people to get access to provision.

BAP (1): It seems like they are talking about (specific young client - YC)?

Susan: Something about how the child benefit was in place – approved by HRMC approved provider – "how do you get on the drop down list? Young people on (one of the education programme available) have an issue as they aren't on the 'list'. Susan asks how do you get them on the 'list' – Marie says she will write a letter and confirm and she has a meeting (with the man who runs the programme)

Harriet – talks about how (a young client - YC) is "*back on track*". YC's dad wasn't getting the money from child benefit and wasn't getting paid by (the charity programme the YC was enrolled on). YC can get on a programme (in 2 weeks' time) but until he moves to (charity programme) the YC won't get paid so (charity programme) are going to pay YC in the interim (19.50 to dad and 25 to YC)

BAP (2) – it appears that because YC's training programme wasn't on some HMRC provider list, Dad wasn't getting the child benefit payment of 19.50 a week for YC and YC's own payment was reduced. So Dad kicked off and withdrew him from the programme because they desperately needed the 19.50 a week and wanted YC client to go on another programme which would pay. Anyway, Harriet and Susan and (man who runs the programme) have intervened and charity programme & Susan's team are paying dad the benefit shortfall, have re-registered young client on the programme and

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are trying to get the programme on the HRMC provider list. It is clear this amount of
money is a very big deal breaker to the YC's involvement (this is the difference between
attending a programme that suits the YC or that doesn't but is on a 'list') and I think they
have been trying to get this charity programme on the provider list since we have been
attending meetings – no easy task it appears. When you are living in poverty £50 a week
is make or break to your ability to survive

Note = the above extract is from the final electronic descriptive field note – not the original notes taken on site. Everyone is anonymised and presented as fictional characters. I present the young client as gender neutral. BAP refers to my notes: BAP (1) was written in my initial field notes on the day and BAP (2) was written when I wrote up the final descriptive narrative later that day

Typical to such observations, these initial notes were only sensible to myself (Lofland and Lofland, 1995). Therefore, these initial notes were then converted into a descriptive observation note to create a "*world-on-page*" (Emerson et al., 2001, p. 358) by recounting the observation as a detailed story (see Figures 2-3). I did this by converting my written notes into electronic format and supplementing them with further rich description of the action plus reflective and analytical notes where appropriate (see Figure 4). These final descriptive notes were produced either that evening after returning from fieldwork or the next morning so the memories of the day were as fresh in my mind as possible (Atkinson, Coffey, Delamont, Lofland & Lofland 2001). There were occasions where I added to these notes as time progressed and more action was observed. When I create my initial notes, they were only based on what I knew at the time the action unfolded. But as I was in the field longer and reflected on the action, I gained subsequent understanding that was incorporated back into the notes as asides to help further characterise what was going on at earlier stages (Van Maanen, 1988). This allowed me to make full use of what I have come to know and

understand about outcomes, meanings and action over my time in the field (Emerson et al., 2001).

I recorded my observation notes using the first person by presenting the details I saw, experienced and remembered from my perspective and in my own voice, peppered with the actors' voices where possible. I felt this was the most suitable way for the reader to get an inside view of the action as it encourages the writer to present a natural unfolding experience as seen from a participant's point of view (Emerson, et al., 2001). Moreover, this approach is befitting to the philosophical assumptions that underpin the research in which I conceive of myself as a participant and not a privileged observer, often linked with writing field notes in the third person (Atkinson, 1990). Therefore, these descriptive field notes are very much my version of the world I was observing filtered through my concerns. Here, I present detailed dialogue of the action to create authenticity and enable to reader to "*vicariously experience the moment*" as I did (Emerson et al., 2001, p. 365). Arguably the moment-by-moment writing choices in how I present the action can create a rhetorical effect and this I do not deny (see Section 3.2.3) (Emerson et al., 2001). All in all, some observations were more detailed than others, which largely related to the action that happened on that particular day. As a result these notes varied from 2,700 to 12,300 words in length.

Creation of field notes

In addition to the detailed observations of actors' routine working practice, I also created a general field note after each visit. These notes generally covered the following materials: the quality of interaction between myself and participants; the impact of the data collection on my own personal identity and emotions; my opinions and attitudes

towards different individuals; what I perceived to be happening around me; and anything of theoretical relevance or analytical inferences "*no matter how obvious or far-fetched*" (Lofland & Lofland, 1995, p. 94). These notes were produced for analysis in one of two ways. Firstly, an electronic word document, separate to the observational notes was created and this occurred for site visits 1-3, 9, 11, 12 and 16 (see Figure 4 & 5). Alternatively, I embedded the notes into the observational notes as I converted my handwritten notes into an electronic format (site visits 4, 6-8, 10, 15 and examples can be viewed in previous figures (see Figures 2 & 3). Here, I identified things that I found interesting and impactful regarding my practice, what I perceived to be happening and any theoretical hunches. I did this by inserting in italicised font an 'BAP = …..' or 'NB = …..' to indicate my field note. The production of the specific stand-alone notes versus recording the notes alongside observations depended largely on what happened that day and was driven by researcher discretion. If something felt of significance then I elaborated on it in more detail separately – if not, reflections were made within the observation notes. Arguably, I should have been more disciplined with my field notes and instead wrote in-depth summaries after each visit. I feel this variability is reflective of the nature of our everyday lives - some days are far more eventful and game changing, whilst others are more routine or mundane.

Figure 4: Extract from field notes to illustrate content and style of this data

Field Note - Strategic Meeting 3 – 8 July (Visit 16)

The first interesting point in the meeting is Susan starts to talk about how the changes to the Pilot Team meeting format is going. As Susan says it is a bit chaotic and they are having some teething issues but it will work itself out. From the first meeting it was clear that is was a) chaotic and b) teething issues as the group dynamics and routine need to settle given the changes. What is interesting is Hilary (Strategic Lead from Early Years)

says the new format is 'challenging for the rest of us'. And they alongside the Strategic Lead from Health (SL-H) really push and challenge Susan about this change to the format.

Why I find this interesting is that Hilary is not involved in the Pilot Team meetings. She admits that their role and team of workers have nothing to do with the pilot team so why are they leading the charge and challenging Susan on quite simple details – like making sure there is notice given on meeting attendance etc.??? Hilary is trying to unpick every little detail to find fault with the new approach but arguably in a non-aggressive format. The SL-H is challenging Susan on the decision claiming now (a specific front line worker) can't attend because anybody from health needs a block of time consecutively in a week free otherwise it is filled with patient work. I have attended 7 pilot team meetings and I have never seen this frontline worker there. Maybe they are very important and pivotal to the team functioning but I would imagine if they were I would have seen them once. The same can be said for Cheryl from Health (Another Health Strategic Lead chimes in about Cheryl struggling to attend). I have seen Cheryl a few times and I actually have yet to see her speak in meetings. She just sits there and looks bored for the majority of the meeting. Arguably you can see the points the SL-Hs raise as they have to balance patient appointments next to meeting attendance so they may need some regularity to scheduling. But Susan makes it clear they will have advanced notice and will now only need to attend when their input is needed.

Figure 5: Extract from field notes to illustrate content and style of this data

Field Note - Internal Event 1 – 19 June (Visit 11)

This was a particularly interesting event because it was the first time P and I attended one of these events where the key workers get together and talk about what is working well and what isn't working and where they might need support. The vibe was pretty good and friendly overall – they even had biscuits (cookies to me) which is a first. There was one 'new' person... Then another worker, who works in social services, she knows Harriet as from another project they work on. In essence only A was 'new' but I don't think we had met the other worker before. There was your typical banter between Gary, Harriet and Susan – Susan teasing him about not shutting up. Harriet and him do jib either other now and again.

I was initially struck by how incredibly open everyone was talking about their feelings. As the conversation started, I was blown away by the depth and description they used to discuss how they manage the challenges they are faced with. I did think after we left how incredibly lucky we are to have such genuine people who are willing to share such personal thoughts with strangers. It shows the trust we have built but also very much – I think – their buy into the 'cause'. If it is something that might help these people, they are up for it.

3.2.4 Overview of analytical procedures

In this section, I discuss the process by which I gained empirical and theoretical insights into the nature of the institutional work carried out by actors in their everyday social interactions as they delivered an innovative public service (RQ1). As the purpose of the thesis is to explore micro-level social action, I adopted an inductive logic (Emerson et al., 2001; Garud et al., 2002; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006) to ensure theory emerges from organisational actor's day-to-day interactions. By travelling back and forth between the data, concepts within the extant literature (e.g. institutional theory, institutional work) and emerging categories and theoretical arguments over time (Miles & Huberman, 1994), I ensured all insights were developed from, and situated in, patterns emerging from the data (i.e. individuals social interactions) (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007 p. 25). The process by which I gained these insights was started by first creating fictional identities for the actors involved in the action to enable both the researcher and reader to easily track what is being said over time. To make sense of this mountain of data, I used the concept of discursive spaces (Hajer, 1995; Maguire & Hardy, 2010) as way to collate all the social interactions into unique clusters based on the location of the observed action (operational and strategic discursive spaces). This enabled me to look for patterns, relationships and/or processes in the 'discourses in

action'[17] and the discursive practices employed by actors over the five-month period. I travelled back and forth between the data, extant literature and emerging understanding to capture the types of institutional work (see Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Lawrence et al., 2013) conducted by actors within and across these spaces. Through this process, I identified two types of institutional work – discursive boundary work and discursive practice work.

To help me understand the nature of the institutional work observed (RQ1), I progressively focused (Stake, 1995) in on specific elements and features of the institutional work. I first looked at the different discursive practices actors used in their work to provide insight into how actors go about changing established routines, practices and forms (RQ1b). I then considered how the rules and resources available in the field (RQ1a) - like the role of the field (external and internal factors), field position (embeddedness) and social (individual characteristics) conditions - facilitated their institutional work. Such an approach enabled me to bring agency to the forefront of the analysis without excluding the role of structure (institutional conditions) thereby recognising the recursive nature of institutions and action (see Giddens, 1994; Seo & Creed, 2002; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). In the following sub-sections, I present these processes in detail. I start by first discussing the creation of fictional identities.

3.2.4.1   *Creation of fictional identities*

The creation of fictional identities for organisational actors and groups of actors is adopted for two reasons. Firstly, as discussed in Section 3.2.3, the sensitive nature of the research context meant confidentiality and anonymity is essential in terms of the

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[17] focusing on what is being said, in what contexts, by whom and to whom, and for what affect.

organisational actors involved, and the activities discussed during the field visits. By creating fictional identities, I clouded the true identity of the individual but retained the uniqueness, individuality and context that is necessary to provide a rich picture of the action. Because the action observed is complex, unfolds quickly and involves different organisational actors over time, the creation of fictional identities rather than generic labels make it easier for the researcher and the reader to discern one character from another as they converse at a particular point in time. Therefore, the creation of identities helped me to surface the many unique voices and their convergent and divergent views that arose from their various positions and roles across different contexts (Emerson et al., 2001). Table 7 provides a summary of the fictional identities and groupings to aid the analysis, and is an important reference point for the reader over the final chapters.

Table 7: Summary of fictional identities and groupings

Groupings	Fictional Identities of Organisational Actors	Description of Job Role / Position
Pilot Team (PT) (team delivering the innovative service)	Susan	PT leader & Strategic lead – driving force behind the pilot team (Core member)
	Marie	Administrator – takes minutes, organising data sharing and calculates PT's impact (Core member)
	Harriet	Key worker – original worker and first person to work in this way. (Core member)
	Gary	Key worker – recently adopted the new way of working, works closely with Harriet (Core member)

Groupings	Fictional Identities of Organisational Actors	Description of Job Role / Position
	Amy	Support worker – frontline member of the drug and alcohol service, provides intelligence to the PT (peripheral member)
	Tim	Support worker – member of the police service, helps Susan, but doesn't work at the frontline (core member)
	Dave	Support worker – frontline member of the police service, provides intelligence to the PT (peripheral member)
	Steve	Strategic lead – middle manager in the police service, works with Susan (core member)
	Roy	Key worker – recently adopted the new way of working but is only involved in his clients and not others like Harriet or Gary (peripheral member)
	Cheryl	Support worker – frontline member of the health service, provides intelligence to the PT (peripheral member)
Strategic Team (service leads involved in the MPSIP)	Claire	Leader of the Marion Public Service Innovation Project
	Betty	Project manager under Claire who helps to gather information on all innovation activity on the estate, an advocate for the PT
	Rosie	Strategic lead on complex dependency, runs a service designed at a national level and is in opposition to the PT
	Barbara	Strategic lead on workforce development, helped Susan in the design of the PT's practice

Groupings	Fictional Identities of Organisational Actors	Description of Job Role / Position
	Hilary	Strategic lead on Early Years' services in the borough
	Susan	Pilot Team Leader (see above)
	Marie	Pilot Team Administrator (see above)
	Steve	Strategic lead from the Police (see above)

The creation of fictional identities was a deliberate choice to aid the presentation of the data and discussions of findings within the study. This facilitated the presentation of detailed extracts and vignettes of the 'actors' and the 'action' in vivid detail by showing the reader how they interact in their own realities and the complexity of this action. I then juxtaposed these extracts against my voice, to convince the reader how I learned about a process as well as illustrating something more complex is going on that what an outsider might see (Atkinson, 1990). I used this particular rhetorical strategy to create authenticity in my claims and representations as well as persuade the reader by letting them "*vicariously experience the moment*" as I did (Emerson et al., 2001, p. 365). This is particularly important given the research aims of highlighting both agency and structure when considering social action.

3.2.4.2   *Conceptualising the data as "discursive spaces"*

One of the disadvantages of participant observation is the sheer amount of data the researcher is faced with, making selecting what to analyse a challenging task (Van Mannen, 1998; Lofland & Lofland, 1995; Atkinson, 1992). Upon reading and re-reading through the data it, became clear that the social action observed involved actors

debating issues, promoting ideas, persuading each other of the virtues of their approach over others through 'talk' in specific and distinctive settings. In these settings, actors used talk to produce and distribute texts, which are then heard, interpreted, reproduced and acted upon (or challenged) by other actors. When I went back to the literature, the activity I observed – production, distribution and consumption of texts – happened in spaces that carried the hallmarks of a *discursive space* (Hajer, 1995). Such a space is a physical or virtual *"site of contestation in which competing interest groups seek to impose their definitions of what the main problems are and why they should be addressed"* (Jacobs, Kemeny & Manzi, 2004, p. 442). Specifically, the discursive action observed involved actors debating and contesting how the pilot team and its innovative practice worked at the frontline line during operational meetings and events; and how the innovative service was positioned to senior executives during strategic meetings and events.

To create these spaces, I grouped all the discursive action that occurred in operational or strategic events and meetings over time. I then considered how actors gain access to these distinct spaces, who produces most of the text in the spaces, the types of text produced and distributed, the purpose of the text and the text consumers (see Table 8). Such an approach is important because it stopped me from conceptualising the case as a "*single undifferentiated space"* and instead *"look for variation in patterns of text production, distribution and consumption that characterise distinct discursive space*s" (Hardy & Maguire 2010, p. 1385). By delineating the data in this way, I was able to discover the different actors that are included (or excluded) from discursive activity within the spaces, and the chain of discursive activities that bring out change or maintain continuity, to emerge and subsequently be examined (Hardy &

Maguire, 2010). This was a necessary first step to help me look for patterns, relationships and/or processes in the 'discourses in action' and the discursive practices aimed at creating, maintaining or transforming elements of institutions (RQ1) during the everyday talk and interactions of frontline service delivery agents and service leads over the five-month period.

Table 8: Summary of characteristics of the two discursive spaces

Characteristic	Operational	Strategic
Description	Pilot team meetings and internal event	Strategic team meetings and external events
Access to discursive activity	Meeting access is open to any operational frontline staff working in the locale with knowledge or ability to support cases of the team. Discussions are case by case and the floor is open for debate. There is no formal structure to proceedings although there is a chair. All participants sign data sharing and disclosure agreements.	Only strategic service leads and their assistants attend. The meetings follow typical bureaucratic structures (introductions, previous minutes, updates, AOB). Leads speak in turn, but there are frequent debates on certain topics.
Main text producers	Susan, Harriet, Gary, and Roy	Susan, Rosie, Hilary, Claire and Betty
Types of text produced and distributed	Verbal talk - written documents are restricted due to confidentiality	Verbal 'talk' - written reports, case studies and bulletins are produced and circulated across service leaders (I had no access)
Purpose of text production	Define 'problems' to target, diagnose the causes of 'problems', plan interventions to solve 'problems' and report on the effectiveness of work undertaken	Discuss any public service reform activity – focuses on successes and key learning points to inform future activity.

Text consumers	Those involved with the team but are not champions or architects of the service (i.e. Amy, other frontline workers) and the occasional strategic lead	Other strategic leads in attendance and those that gave their apologies via meeting minutes

3.2.4.3   Data analysis and interpretation of the discursive boundary work across operational and strategic spaces

Within this section, I discuss how I identified the presence of discursive boundary work during two distinct and separate turf wars actors over the five-month period. Through a fine-grained analysis of the action observed during this turf wars, I identified the presence of 10 discursive frames (3 in the operational turf war, 7 in the strategic turf war) that were employed by actors to either expand the boundaries and jurisdiction of the pilot team (transformation) or shrink the boundaries of the team (maintenance). I explored the micro-processes that underpinned these frames. Here, actors used a variety of discursive framing tactics (issue, justify, self-casting and alter-casting) to bring credibility to their frames or undermine the frames created by others. Such an analysis highlights the nature of institutional work (RQ1) by shining a light on how actors work to establish or change practices, rules and forms in their field (RQ1b). To shed light on role of rules and resources in the field in actors' discursive boundary work (RQ1a), I considered how field position and social status of actors facilitated such work and the type of field level resources actors used in their framing.

Identification of discursive boundary work and turf wars

During my reading of the observational and interview data, I noticed areas of contestation and conflict where actors raised concerns or voiced disagreements regarding what the group 'should' be doing and who has jurisdiction to be engaging in specific practices in both discursive spaces. In the operational space, pilot team actors

who work at the frontline regularly debated if there was an amphetamine problem on the Marion estate and whether the team should devise solutions and intervene in such issues. Whilst in the strategic space, service managers contested who should be working with those with 'complex dependency' and what information was provided by the MPSIP to senior executives. To make sense of these instances of debate and contestation, I created a timeline (see Figures 6 & 7) of when talk around these subjects arose. Next, I examined what was being said, in what context, by whom and with what effect.

From a process of iteratively cycling between the data, emerging theory and the extant literature, I identified a number of interesting features concerning these sites of contestation. One, the substantive content of these discussions was reflective of discursive boundary work as actors used talk, language, or discourse to establish, obscure or dissolve distinctions between groups of people or activities so that actors can pursue their creation, maintenance or transformative interests (Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010; Bucher, Chreim, Langley & Reay, 2016 – See Chapter 4). Although these discussions appeared regularly, they were not permanent fixtures, and a clear settlement was not reached for either case. When clustered together, these series of events carry the hallmarks of framing contests (Sewell, 1992; Lounsbury, Ventresca & Hirsh, 2003) as actors discursively (re)draw temporary boundaries that were then challenged and reconfigured as actors struggle to transform or stabilise jurisdictions over time (see Figures 6 & 7). Rather than referring to them as framing contests, I draw on Hoffman's (1999, p. 352) metaphor of organisational fields as war zones and instead categorise them as turf wars. I choose this particular nomenclature as the discursive work being undertaken by actors was often lively, rapid fire and cutting which was reminiscent more of warfare than a general contest.

For example, pilot team members spent considerable time discussing whether there was an amphetamine problem on the estate and if they should intervene and tackle this issue (see Figure 6 & Section 4.2.1). After some debate, the team agree they should tackle the amphetamine abuse issue and devise plans for action (see Figure 6 & Section 4.2.2). This activity triggers tensions between the pilot team and those working in the drugs and alcohol team and both parties debate whether there is an amphetamine abuse problem and who has jurisdiction to tackle such issues (see Figure 6 & Section 4.2.3). All the discursive action related to frontline workers and middle managers (re)drawing boundaries concerning who had an amphetamine abuse problem, whether an amphetamine abuse problem exists on the estate, and who has jurisdiction to tackle amphetamine abuse was aggregated together and labelled as 'The Great Amphetamine Debate'. This particular turf war is labelled an *operational turf war* because the key actors are frontline workers and the subject material concerns. operational frontline practice. Conversely, the second turf war is a *strategic turf war* as it involved middle managers (re)drawing boundaries concerning who should be leading any activities related to supporting those with complex dependency (see Figure 7 and Section 4.3). Here, middle managers debate who should lead services delivered to those with complex dependency and whose complex dependency work should be highlighted to senior managers by the MPSIP (see Figure 7 and Section 4.3). As a result, all discursive action related to this topic was aggregated together and labelled as 'The Who Controls Complex Dependency' turf war.

Figure 6: Timeline of the 'Great Amphetamine Debate'

PT members report on
investigations into
amphetamine abuse on
the estate to help craft
solutions

Boundary contestation
between drugs team and pilot
team over whether there is
amphetamine abuse and who
has the right to intervene

Clients continue
disruptive behaviour
and abuse
amphetamines

Discuss clients with
disruptive behaviour
who abuse
amphetamines

PT reach consensus
amphetamine abuse is
'problem' on the estate
that needs tackling

Early indications of tensions
between drugs team and pilot
over who has jurisdiction to
investigate this and whether
there actually is a 'problem'

Consensus is
reached and
everyone is 'wholly
onboard'

Visit 8
O-4
1 June

Visit 11
O-6
19 June

Visit 16
S-4
16 July

Visit 4
O-2
20 April

Visit 7
O-3
18 May

Visit 10
O-5
15 June

Visit 12
O-7
19 June

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Figure 7: Timeline of 'The Who Controls Complex Dependency Debate'

Question why intensive focus on the PT and not the rest of key workers in the area, also that this work isn't new; PT are successful as they are not as busy as others

PT discuss they should stay away from clients targeted by Rosie's team

Questioning the involvement of PT in 'complex dependency' work and that their practices sit outside the remit of an existing framework

Rosie queries the risks associated with the PT service delivery model and that it sits outside the wider agenda

Both leads (Rosie & Susan) present together at an external event and present as a united front working together

Visit 3
Interview with Rosie
17 April

Visit 4
O-2
20 April

Visit 6
S-1
13 May

Visit 9
S-2
10 June

Visit 16
S-4 (external)
20 July

With the talk sequenced into these two turf wars, I then inductively analysed the

discursive boundary work to explore the nature of their institutional work (RQ1) by

considering how actors go about changing established routines, practices and forms

(RQ1a). Looking closely at the social action, it appeared as if they used their talk to assign

meanings (e.g. what is a problem, what causes dysfunctional client behaviour, who

should engage in what activities) and interpret events or conditions (e.g. what are

appropriate solutions and practices) to gain support, legitimacy or persuade their

audiences of their reconfigured boundaries and jurisdictions. The literature suggests

such action is reflective of discursive framing (Benford & Snow, 2000; Lounsbury et al.,

2003; Werner & Cornelissen, 2014; Bucher et al., 2016) – the act of using words or

patterns of words to create a cognitive *"schemata of interpretation"* (Goffman, 1974, p.

21) [i.e. "frame"] in social interactions to achieve an interest [i.e. framing] (Suddaby &

Viale, 2011; Werner & Cornelissen, 2014). I chose the concept of discursive frames and

framing to help me make sense of the action I observed. The choice of such a concept is

appropriate as framing is recognised as process that enables insight into how actors

reinforce institutional structures or invoke new understandings (Benford & Snow, 2000;

Weber & Glynn, 2006; Diehl & McFarland, 2010) which is a central purpose of the study.

Through a process of recursive cycling between the data at each site across time,

I was able to identify the discursive frames being created and labelled these according

to the general themes actors were tending to pursue in their talk (see Figure 8). For the

operational turf war, there were three frames that persisted over time – *'there is a*

problem and we should intervene', *'there is a problem but we shouldn't intervene'* and

'*there is no problem*' (see Figure 8 and Section 4.2.1-4.2.3 for a detailed discussion of these frames). The '*there is a problem but we shouldn't intervene*' frame involves actors recognising there is an amphetamine problem but the pilot team should not intervene in such issues. This frame is deployed when the pilot team discuss the progress of Sybil during visits 4 (Roy & Amy) and 12 (Blanche) and is used by different actors.

Conversely, there were seven frames deployed during the strategic turf war: '*pilot team is unsafe*', '*pilot team is unsafe and expensive*', '*pilot team is safe and cost-effective*', '*bigger picture in reporting*', '*pilot team only in reporting*', '*PCSOs to the pilot team*', '*PCSO allocation to be determined*' (see Figure 8 and Section 4.3.1-4.3.3 for a detailed discussion of these frames). The '*pilot team is unsafe*' frame involves Rosie discursively positioning the pilot team as unsafe to workers and clients unlike the complex dependency service run by her team. This frame is deployed at visits 3 and 6 when Susan presents any of the success of the pilot team during MPSIP strategic team meetings.

To help me understand what institutional outcome the frame was being used to achieve via actors' discursive boundary work, I drew on Lawrence and Suddaby's (2006) seminal typology of institutional work. Frames that were being used to expand the boundaries or jurisdictions of the pilot team ('*it's a problem and we should intervene*', '*the pilot team is safe and cost-effective*', '*pilot team only in reporting*' and '*PCSOs to the pilot team*') were classed as transformative discursive boundary work (see Figure 8 and Section 4.2-4.3). For example, the '*it's a problem and we should intervene*' frame is deployed when pilot team actors are looking to expand their jurisdiction from tackling just high volume police call-outs to including amphetamine abuse problems on the Marion estate. Whilst those that sought to re-draw the pilot team's boundaries and

jurisdictions or maintain the status quo that existed before the inception of the pilot team (*it's a problem we shouldn't intervene, there is no problem, pilot team is unsafe and expensive, bigger picture only reporting, PCSOs to be allocated*) were classed as maintenance discursive boundary work (see Figure 8 and Section 4.2-4.3). For example, Rosie deploys the *'pilot team is unsafe and expensive'* when the pilot team positions themselves as a credible alternative to the services run by Rosie's team, a team that existed prior to the inception of the pilot team.

Framing tactics employed to create or challenge frames during the turf wars

In the next stage of analysis, I wanted to shed light on how the frames were used in actors' everyday social interactions. To help me make sense of this complex, and often overlapping action, I drew on the work of Bucher et al. (2016) to categorise the different types of discursive framing tactics used by actors to substantiate their frames during these turf wars. In total, I found four framing tactics that were prevalent in actors' talk during these turf wars (see Figure 8 and Section 4.2-4.3).

The first tactic is *'issue framing'* (see Figure 8) which is when actors define a particular problem or issue, identify who should be involved in tackling such problems, or identifying solutions to the problem. Examples of issue framing are when Harriet, Susan and Gary discuss some of the extremely dangerous behaviour Sybil displays and pose whether its appropriate to ignore it and not help: "*we need to protect her because is a safety issue*"; "*we can't just sit here and let this continue*". Here, they draw on a moral imperative of 'we can't ignore it and the pilot team should help' to enforce their *'it's a problem and we should intervene frame'*.

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The second is '*justifying'* (see Figure 8) and this is when actors draw on different forms of knowledge to substantiated their claims to specific boundaries they have drawn. Roy uses such tactics when contesting boundaries (visit 12) with Blanche to justify the pilot team's intervention with Sybil. Roy draws on the moral imperative in his talk by describing how no other agency is willing to take her on and she continues to display dangerous behaviour to herself and others, therefore something needs to be done. This talk is used to justify the '*there is a problem and we should intervene frame'*.

The third is '*self-casting'* (see Figure 8), this is when actors draw on their own professional or authoritative background to frame themself as an expert or being able to speak on behalf of the subject to declare boundaries. In the strategic turf war, Rosie does this to substantiate the 'pilot team is unsafe frame' by presenting herself as an authority on all things complex dependency. She does this by: identifying herself as "*too strategic to attend the pilot team meetings*"; often refers to being the area's lead for a national complex dependency programme; using technical terms; illustrating knowledge by describing in detail specific complicated risk processes.

The fourth is '*alter-casting'* (Figure 8) which is when actors frame others' identities as different or inferior to their own to (re)position the boundaries and practices of other groups. In the strategic turf war, Rosie problematises the team's involvement within the jurisdiction of complex dependency by reconstructing the identity of the team as inferior to other services to validate her '*pilot team is unsafe*' frame. Equally, actors whose identities or boundaries are being reframed through alter-casting tactics work to rebuff such claims by engaging in alter-casting tactics themselves. For example, when Rosie discursively works to alter-cast the pilot team as unsafe in visit

6, Susan responds by repositioning the identity of her team as safe. She does this by highlighting the safety policies and procedures to counteract this attempt.

Figure 8 contains an illustrative map of the frames present at each point of the turf wars, a description of the action to show how the framing tactic manifested itself in the everyday talk, the classification of the action into one of four tactics and the actors who participated in the action. In addition, Section 4.2 and 4.3 discusses how these framing tactics came to be, how they were used, by whom and for what purpose.

Role of field position, status and resources on discursive boundary work during the turf wars

One way to gain insight into the nature of institutional work is to consider the rules and resources actors draw from the field when pursuing their interests (RQ1b). Looking at the different frames and tactics used across the turf wars, patterns started to emerge in regards to the position of the actor, the types of resources used in framing, the social status of the actors, and the effectiveness of the discursive boundary work. To help illuminate the role of resource, position and status, I iteratively cycled with the data, emerging theory and literature to develop my insights.

I started by coding the framing tactics based on types of resources (rational, normative or experiential) actors drew on to establish their discursive frames (Vaara, Tienari & Laurila, 2006; Bucher et al., 2016). *Rational* resources are mobilised when actors refer to the utility or function of specific activities and practices and they do this in either a direct or indirect way. Direct rational resources occur when actors cite statistics, academic research reports and 'improved outcomes' as these are seen as reliable forms of knowledge and a sound basis for effective action in the field. Indirect

rational resources are when actors frame the behaviour of service users as 'rational' to then justify later frames as reasonable and credible solutions to the problem. *Normative* resources are when actors draw on motivating cultural background knowledge concerning what *should* be done. For example, actors draw on an existing culture of risk aversion that is unique to the empirical context, as well as wider societal norms around human rights and morality to justify frames. Lastly, actors play on their local experience and knowledge as experiential resources in their claim making. *Experiential* resources include using technical language, referring to their involvement in strategic decision-making, longevity in service delivery, knowledge of local and national policies, procedures and processes and frontline observations in their framing. Appendix A contains a detailed list of all the framing tactics and the types of resources drawn during such work. In addition, Section 4.2 and 4.3 discuss how these resources where used, when, by whom and for what effect.

I then drew on the literature to help explicate why certain actors (based on their field position and status) were more successful than others with their discursive boundary work during these turf wars. Heimer (1999) suggests the field position of actors in relation to a group (insiders or outsiders) can shape "*patterns of participation, the process by which problems are put on the agenda, way solutions are proposed*" (p. 43) which in turn affect whether ones' work results in symbolic or instrumental change. Drawing on this understanding, I assigned each actor a field position in relation to his or her proximity. Central actors are those who are regularly present at pilot team meetings, involved in the design and delivery of innovative service and central to the team's success (Harriet, Susan, Marie, Betty, Gary, Steve, Tim). Peripheral actors are those who attend team meetings, may provide intelligence and work in the innovative way but are

not vested in the team like central actors (Roy & Amy). <u>Outsiders</u> are those who are not members of the pilot team and are involved in competing or overlapping services (Rosie & Blanche). To provide a further layer of understanding, I considered the role of social status (Gaurd et al., 2002; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Currie et al., 2012) on the discursive boundary work of actors. I categorised actors' social status based on their job role; <u>low status</u> (operational/frontline worker – Marie, Harriet, Gary, Tim, Betty, Roy and Amy), <u>middle status</u> (manager of a service – Susan, Rosie, Barbara, Claire) and <u>high status</u> (senior manager / executive – CEO and Chief Constable). Once actors were categorised based on the social position and status, I cycled between the data across the turf wars to look for patterns and relationships between such factors and the effectiveness of their framing tactics to reveal if any of the above combinations was more or less successful at achieving the intended institutional outcomes. These relationships are discussed in Sections 4.2-4.3 and Figure 8.

Figure 8: Summary of the discursive boundary work analysis

Note: Green boxes indicate frames used to achieve transformative institutional outcomes. Red boxes indicate frames used to maintain institutional arrangements.

Note: Green boxes indicate frames used to achieve transformative institutional outcomes. Red boxes indicate frames used to maintain institutional arrangements.

Figure 8: Summary of the boundary work analysis (continued)

Discursive Frame	Visit	Framing Tactic	Description of Discursive Action (Field Resource)	Actor(s)
It's a problem and we should intervene *(Operational Turf War)*	8	Issue	**Amphetamine abuse on the estate is prevalent and not linked to one case (experiential)** Roy suggests he has a substantial number of clients who have mental health problems and are amphetamine users and the usage makes their mental state poor. Tim concurs its more of problem *'getting worse, loads appear to be having problems with it'*.	Gary Tim Susan Roy Harriet
			The nature of amphetamines results in its prevalence (experiential) Lack of stigma associated amphetamine usage *'wont do much harm'*, *'often associated with women taking diet pills'*; *'Its cheap, easy to get a hold of'* appropriate to ignore it and not help: *"we need to protect her because it is a safety issue"*; *"we cant just sit here and let this continue"*	Tim Roy Harriet Jane
			The pilot team should intervene and help tackle the amphetamine abuse on the estate The pilot team reach a consensus to figure out 'how to beat it' by spending a few weeks researching people know? Who has experience of beating amphetamine usage? Go into academic journals to see how in the UK or other countries overcome it.	Harriet Roy Gary Susan Tim
There is no problem *(Operational Turf War)*	12	Issue	**Moral Imperative – It is a persons choice to seek help, not the jurisdiction of the pilot team (normative)** *"If she doesn't want to engage, we can't do anything"*; *"I understand you want to help but some people you can't help"*; *"its horrible but people have human rights"*	Blanche
			The estate definitely does not have an amphetamine problem (rational & experiential) (1) Blanche cites police statistics that show little use on the estate (rational) (2) She says in her many years of experience she only knows of a handful of people with amphetamine abuse problems (experiential) (3) Cites a report she is writing for a 'Medical Board' that looks at the various drugs being abused on the estate, amphetamines are not listed (rational); She consistently repeats the phrase *"the estate definitely does not have an amphetamine problem"*.	Blanche
There is no problem *(Operational Turf War)*	12	Altercasting	**Discrediting or undermining the work of the pilot team to tackle amphetamine abuse on the estate to recast boundaries as not in the pilot team's jurisdiction (rational, normative, experiential)** (1) Discredits the academic studies found by Susan by highlighting shortcomings in the design and countering with other studies that contradict those originally claimed (rational) (2) Rapid fire questioning of Roy regarding decisions made to support Sybil – why have you done this? Why haven't you done this? Have you considered this? (experiential & rational) (3) Draw on the morality of situation by asking if people realise how "hard" prescription treatment is on a person and the need to be "very careful". Not every GP will so you are "getting her hopes up by pushing something that might not be an option" (normative) (4) Downplaying the 'innovativeness' of the service delivery model makes the comment they did the same type of work the team is doing now back then to help a family and it didn't work (experiential)	Blanche
There is no problem *(Operational Turf War)*	12	Self-casting	**Presents herself as an 'expert' on drug treatment (rational)** Refers to only certain people having access to a significant report but she could share it; repeatedly stresses the reports length suggesting those around the table would struggle to follow its content; Frequent use of technical language to emphasize her professional knowledge on the subject.	Blanche

Note: Green boxes indicate frames used to achieve transformative institutional outcomes. Red boxes indicate frames used to maintain institutional arrangements.

Figure 8: Summary of the boundary work analysis (continued)

Discursive Frame	Visit	Framing Tactic	Description of Discursive Action (Field Resource)	Actor(s)
It's a problem and we should intervene (Operational Turf War)	12	Justifying	**Justifying the pilot team's intervention with Sybil (experiential)** Draws on the moral imperative in that no other agency is willing to take her on because she does not easily fit within defined categories yet she continues to display dangerous behaviour to herself and others therefore something needs to be done. Other front line workers cite knowledge of other amphetamine abusers.	Roy
It's a problem and we should intervene (Operational Turf War)	12	Self-casting	**Presents himself as capable to be involved in Sybil's drug treatment (experiential)** Countering rapid fire questioning on Sybil's care with measured and rational answers with a clear justification for why particular decisions were made and aligning this good practice or existing frameworks. Amy does interject to once back up why Roy has made certain decisions and frame them as appropriate and relevant to the case.	Roy
Pilot team is unsafe (Strategic Turf War)	3	Justifying	**Framing the Smith family as not 'standard' therefore too 'risky' to fall within the jurisdiction of pilot team (experiential & normative)** Rosie discusses that at first the Smith family might have looked 'standard' (low-risk) and within the boundaries of the pilot team but once they 'dug underneath' it was not. Therefore the family should be helped by a model with appropriate safety and risk policies and procedures (models in her service delivery portfolio).	Rosie
			Drawing attention to perceived issues of risk and lack of safety in pilot team practices (experiential & normative) "We've already got a new model in place to do this sort of work, we've got the safety valves of supervision and policies and procedures. It's a new model we signed up to with [other areas in a wider field], so if anything is happening, it should be done through that model."; "I really do hope I'm wrong, people are trying and doing their best, but actually not within a safe environment for them or the families."	Rosie
Pilot team is unsafe (Strategic Turf War)	3	Altercasting	**Problematizing the pilot team involvement within the jurisdiction of complex dependency by reconstructing the identity of the team as inferior to other services (normative,** "And for me it's like you cant just give it to a group of people and go….there you go, deal with it. Because who are the group of people? Who is taking responsibility? Who's looking at the worker? Who's supervising them, in terms of keeping them safe, keeping their families safe…So I had concerns about that and I still have concerns about that, and very much for the worker because [they are doing this onto of their day job, risking burnout]…"; "[pilot team] wouldn't have had information that we can pull for things like school attendance and…so they're working not with the full picture, and that the whole point of the way we set this up [our model] is that people have a fuller picture".	Rosie
Pilot team is unsafe (Strategic Turf War)	3	Self-casting	**Presents herself as an authority on all things complex dependency (rational)** Rosie identifies herself as "too strategic" to attend the pilot team meetings; often refers to being the area's lead for a national programme; using technical terms; illustrating knowledge by describing in detail specific complicated risk processes	Rosie

Note: Green boxes indicate frames used to achieve transformative institutional outcomes. Red boxes indicate frames used to maintain institutional arrangements.

Figure 8: Summary of the boundary work analysis (continued)

Note: Green boxes indicate frames used to achieve transformative institutional outcomes. Red boxes indicate frames used to maintain institutional arrangements.

Figure 8: Summary of the boundary work analysis (continued)

Discursive Frame	Visit	Framing Tactic	Description of Discursive Action (Field Resource)	Actor(s)
Bigger picture in reporting (Strategic Turf War)	9	Justifying →	*Reorientation of the focus on the pilot team to all key worker models for reporting to senior team (rational)* Rosie argues that a piece a research about her model should be included in the report "it needs to be framed as part of the conversation". Rosie argues you can't isolate it, it needs to be discussed as part of the 'bigger' picture and her model needs presenting. When discussing the interim evaluation report produced by my colleague and I, Rosie again stresses her frustration on the concentration on the pilot team and ignoring the rest of the "good work" being done by key workers across the borough.	Rosie
Pilot team only in reporting (Strategic Turf War)	9	Justifying →	*Shifting the attention back onto the pilot team in reporting (rational)* Betty states that the board "were particularly interested in what is happening in Marion that is different" hence why the focus on the pilot team. Betty has a lively and long conversation with Rosie about the interim evaluation report concentrating on the pilot team because that was the purpose of the report (it was an evaluation of the pilot team).	Betty Claire
Bigger picture in reporting (Strategic Turf War)	9	Altercasting →	*Framing the pilot team's ways of working as not 'new' (rational)* Rosie questions whether this really new or different to what other people are already doing: 'I think, I was perceiving that the pilot team model was being, my perception was it was being tagged as, oh, look at this, isn't it good, it's working and nothing like this has worked before. An other strategic lead (SL) chimes in about this way of working not being new.	Rosie SL
PCSOs to the pilot team (Strategic Turf War)	9	Justifying →	*Drawing attention to the lack of resources in the pilot team (rational)* Claire discuss how the pilot team lacks resources and Claire mentions how PCSOs could be used to expand the capacity of the team (rational).	Claire
PCSOs to be allocated (Strategic Turf War)	9	Justifying →	*Framing PCSOs as "her" resource (rational)* Rosie makes it clear the PCSOs are her resource and they fall within her jurisdiction – "we (meaning Rosie's team) have some PCSOs"; "it's not necessarily for here (Marion estate); "we have yet to decide what we're doing"	Rosie
PCSOs to the pilot team (Strategic Turf War)	9	Justifying →	*Drawing attention to the lack of resources in the pilot team (normative)* Susan discusses how the pilot team have been using PCSOs to successfully reduce police call outs (normative).	Susan
PCSOs to be allocated (Strategic Turf War)	9	Self-casting →	*Framing herself as an expert and taking up a role as a spokesperson for the pilot team (experiential)* Rosie displays her insider knowledge of PCSOs and what is happening at city region, national level. She also says "And that, sorry, that's just one of the problems, you should be aware, that nationally and at city region they're starting to think about, I don't know what they are going to call it, whether it's a complex individual programme but they're starting to think about at on a city region, the city region are asking us for information to feed back to national, so national are starting to look at that. So just to be aware some of the work here is probably a forerunner of....I've already said something to them about the work on Marion." suggesting she is representing the team at levels the others cant reach.	Rosie

Note: Green boxes indicate frames used to achieve transformative institutional outcomes. Red boxes indicate frames used to maintain institutional arrangements.

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3.2.4.4 Data analysis and interpretation of the discursive practice work across operational spaces

Throughout the course of my observations and reflective summaries, I note the repeated and reoccurring presence of emotional storytelling in operational spaces as actors discussed their clients' problems and devised solutions to such problems. This had empirical significance to me, as I had rarely observed people telling such elaborate and emotionally resonant stories routinely, in what can be described as a mundane setting (weekly meeting). Because these discursive acts resonated with me, I read and re-read through the operational action and extracted any instances in which actors told stories in these spaces. I then analysed these stories by identifying the storytellers, the characters and their plot(s) (Gabriel & Griffiths, 2008 – see Table 9). I only used a selection of the stories told because the nature of some of the stories would have revealed the identities of participants.

Comparing and contrasting key features of these stories suggested they referred to one of two overarching narratives concerning two clients – 'Grieving Family' (Smith family) or 'Vulnerable Heather' (Heather) (see Section 5.1). Both of these narratives had specific characters and a plotline that were reflected in the individual stories (see Section 5.1-5.3). Moreover, these narratives and the stories that created them, were used by pilot team members to make sense of their own and others' actions (Pentland, 1999; Chase, 2005). For example, they were constructed at a personal level (Chase, 2005) to make sense of the behaviour and actions of the individuals and families pilot team members supported. But they also spoke to common societal narratives such as family, bereavement, protection, vulnerability, hope and redemption (see Section 5.1).

Table 9: Stories told by pilot team actors about their clients in operational spaces

Story	Visit (Location)	Main Characters	Plot	Storytellers
About Dad	3 (Interview)	Dad, Mum, Daniel, Andrea (Smith family)	Grief, loss and bereavement are the causes of the dysfunctional behaviour	Harriet
About Cheryl	3 (Interview)	Cheryl, Mum & Dad (Smith family)	Grief, loss and bereavement are the causes of the dysfunctional behaviour	Harriet
About Heather	3 (Pilot Team Meeting 1)	Heather and her two exploiters	Heather is the protagonist and her exploiters are the antagonists. Her circumstances are out of her control due to her vulnerability	Gary & Harriet
Narrating Dad's outburst	4 (Pilot Team Meeting 2)	Daniel, Dad, Mum and Nan (Smith family)	Grief, loss and bereavement are the causes of the dysfunctional behaviour	Harriet & Gary
About Heather (Bag of Cans)	8 (Pilot Team Meeting 4)	Heather and her exploiters	External factors (her age, nature of her exploiters and what they do to her) cause her lack of perceived engagement with the pilot team support	Harriet
Heather is Going to College	2 (Pilot Team Meeting 2)	Heather and Harriet	Highlight the vulnerability and isolation Heather feels	Harriet
About Sybil	12 (Pilot Team Meeting 6)	Sybil	Sybil's drug use was caused by a childhood trauma	Roy

During the in-depth reading of the stories and narratives, I noticed their emotional richness. Firstly, the stories contained pathos based rhetorical strategies like humanising language, affective vocabulary and metaphors to evoke emotional responses from listeners (see Section 5.2.1-5.2.2). For instance, storytellers used humanising language by naming their characters (i.e. clients) not by their name but by using titles like *dad*, *nan*, *mum* or *little one* (see Section 5.2.1-5.2.2). In addition they also use emotional metaphors ("*playground mum*" "*one of those dads*") and affective vocabulary (grief, loss, died, cried, evil, vile, disgusting, controlling) in their storytelling (see Section 5.2.1-5.2.2). These rhetorical strategies appeared to emotionally and personally connect the stories to their audiences in turn eliciting an emotional response in the audience (see Section 5.2.1-5.2.2). I therefore conceptualised these stories with emotional elements as *emotional stories,* and the act of telling such stories as *emotional storytelling*.

Next, I looked for patterns in the emotional stories, in regards to when they were told, for what effect and perceived purpose. From this step, I found emotional stories that were told to construct the dysfunctional behaviour of clients (e.g. drug use, crime, domestic abuse) as a consequence of the situations or circumstances they faced (see Section 5.1-5.3). For example, the Smith family's behaviour was a consequence of grief and Heather's behaviour was a consequence of her vulnerability and exploitation (see Section 5.2-5.3). Emotional stories were also told to reconstruct the identity of the clients as redeemable rather than hopeless, by positioning their behaviour as a rational response to their circumstances (see Section 5.2-5.3). Lastly, I found that when pilot team members started to express disillusionment in regards to their clients' ability to change or progress, emotional stories were told to 'change' their attitudes (see Section

5.2-5.3). Looking beyond the instances of emotional storytelling and exploring everyday talk and social interactions more generally, I noticed similar themes to those found in the emotional storytelling (e.g. hope, redemption, grief, vulnerability, exploitation, protection) (see Section 5.1). I felt all of these instances related to a set of shared beliefs and assumptions about the people on the Marion estate and a pilot team key worker's service delivery.

Cycling back, the literature suggested these shared beliefs and assumptions were reflective of a 'practice' (Jarzabkowski, 2005) or a set of shared local understandings concerning the pilot team's innovative service delivery model. In Section 5.1, I discuss in detail how I constructed the key notions that combined to form the pilot team's practice. The link between the emotional stories being told, the narratives these stories constructed, and the shared local understanding concerning the practice indicated to me that the emotional storytelling was central to establishing or reinforcing the correctness of the activities associated with the practice or the social expectations concerning how these activities are enacted (see Section 5.1). As a result, I categorised the use of emotional language or emotional storytelling in actors talk aimed at affecting the practices that are seen as legitimate within a domain as discursive practice work (see Ziestma & Lawrence, 2010 – see Chapter 5).

To understand how actors went about their discursive practice work (RQ1a), I coded any emotional stories pilot team members told to establish their innovative service delivery model as a credible way of working to tackle social problems on the Marion estate as discursive practice work aimed at creation (see Section 5.2.1). Within the category of creative discursive practice work, stories were told to evoke emotions like empathy to recruit actors and mobilise participation in the team's innovative

practice (see Section 5.2.1). They were also told to frame clients' framing dysfunctional behaviour as a consequence of situations and to reconstruct their identities as redeemable, to stifle any resistance towards the establishment of the practice as a credible way to tackle social problems by blocking negative emotions (i.e. hopelessness, disillusionment) (see Section 5.2.1).

Next, I coded any stories pilot team members told to maintain the practice as a credible way of working within the pilot team as discursive practice maintenance work (see Section 5.2.2 & 5.3). For example, stories were told when clients were not progressing on the linear path towards to success and the practice could be conceived as not working. Therefore, actors told stories to position clients' lack of progress as a rational response to their circumstances, diverting disruptive emotions and fending off potential resistance (see Section 5.2.2). In addition, I found that when pilot team members deviated from shared local understandings that underpinned the innovative practice in their talk or frontline delivery, specific actors (Harriet and Susan) discursively worked to correct such deviances and bring them back in line with social expectations to maintain the practice in everyday interactions. In these instances, Harriet and Susan embodied the notion of practice custodians (Lok & de Rond, 2013 - see Section 5.3). When Harriet or Susan experienced explicit practice breakdowns in pilot team members' talk (see Section 5.3.1–5.3.2), they used emotional stories or emotional talk to repair these instances. Equally, when implicit breakdowns occurred, Harriet used an emotional story to smooth over this minor breach (see Section 5.3.3). Lastly, Susan discursively works to motivate pilot team members to improve their existing ways of working even though they roughly adhere to social expectations by asking them to think outside of the box and do "whatever it takes" (See section 5.3.3).

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Lastly, by tracking who told what stories and used what emotional language over time, I noted that at the start of fieldwork it was largely Harriet (main text producer) who engaged in such activity but as time progressed other actors (Susan, Gary, Sally, Edward) deployed such discursive devices (i.e. emotional storytelling, affective vocabulary, metaphors, humanising language) in their everyday talk. Whenever pilot team members beyond Harriet co-opted her rhetorical style or told emotional stories, I coded this as embedding and routinising of the practice (see Section 5.2.2). Furthermore, I classified this activity as discursive practice work aimed at maintenance as it demonstrates how shared local understandings are being recreated and reproduced across the pilot team in a taken for granted manner (see Section 5.2.2). Importantly such instances demonstrate that the emotional storytelling and rhetorical style are routine artefacts of actors' everyday talk, therefore establishing authenticity and credibility in my analysis (see Chapter 5).

3.3   Summary

This chapter sets out the design and execution of a qualitative single case study approach to explore the micro-level institutional work of actors as they deliver an innovative public service. I started by first discussing the meta-theoretical commitments of the research concerning key concepts such as structure, agency and discourse. Here, I justified my interest in the "discourses in context" and the discursive practices employed by organisational actors in their everyday, real time social interactions as a means to understand their micro-level institutional work. I then presented the case of empirical interest – the "pilot team". The pilot team is an inter-organisational collaborative team involved in the design and delivery of an innovative public service delivery model aimed at reducing high volume police callouts to reduce service demand

and improve the lives of the citizens on the Marion estate. Next, I justified the choice of a qualitative single case study methodology with participant observations and unstructured interviews to gain insight into actors' institutional work on the ground. In total, 16 visits to the locale were made from March to July 2015, which involved 7 operational team meeting observations, 3 strategic team meeting observations, 14 qualitative interviews, 2 event observations (one internal, one external) and two days of shadowing key workers. Thus, resulting in 21.6 hours of transcribed interviews and meetings, 27.7 hours of working practice observation and nearly 22,000 words of field notes. Lastly, I presented in detail the procedures employed in the analysis of the aforementioned data to gain insight into the nature of actors' institutional work. Subsequent Chapters (4 & 5) will present the findings that emerged from the application of the analytical procedures described within this chapter.

CHAPTER 4: DISCURSIVE BOUNDARY WORK AND MANAGING JURISDICTIONS: GAINING INSIGHT FROM PUBLIC SERVICE INNOVATION TURF WARS

In this chapter, I discuss the discursive boundary work[18] undertaken by actors as they attempt to legitimatise or delegitimise who has jurisdiction to engage in specific activities or practices in their field. I do this by focusing on two 'turf wars' - '*The Great Amphetamine Debate*' (Turf War 1) and '*The Who Controls Complex Dependency Debate*' (Turf War 2) that emerged over the course of fieldwork and analysis. In these turf wars, pilot team actors discursively work to establish new boundaries, or disrupt existing boundaries, as a means to legitimise their innovative service delivery model as a credible alternative to those that dominate the field. Actors outside of the team respond to this boundary work by discursively challenging and undermining their efforts by maintaining existing boundaries or redrawing newly created ones. In this context, the work aimed at reconfiguring boundaries involves actors engaging in discursive 'framing' (Benford & Snow, 2000; Lounsbury et al., 2003; Werner & Cornelissen, 2014; Bucher et al., 2016). Here, actors use words or patterns of words to assign meanings and/or interpret conditions and events in such a way to gain support, legitimacy and persuade their audiences (Suddaby & Viale, 2011; Werner & Cornelissen, 2014). As a result, frames serve as linguistic resource actors can employ to serve either transformation or maintenance interests. Importantly, the ethnographic nature of the data collection,

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[18] *Boundary work* is institutional work aimed at establishing, obscuring or dissolving distinctions between groups of people or activities so that actors can pursue their creation, maintenance or transformative interests (Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010; Currie et al., 2012; Bucher et al., 2016). Discursive boundary work relates to the use of talk, language or discourse aimed at affecting creating, maintaining or disrupting boundaries.

allows me to shed light on how these frames are created, challenged or reconfigured as actors struggle over meaning in their everyday interactions over time.

I start this chapter by first introducing the concept of empirical interest, boundaries. The focus then shifts to presenting the 'discourses in context' by examining the discursive frames, foci of the framing and specific tactics employed when framing by actors as they discursively (re)draw boundaries during each turf war (RQ1b). Moreover, attention is paid to how actors draw on different resources available in the field in their discursive framing to advance either innovation or maintenance interests (RQ1a). Overall, these findings provide insight into the micro-level institutional work carried out by actors when pursuing public service innovation (RQ1).

4.1   Boundaries, Boundary Work & Jurisdictions

Boundaries are demarcation lines used to define the scope of a group of objects, people, or activities at an individual, organisational or institutional level (Gieryn, 1983; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2006; Martin, Currie & Finn, 2009; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). They play an important role in the processes of institutionalisation because actors use them to regulate interactions between people and activities like practices[19] (Scott, 1994; Suddaby & Viale, 2011). For example, boundaries shape the practices of a group by delineating which behaviours are recognised as a legitimate form of activity (Gieryn, 1999; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). Importantly, they distinguish actors into 'insiders' and 'outsiders', influencing who is included, or excluded, from making decisions or particular interactions (Gieryn, 1999; Lawrence, 2004; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2006).

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[19] See Chapter 5

Consequently, boundaries can create jurisdictional spaces in which certain groups of individuals are identified as (professions like doctors or scientists; or occupations like engineers, nurses, technicians) holding expert knowledge and the exclusive rights to conduct practices associated with that knowledge in particular domains (Abbott, 1988; Bechky, 2003; Currie et al., 2012, Bucher et al., 2016). As a result, boundaries shape actors' access to material and non-material resources like power, status and remuneration, often resulting in some individuals or groups acquiring or monopolising status and resources more often than others (Lamont & Molnar, 2002). For example, studies have shown that in well-established and bureaucratic settings like healthcare or social work, professions tend privilege their own jurisdictional claims and influence the division of labour by creating, legitimising and controlling the knowledge and practices around them to maintain or extend their jurisdictions (Finn, 2008; Battilana, 2011; Currie et al., 2012, Bucher et al., 2016). Because boundaries are socially constructed though the ongoing activities of individuals, they are not a permanent feature but instead are unstable and subject to ongoing negotiation and contestation (Thomas & Hewitt, 2011). Therefore, it is no surprise that individuals or groups of individuals employ strategies (i.e. boundary work) to negotiate, establish, manage, challenge or remove these demarcations as a way to exclude others, expand their control or protect their autonomy (see Gieryn, 1999; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010; Currie et al., 2012; Bucher et al., 2016).

4.2 Turf War 1 – 'The Great Amphetamine Debate'

The first turf war was an operational one, involving predominately front-line actors (re)drawing boundaries around what should be the work of the team and who has jurisdiction to be engaging in specific practices in the field. The site of contention concerns the involvement of the pilot team in tackling amphetamine abuse on the Marion estate. Here its members and those in the drugs and alcohol team engage in a turf war over who has jurisdiction a) to identify a problem (amphetamine abuse on the estate) and b) subsequently derive solutions to tackle the problem (reversing drug abusing behaviour to improve lives). These acts of boundary contestation happen during the pilot team meetings over the course of many weeks (visit 4, 7, 8, 11, 12) as front-line workers discuss the everyday functionality and administration of the innovative service model. The main characters involved in this turf war are as follows:

- Susan – leader of the pilot team and manager of another service
- Harriet – core pilot team member and front-line worker (Susan's other service) upon which the innovative delivery model is based
- Gary - core member of the pilot team and front-line worker (housing) who works closely with Harriet
- Tim – front-line worker (police) who is considered a core member of the team but attendance to pilot team meetings varies considerably
- Roy – front-line worker from a housing service that works with the pilot team in supporting clients who is a peripheral team member
- Amy – front-line worker from the drugs & alcohol team that works with the pilot team in supporting clients who is a peripheral team member
- Sybil – an individual on the estate with erratic and dangerous behaviour fuelled by an amphetamine addiction but is a low-level user of public services.
- Blanche – manager in the drugs & alcohol service who is Amy's boss

In the main, core pilot team members work towards discursively constructing a frame entitled '*there is a problem and we should intervene*' as a means to expand their boundaries and serve their transformative interests. Specifically, that the team's purpose to reduce high volume police callers who are placing a demand on services, not to tackle individuals who are low-level users of public services or to tackle a wide-ranging problem like amphetamine abuse on the estate. In response to this boundary expansion and creation, members of the drugs and alcohol team challenge and undermine their efforts by constructing two opposing frames – '*it is a problem, but we shouldn't intervene*' and '*there is no problem*' which serve to maintain existing boundaries and jurisdictions. Because boundaries (Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010; Thomas & Hewitt, 2011) and discursive frames (Sewell, 1992; Lounsbury et al., 2003; Werner & Cornelissen, 2014) are temporary and can be contested over time, I present my findings temporally, rather than focusing on each frame individually. This allows me to shed more light on how the frames and framing tactics emerge from everyday conversation and interact over time.

4.2.1 Discursive boundary contestation: Emergence of conflicting frames 'it is a problem and we should intervene' & 'it is a problem but we shouldn't intervene' (Visit 4)

During the second pilot team meeting I observed, Amy [peripheral team member from drugs and alcohol team] and Roy [peripheral team member from a housing service] start to discursively construct the frame '*it is a problem but we shouldn't intervene*' aimed at maintain existing boundaries when discussing the case of Sybil[20]. Here, they

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[20] Sybil is a citizen on the Marion estate who has created a high volume of police callouts and was subsequently identified by the pilot team for help.

discursively present Sybil as deeply entrenched in drug use and ultimately "*beyond help*". By drawing on experiential resources like knowledge of Sybil, both Amy and Roy cite specific examples that justify this notion. Amy describes Sybil as using "*huge amounts*" of amphetamines and suggests she has "*never seen anyone so off the wall before*". Both Amy and Roy highlight how Sybil has been using drugs for years and they don't remember a time where she was not on drugs. Moreover, they appeal to the normative resource of human rights, which is founded on the belief that people have a right to use drugs and the team should only expand their boundaries, when a client actively seeks help. Amy achieves this by suggesting that "*some people just like [using drugs] and don't want to change*" and only those that want "*genuine change*" should be helped. Roy furthers Amy's argument by describing Sybil as not engaging "*on her own*" with treatment. Specifically, she is good at "*smiling and nodding but not following through on anything*" and they "*can't force her to do anything*". In sum, the talk of Amy and Roy create the "*it's a problem but we shouldn't intervene*" frame by first focusing on the nature of the issue (Sybil's drug use) and solutions to the issue (lack of intervention). Actors justify this frame by drawing on normative resources like human rights and experiential resources like their insider knowledge of Sybil's history and behaviour, to support the maintenance of existing boundaries.

In response to Amy and Roy framing the issue as problem but not worthy of intervention, core pilot team actors like Susan [leader of the pilot team], Harriet [core pilot team member and front line worker] and Gary [core pilot team member and frontline worker] challenge such attempts by constructing the opposing frame '*it is a problem and we should intervene*'. Central to this framing is notion of redemption, that is, no one is beyond help or hope. Harriet and Gary orientate to this commitment by

talking about the various instances of dangerous behaviour displayed by Sybil to draw attention to her vulnerability[21]. These discussions are then linked to appeals to a moral imperative in their talk – that is, if they know people are displaying dangerous behaviour that is a threat to their life, the team cannot ignore it, as they have a duty to "*protect*":

> "*It's ridiculous to say someone's needs are too high so we aren't going to help them*" (Susan – Observation Note)
>
> "*We need to protect her because it is a safety issue*" (Harriet –Observation Note)
>
> "*We can't just sit here and let this continue*" (Gary & Susan –Observation Note)

Like Amy and Roy, core pilot team members identify the same issue in their talk (Sybil has a drug problem) but instead pose a different solution to the issue – intervention. Although Harriet and Gary do not work directly with Sybil, they are able to draw on their insider, experiential knowledge of the estate as a resource when presenting examples of her behaviour that emphasize the danger in her actions and her increasing vulnerability. By drawing on morality based normative resources like duty, protectionism and vulnerability in adjacent discussions, they work to justify their solution that supports the expansion of team boundaries.

In this meeting there was no clear group consensus or settlement reached about whether the team should tackle Sybil's amphetamine abuse. At this point both frames appeared to co-exist separately as each group discursively presented their frames and the conversation then moved onto to the next active case.

4.2.2   Reaching a consensus: Domination of 'it is a problem and we should intervene' (Visit 7 & 8)

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[21] I can't describe in detail these examples as it would reveal her identity. The only indication I can give is that they describe her engaging in risky forms of prostitution and behavior similar to someone undergoing a psychotic breakdown.

When the pilot team discuss Sybil in the third meeting (Visit 7), it appears that Roy and Amy have orientated to the '*it's a problem and we should intervene*' frame advocated by their colleagues not only in their discourse but also in practice. In contrast to visit 4, where Amy and Roy argue they should not intervene to help Sybil unless she actively seeks treatment, both actors discuss helping Sybil to get into drug treatment. Roy describes escorting Sybil to her sessions with the drugs & alcohol team. Amy discusses seeing her multiple times for treatment, although she was too ill to participate each time. In these examples, Sybil presents as someone not actively seeking treatment on their own which speaks to the '*it's a problem but we shouldn't intervene frame*'. Roy and Amy appear to justify this contradiction by discursively rationalising Sybil's lack of engagement. They discuss how difficult it is to tackle amphetamine addiction and describe the side effects from withdrawal as "*horrendous*". Roy also narrates how Sybil uses amphetamines to self-medicate underlying mental health problems. He draws on the expertise of a medical professional in his talk by highlighting how a psychiatrist stated Sybil must get off amphetamines if they are to successfully treat her mental health problems. Roy emphasises that "*everyone says the same thing, we need to get her off amphetamines to get her out of risk*". Importantly, Roy and Amy do not contest a suggestion made during the meeting by Harriet to put Sybil on a prescription pathway[22]. Instead, both agree that a prescription pathway for treating amphetamine addiction is rare, but she is an "*extreme*" case. Therefore, they might be able to organise such an option.

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[22] A prescription pathway is the use of medication as prescribed and overseen by a physician to support recovery of a substance abuse disorder.

These segments of talk frame Sybil as not being beyond hope, but instead as an individual who has rational reasons for her lack of engagement and continued drug use. This works to justify their practical actions and their talk in line with the '*it's a problem and we should intervene*' frame. Central to this justification is the use of experiential resources like knowledge of Sybil as an individual, and of drugs treatment, along with rational resources like a diagnosis from medical experts in their talk.

It was during the fourth pilot team meeting (Visit 8) that discussion concerning amphetamines took a significant turn. Roy mentions that he has a number of amphetamine users in his service who also have poor mental health. Other members of team suggest such abuse is prevalent across the estate: "*every time we turn over a rock, amphetamine is under it*" (Gary); "*[we] find it [amphetamine abuse] when we go looking for something else*" (Tim – core member from the police service). Others suggest it is prevalent because it is cheap, easy to get a hold of, and lacks the stigma associated with Class A drug use ("*its usually associated with women and diet pills*"). Susan then suggests "*there is a big piece of work on amphetamines here. Not just here [Marion] but borough wide, it's a big issue*" and tasks members to gather intelligence on how to successfully get people off amphetamines over the next few weeks. She then plans a dedicated team meeting with other services like mental health to help devise solutions to this wide-ranging problem. Here, the '*it's a problem and we should intervene*' frame shifts substantially from tackling Sybil's amphetamine addiction, to tackling amphetamine addiction on the estate and in the borough.

This signals a major expansion in the pilot team boundaries from working to solve problems at a micro, individual / family level to those at a macro organisational field level. Although such an issue falls outside of the established boundaries of the

team, there is consensus concerning this frame. No member contests Susan's mobilisation of their expertise and skills to strategise possible solutions. Instead, everyone agrees to participate in the intelligence gathering.

4.2.3   Boundary contestation: Clash of conflicting frames 'it is a problem and we should intervene' and 'there is no problem' (Visit 11 & 12)

Once the pilot team started to adhere to the new expanded boundaries in their practice by gathering intelligence on tackling amphetamine addiction, tensions start to surface between the pilot team and other agencies. At visit 11, pilot team members suggest others were being "*defensive*" to their calls and appeared "*threatened*" by their actions. Susan described receiving an email from Blanche (senior manager in the drugs team) questioning the team's actions. Susan suggested she sent a few "*carefully worded emails*" explaining a "*miscommunication*" about what the team were doing to "*clear the air*". In this email she invited Blanche to pilot team meeting six (visit 12).

The sixth pilot team meeting is the second site of boundary contestation, and substantially differs to the example discussed earlier. In visit 4, actors created and justified their frames to either maintain or expand boundaries without reaching a verbal consensus. By contrast in visit 12, the contestation goes one step further as actors discursively undermine each other's frames until a consensus is reached in one point of time. This begins by Blanche discursively creating the '*there is no problem*' frame to reverse the expanded boundaries of the pilot team and re-establish the status quo. In response, the pilot team counters with the '*it's a problem and we should intervene*' frame to justify the expansion and counter Blanche's efforts to re-configure boundaries. Blanche identifies herself as an expert and able to speak on behalf of an issue (self-casting) to reposition the status, knowledge and identity claims of the pilot team in

relation to herself (alter-casting) to discredit their boundary work in her talk. The pilot team counter her efforts by presenting themselves as experts and capable in regard to the issue (self-casting). Below, I will discuss the micro-level action involved in creating and contesting these frames in the talk of the team.

Roy starts by updating on his progress with Sybil in which treatment options were discussed with her but she had no response. Following on from this point, Blanche draws on the normative resource of human rights to argue that the team should not be intervening and trying to push Sybil into treatment:

> *"if she doesn't want to engage, we can't do anything. We are pushing her human rights. I understand you want to help but some people you can't help."* (Observation Note)

Blanche then immediate starts to create and justify the '*there is no problem*' frame. First, she explicitly states, '*there isn't an amphetamine problem*'. She then draws on rational resources like police statistics and medical reports to justify her frame. Here she cites only '2' people with issues like Sybil, and the police have only had 8 calls in relation to amphetamines demonstrating "*there is not a problem at all*". She cites a draft strategy report she is writing for the 'Medical Board' that looks at the various drugs being abused in the area and "*amphetamines is not on the list*". When discussing this draft strategy document, she uses self-casting techniques in her talk to make her arguments persuasive and credible. She emphasises how only she has access to the report but is "*willing to share*" with the group. She also draws attention its inaccessibility to non-experts by citing its length (nearly 300 pages). Then she frequently uses technical jargon by stating various technical words to test whether the group understands what these mean. She also frequently repeats the statement, "*the estate definitely does not have an amphetamine problem*" throughout the discussion. Combined, these efforts present

herself as an expert and authority on drug treatment and reinforce the legitimacy of the frame, which undermine and challenge the expansion of the team's boundaries. Moreover, they bring into question the team's ability to identify problems in regards to amphetamine abuse generally.

Overall there is very little effective push back from the pilot team members against the '*there is no problem*' frame being crafted by Blanche. The team do attempt to counter her efforts by drawing attention to rational resources like research studies or their own experiences of other individuals with amphetamine abuse but these are discredited by Blanche as she repositions the team as lacking knowledge and skill in relation to drug treatments. She discredits the academic studies found by the team by highlighting shortcomings in their research designs and presenting contradictory studies and findings. Additionally, she draws on normative resources like empathy and her professional experience in her discursive challenge of the team's solution of putting Sybil on a prescription pathway. She asks the pilot team if they realise how "*very hard on the body*" prescription treatment for amphetamine addiction is on a person. She emphasises the toll on the body by stating "*only 4 people in 13 years*" have received such treatment in the borough. This is further reinforced by stating, "*you are pushing something that is an option a GP might not prescribe. You are suggesting an option she might not have access to and getting her hopes up*". Combined, these instances of talk not only overtly alter-cast the team as lacking appropriate knowledge and skills to intervene, but also brings credibility to Blanche's position as an expert in the field (self-casting). It is important to note that core team members like Susan and Harriet who often take up much discursive space in meetings, and are advocates for the team's way of working, are not present on this day due to other engagements. It is possible that the

absence of key spokespeople, in particular Susan who is on a similar hierarchical level as Blanche, creates a power imbalance in so much that individuals opt-out of challenging Blanche's framing tactics given her professional status.

Blanche then shifts her discursive work from alter-casting the practices of the pilot team, to focusing on the professional practice of Roy. Here she drives a prolonged verbal exchange with Roy that takes on the style of an interrogation (see excerpt box) as she tests Roy's knowledge of Sybil and the public service delivery system by asking repeated questions about his actions conducted in relation to Sybil's care (see Vignette 1). This exchange appears as if Blanche is looking for flaws in his practice by unpicking his decision-making. Yet, Roy counters these attempts by drawing on his experience as a front-line practitioner to position himself as credible in his talk. For example, Blanche mentions that the Spearhead team is looking at Sybil currently. This is a pointed comment because this team, run by Rosie is in competition with the pilot team[23] and perceived by some as the only source of insider knowledge on key individuals on the estate. Roy counters this claim by stating "*I am aware of her history*" and then he describes the childhood trauma experienced by Sybil that triggered her substance abuse and mental health problems. Thus, he discursively works to rebuke insinuations he lacks knowledge of Sybil by displaying insider knowledge, therefore re-casting himself as an expert and credible. Roy continues to engage with Blanche in this cycle of alter-casting (Blanche) and self-casting (Roy) by providing credible and relevant responses when faced with questions that attempt to surface a lack of knowledge or capacity to devise appropriate solutions or practices to support Sybil:

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[23] This turf war between Rosie's portfolio of services and Susan's will be discussed in Section 4.3

"Blanche is trying to poke holes in everything Roy has discounted or tried with Sybil and with every question she tries Roy has a credible answer which is infuriating Blanche more and more. Roy has a serious backbone here and stands right up to Blanche by explaining what he did and why that was justified given the circumstances. I am surprised by this as Roy is generally quiet in meetings. I kept wondering if anyone was going to help him out but he held his ground. At one point, when he made a really strong point I wrote a little 'Yay' in my notebook." (Field Note)

Vignette 1 - Exchange between Blanche & Roy about Sybil's intervention[24]

Blanche: *"Why have you not done her on a police enforcement issue?"*

Roy: [those complaining about her behaviour] won't report her

Police member: She doesn't present as mentally ill so they can't 136 her

Blanche: Why haven't you phoned street triage?

Roy: He says he has tried and agrees that is an idea but a social worker has seen her and she passes every time they try to assess her

[***Questioning continues but is too personal to present***]

Blanche: Just withhold her money

Roy: Withholding money just makes it worse as she steals more

Blanche: Has this been reported to the social worker?

Roy: Yes and it appears the social worker has dumped her on them. They have put together a safeguarding report on her. There are risks to her health so it appears the social worker should do something. There is "*nothing else I can do*". Mental health won't look at her because of the amphetamines, they blame her behaviour on that and push her back to the drug team. I can't get her in the mental health residential service because she is too high risk.

Blanche: Does she *actually* have a mental health diagnosis?

Jim: Yes she has been in [CAMHS - Children and Adult Mental Health Services] and has been given medication but she refuses it from time to time?

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[24] Please note that we could not record during this meeting so the observations are mix of direct quotes (represented by italics) and my summary of what is being said. Parts of the discussion are excluded because they contain personal details.

> Blanche: What else do we do if we can't get her into a mental health service?
>
> Roy: This is why I am pushing for drug treatment
>
> Blanche: Maybe we can put a drug package with mental health together in a residential service but she **needs to want to go into treatment.** This needs to step up a gear and won't be fixed "*around this table*". "*It's easy saying its drug related*". "*She has a mental health problem, detox won't fix this problem*". We need to "*take this further up*". "*I'm not making any promises*"...... (Observation Note)

Roy's self-casting techniques are successful enough that by the end of the hour long verbal exchange, Blanche agrees to look into the helping Sybil by putting together a prescription pathway in conjunction with mental health services. Although Blanche begrudgingly agrees to help ("*I'm not making any promises"*), she is not embracing the team's practices as a credible and legitimate way of working. For example, when Roy discusses another client they are supporting who calls 999 frequently when he is high, she suggests, "*they have got to tell them there are consequences for their behaviour, it is not an excuse to act like that because you are high*". Roy states that this person has reduced their call to 999 by calling 101 or his local PCSO instead of tying up emergency services. Blanches makes a one-off comment that it's like "*leading a horse to water, if you take the psychologists to them, it won't change*". But Roy and another police officer counter this assertion by stressing he is actively engaging, as his calls have reduced. Right as the meeting adjourns, she tells a story of how 15-20 years ago a team, similar to the pilot team, was targeting a family that caused a lot of problems on the estate but the problems only went away when their housing block was demolished. This anecdote discursively downplays the innovativeness and effectiveness of the pilot team's service delivery model by suggesting their way of working is not new and is ultimately ineffectual as people will not change their behaviour. Interestingly, at a meeting 3 months later between the researchers and the pilot team, Susan described Blanche as

being wholly "*on board*" with the work of the team but how this consensus was reached and through what means we were unable to determine.

4.2.4   *Summary of an operational turf war – The Great Amphetamine Debate*

Figure 9 summarises the evolution of this operational turf war over time. This turf war starts by actors creating opposing frames *['it's a problem and we should intervene' vs. 'it's a problem but we shouldn't intervene'*] that are justified by drawing on experiential and normative resources in their talk concerning whether or not they should intervene in the case of Sybil. As time progresses, those that opposed and challenged the intervention frame present as converted to the intervention frame [*'it's a problem we should intervene'*] during subsequent meetings (visits 7, 8 & 11). It is difficult to ascertain how this consensus was reached because such activities were outside of the empirical observations. But it is clear, Roy and Amy are discursively orientating to the intervention frame in their talk. Once the team expands their boundaries in practice by gathering intelligence to back up their claims that there is an amphetamine abuse problem and to draft solutions to the problem, tensions start to surface between organisations. A manager from drugs and alcohol team, whose jurisdiction is being encroached upon by the pilot team's work, attends a team meeting (visit 12) and discursively works to contract the team's expanded boundaries and maintain her service's dominance in the treatment of alcohol and drug abuse on the estate. Here, Blanche draws on rational, normative and experiential resources in her talk to justify that '*there is no problem on estate*' and altercast the pilot team and Roy specifically, as lacking the knowledge and skill to identify amphetamine abuse and craft credible solutions to such issues. In response to such efforts, Roy and Blanche

Figure 9: Evolution of frames used by actors to expand and contract boundaries during an operational turf war
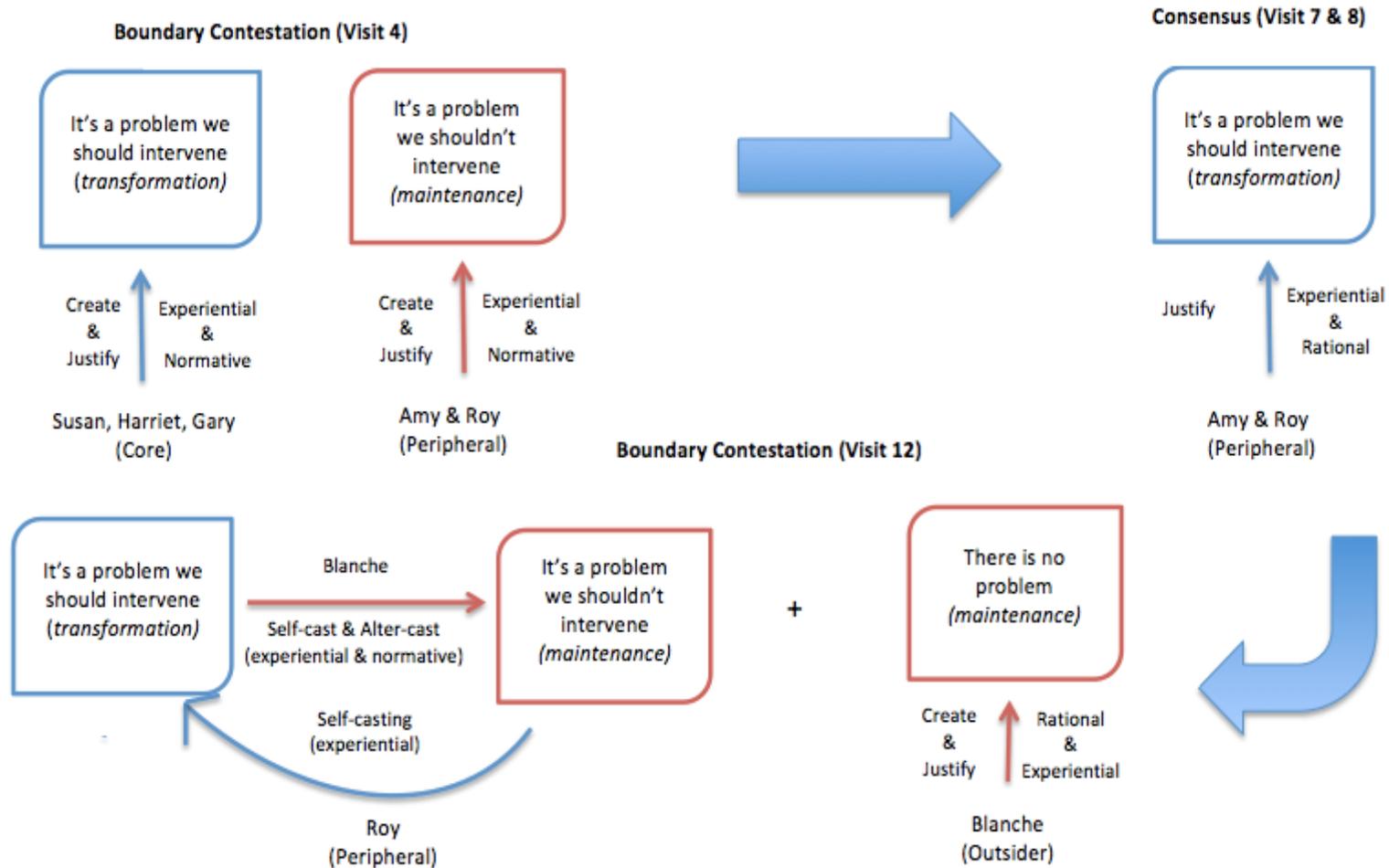
enter into a prolonged cycle of altercasting and self-casting that takes up the majority of the discursive space in the meeting. That is Roy draws on experiential resources to provide credible and relevant responses (self-casting) when faced with questions that attempt to surface a lack of knowledge or capacity to devise appropriate solutions or practices to support Sybil (altercasting). Roy's self-casting is successful, in so much that Blanche agrees to help the pilot team intervene in the case of Sybil, although the lack of consensus on the issue of amphetamine abuse appears unresolved. Overall, this turf war demonstrates the following micro-level discursive processes (see Figure 9):

1. Actors within the group create opposing frames regarding whether to expand their boundaries (maintenance vs. transformation)
2. With time, actors within the group orientate to a single agree upon frame that supports boundary expansion (transformation)
3. Once they start to adhere to these new expanded boundaries in practice, conflict is triggered (maintenance vs. transformation)
4. Actors from different groups create opposing frames (maintenance vs. transformation) that compete with each other in a single discursive event until one emerges a winner – in this case it is partial as the boundaries are expanded to help Sybil but not to tackle the issue more generally across the estate.

4.3   Turf War 2 – 'The Who Leads on Complex Dependency Debate'

The second turf war involves managers with similar portfolios of services constructing, defending or contesting boundaries concerning *who should be working with particular types of individuals* and *what information should be included in strategic decision making when defining professional boundaries in the area*. Specifically, this involves Rosie and Susan (with Betty) discursively working to construct, expand or undermine boundaries and practices of their respective teams in what I term the 'The *Who Leads on Complex Dependency Debate*' turf war.

> **Pen Portraits of Actors in 'The Who Controls Complex Dependency' Turf War**
>
> '**Claire**' – is the <u>lead</u> of the MPSIP and chairs the meetings of these groups (i.e. strategic meetings). She also reports directly to senior executives concerning the progress and findings from the team.
>
> '**Betty**'– is a project manager who supports the pilot team but also works to collate all information regarding any reform activity being conducted in Marion. She is a strong advocate for the work of the pilot team.
>
> '**Susan**' - is <u>leader</u> and driving force of the pilot team. Importantly she is the public face of the team as she champions their activity by reporting on their progress at strategic team meetings, public events and workshops by acting as a <u>*strategic lead*</u>. She is also a strategic lead for a different service involved in the MPSIP
>
> '**Rosie**'– is a strategic lead for a programme endorsed and pushed by central government for dealing with similar clientele to that which the pilot team support but instead uses a 'typical' bureaucratic and prescriptive framework for service delivery. Rosie often attends events at the wider city region level and provides this input at strategic meetings, as well as what is going on in her team.

Contextually, Rosie and Susan lead services that are similar in terms of target population[25] and type[26] but differ in their implementation. Key workers in Rosie's team are constrained by a highly prescriptive national service delivery model that dictates not only who they can support through a set of criteria, but also how they can support service users via sets of pre-determined packages of interventions. In contrast, key workers in the pilot team are given extensive freedom and discretion in terms of

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[25] Both services target reducing the use of services by families with '**complex needs**' or those with needs that span health and social care. For example, mental health problems, combined with substance misuse and/or disability, including learning disability, as well as social exclusion.

[26] Both services use a **key worker model**, which involves one worker liaising with the family but coordinating care across multiple services.

identifying families and individuals in need[27], and in the design and implementation of solutions to their problems[28]. Both of these services are key players in the Marion Public Service Innovation Project (MPSIP). Specifically, this project (referred to as the 'Strategic Team') is in charge of experimenting with different ways of working across many different services to reduce service demand, save money and improve lives on a specific estate. Therefore, work from this team is reported to senior executives in the council to inform future decision-making in regards to service design.

Some of this boundary contestation occurs during strategic meetings as well as outside of these meetings. For example, Rosie contests the involvement of the pilot team in complex dependency work when speaking to the researchers and during strategic team meetings. Here, she discursively works to undermine the involvement of the pilot team in tackling complex dependency on the estate by framing their practices as *'unsafe'* and *'expensive'* in comparison to her service delivery model to maintain her perceived position as lead on complex dependency. In response, Susan discursively works to justify her transformation interests by justifying her team's involvement in complex dependency, and the credibility of their practices. Rosie also discursively challenges the boundaries set by Betty in regards to what information is included in reports given to the executive team. Rosie discursively works to expand, in effect transform, the strategic team's focus on the pilot team by justifying the inclusion of her

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[27] Sybil, discussed earlier in the chapter, is an example of the pilot team's latitude in selecting individuals to help. She is highly vulnerable and in 'need' but *'falls off the radar because she does not meet thresholds'* (Blanche) but the team are available to intervene due to flexibility and discretion.

[28] For example, the pilot team supported an individual in accessing hair and make-up to help her look presentable at her mother's funeral or supported a gym membership to help keep a young man off the streets at night and out of trouble. These personal and low-level well-being related interventions were demonstrated to be useful in building trust and confidence in cases to help them work toward improving their lives but are not supported by the national service.

team. Here Betty, Susan and Claire (to a lesser extent) try to discursively maintain and justify the reporting boundaries in light of Rosie's efforts. When faced with repeated contestation over time, Claire concedes and actions Rosie's suggestions. As boundaries and discursive frames are temporary and unstable, I will demonstrate how the micro-action underpinning these frames and framing techniques evolve over time in the below subsections.

4.3.1 Boundary contestation: Who has jurisdiction to tackle complex dependency and which practices are "safe"? (Visit 3)

This first evidence of boundary contestation over who has jurisdiction to tackle service users with complex dependency surfaced at the start of the fieldwork. During our first encounter with Rosie (visit 3), she opens the conversation by introducing the history of her portfolio of services. From her perspective, she had been leading on service transformation in the area for a considerable time through the management of a national model aimed at supporting families with complex needs. When the previous CEO of the Council decided to experiment with tackling complex dependency generally (individuals and families) on the Marion estate, Rosie felt her model was a logical choice for such work due in part to the skills, expertise, access to resource and design of the model. As a result she identified a limited number of individuals to tackle on the Marion estate. Rosie suggests this is "*when the confusion starts*" as the pilot team was formed to look at individuals and families with complex needs, with no connection to her team:

> "*[My service] has been around for three years and from my perspective was about service transformation and the forerunner to public service reform, the intention being to reduce demand, and treat deal with high-cost families and to change services so we get to preventative. That has always been the aim……So for me we already have a working model that is a new model that ties into the city-region, a key worker, all that stuff.…It sounds like preciousness to people but for me its, I'm doing complex dependency across the piece, trying to look at things, and trying to transforming*

service and have been doing for a while and testing things out. And I see Marion as the perfect place as a test bed…. Now on a parallel basis, there was the setting up of the pilot team, Susan has been very strong in leading it. And those people who are there are generally your front line workers who know the patch which is cracking but I am concerned and expressed my concern is that they have started looking at families without any connection to us." (Interview with Rosie)

Much of our conversation with Rosie from this point onwards focuses on her using the 'Smith'[29] family as a resource in her discursive boundary work to frame the pilot team's practices as '*unsafe*' and therefore inferior to her team's practice as a means to draw boundaries around who should be involved in supporting those with complex dependency, and which practices are credible in the support of such service users. She begins creating the 'unsafe' frame first by constructing the pilot team's identity as one that lacks the appropriate skills and expertise to handle such cases - "*who are this group of people?*" and "*who is supervising them and keeping them safe, keeping their families safe?*". Then, she suggests the pilot team's structure is unsafe for the key worker as it has the potential to lead to burnout by speaking to normative resources like risk and health and safety.

"And for me it's like you can't just give it to a group of people and go….there you go, deal with it. Because who are this group of people? Who is taking responsibility? Who's looking at the worker? Who's supervising them, in terms of keeping them safe, keeping their families safe…So I had concerns about that and I still have concerns about that, and very much for the worker because [they are doing this onto of their day job, risking burnout]...." (Interview with Rosie)

The '*unsafe*' frame is further justified by recalling a story about how Rosie had already explained to other strategic leads that the pilot team should not be involved in delivering services to those with complex dependency because their practices lack the

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[29] The first family supported by the pilot team, of which the team has had much success due to marked improvements in the family lives – a son is in work and not committing crime, the youngest is off the child in need radar, an elder daughter has had her physical and emotional health improvement, the family is no longer a high volume domestic abuse call out address.

appropriate *"safety valves"* to create a safe environment for workers or families. Instead, those involved in complex dependency should be using her model by drawing on rational resource like policies and procedures, which is particularly poignant in a risk adverse and highly bureaucratised environment like public service delivery (see Brown, 2012; Osborne & Brown, 2013; Vickers et al., 2012).

> *"So you need to understand, we've already got a new model in place to do this sort of work, we've got the safety valves of supervision and policies and procedures. It's a new model we signed up to with [other areas in a wider field], so if anything is happening, it should be done through that model.....I really do hope I'm wrong, people are trying and doing their best, but actually not within a safe environment for them or the families."* (Interview with Rosie)

In the above she not only works to altercast the pilot team as unsafe, but also self-casts her team as the credible and safe alternative. For example, she mentions how her model has additional resources the pilot team cannot access, therefore pilot team members do not have a full picture of the client which can adversely affect service quality and safety, by appealing to normative notions around risk again.

> *"[pilot team] wouldn't have had information that we can pull for things like school attendance and...so they're working not with the full picture, and that the whole point of the way we set this up [our model] is that people have a fuller picture. So that is partly why I am concerned as well."* (Interview with Rosie)

Overall, in the above discussion Rosie discursively works to maintain her perceived position as the lead on complex dependency services. This is achieved by drawing attention to how the pilot team's practices lack the safety nets (specific policies and procedures) of her service delivery models, thus risking the safety of the families involved and the key worker. She then altercasts or repositions the identity of the pilot team as inferior and separate to her service delivery model by highlighting a lack of resources, potential risk to workers and families as well as questioning the experience and knowledge when supporting such cases. By using such normative and rational

resources in her talk, she problematises the pilot team's involvement with those with complex dependency by framing them as '*unsafe*'. In so much that the pilot team should not be involved in complex dependency, as their practices are not a credible alternative to her team.

Rosie discursively works to back up her claims by casting herself as an authority in all things complex dependency by drawing on experiential and rational resources when speaking with the researchers. For example when the researchers ask if she has ever attending a pilot team weekly meeting, she identifies herself as "*too strategic to attend the pilot team meetings*". Frequently she refers to being the area's lead for a national service in conversation. She demonstrates her in-depth and working knowledge of service delivery by using technical terms and describing in detail complicated processes and procedures like a 'CAF' (Common Assessment Framework).

It emerges from this conversation that there is evidence that Rosie has presented discursive arguments against the pilot team's involvement in complex dependency to various parties (other strategic leads, pilot team, researchers) over time:

> "*And my concern is, and what I said clearly to that group twice, and myself and [another strategic lead] at one point had a very difficult relationship, which we had to resolve, because they was trying to do things which I'm like, it's not safe, it's not this, and it's not that. So, like, stop, and you need to understand…*" (Interview with Rosie)

Yet, the pilot team continue to operate their service delivery model cast as '*unsafe*' and work with the Smith family who are drawn as outside of the team's jurisdictional boundaries and expertise. It appears at this point in time that Rosie's discursive boundary work has had little impact on existing boundaries or practices in field. Although this brings into question the efficacy of Rosie's '*unsafe*' frame, I observe her

frequently using this frame in her discursive boundary work over the course of the fieldwork.

4.3.2 Boundary contestation: Who has jurisdiction to tackle complex dependency, which practices are "safe" and what information should be included in reporting? (Visit 6)

At strategic team meeting one (visit 6), Rosie returns to the '*unsafe*' frame in her discursive boundary work. When Susan reports to the group on the progress of the pilot team by discussing Harriet's work[30], Rosie asks how many cases Harriet has and whether this is her full-time job. When Susan mentions the number of cases Harriet is involved with, Rosie states that "*is a lot of demand on her….and we're pinning a lot on one individual, although she is very skilled*". Here, Rosie draws attention to a perceived unreasonable demand being placed on Harriet that then could lead to an unsafe environment for Harriet and service users. Susan challenges these attempts to present the practice as unsafe by highlighting their safety policies and procedures to demonstrate their practices as '*safe*':

> "*Now, in terms of Harriet….we have a really robust system in place for that, which is actually dead effective. She's never had that kind of support before, and it means she does, is able to do more stuff, it doesn't have that emotional impact. So it's looking at how we can scale that up, if that's the way forward, and that sort of thing [for future services being rolled out in the borough]."* (Susan - Strategic Team Meeting 1)

Rosie then discursively works to frame the pilot team as '*expensive*'. Here, she draws on normative resources in the field, like public sector austerity and public sector reform that focus on reducing fiscal expenditure and creating efficiency savings, to altercast the team as more expensive than alternative approaches. For instance, when

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[30] She presents some of the success of the clients Harriet is supporting although I can't mention specific examples as this would reveal the identity of individuals

Susan discuss the savings made by the team based on a cost benefit analysis, Rosie is quick to point out that the pilot team's ways of working is more expensive than other approaches – *"So that's the more expensive version [of key working]"*. Susan makes the point that it might be expensive but the team is getting results quickly – *"but it's the one [service delivery model] that's getting results"*. Here, Susan appeals to the moral dilemma concerning balancing improving lives and saving money. In so much that before Rosie's comment she had discussed how this particularly family had been 'turned around', therefore yes the service might cost more but improving lives is morally more significant.

In this meeting, both Susan and Rosie engage in cycle of self-casting and alter-casting to maintain their positions in the field. Susan presents rational resources like efficiency savings and anecdotes of service user success to justify the team's involvement in complex dependency service delivery and the credibility of their practice to support service users with such issues. Rosie then counters these claims by alter-casting the team as '*unsafe*' and '*expensive*' to challenge their entry into the realm of complex dependency and undermine the credibility of their practices. After which, Susan challenges Rosie's discursive work by re-casting her team as capable and their practice as credible to the audience by drawing on rational and normative resources like cost benefit analyses, improving lives and policies and procedures. Like previous attempts, it appears that Rosie's discursive boundary work has limited effect on actual practice, as the pilot team continues to support those with complex dependency with their service delivery model over the course of the fieldwork.

Earlier on in the meeting, Betty suggests that because the pilot team is "*going extremely well*" in Marion, it seems like they should put a proposal to the board to give

the pilot team a dedicated base to work from that has access to systems and up-to-date information to test if executives are interested in rolling out this way of working across the borough in other high need areas:

> *"It just seems like delaying the inevitable by waiting another six months until the end of the project, and so we're intending to propose, as we mentioned at the last meeting, that steps are taken to plan for the future, to see if the [executives] has an appetite for starting to put things into process now, where locality teams might work from…."* (Betty - Strategic Team Meeting 1)

Rosie contests this notion by suggesting boundaries and decisions should not be made on such a small piece of work (i.e. the pilot team) and instead should be based on the '*bigger picture*' by including findings from all work being conducted on complex dependency. Here she suggests focusing on one team, on one estate, makes the information irrelevant and too small to be relevant to strategic decision making:

> *"Marion is a microcosm of what we're doing. But I think we've got to be careful thinking there's an extrapolation up or down to Marion from a wider locality…I think we are in danger of, if say we want this, that and the other, people who are looking at the wider borough will go it's too small so you can't, whereas actually we want to capture all the good practice…..it's just that the paper will have to be carefully written…it can't be overemphasised on the small size of Marion"*. (Rosie - Strategic Team Meeting 1)

Rosie is attempting to transform the established boundaries of the strategic team in relation to reporting on innovative complex dependency work, by shifting the focus from the pilot team to all services in the area. Betty responds to Rosie's concerns by saying the report "*emphasises very strongly that this is just the tip of the iceberg*" in terms of whether there is a future to this type of working across the borough. That the "*report doesn't shy away from the fact*". Susan also chimes in by suggesting "*when you see the report you'll be reassured. It's a small bit of a bigger picture, but it's very clear that it's a small bit.*" Here, Betty and Susan discursively work to maintain the strategic team's focus on the work pilot team in reporting endeavours.

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This exchange about the report is important because it signals a new point of boundary contestation concerning what information is included when reporting to senior executives to influence future decision making. Betty, Claire and Susan all work closely together and are strong advocates of the pilot team. Betty, on behalf of the strategic team would like to put a case together to formalise the work of the pilot team by acquiring physical resources and presenting their model as a delivery option that can be rolled-out across the borough. Therefore, she is working to maintain the strategic team's focus on presenting the pilot team as exemplar of innovation and success. However, Rosie works to transform these boundaries by framing the work of the pilot team as "*too small*" and "*insignificant*" to be included in such reporting activities. Instead, Rosie presents a case that if the team are to influence decision makers, they must include all complex dependency work being conducted to make a convincing case. As a result, Rosie advocates for boundary expansion and the inclusion of her team's work as well as that of the pilot team in reporting. Betty and Susan remain unconvinced and argue the boundaries do not need to be expanded because adequate disclaimers are presented in the report. Unfortunately due to issues of confidentiality, I was not able to view the content of the report to see what content was sent to executives. Future conversations indicate Rosie's discursive work was unsuccessful as the report's content was not altered based on the discursive exchange in the meeting.

4.3.3   Boundary contestation: What information should be included in reporting and who leads on complex dependency? (Visit 9)

One area of boundary contestation involves the issue of using Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) as key workers to tackle complex dependency. As discussed at site visit 6, the strategic team of Claire and Betty are lobbying senior executives to

expand the work of the pilot team by securing funding to formalise the work of the team and to roll-out this way working in other high service demand areas. During this time, it came to the attention of police officers involved in the pilot team (Tim and Dave) that central government was willing to fund places for PCSOs to work as key workers but this funding was part of the wider national programme that Rosie is the area lead (visit 8). During pilot team meeting 4, Tim discusses trying to go "*under the radar*'" with Rosie to convince her to allocate these PCSOs to the pilot team agenda. Tim discusses wanting all three individuals but to "*pacify her he agreed two will be in Marion and one on [another estate]*". Tim felt this was a good compromise because it made Rosie "*happy*" plus there is little inter-organisational collaboration on the other estate. Therefore this could provide a "*control group*" enabling the team to "*show how this way of working is much more effective and has a greater impact*". Tim also discusses how Rosie did not want to place the PCSOs within locality-based teams. Here, Tim draws on his experience to convince Rosie that PCSOs become PCSOs because they want to work on the "*same patch and get to know their local area intimately*" and the entire point of being a PCSO is to "*locally work*". Tim is unsure whether Rosie agreed but he has chosen three individuals and decided who will go to which areas. As the discussion evolves it emerges that these three PCSOs are part of a larger group, controlled by the city-region who will put them through a standard training programme of an unknown nature. Tim is concerned the training will be "*too rigid*" and focus solely on individuals and families who only hit specific criteria – similar in design to Rosie's programme. Susan feels this is daft as "*we have a model here that works*" and it could take the city-region "*forever and day to make up their minds*". Instead, she suggests the PCSOs shadow Harriet, take some of pilot team's training and managerial support. Tim indicates this is most likely not

possible as they *"want a central approach"* and Rosie wants to *"oversee the training"*. Susan suggests she might speak to Rosie later about this issue.

This exchange demonstrates how the pilot team are discursively working to alter boundaries in pursuit of their innovative interests. Because of the scarcity of resources in the field, they need to look to other parties to provide much needed resources to expand their practices beyond their team. Here, Tim and Susan identify an opportunity to gain resources from Rosie to expand their jurisdiction, provide evidence of the effectiveness of these practices over others in the field and influence Rosie in another jurisdiction (Rosie's team). Tim discursively works to convince her to allow the team to access resources and to influence the use of the resources in line with the practices of the pilot team.

Approximately a week later, the issue of PCSOs is raised during the second strategic team meeting. Susan and Claire discuss how the pilot team is constrained by only having a few key workers and how the strategic team should think about how to expand their capacity to handle more cases. Claire mentions how PCSOs could be used to help increase the capacity or expand the boundaries of the pilot team (see Vignette 2). Rosie's immediate reaction is to discursively contest this claim by drawing attention to the fact the PCSOs are *"her"* PCSOs and fall within her jurisdiction (*"we have got some PCSOs"*). Importantly, she has the say in terms of how this resource will be allocated – *"it's not necessarily for here [on the Marion estate]"*; *"we have yet to decide the where, plus what we're doing"*. Here, Rosie draws clear discursive boundaries around who controls the allocation and use of these particular resources. Susan attempts to appeal to the normative resource of decreasing service demand by highlighting how by working with PCSOs her team have successfully reduced police call outs in an effort to justify to

allocation of resources to the pilot team. Rosie responds to this justification by taking up the role of spokesperson for complex dependency work and demonstrating her insider knowledge. She mentions how the group needs to "*be aware*" that city region and national are looking to do work similar to the pilot team and she has already fed back to them about the work of the pilot team (see Vignette 2).

Vignette 2 - Exchange between Claire and Rosie concerning the PCSOs

Claire: '*And there's the PCSOs input as well? So that's an additional…..*

Rosie: '*Woah, woah, who. Which PCSO input?"*

Claire: '*I don't know*'

An unknown female starts laughing

Rosie: '*WE have got some PCSOs? I read somewhere, we, [my programme], have got them, which we have yet to decide the where, plus what we're doing?"*

Claire: '*But we have a couple of PCSOs now out with the pilot team."*

Rosie: '*That is just what I am clarifying. Again, the trouble is, language wise people might think they are talking about different things same things when they are different things, so we just need to clarify."*

Claire: '*So there needs to be a discussion on that."*

Rosie: '*There's a city-region exercise going on about PCSOs, about training, a specific project that we potentially will be in tying in here, but we just need to be clear about what it is."*

Claire: '*Have we got numbers though, Rosie for that?"*

Rosie: '*It's proposed, its three but its not necessarily for here because other people have other views. So I need to talk to other people."*

Claire: '*Well I know….yeah, OK. Yeah. I'll shut up."*

Everyone laughs….

Claire: '*But its perhaps something to put an action that we do need to have a clarity around. How many, how we use them and if here is an opportunity in Marion or not?"*

> Susan describes an example of how a key worker and a PCSO have reduced police call outs
>
> Rosie: *"And that, sorry, that's just one of the problems, you should be aware, that nationally and at city region they're starting to think about, I don't know what they are going to call it, whether it's a complex individual programme but they're starting to think about at on a city region, the city region are asking us for information to feed back to national, so national are starting to look at that. So just to be aware some of the work here is probably a forerunner of....I've already said something to them about the work on Marion."* (Strategic Team Meeting 2)

This is a significant discursive power play from Rosie on various levels. Firstly, it demonstrates her position as an expert as she has insider knowledge others around the table do not. Secondly, it justifies her attempts to altercast herself as the lead on complex dependency by acting as the spokesperson for a team she has little to do with by reporting on their work to others at a strategic level. Moreover the emphasis on "*be aware*" felt pointed, as if to suggest another standardised programme is in the works that could result in the pilot team having to adopt ways of working similar to her team or making the pilot team obsolete:

> *"This whole exchange feels like hand bags at dawn– the thing with the PCSOs and then this well the city region is doing this and I have feedback to them but I think why haven't they involved team that has done all the work in the feedback....and now the city region will make decisions so was it a threat like this is going to happen and you are now going to have to take the city region approach?"* (Field Note)

This statement ended the discussion about the allocation of PCSOs, and the conversation quickly turned to the next item on the agenda.

In this meeting, when the strategic team discusses reporting, Rosie discursively works to create and justify the '*bigger pictur*e' frame. That is, whenever the strategic team appears to be focusing their attention on the pilot team in their reporting efforts, she discursively works to reorient their focus on all areas of complex dependency. For

example, when Betty discusses producing a second report[31], Rosie argues information about her team's work should be included to provide a '*bigger*' picture because decisions need to be made on "*the whole conversation*" (see Vignette 3). Betty attempts to challenge this notion by emphasising that the board has specifically asked for this information but Rosie continues to justify her frame that all complex dependency work should be included in the report. Rosie's framing appears to have influenced practice as Claire concedes to expand the original report boundaries to include the work from Rosie's team.

Vignette 3 - Extract from the report debate

Rosie: *"What we need to add to board report is the evaluation that was done of the advocates and the [Rosie's service model] key worker approach and competency and jobs…potential framework for job descriptions to look into that whole conversation, because that's what's happening at that level. But it's based on those services, it needs to be framed as part of the conversation."*

Betty: *"What [the board] were particularly interested in is what is happening on Marion (i.e. the pilot team) that's different."*

Rosie: *"I understand that, Betty, and I know we've had this conversation, but they need to see it as part of the bigger picture."*

Betty: *"Yeah, they can, we can feed that in as well."*

Claire: *"We can probably do a…yes, this is coming from city region, and yes, this is what we're learning. Is this a opportunity to splice, almost, yeah."* (Strategic Team Meeting 2)

The issue of the bigger picture arises again when Betty discusses the interim report drafted by the research team[32]. Betty mentions that the report was shared with

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[31] Betty discusses that the board would like a more in-depth report that unpicks why the pilot team is so successful or 'what makes the difference' between this group and other groups doing similar work.
[32] This interim report was drafted in response to a request from the police for any learning that could be fed into a meeting they were attending. As a reminder, the police service is funding the research team

the group and "*I got comments back from one person, and Rosie and I met…*" It appears that at this meeting there was a "*lively conversation*" that lasted for "*only for two hours*" (both Betty and Rosie laugh at this, suggesting this is not their first struggle over content). Rosie queried why our report was "*very concentrated on the worker [Harriet] and how the worker works*". Again she discursively reorients the focus away from the pilot team by justifying her '*bigger picture*' frame to expand the boundaries of reporting to include all complex dependency work:

> "*Yeah. I think there's a misunderstanding about what's happening outside the pilot [team], and it's, you all hear my frustration one way or another. There's reference to the key worker approach in the pilot team, which from my perspective, it's a key worker approach, yes, right, which has the added benefit of working in the context of freedoms and flexibilities that the rest of the borough doesn't have. And then there is another tranche of key workers who are working on a dedicated basis, who are doing that same work. And obviously I am going to say that needs a reference [in the evaluation report], and this is where we have a difference of opinion.*" (Rosie - Strategic Team Meeting 2)

Rosie then discursively works to frame the work of the pilot team as not '*new*' to expand the boundaries of the report to include all key workers tackling complex dependency:

> "*I was perceiving that the key worker approach in Marion was being, my perception was it was being tagged as, oh, look at this, isn't it good, it's working and nothing like this has worked before. Where I'm going, it is, it is, it is…but then, not knowing that the rest of the world is still doing business as usual. So we've got a stage here, and for me, we have got a discussion about, actually there are some workers who are working in Marion (not part of the pilot team) doing this type of work….and we talked about how we get that evaluated as part of [all work in Marion]*" (Rosie - Strategic Team Meeting 2)

Rosie's attempts to *altercast* the identity of the pilot team from innovative and new, to something that been tried before, appears to gain traction in the group. Once Rosie

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and requested a focus on the pilot team and specifically why the pilot team works well and barriers to implementation.

starts to challenge the assumption of the pilot team's innovativeness, another strategic lead joins in the debate and suggests similar things have done before:

> *"Sorry, I'm just thinking that the evaluation report kind of highlights what every, whenever there's been an evaluation of projects like this, I think there's one on [another area] about, was it ten years ago? And it was very similar to this project in terms of people working together, and the problems that you're facing and we're talking about now are exactly the same problems, and they're exactly the same problems that are highlighted in every serious case review."* (Strategic Lead – Strategic Team Meeting 2)

The effectiveness of Rosie's discursive work is arguably mixed. In the local and micro-level of the MPSIP she was able to successfully expand boundaries with her discursive work to include the efforts of her team. But at the wider more organisational or borough wide level, her efforts had limited impact. At the final strategic meeting I observed (Visit 15), the MPSIP was disbanded and everyone was sent back to focus on delivering their services in isolation. But the pilot team was continued under the direct supervision of the senior executive team, rather than the strategic team. Moreover the work of the pilot team was showcased in detail at an external event (Visit 16) comprised of an audience of a large number of practitioners across the borough and introduced by senior executives in the area. Arguably, Rosie had a short slot in the event to present the work of her team but the majority of the discursive space (45 minutes of the hour of presentations) was occupied by discussing how the pilot team works, why the team works so well and successes they have had. Here Rosie managed to expand boundaries to enough to be included in the discussion but was not able to fully reorient the focus away from the pilot team.

4.3.4   Summary of an strategic turf war – 'The Who Leads on Complex Dependency Debate'

Figure 10 summarises the evolution of a strategic level turf war as managers of similar services discursively work to construct, expand or undermine boundaries and practices of their respective teams and they fight over '*Who Leads on Complex Dependency*'. Rosie and her team have been leading the way in this area by administering a service delivery model devised by central government for nearly three years. However, the creation of the pilot team as part of the MPSIP signals an intrusion and expansion of the complex dependency jurisdiction, as the pilot team is now included in the complex dependency conversation. As the pilot team starts to support those with such needs, Rosie vigorously contests this boundary expansion in different discursive settings over time. By using a mix of tactics (self-casting, justifying and altercasting) and resources (experiential, rational and normative) she discursively works to create the pilot team as unsafe to different audiences (researchers, strategic team and other service leads), thus creating the '*pilot team is unsafe*' frame. In response, Susan who leads the pilot team draws on rational and normative resources to self-cast her team as a safe and credible choice for helping those with complex dependency. Moreover, when the MPSIP plans to report to council executives on their progress, Rosie discursively works to reduce the emphasis on the pilot team and instead expand the report boundaries to include all complex dependency services. Here, Rosie creates and justifies the '*bigger picture*' frame to include her team in the conversation. Although some strategic team members do

Figure 10: Evolution of discursive frames used to expand and contract boundaries during a strategic turf war
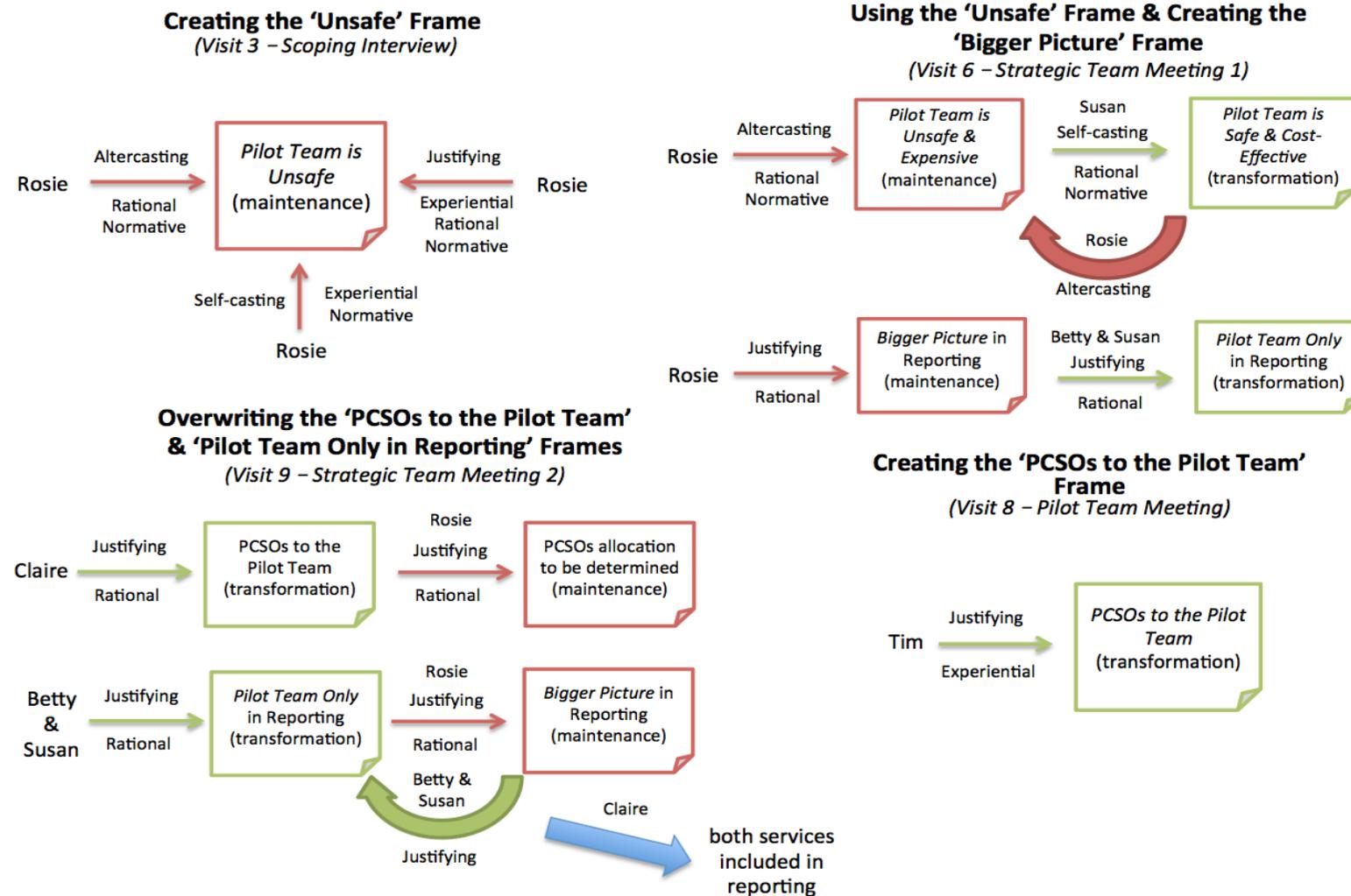
attempt to justify the emphasis on the pilot team, Rosie's repeated airing of the '*bigger picture*' frame over time leads to the strategic team compromising by expanding the reporting boundaries. Ultimately, Rosie's discursive efforts were only partially successful as they influenced only minor, local boundaries (strategic team report). She was unable to effectively challenge the presence of the pilot team in the jurisdiction of complex dependency service delivery generally. Despite her efforts, the pilot team were put on a more formalised footing and started to report directly into senior management, cementing their status in the area of complex dependency service delivery. Overall this turf war demonstrates the micro-level discursive processes in which:

1. Actors oppose the expansion of their jurisdictional boundaries to different audiences (maintenance)
2. Actors who are encroaching on these jurisdictional boundaries work to establish themselves as a credible alternatives (transformation)
3. Actors compete regarding what information is included when influencing strategic makers (maintenance vs. transformation). Through repeated attempts a compromise is reached supporting maintenance efforts, although this has little impact on wider jurisdictional boundaries.

4.4   Summary of Findings from the Turf Wars

This subsection provides insight into the micro level action carried out by actors as they discursively work to maintain or transform boundaries when pursuing public service innovation. Specifically, actors use discursive frames and framing tactics in their everyday talk to legitimatise or delegitimise who has jurisdiction to engage in specific activities or practices in their field. In their framing efforts, actors draw on rational, normative and experiential resources available in the field, to create and justify their

frames in an effort to support boundary expansion (transformation) or contraction (maintenance).

The findings highlights the ongoing contested and messy nature associated with boundary creation or maintenance. These boundaries were not created in a singular discursive instance but instead emerged over a period time. Even when a consensus appeared to be reached, actors still had to work to maintain the boundaries they drew. Moreover there was often an intersection between maintenance and transformation efforts and actors engaged in cycles of (re)drawing each others' boundaries over a number of instances until a temporary settlement was reached.

Moreover, the findings offer insight into the role of agency by highlighting the great amount of effort required on the part of actors to create and maintain such boundaries. If we look specifically at Rosie and Blanche, these actors repeatedly and vehemently contested the expansion of boundaries. Rosie was the picture of dogged determination as she engaged in similar verbal debates across different discursive spaces with intention of gaining support of the boundaries she drew. Whilst Roy withstood an unplanned, hour-long interrogation of his practice to maintain the team's expansion into the realm of tackling amphetamine abuse. All and all, such work required ongoing and sustained effort over time that sometimes appeared intentional or just emerged in the here and now as part of the day job.

Interestingly, the outcomes from such discursive boundary work were mixed. At an operational level, the team was only able to tackle amphetamine abuse in regards to one individual rather than across the estate resulting in very minor alterations to the jurisdictional boundaries. Similarly, Rosie was only able to alter boundaries at a meso-level (strategic team) but ultimately failed to stop the infringement of pilot team into

the jurisdiction of complex dependency services at a wider organisational field level. It appears that field position plays a role in this outcome and this point will be returned to in the discussion chapter.

CHAPTER 5: EMOTIONS AND PRACTICES: A MICRO-PERSPECTIVE ON INNOVATION IN PUBLIC SERVICES

Although there have been calls to take seriously the micro-social dynamics that underpin institutions (Barley, 2008), arguably few studies consider people's *lived* experience of institutional arrangements (Hallett, 2010; Voronov & Weber, 2016; Lok, Creed, DeJordy & Voronov, 2017; Zietsma & Toubiana 2018). One way it has been suggested scholars can "*take people more seriously in institutional theory*" (Zietsma & Toubiana 2018, p. 428) is to move away from rational and cognitive accounts of institutions and agency and instead consider emotions and the role they play in institutional processes (Voronov & Vince, 2012; Lok et al., 2017; Zietsma & Toubiana 2018). During the process of data collection and analysis, emotions appeared to play a significant and re-occurring role in the discursive practice work of the pilot team over the course of the fieldwork. For instance, Harriet, Susan (Gary and Roy to a lesser extent) *tell emotional stories* of their clients and use *pathos based rhetorical tactics* in their everyday talk to invoke useful emotions to mobilise participation in their practice and block negative emotions that could be used to resist the practice. Also, Harriet and Susan were found to use emotions in their talk to repair any overt and explicit, as well as more subtle and latent practice breakdowns to maintain the credibility and participation in the practice over time. I start by first introducing the concepts of empirical interest: practices, practice work and pilot team practices.

5.1   The 3 Ps: Practices, Practice Work and the Pilot Team's Practices

A practice is generally conceptualised in the institutional literature as a shared routine or a pattern of activities that guide behaviour according to a situation

(Jarzabkowski, 2005). Whilst individually these routines or activities might appear insignificant, it is when they are clustered together that they develop meaning and order. In so much that, social groups create a shared understanding concerning how activities should be done (Jarzabkowski, 2005) by defining the correctness of practice as well as providing ways for members to learn them (Barnes, 2001). Consequently, for a practice to be considered a 'practice', it must conform to certain social expectations that can be recognised by those both inside and outside of the social group (Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). Although these social expectations may be derived locally, they can also be derived from broader cultural frameworks like institutional logics (Jarzabkowski, 2008; Lounsbury & Crumley, 2007). Practice work therefore is a type of institutional work that studies how actors affect the practices that are legitimated within a domain through creation, maintenance or disruption activities (see Ziestma & Lawrence, 2010). Often when studying such practice work, institutional scholars focus on the actions, interactions and negotiations actors undertake to understand how this shared meaning is used to instantiate, reproduce and modify practices (see Jarzabkowski et al., 2009).

In this study, the 'practice' the pilot team works to create and maintain is their innovative service delivery model. This model of working is based on the principles of person-centred restoration. The model involves key workers gaining access to the lives of individuals and families and obtaining permission from them to identify their "*problems*"[33] and to then work towards "*improving*" their lives. Arguably, key workers and person centred restoration is not new, but it is the freedoms and discretion given

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[33] Social problems that cause individuals and families to be 'high volume' users of public services, initially high volume police call outs in relation to domestic abuse, then evolving into those with complex needs that present as highly vulnerable and chaotic.

to key workers to do "*whatever it takes*" that sets this way of working apart from the practices that dominate public service delivery on the Marion estate, and in the wider borough.

Central to the pilot team's practice, is a set of shared local understandings within the group concerning the people on the Marion estate and the frontline key worker (see Figure 11). Specifically, this concerns a) the *causes and continuation of dysfunctional behaviour by people on the Marion estate ("about the people")* and b) the *attitudes and behaviours an ideal key worker should display* ("*about the worker*") in their frontline delivery. It is important to note that such notions (a & b) were first proposed in a full paper presented at the 33rd European Group for Organizational Studies (EGOS) Colloquium in Copenhagen by myself and Professor Penny Dick. In this paper,[34] and a subsequent manuscript[35], we drew on the Communicative Constitution of Organisations (CCO) literature to explicate how such notions developed into an authoritative text (see Kuhn, 2008) which gave the cross-sector collaboration authority. Rather than focus on how authority is acquired through the creation of an authoritative text like we did in those outputs, I instead re-theorise these notions as a set of shared local understandings that underpin the pilot team's innovative service delivery model (e.g. the 'practice'). This theorisation is driven by the degree to which actors' everyday talk concerning the practice is grounded in these shared understandings. Therefore, if we are to understand

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[34] The conference paper was titled "Making little differences and achieving small wins – the re-authoring of social care scripts in the context of public sector reform" by Penny Dick and Beth Patmore in 2017. Please note I cannot reference this conference paper because it is not in the public domain. But I can provide this upon request

[35] The manuscript 'The accomplishment of authority in cross sector collaborations: an interactional, multi-source theorization' by Penny Dick and Beth Patmore (2018) went under review but then rejected by Organization Science and has since not be resubmitted elsewhere at the time of writing and therefore cannot be referenced. But I can provide this upon request

how the practice is created and maintained, it is essential to understand the correctness of the activities associated with the practice, and the social expectations concerning how these activities are enacted in practice.

Central to the pilot team's practice is belief that the *cause of dysfunctional behaviour by people on the estate* (i.e. unemployment, anti-social behaviour, drug use, poor parenting, lack of engagement with services) is not down to some fixed and unchangeable personal characteristics but is instead a *consequence of the situations and circumstances in which they are embedded*. If we take the example below, narrated by Susan at the start of the fieldwork, there is a rational reason why people behave in a particular way - which is external to them as individuals. For instance, it is reasonable, and not unexpected, that people are not seeking work when they suffer from poor physical health, lack education and are worrying about losing their house whilst caring for children or relatives - a typical life scenario for those living in Marion:

> *"And really asking [service user] what's important to them. Because if, [front line worker] goes in like 'my job is to get you a job', but really, you can't get a job because your teeth are rotten and you don't interview very well because you lack confidence, and you've got debt issues, and you're worried that you're going to lose your housing and you're caring for an elderly relative…when are you ever going to think about getting a job? Because really it's not important in your life, even though it's important to the person you're working with, because you're a tick box…but you can't move forward when you're dragging a big chain around your back."* (Interview with Susan)

Moreover, the *reasons why dysfunctional behaviour continues* is due in part to the public service delivery system, in general. A culture of box-ticking and rigid approaches to service delivery results in both parties perceiving there is little hope key workers can improve lives. Pilot team members regularly discuss encountering "*negative*" colleagues who have "*seen it all before*" and believe that "*nothing works*". This disillusionment can

lead to citizens having bad experiences of public services that then feeds a vicious circle of disillusionment and disengagement between both front-line workers and their clients:

> *"It's actually going in thinking you can do something and not…if you go in with a negative attitude that somebody's never going to amount to anything, it's not going to happen. If you've already written them off before you start working with them, how can, if they sense that you've no belief in them, what's the point in them even bothering"* (Interview with Susan)

> *"Because, like I said earlier, the problem is, [people on the estate] always had a negative view. People, a lot of them on here, not everybody but a vast majority have had a negative view of people like me, they've had this negative view because they have had a bad experience before. So consequently they don't trust anybody. It's about breaking that down and showing these people that actually we do care and we do want to help you."* (Interview with Gary)

The social expectations concerning what *attitude and behaviours an 'ideal' key worker should display when working in this innovative way* stands in stark contrast to the negative views that permeate the organisational field. Within the pilot team, there is a shared local understanding that a key worker will be a) optimistic that people can change by believing everyone deserves a shot at redemption and b) do *"whatever it takes"*" to engage people and improve their lives – in their everyday practice:

> *"And actually for this what we're saying is, well, that's not good enough [someone didn't engage so move on], what's it going to take to engage them? So we've got, kind of got this unwritten principle of, we've got to do whatever it takes. Because that's what we know is going to be best for those families. If we're not just ticking the box of, that target has been achieved, and instead we're actually looking at, what can we do to make this family's life better, then we're morally incumbent to just whatever, whatever's going to work".* (Interview with Susan)

Figure 11: Schematic representation of the shared local understandings that constitute the pilot team's innovative way of working
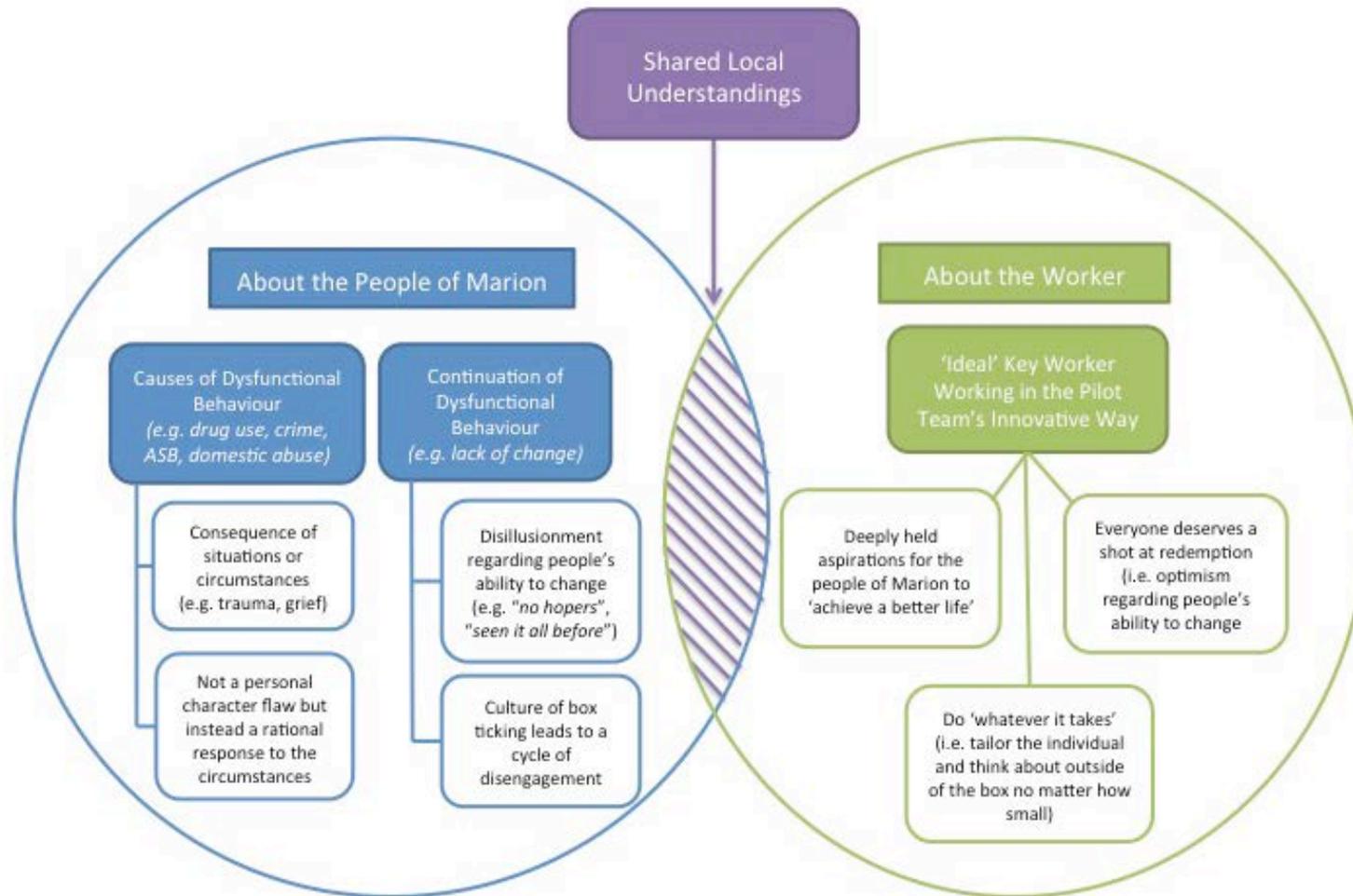
"You have to be enthusiastic to be able to make this work. You have to be willing to, you know, go the extra mile. You've got, you've all got to have that common goal, which is making it better for the people that we're dealing with. Because at the end of the day, I always say, we go home, don't we... We go home at the end of the day. All the people we work with and deal with, they stay here, don't they....Because it's really is tough for [people you are helping]. But if you, as [the people you are helping], if you will. If, you know, you're up against it, your world's crumbling in, and all of a sudden you've got these people who want to work with you and want to help you, and these people are enthusiastic and optimistic, I think human nature will dictate that sooner or later, that will rub off. It'll rub off on you." (Interview with Gary)

In terms of doing *"whatever it takes"*, this refers to workers stepping outside of their rigid job role and working holistically with people. So rather than saying, I can only help with what fits my predetermined job role, these ideal key workers will support people to overcome a variety of different problems no matter how small, that might hinder long-term outcomes like employment (i.e. helping arrange access to dentist to improve their confidence). But it is focusing the intervention around people's needs by getting to know them and supporting them to achieve that is central:

"So what we're asking people to do is kind of work holistically with the people that they're working with. So, you know, not going, oh, well my job is just to talk to you about your employment prospects, or your training….[to saying] these are what you're telling me your needs are, how can you make them different? So it's not so much directing people towards different agencies, it's getting people to be self-autonomous." (Interview with Barbara)

"You don't have to be a specialist in anything, you just have to have a little bit of knowledge, I think, around key areas, debt and money, housing, health and wellbeing, drugs and alcohol, mental health, parenting and core family relationships, and the importance of not just working with one individual, that there's usually a wider picture, and if, I think, if I want something to be sustainable, when I've gone, you need a network around the person. And if that can be people that love and care about them, it's going to be far more successful." (Interview with Harriet)

On this similar theme of optimism, the ideal key worker has deeply held aspirations for those they help on the Marion estate. Rather than perceiving individuals

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as "*no-hopers*", workers want to encourage those they help to aspire to achieve a "*better*" life:

> "*One of my biggest things, I'm quite into motivation, I don't give motivational talks, but if I've got a group of young men, I will quite happily speak to them in a motivational way. It is OK to have dreams and ambitions and a purpose and, you know. And some of them get it, some are like, you know. But it's entrenched within them, you see, that's the problem. It's breaking down these ideas that are entrenched within these kids that, well, we're from Marion, and we have to, all we do is live on benefits or a bit of petty crime or, you know... because we're from Marion, this is what we do. And you're better than that. I always say this to them, you're better than that. Just because you are from here, you can go on to do bigger and better things, you know. It's OK.*" (Interview with Gary)

> "*Another thing as well, and I do say this to Susan and when I've worked with anyone, I think we should raise the expectation of people, people really don't aspire to do a lot of things [on the Marion estate]. And why not? Why shouldn't they? So when you say, what would you really like to do, think bigger than that, and see people get excited about... you could do that, of course you can do that, you can get a job, you can own your own home, you can get a bank account. Basic things that people have never thought they could do, and they just need to be told, yeah, you can, of course you can do that.*" (Interview with Harriet)

Combined, these notions concerning the ideal key worker, external causes of dysfunctional behaviour and lack of engagement by individuals and families on the estate become a '*shared understanding*' held by the group in relation to the delivery of their innovative service model. That is, the pilot team's practice has a number of specific social expectations group members should conform to in their everyday actions, interactions and negotiations. If we look back to the previous section on discursive boundary work, we can see these shared local understandings playing out in actors everyday talk as they diagnose problems and craft solutions.

For example, the shared understanding concerning the *causes of dysfunctional behaviour of those on the estate* appears in visits 7 & 8 when Roy and Amy discursively work to frame Sybil as an individual who has rational reasons for her continued drug use

and lack of engagement in drug treatment. For instance, Sybil uses drugs to self-medicate a serious mental health problem brought on by a trauma experienced early in her life. Or Amy positions her lack of progress in her drug treatment as an artefact of the difficulty associated with tackling amphetamine abuse. As key workers discuss Sybil, their talk is grounded in this shared notion that dysfunctional behaviour is a consequence of the situation a person is embedded in, rather than the person.

Although Roy and Amy are aligning themselves with the shared understandings in visit 7 & 8, that does not mean actors conform to social expectations within a group all of the time. Indeed, negative views concerning the ability of public sector actors to improve lives on the Marion estate were observed at the start of this operational turf war. Amy and Roy had written Sybil off as someone who would or could not *change* (visit 4). These negative views were shown to exist outside of the group as Blanche expressed strong negative views of both Sybil and another client's ability to change suggesting such individuals will not change even when helped (i.e. *"leading a horse to water, if you take the psychologists to them, it won't change"*).

In response to these deviations from the ideal, Gary and Harriet draw on redemption (i.e. no one is beyond help or hope), a central tenet of the pilot team practice, as a resource in their discursive framing to bring Roy and Amy's in line with the group's social expectations. Harriet and Gary talk about various instances of the dangerous behaviour displayed by Sybil to highlight her vulnerability. These statements were then linked back to issues of morality, duty and protectionism, in an effort to shift Amy and Roy from a position of negativity and lack to action, to one that reflects social expectations. Indeed, after these framing attempts, both Amy and Roy start to support Sybil and rationalise her drug use and lack of progress in treatment as consequence of

her circumstances (visits 7 & 8). Significantly, Roy displays an unwavering commitment to these shared local understandings during his prolonged exchange with Blanche towards the end of the turf war (visit 12). When Blanche discursively works to undermine Roy's intervention with Sybil by framing her as "*some people you can't help*", Roy counters these attempts by continually justifying his intervention and continued support of Sybil by casting himself as a knowledgeable and credible practitioner. Eventually, Roy's repeated and continual commitment to the shared local understandings in his self-casting techniques, result in Blanche begrudgingly agreeing to help the pilot team support Sybil.

Finally, the do "*whatever it takes*" expectation manifests itself in Roy and Amy's working practice as they support Sybil. Both Roy and Amy escort Sybil to her appointments, actions that appear above and beyond the standard practice of key workers operating in a traditional manner. When she appears to not be progressing in treatment, rather than giving up on Sybil, the entire pilot team goes off to research alternative forms of treatment for amphetamine abuse in hopes of finding a way that can successfully tackle her amphetamine abuse. This example shows how both Roy and Amy display a central notion and social expectation of pilot team's practice in their daily mundane actions.

Now that I have mapped out the shared local understandings concerning how the pilot team's innovative practice should be done, I can explore how actors draw on these understandings and expectations to create and maintain their innovative practice as a viable way to tackle social problems on the Marion estate. In the next sub-section, I focus specifically on how actors combine elements of these shared understandings with resources like emotions in their everyday talk to create and maintain their

innovative way of working. First, I show how actors tell emotional stories of their clients that highlight the external causes of their dysfunctional behaviour and lack of engagement. These stories, as well as the use of pathos based rhetorical strategies when discussing their clients, evoke emotions like empathy and redemption in their audience to mobilise participation in the practice. Similarly, when clients experience setbacks or achieve limited progress, emotional stories are told to frame this behaviour as rational and expected given the clients' external circumstances. This works to divert disruptive emotions like disillusionment and hopelessness towards the clients and the practice, by continuing to mobilise participation. Next, key actors like Harriet and Susan act as practice custodians by discursively working to repair the moments when a worker's attitudes and behaviours deviate from the ideal by reminding others of the group's shared expectations. Here, actors use emotions in their talk by telling emotional stories or by using emotive language or concepts to repair such breakdowns. Before I present the vignettes of talk that support actors' innovative and maintenance efforts, it is important to provide background concerning the focus of storytelling efforts and delineate some key concepts concerning narratives and storytelling.

5.2 Telling Stories to Create and Maintain a Practice

The stories actors tell as part of their discursive practice work, draw on two narratives created for making sense of the dysfunctional behaviour in clients, in line with the hope and redemption element of the team's shared understanding (see Table 9). Narratives are cognitive frameworks that individuals use to "*understand one's own and other's actions, of organizing events and objects into a meaningful whole and of connecting and seeing the consequences of actions and events over time*" (Chase, 2005 p. 656) at a personal, organisational or societal level. Stories are what individuals tell

when making sense of their lived experience and they draw meaning from the narratives around them. A story can fully reflect a narrative(s), or multiple stories might need to be bundled together to understand the narrative it is drawn from (Pentland, 1999; Chase, 2005). Therefore, if we are to understand stories, we need to consider the overarching narratives these stories work to create otherwise meaning is lost if they are divorced from their context (Mischler, 1986; Boje, 2001; Brown, Denning, Groh & Prusak, 2005).

During the data collection and analysis, two narratives permeated the stories of the pilot team that I have labelled the "*Grieving Family*" and "*Vulnerable Heather*"[36]. Table 10 provides a summary of the main characters in each narrative, the plot and how this links to the causes of dysfunctional behaviour. The Grieving Family narrative surrounds the Smith family: the first big success of the team. The Smith family is narrated as a family who is grieving from the loss of the family matriarch (mother, Margaret), who died suddenly from cancer. Here, dysfunctional behaviour is narrated as a consequence of bereavement and loss as each family member struggles to cope in different, yet rational ways. For the second narrative, Heather is being financially and sexuality exploited by two older men who prey on her vulnerable condition. Heather's behaviour is a consequence of the exploitative and abusive environment she is trapped in, her poor physical health and limited mental capacity. These narratives start out as personal narratives constructed by the front-line workers as they make sense of their experiences working with these families. Although these narratives are personal, they also speak to existing societal (protection, exploitation, family, bereavement) and

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[36] The notion of actors telling narratives that appeal to the superordinate narrative of redemption and some actors having narrative and rhetorical skills was noted in previous publications but was not empirically or theoretically addressed in a substantive way.

organisational (improving lives) narratives. Moreover, Harriet (most frequent story teller), Susan (lesser extent) and Gary (lesser extent) are the most frequent producers of such stories in their talk. The link between these two group narratives will be explicated as I present the different stories told in everyday talk during pilot team meetings.

Table 10: Group narratives actors' storytelling produce

Narrative Elements	Grieving Family	Vulnerable Heather
Characters	Smith Family - Bob (father), Daniel (teenage son), Cheryl (young adult daughter), Chris (youngest school aged child), Nina (grandmother), Margaret (Mum), Andrea (teenage daughter), Matt (adult son)	Heather and her exploiters, Bill and Jim
Plot	Margaret (mum) passed away suddenly from cancer leaving the disabled father as head of the family. Prior to this, the family had not used many services. There were concerns from school that the youngest child was being neglected; Daniel (middle son) was fighting with his siblings and engaging in petty crime; Cheryl (eldest) was struggling to balance responsibilities of both families.	Heather is a prostitute with drug and alcohol addiction. Heather recently lost her mother to a drug overdose with no family. She is young, with a learning disability. Two men who are much older than her are exploiting her by feeding her drug habit, forcing her to turn tricks and then taking all her money. Her physical health is poor. When she tries to leave her exploiters using physical and emotional violence / abuse to keep her in the situation.
Causes of dysfunctional behaviour	Family members are struggling to cope with the loss of Andrea in their own distinct ways.	Financial and sexual exploitation of a vulnerable person – Heather is under the power of older and abusive men and lacks the mental capacity to leave the situation.

Narrative Elements	Grieving Family	Vulnerable Heather
Link to other narratives	Speaks to societal narratives around family, bereavement and loss. Equally it speaks to the team's belief in "hope" and "redemption"	Speaks to societal narratives around protection, exploitation and vulnerability. Equally it speaks to the team belief in "hope" and "redemption"
Story producers	Harriet, Susan, Gary and others	Harriet, Susan, Gary

5.2.1 Telling emotional stories to create the innovative practice as a legitimate way to tackle social problems in Marion

Practice work aimed at creating the innovative service model is necessary as core pilot team members (Susan, Harriet, Marie and Gary) regularly work with those who are indoctrinated in approaches to service delivery that differ substantially from the team's practice. As Susan reflects to the researchers on the second visit, it might appear as everyone is "*on board*" but that is only a relatively new phenomenon. Negative attitudes existed in frontline workers working with the team for some time:

> *"Something that's very interesting is there's massive attitudinal cultural differences amongst the various members of the group, and we seem to be blending those now, so we've been together for a number of weeks, and we're starting to find some common ground. And nobody actually said it in the room, but there were some quite shocking attitudinal differences. [Can you give us an example?] Yes, Daniel was a little shite who would never make good, and, members of the team said, there is no chance, he's going to be in prison and that's all that's going to happen. And when you talk to them now they'll go, oh, he's done so well, it's brilliant. But they seem to forget that they actually had no belief."* (Interview with Susan, Visit 2)

She goes on to discuss how only very recently (as of that meeting) a front-line worker, different to those discussed above, is only just "*coming around*" to embracing the practices:

"…And we were talking about one particular client, and he was like, it'll never work, we've been trying for thirty years. And it was like, well, could we just try again, and could we just try again in a multi…and you could just see on his face, he just had no belief. So we kind of just, yeah, just wooed him, really [laughter]. And just sort of, brought him along to things, and he's, [another worker] just very discreetly, just then, just said to me, he's really on board with this stuff, he's dead excited about it. So yeah, that shift is starting to happen". (Interview with Susan, Visit 2)

As the above extracts demonstrate, not everyone who walks into the meetings is aware of or signed up to the shared local understandings that underpin the pilot team's new practice. Such findings were also observed in the previous section on discursive boundary work. For example, Roy and Amy did not conform to the team's practice at the start of the operational turf war. Indeed both Amy and Roy had written Sybil off as someone who would not or could not "*change*" to improve their life (visit 4). Whilst Blanche (visit 12) regularly expressed negative views concerning Sybil and another client's ability to change (i.e. "*leading a horse to water, if you take the psychologists to them, it won't change*") and whether the team should do whatever it takes to support clients. Therefore core team members must discursively work to create their practice as a legitimate alternative, regularly and persistently over time. One way pilot team actors do this is by narrating emotional stories of their clients' when diagnosing issues and drafting solutions to their problems. Here actors use these stories to evoke emotions like empathy to mobilise participation and to block negative emotions that can stifle creation efforts. Below I present three vignettes from everyday talk to illustrate the various storytelling tactics employed during such discursive practice work.

The first example is drawn from visit 3 when Harriett introduces the researchers to the work of the team by telling different stories about the Smith family (Vignette 4 & 5). In her storytelling, Harriet uses a variety of pathos-based rhetorical strategies (humanising language, metaphors, affective vocabulary) to evoke emotional empathy,

to mobilise people to the shared local understandings that underpin the practice. Firstly she uses *humanising language to emotionally connect these stories to their audience*. For example, in the 'about Dad' and 'about Cheryl' vignette, rather than using depersonalised language like their first name ("*Bob*", "*Margaret*") or the more objective and distanced, *'the' dad*" or *'the' mum*, Harriet refers to them simply as '*dad*' and '*mum*'. In the 'about Cheryl' story she directly compares Cheryl to her own child. By referring to main characters in this way, they emotionally and personally resonate with an audience as we all have a "*dad*", a "*mum*" or a "*child*". This separates the individual clients from their problematic behaviour (unemployment and neglectful parenting; domestics violence between siblings) and instead presents them like any typical person or family.

Vignette 4 - 'About Dad' (Scoping Interview with Harriet)

Harriet: "So they came to the [team's] attention because of domestic violence"

Researcher 1: "Between who?"

Harriet: "Between Daniel and Andrea, they argue like cats and dogs. Because they just, they're very similar in age, and we are still, I know I keep saying this to everyone and I sort of think, I don't think we realise, mum died [less than 6 months ago]."

Researcher 2: "That's not a long time ago."

Harriet: "And five kids lost their mum….When you go into this home, you can quite clearly see, dad is just one of those dads, mum did everything. She was a playground mum, who went to everything. Dad never went to a parents' evening, he never cooked a meal. I wouldn't even imagine he knew how to use the washing machine, let alone…and she died very quickly. So he's suddenly landed, to keep this family together, of five kids, and grieve for his wife. So it just was really complex, really, they just needed a bit of help….I think services may have seen him as neglecting Chris. But really it's not, he's grieving, and he needs some support with that, to manage that…."

Vignette 5 - 'About Cheryl' (Scoping Interview with Harriet)

> *"There was an awful lot of pressure on her shoulders, really. And she, she was grieving, her mum had just died, you know. When I went to meet [her for the first time] I said that I'd come out to meet her because we know that mum had passed away, there had been, before mum died, or just as mum was dying, children were about just to go on Child In Need, and there'd been a few meetings, nobody had attended these meetings. Nobody from the family had gone. Because mum had died, dad's [disabled], so I just sort of went and said, look, I've come, and I know that mum's passed away, we want to help, you know. And this is what we can help with. I just sat down and chatted with her, really. And immediately, she just sat there, it just broke her heart…., and she just cried. She's not that much older than my son. I said, darling, it's absolutely alright to miss your mum. You know?…….she was just an adorable young girl having it really hard."*

Harriet also employs other rhetorical tactics like metaphors and affective vocabulary in her storytelling to engender empathy with her clients' situation in her audience. For example in the 'about Dad' (see Vignette 4), two metaphors are used to narrate the relationship of mum and dad – the "*playground mum*" and "*one of those dads*". These metaphors and the text around them construct the family in the image of a traditional household where the mother is the lynchpin of family life. She takes charge of the cooking, cleaning and child rearing whilst the male figure is removed from these activities. These narration choices emphasise the way the family was in the past, drawing attention to the dramatic change in circumstances caused by the death of Margaret. The family did not just lose a parent, but the parent who held the family together as a functioning unit. Significantly, affective words like "*grieve*", "*grief*", "*lost*", "*died*", "*passed away*", "*cried*", "*broke her heart*" are used frequently when storytelling. Such verbs are overtly emotional and link to social emotions like empathy.

The rhetorical tactics employed in the above stories not only evoke emotions of empathy in the audience but they simultaneously reframe the dysfunctional behaviour as consequence of bereavement and grief re-constructing the client's identity as

redeemable. This is important to creation efforts because it works to block negative emotions like disillusionment and hopelessness towards the people of Marion that can be used to resist the uptake of their practices. For instance, Harriet draws attention to the sudden nature ("*she died quickly*", "*he's suddenly*", "*just died*") as well as the dramatic change in family dynamics caused by Margaret's death. This suggests that the family has had little time to adjust to new familial roles and are in the early stages of grief (anger, bargaining, depression). Moreover, when any dysfunctional behaviour is mentioned it is juxtaposed against emotions of grief and loss. The domestic violence between siblings ("*they fight like cats and dogs*") is discursively positioned near "*mum died recently*" and "*five kids lost their mum*". Whereas, the neglect of the younger children is a consequence of "*he's grieving*", "*she was grieving*", "*mum had just died*". These instances suggest that behaviour is a direct consequence of the situation the family is embedded in, and therefore, is a rational response given their circumstances. Harriet then goes on to suggest that they "*need some support*" or "*a bit of help*" recreating their identity as not hopeless but redeemable.

Vignette 6 - 'About Heather' (First Pilot Team Meeting)

"Someone asks the group how Heather got in the place she is in and Harriet pieces together a story where Heather came to visit or stay with her mom in Marion. Her mother is a drug user, she met these guys and got stuck in a cycle. Her mother just recently died from a drug overdose. She has no other family and a learning disability. Gary explains that these guys are complete tramps. They look like tramps. They are dirty, disgusting and look like hobos, with limps and missing teeth. They are vile and disgusting looking. They live together and one is more evil and manipulative than the other. They beat her up all the time, they steal her money after she pimps and use the money to feed her drug habit and their drinking habit. One is more controlling than the other. There is evidence of financial abuse; domestic violence and domestic abuse; sexual exploitation. They inject her with the drugs and send her out to earn when she starts to detox to make sure

she earns. They follow her everywhere and try to chase any help off. Both Gary and Harriet keep saying "can't give up on her or she will end up dead", "there is something about her which gets under your skin", "you can't forget about her". The big problem is she won't complain or admit anything is wrong and without a crime being committed they are going to struggle to separate her from the men. Harriet says it is about "building up trust' first". (Observation Note)

"It is interesting because both Gary and Harriet tell an incredibly compelling story about Heather. Arguably her story is compelling - there are no questions about that. But it is very emotive in the way it is put across by both of them. Like when Gary was discussing the two men who are pimping out and injecting her...he looked me straight in the eye and said these aren't your typical picture of what you think of as 'pimps' from TV. They are dirty, disgusting and look like hobos, with limps and missing teeth. They intimidate her with their dogs, beat her and threaten to take the drugs away and steal all her money. Harriet has tried to reach out to her and they have been trying to intimidate Harriet. Or hang around when Heather tries to speak to Harriet. Gary keeps saying about how "there is something about Heather, "the kid just gets under your skin and you can't give up on her", and whilst Gary agrees she is chaotic and infuriating at times "she just get under your skin", "you can't give up on her or she will end up dead". This is something both Harriet and Gary tell the group. Harriet identifies with Heather it is all about "building up trust with her". What I love about Harriet talking about these families is how she humanizes them. She paints a vivid picture about how poorly Heather is describing individual symptoms of her poor health, about her hair (her roots are a mess) and make-up, and having a dream of a job, how vulnerable and skipped over she is. Gary is very much the same about her situation reminding everyone if they don't get involved she will be dead and deserves a chance." (Field Note)

A similar pattern in storytelling emerges when Harriet and Gary start discussing a relatively new case to the team, Heather (see Vignette 6). Where in the previous vignette, the narrator was just Harriet, it is now Harriet and Gary who are telling the story of Heather. Like previous rhetorical strategies, metaphors and affective vocabulary are employed to evoke emotions like empathy, indignation and outrage with Heather's

situation. Her exploiters are narrated as "*tramps*" which is used to counter underlying social imagery that may glamourise the idea of a pimp. Instead affective language like "*evil*", "*vile*", "*manipulative*", "*disgusting*" and "*controlling*" are used to describe these men. The abusive and exploitative acts being done to Heather are vividly described with an emphasis on her lack of agency in the situation – "*they follow her everywhere*", "*they chase off help*", "*they inject her*". This emphasises that her prostitution and drug use is caused by external forces and therefore are a consequence of her exploitation. Arguably, the most emotional and persuasive rhetoric is the utterance of "*we can't give up on her or she will end up dead*". Where the Smith family's situation was narrated as redeemable in a straightforward way ("*just needing a bit of help*"), Heather's situation is far more complex and drastic. She needs to be removed from this hopeless situation otherwise the alternative will be death. Harriet suggests it is just a matter of "*building up trust with her*" to work towards redemption and therefore redemption is discursively constructed as possible.

5.2.2 Telling emotional stories to maintain the innovative practice as a legitimate way to tackle social problems in Marion within the pilot team

Core pilot team members tell emotional stories to maintain the team's practice over time. Firstly, team members tell emotive stories of client's behaviour to divert disruptive emotions in an attempt to fend off resistance to the new service. As mentioned earlier, the progress of clients can unravel quickly and frequently due in part to their deep and entrenched problems. Therefore, any transgressions can negatively affect emotions and attitudes in the team towards clients, and the effectiveness of the practice. By telling emotional stories of client's transgressions in such a way that the transgression seems reasonable under the given circumstances, pilot team members

can trigger empathy with the client's situation. Consequently, actors can play down their backwards steps whilst continuing to frame clients as redeemable, to maintain the practice as efficacious and a legitimate way of working.

Vignette 7 – Narrating Dad's Outburst (Pilot Team Meeting 2, Visit 4)

"They expand further and it appears that Dad threatened to throw Daniel off his training programme (due to the lack of money), which triggered the intervention of children services and nearly ruined 6 months of work. Harriet says she is seeing them individually and separately every week. Dad spends time with "the little one" and the older ones feel left out and craving his attention but dad doesn't appear to care. Mum was the lynch pin of the family. There is a suggestion that dad wants to be their friend and not their parent as Margaret did the parenting. Now dad just sits on the sofa, smoking cannabis. Nan yells at him to try to snap him out of it but it's not working. Angela and her little one are staying away from the house because it is so negative. Gary and Harriet talk about how grim it is in the house – Dad sits on the sofa, curtains are never opened and he doesn't leave the house. Harriet says the kitchen table is covered with bills and paperwork and some of the mum's stuff in still in a huge pile and no one else dares to touch it. I think Nan tried to get dad to go through it and started throwing things away and he freaked out at her. Whole meeting room agrees it is so hard and clear the family is still grieving." (Observation Note)

"There is quite a bit of talk about how difficult it is in the house and how the family is still grieving. Chris has a lot of health issues and didn't leave the house much anyway but since Margaret has died he hasn't left at all. Nan is stepping into Margaret's role the best she can. But Gary and Harriet paint a very convincing picture of how sad things are in the family and humanizing their situation. It is hard to not be overwhelmed by it. Gary told some very powerful and emotive stories about Chris today and so did Harriet. The bit about the kitchen table and refusing to clean up or move Margaret's things. The bit about them lacking a father figure because Chris wants to be their friend and not their parent as Margaret did the parenting. All of this backs up the point Harriet keeps making about them being a 'grieving family' so these behaviours and outbursts are justified it feels in light of these issues." (Field Note)

Vignette 7 highlights an example of this discursive work during the second pilot team meeting. It appears that Dad had stopped Daniel from attending the training programme he was engaging well with, nearly triggering an intervention from Children's Services. The reasons presented for this was that the training programme was not on an approved provider list, resulting in the family losing £20 a week of benefit income. Harriet managed to smooth this over by providing the family with £20 from an alternative funding source whilst she supported the programme (small local charity) in filing the paperwork to become an approved provider. There was a sense of frustration with dad because this action could have undone the progress of the team. This was attributed to the fact that Dad is suspicious of authorities, in particular children's services because his wife was a "*looked after child*". Therefore, Daniel not attending training or education would have triggered a visit from Children's Services and eroded the trust the team had built with the family.

To divert negative emotions towards Dad, both Gary and Harriet immediately start telling emotive stories about the depth and significance of dad's grief after discussing his transgression. Affective adjectives like "*dark*", "*grim*" and "*negative*" are used to describe the house. The plot line about being the children's friend paints his lack of parenting as a consequence of his wife being the 'parent'. Therefore he doesn't know how to be the parent and doing so would involve accepting his wife is not there. The most emotive plotline is Dad refusing to let anyone move papers off the kitchen the table. Here, dad is positioned as deep in grief and unwilling to move on. The stories achieve their intended outcome as the group collectively agrees how hard the family has it and the sadness of their situation, with no one challenging the potentially

destructive behaviour of Dad. Instead dad's behaviour is framed as rational and the audience has empathy towards his situation, rather than frustration or disappointment.

It is important to consider that these stories and rhetorical style are spoken in front of an audience of individuals that are external to the team and occupy an elite position (i.e. researchers). In so much that, we could potentially influence key decisions around access to financial resources and decisions regarding the long-term sustainability of the team due to our research. Therefore it is worth considering whether such discursive tactics are told to "*put on a show*" or are genuine routine artefacts of actors' everyday talk. The above vignettes demonstrate how the stories are told in varying scenarios, for different purposes and by different actors, suggesting they are employed when persuasion is needed. Moreover, such discursive tactics have become regular features of pilot team members' talk over the course of the fieldwork (see Vignette 8).

Vignette 8 – Routinisation of storytelling and rhetorical style

"Gary now speaks about the family like Harriet does. It isn't Bob – its 'dad', 'nan', 'our Daniel'. Gary told some very powerful and emotive stories about Bob today and so did Harriet." (Observation Note)

"Around this point there is quite a lot of sympathy around the room for dad who is grieving. The emotion is palatable especially when Susan talks about when they met and how much Bob adored his wife and is lost without her. A lot of muttering about how this family grieving from different members as they recount the family's story. It didn't take much prompting at all either if that makes sense. Normally in the past Harriet would put forward a 'case' for their plight but it just nearly happened in a way if that make sense. The feels are becoming quite normalized now for this family. This is particularly evident as Harriet normally call them dad, mom, nan etc. but Sally, Edward and Gary were using this language to talk about them in the front of the group. It wasn't just Harriet." (Field Note)

For instance, storytelling was the preserve of Susan and Harriet but as time progresses, Gary, Roy and Edward use such tactics when discussing the Smith family or Heather during meetings. A similar pattern emerges when one considers the use of humanising language. For instance, I note in visit 4 how Gary starts to use humanising language when talking about the Smith family. In the beginning they were referred to by their first name but when discussing them at visit 4 and onwards they are now "*nan*", "*dad*", "*little one*". The same goes for other more peripheral members like Edward (he steps in for Susan when she is unavailable to attend pilot team meetings). In pilot team meeting 6, he refers to Smith family members as "*dad*", "*our Daniel*" and uses the grieving family narrative when discussing the progress of the family. This demonstrates how the shared local understandings concerning the causes of dysfunctional behaviour, optimism and redemption started to embed and become a routine feature of pilot team members' everyday talk beyond key players like Harriet and Susan. Therefore, the on-going regularity of such features suggests it is not used to put on a show but instead is the routine social action actors' engage in to get the job done.

5.3   Using Emotions to Repair Practice Breakdowns

Following the work of the pilot team over time demonstrates that the creation of a practice is not a linear process of smoothly moving from creation to the routinisation of the practices into actors' everyday mundane actions. Breakdowns in practice can occur regardless of how routinised they may be, because practices involve an ongoing and evolving process of social construction (Yanow & Tsoukas, 2009; Lok & de Rond, 2013). Whilst in some cases these breakdowns might be insignificant (temporary disruption to the flow of a practice), they can build on each other to eventually becoming a source of change (Yanow & Tsoukas, 2009). Therefore,

breakdowns can threaten the organising principles of a practice resulting in maintenance work being needed to ensure stability over time (Dacin et al., 2010; Lok & de Rond, 2013). Such efforts are significant and relevant to this empirical case as those that appear on-board (e.g. Gary and Roy) still have moments where they slip back into previous and opposing belief systems, attitudes and behaviours. In contrast, Harriet and Susan never waver from the team's shared local understandings over the five months of fieldwork. Their unrelenting commitment to the practice resulted in them often acting as practice *custodians* (Lok & De Rond, 2013). That is whenever a frontline worker deviated from the shared local understandings by displaying disillusionment towards clients or not doing "whatever it takes", Harriet or Susan would discursively challenge these attitudes and behaviours until they were reversed and the offenders displayed the social expectations in their talk or practice. Below I present a number of different episodes from the actors' everyday action that highlights the unrelenting nature of these custodians when they face both overt and subtle practice breakdowns.

5.3.1   Episode 1 – "Groundhog Day" with Richard

During pilot team meeting 3, Roy and Susan start to discuss the progress of a client named Richard (see Vignette 9). Largely Roy is of the attitude dealing with Richard is like "*Groundhog Day*". Every time he starts a new tenancy he promises he will not use drugs and stop associating with certain people but instead he repeats this pattern of behaviour. Although Roy recognises that Richard says he wants support to change, Roy has never experienced him engaging or trying to change his behaviour. For these reasons, Roy feels it should be case closed and the team should walk away from helping Richard when he is transferred off the estate. This talk is an overt breakdown in Roy's practice as he expresses disillusionment in regards to Richard's ability to change and

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unwillingness to do "whatever it takes" by absolving the team of any further support or responsibility towards Richard.

Vignette 9 - 'About Richard' (Pilot Team Meeting 3, Visit 7)

"Susan does not want to give up on Richard [Pseudonym], who has been dealing drugs but they [the police] haven't been able to bust him. He has been moved because a father of one of the young lads he sold drugs to has attacked him at home and said if he caught him dealing again he was going to kill him. Richard of course played this down as he is good at "staying under the radar" as Roy says. Roy feels Richard's behaviour is never going to change and feels the only solution is to get him off the estate and a) be someone else's problem or b) maybe see if another agency can tackle him better. But he is beyond hope. Susan disagrees and feels moving Richard shouldn't prevent their involvement because it doesn't fix the problem and she wants to try to turn him around. She keeps coming back to what he wants and what would be successful and how could they help. Roy keeps saying [a local social enterprise] offers loads and loads of support packages and implies the partnership group's help isn't needed. Roy definitely has an "I wash my hands of this" demeanour but Susan wasn't having it and brought him around to agreeing to speak to [the social enterprise] and offer the group's continued involvement which I don't think Roy agreed with but backed down and agreed to do it. I find it interesting because it does seem that Richard is a pretty despicable human being but Susan doesn't let this cloud her opinions. She wants to help regardless because she really believes that everyone deserves a chance." (Observation Note)

Once Susan experiences these diversions, she works to repair such breakdowns by appealing to both rational and normative resources in her talk. For example, "*all we are doing is moving him elsewhere, the behaviour will stay the same, it will just be in another district*" and "*moving the tenancy doesn't mean the problem is solved, some of group will follow him to the his new place and that isn't that far away*". Here she uses rational resources (i.e. desire to reduce service demand) by drawing attention to the fact moving Richard will not solve the problem (high volume of police call outs) but just

move them from one estate to another. Arguably, the pilot team is focused on reducing demand on the Marion estate, but their work is part of a wider programme of service reduction across the borough. She also appeals to normative and emotional resources of redemption and hope when she counters Roy by suggesting that "*maybe he has learned some lessons*" this time and "*he is very vulnerable at this moment and needs something good in his life*". In this vignette, she continually challenges Roy's attempts to frame Richard is a lost cause and the team should walk away and not do "whatever it takes" – all of which contravenes the team's shared local understandings. Susan does not ignore or tolerate these breakdowns but instead repeatedly works to reverse them. She keeps working until Roy relents and agrees to bring his practice in line with that of an ideal key worker. This episode is an example of an overt practice breakdown that is repaired by drawing on emotional and rational field resources in the everyday talk of practice custodians.

5.3.2   Episode 2 – Gary's frustration with Heather

Harriet acts as custodian, particularly when overt breakdowns occur in relation to the support of Heather. Gary at times gets frustrated with Heather's behaviour and expresses much disillusionment concerning her inability to change and have a normal life (i.e. paying her bills, stopping her interaction with her exploiters, giving up drink and drugs). Harriet (and Susan to a lesser degree) discursively works to reverse these sentiments by narrating emotional stories of Heather as a way to explicitly remind others of the shared local understandings. Specifically, Harriet uses these emotional stories to draw attention to Heather's vulnerability to engender empathy and frame her behaviour as a consequence of external factors, to reverse Gary's emotions toward Heather from frustrated to supportive and sympathetic (see Vignette 10).

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When Gary expresses frustration with Heather's inability to get her gas connected or sort her rent arrears he frames her as being "*away with fairies*" and refusing to take responsibility and ownership. Such framing contravenes shared local understandings that dysfunctional behaviour is a consequence of the situations and circumstances the individual is embedded in, not the individual. Harriet and Susan then start to tell stories that draw attention to her learning disability and the obtuse and bureaucratic nature of system and processes. For example, Harriet narrates how *she* struggles to navigate the system by spending hours on the phone with British Gas, therefore what hope do their clients have to sort such issues.

Vignette 10 – Vulnerable Heather (Pilot Team Meeting 4, Visit 8)

"Gary raises this issue of responsibility- how clients don't care, they don't hang onto important documents because they don't care and need to take responsibility for their problems.

Susan said for people like Heather she is "baffled by everything" so she doesn't have any chance. They need extra help.

Gary says that Bill is breeching his bail and drinking on Heather's street and he is annoyed because he saw Bill, Jim, Heather drinking together and they look really happy.

Harriet jumps to Heather's defence and says they "won't leave her alone". Gary is totally aware but still annoyed with Heather. Harriet says he is a 60 year old man and she is a 24 year old. Susan says that it is probably easier to give in than fight it.

Harriet says – Bill has been winding some kids up on First Street and got them to target Heather who are now spitting at Heather and calling her names.

Kev says well he shouldn't be on First Street

Harriet – says she has lost all hope." (Observation Note)

Alternatively, when Gary expresses his frustration with Heather's continuing to interact with Bill and Jim, Harriet tells stories that draw attention to rational reasons for

Heather's behaviour. They highlight how interacting with them is the "*easiest*" option. Harriet narrates how the men sit outside her flat and "*goad her with a bag of cans*" as an attempt to bribe her to leave her flat and drink with them. Or how the men get others to abuse Heather when they are not around. Even though a restraining order exists, they still find ways to tempt Heather back into group or punish her for leaving the group. These stories narrate the hopelessness Heather feels to engender sympathy with her situation and explain why she can't just walk away from these men. Eventually, these stories convince Gary to shift his emotions from those of frustration to supportive and sympathetic. Towards the end of the exchange he relents and says "*there is just something about her, she just gets under your skin, although she can drive you insane*".

5.3.3   Episode 3 – Heather is going to college

The previous two episodes illustrate how custodians repair overt and explicit practice breakdowns as they happen in everyday talk. But they also repair more minor and subtle breakdowns. For example, in the second pilot team meeting (Vignette 11), Harriet discusses how she will get Heather to College in September and the initial reaction is laughter from the group. In my post fieldwork reflection, I noted how people were positive about helping Heather in the room, but the laughter indicated getting her into education was impossible or ludicrous aspiration. Here, no one overtly and explicitly challenges the shared understanding of aspiring to achieve a "*normal*" life, but there are underlying indications of a possible nonconformity (i.e. disillusionment towards Harriet's plans). In response, Harriet quickly narrates an emotive story of sitting in a car with Heather alone, and Heather telling Harriet "*no cares about girls like me*". Almost immediately, this story brings the team back around to displaying ideal worker attitudes and behaviours.

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5.3.4 Episode 4 & 5 – Doing whatever it takes to help

During pilot team meeting 4, Roy starts to discuss the progress of Sybil and mentions her predilection to engage in magic whereby she casts spells that can involve setting things on fire in her flat (Vignette 12). Largely, Roy sees the behaviour as an activity that is a product of her poor mental health that should be discouraged given the health and safety implications. On the converse, Susan suggests this could be a way "in" with Sybil. Here, Susan asks Roy a series of questions concerning how and why Sybil cast spells and then attempts to convince Roy he could use her interest in such activities to help her engage in treatment. Arguably, Roy is displaying practices that fit with doing "*whatever it takes*" by putting notices up in her flat and taking her to treatment. Yet, Susan is pushing him to *really* think outside of the box in regards to his support of Sybil. On the surface, the comments from Susan could be interpreted as a joke given the nature of the subject material, but Susan was not joking. Once the room starts to laugh at her suggestion, she continues to try to convince them that this could be a viable strategy.

> **Vignette 12: 'About Sybil' (Pilot Team Meeting 4, Visit 8)**

"Roy discusses how he has had many discussions with her and has been putting up all these notices to stop her constantly getting herself locked out and about not burning stuff in her flat. It seems that she has stopped setting fires and getting locked out and then harassing her neighbours which is a positive. She has started to go treatment but has a terrible short term memory so Jim takes her but she won't remember she needs someone to take her. Susan asks about her spell casting? [Note in previous meetings it emerged the fires were started by Sybil burning items during spell casting to warn off spirits]. She asks if there is anything in the spell casting that is positive that they could use to get her engaged? Maybe get her into a spell casting group? Most of the room is cracking up at this point and laughing. Roy says laughing "I don't know much about spell casting". Roy doesn't think we should be encouraging the spell casting. He is trying to discourage it at the moment. But Susan prods further and asks how long has Sybil been involved with it? Has it been awhile? Roy thinks only recently she got a book on it and that the behaviour is more psychotic rather than spell casting. Susan suggests maybe they should encourage it because it would give her something positive to focus on. 'Maybe there is a Marion Magic Group she could join?"(Observation Note)

"Again here is Susan trying to find something that will work to get Sybil engaged and off the drugs. Even suggesting they encourage the magic as a way to her engaged in something else or use it as a lever to get her off it. Roy feels the magic is a coping mechanism to deal with her psychosis which she won't recognise as a problem and makes worse through her drug abuse. How does one overcome such entrenched problems? Roy appears to be like –let it be and make sure she doesn't harm herself whilst Susan is more into doing whatever it takes to save her and getting her off the drugs." (Field Note)

This vignette is important because it highlights the intense commitment of custodians to the practice as well as a different type of discursive practice work. During Susan's scoping interview she discusses how doing whatever it takes involves finding anything, no matter how small, to try and engage people by gaining their trust. In the above vignette, her everyday talk reflects this deep commitment through her willingness

to encourage something as random and off-the-wall as sorcery in a tenacious and dogged way. Whilst in vignette 8, she keeps pushing Harriet to think of a way, some way, to get an "in" with Heather. What is interesting in both of these vignettes is that neither Roy nor Harriet are deviating from social expectations of an ideal key worker in such a way to create a breakdown in practice. Indeed, Harriet is seen as the exemplar of working in the pilot team's innovative way, yet Susan is still pushing and trying to develop Harriet's practice. In these instances, Susan acts more like a coach, pushing team members to go above and beyond or think further afield in regards to how they support their clients. Rather than maintaining the practice in a typical custodian-like fashion, Susan works to motivate pilot team members to improve their existing ways of working even though they roughly adhere to social expectations.

Vignette 13 - 'About Heather' (Pilot Team Meeting 1, Visit 2)

"Harriet wants the police to wait a bit and build more trust and get Heather less chaotic in her life. She wants to get her to the chemist and support her to maybe get on a treatment plan first [anything else] might spook her. Susan jumps in about a plan for well-being – trying to find what Heather wants in life....is it a job, a letter box / job in a grocery story. What does Heather like? Harriet says everybody wants a blow dry so Harriet has arranged to get her hair done for her mother's funeral. Susan is pushing Harriet about what they can do to get in with her....Harriet says she might know but she doesn't want to go in 'all guns blazing' with her." (Observation Note)

5.4   Summary of the Emotions and Discursive Practice Work

In this Chapter (Figure 12), I provided insight into the micro-level institutional work carried out by actors as they work to legitimate their innovative practice as a credible way to tackle social problems on the Marion estate (RQ1). They do this by drawing on a readily available resource like emotions in their discursive practice work

aimed at creating and maintaining their new and innovative practice (RQ1a). Actors use discursive acts such as emotional storytelling and pathos based rhetorical tactics to mobilise participation in the service delivery model but also to pre-emptively block negative emotions that could be used to resist their new way of working. Moreover, stories and emotive language are told by practice custodians to repair any practice breakdowns to maintain the credibility and participation in the practice over time. Specifically, Harriet and Susan discursively challenge any emotions, attitudes or behaviours that explicitly or implicitly deviated from shared local understandings and expectations. Interestingly, Susan routinely pushes pilot team members to continually exceed social expectations.

In the next chapter, I will consider how actors' discursive boundary and practice work in the context of public service innovation furthers our understanding of institutional work and institutional change. Specifically, I will first argue how the findings provide clarity concerning how institutional work occurs on the ground by highlighting what actors actually 'do' in their everyday practice. I argue that the findings show how work aimed at creating, maintaining or disrupting elements of institutions is not a simple dichotomy between change and stability, it is far more messy, overlapping and complex process than is commonly perceived in the literature. Next, I argue how the findings offer conceptual clarity into the role of agency in 'work' by shedding light on *who* does institutional work and *what* (i.e. effort and intentionality) constitutes such work. Where the extant literature privileges the role of institutional elites in stability and change, I demonstrate how front-line workers and middle managers who lack traditional sources of power, can make things happen in a highly institutionalised environment. In particular such change can occur through what can be perceived as benign and often mundane

activities. Moreover, I demonstrate how the findings shed light on the often ignored dimensions of agency like iterative and practical-evaluative. Here, I find that activities are an 'effortful' accomplishment, with some being harder than others. Lastly, I discuss how frontline key workers and middle managers draw on a mix of field level resources (normative, experiential, rational, and emotional) in their discourse and everyday talk to alter boundaries, jurisdictions and practices in their field. Moreover the field position of actors in terms of proximity to the pilot team built credibility in their talk more so than actor status. Importantly the creation of a relational space like the pilot team meetings was crucial to maintaining momentum of the innovation as actors developed social bonds and commitment to the practices and worked to repair breakdowns to shared local understandings that underpinned the practice.

Figure 12: Summary of the discursive practice work observed during pilot team meetings

Actors Everyday Action	Aim of the Practice Work	Purpose of the Practice Work
Telling stories and using pathos based rhetorical strategies to mobilise empathy for a client's situation to create a sense of duty to help them	Evoke emotions to recruit actors	Creating the practice as a credible way to tackle social problems on the Marion Estate (Creation)
Telling stories and using pathos based rhetorical strategies to reframe dysfunctional behaviour of clients as a consequence of situations are embedded	Blocking negative emotions to the new practice	
Telling stories and using pathos based rhetorical strategies to reconstruct client identities as redeemable rather than hopeless		
Telling stories and using pathos based rhetorical strategies to counter client behaviour that could engender negative emotions	Diverting disruptive emotions to fend off potential resistance	
Telling stories and using emotions to remind others of social expectations when emotions, attitudes or behaviour deviate *explicitly* from shared local understandings		Maintaining shared local understandings and social expectations (Maintenance)
Telling stories and using emotions to remind others of social expectations when emotions, attitudes or behaviour deviate *implicitly* from shared local understandings	Repairing practice breakdowns	
Pushing frontline workers to develop their practice almost beyond social expectations		
Co-opting of stories and rhetorical style by others in and around the pilot team in their everyday work	Embed and routinisation	

CHAPTER 6 – DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In this chapter, I discuss the findings from the analysis of the fieldwork in relation to how the thesis contributes to furthering our understanding of institutional theory, institutional work and public service innovation. In regards to contribution to institutional theory, I start by focusing on how the study develops our knowledge of the micro-processes and micro-social dynamics involved in institutionalisation. This research shows that institutional change is not a linear and dichotomous process that smoothly transitions from change to stability in a simplified way, as most field level studies suggest (Zilber, 2002; Delbridge & Edwards, 2008; Bechky, 2011; Kaghan & Lounsbury, 2011; Smets & Jarzabkowski, 2013). I present a new heuristic that illustrates how at the 'coal face of everyday life', these processes are inherently messy as such efforts are contested, situational and non-linear in nature. Drawing on this understanding, I present a new typology that highlights how the situated nature of work creates a multi-dimensional and overlapping nature in micro-level institutional processes. Together, these findings suggest the seminal typology of institutional work (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006) that presents institutional work as a set of discrete categories focused on a specific activity or outcome, over simplifies this phenomenon. Instead, actors combine different types of work in a single discursive setting, use a discursive tactic for a multitude of different outcomes (creation, maintenance and disruption) and work aimed at a particular outcome often produces different and unintended consequences. Therefore, institutional work appears as much more complex and nuanced concept than what is often presented in the literature.

Next, I demonstrate how the research broadens our understanding of the type of actors who are consequential to institutional stability and change. Much of the institutional literature focuses on powerful actors (Battilana, 2011), elites (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Gawer & Phillips, 2013) and professional associations (Greenwood et al., 2002) – all of which have high levels of perceived legitimacy and control over resources in their field. This research highlights how low power actors like frontline public service delivery agents and middle managers in a public service organisation can influence elements of institutions. Specifically, I present a new heuristic that explicates the antecedents and dynamics that facilitate low power actor agency. Here, I describe in detail the field conditions, field position and social conditions that facilitated such actors to not only seek change but enabled some to be more successful with their discursive institutional work than others.

Lastly, I focus on how the study furthers our understanding of the agency of individuals and their relationship to institutions and institutional work. Scholars have repeatedly criticised institutional literature for a lack of empirical attention into two key areas of agency - intentionality and effort (Lawrence et al., 2009, 2011; Smets & Jarzabkowski 2013). In regards to intentionality, most studies tend to focus solely on the purposeful strategic actions of foresighted actors through planned change and instead ignore what actors do in the here and now (practical–evaluative agency) (Smets & Jarzabkowski 2013). The observational nature of this study enables us to study such practical-evaluative dimensions of agency. These findings show that such agency is neither mindless reproduction nor unconstrained agency but is more nuanced in real life. The institutional work employed in the here and now varies in intentionality and effort. In some instances, such institutional work is highly intentioned and is "hard" work

as they have to repeatedly debate and persuade others at regular intervals. Whilst at other times, the work has intention but requires less creativity or effort to achieve the intended outcomes. Those experiencing the institutional work and reacting with maintenance work do so with intention and great and sustained effort. Combined such insights are important to help us understand the lived experience of actors, an area which has scant empirical attention (Lawrence et al., 2009, 2011; Voronov & Vince, 2012; Lawrence et al., 2013).

In regards to contribution to public service innovation, this study is one of a few empirically based studies that explore how frontline service delivery agents challenge legitimated ways of working and reconstruct taken-for-granted practices when pursuing an innovative public service (see De Vries et al., 2016). This is crucial to furthering our understanding as little is known in regards to how low power actors deliver such activity on the ground (Lipsky, 1980; Thomann, 2015 – see Section 2.1.1). Using a new typology of resources, field position and status, I demonstrate how actors use a mix of different resources in their discursive boundary work. Here, frontline key workers and middle managers draw on a mix of field level resources (normative, experiential, rational) in their discourse and everyday talk to alter boundaries and jurisdictions in their field. This is not a straightforward process, as actors both inside and outside of the team often challenge and undermine these efforts. Often low power actors, like frontline workers draw on experiential and normative resources in their discourse. In contrast, managers tend to frequently use rational resources, in addition to normative and experiential resources. Moreover, these actors also use emotions as a resource in their talk to legitimise their practice as a credible alternative to those that dominate the field in their discursive practice work.

Another contribution to the public service innovation literature, is the insight the study provides into the crucial role of field position rather than status on the outcomes of actors institutional work. The new typology presented show how field position rather than status impacts on how actors access the resources used in their work but also the effectiveness of their work in relation to achieving intended institutional outcomes (maintenance vs innovation). This is significant as often the related literature on institutional change (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2006; Battilana et al. 2009) and institutional work (Lawrence et al., 2013) tends to privilege status over field position. By combining these insights with the work of Heimer (1999), I demonstrate how the field position of the actors in terms of proximity to the pilot team builds credibility in their talk more so than actor status. The frequent and persistent interactions in meaning construction of pilot team members over time, results in their talk having significant credibility with the group over talk presented by outsiders regardless of status. Moreover, the pilot team meetings were reminiscent of a *relational space* (Kellogg, 2009), which created an ongoing safe space where reformers could mobilise and subsequently challenge dominant practices. This was crucial to maintaining the momentum of the innovation by helping actors to develop social bonds, build commitment to the practice, and repair breakdowns to shared local understandings. Moreover, the presence of pilot team members at the strategic team meetings was crucial to sharing knowledge between the operational and strategic levels. This was used to legitimise the innovation in the eyes of top managers and rebuke efforts by other middle managers to undermine the credibility of the team and innovative practice.

6.1   Contributions to Institutional Theory & Institutional Work

In recent years, institutional theory has shifted from a deterministic and structural view of organisation behaviour to advocate the importance of actor agency in understanding how institutions work (e.g. Giddens, 1993; Phillips et al., 2000; Dacin et al., 2002). Theoretical concepts like institutional work emerged to reorient the focus of institutional theory on how agency - in particular how human actions - create, maintain and disrupt institutions (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Lawrence et al., 2013). Although this stream of scholarship has furthered our understanding of the link between agency, institutions and organisation life, there remains a set of neglected and overlooked issues which demand further attention to move this area of scholarship forward (Lawrence et al., 2013). In this sub-section, I focus on how the thesis contributes to such neglected areas in relation to *how* institutional work occurs, *who* does institutional work and *what* constitutes institutional work. I start by presenting a new heuristic that illustrates the situated nature of the institutional work. Drawing on this understanding, I present a new typology to show how such a feature creates a multi-dimensional and overlapping nature in the micro-level institutional processes supported by this work. Next, I present a new heuristic that explicates the antecedents and dynamics of low status actor agency. I then conclude by providing a rare insight into the effort and intentionality involved when actors exercise their practical-evaluative agency.

6.1.1 How institutional work occurs? – The 'messy' nature of the micro-processes of institutional stability and change

An objective of the study was to understand how organisational actors go about changing established routines, practices and forms by exploring the nature of institutional work employed during the delivery of a innovative public service. By adopting a research method that enabled me to capture social action *in situ* and *in vivo*,

I am able to provide insights into such micro-level action that is rarely captured in the institutional literature by studying what actors actually 'do' that results in the processes identified via direct observation of their day-to-day practice (Barley, 2008; Powell & Colyvas, 2008; Lawrence et al., 2011; Kaghan & Lounsbury, 2011; Lawrence et al., 2013; Smets & Jarzabkowski, 2013). Specifically, I found that at a micro-level, the institutional work employed by actors is situated in the social interactions on the ground. Such a feature leads to an inherent messiness and complexity in terms of the outcomes of the work. That is, the different micro-processes associated with creation, maintenance, disruption and transformation are not organised, discrete categories that flow in a systematic manner, like that often presented in the literature (Lawrence et al. 2013). Instead, these processes are multi-dimensional, overlapping, negotiated and contested in nature as demonstrated by a new heuristic (Figure 13) and new typology (Table 11) presented later in this subsection. Resulting in processes that are far more elaborate and convoluted than what is often assumed.

The analysis showed that organisational actors in the pilot team, engaged in a mix of *discursive boundary work* and *discursive practice work* in their routine activities as they sought to establish their innovative public service as a credible alternative to dominant approaches in their field. Here, actors used a range of discursive practices in their everyday talk to influence relationships and action in their field (Hardy et al., 2000; Zilber, 2008). For instance, boundary work involved those inside and outside of the pilot team deploying discursive frames and framing tactics to legitimatise or delegitimise who has jurisdiction to engage in specific activities or practices in the field. Whilst, practices were created, maintained and transformed through the use of discursive acts like

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Figure 13: A new heuristic explicating the situated nature of institutional work[37]

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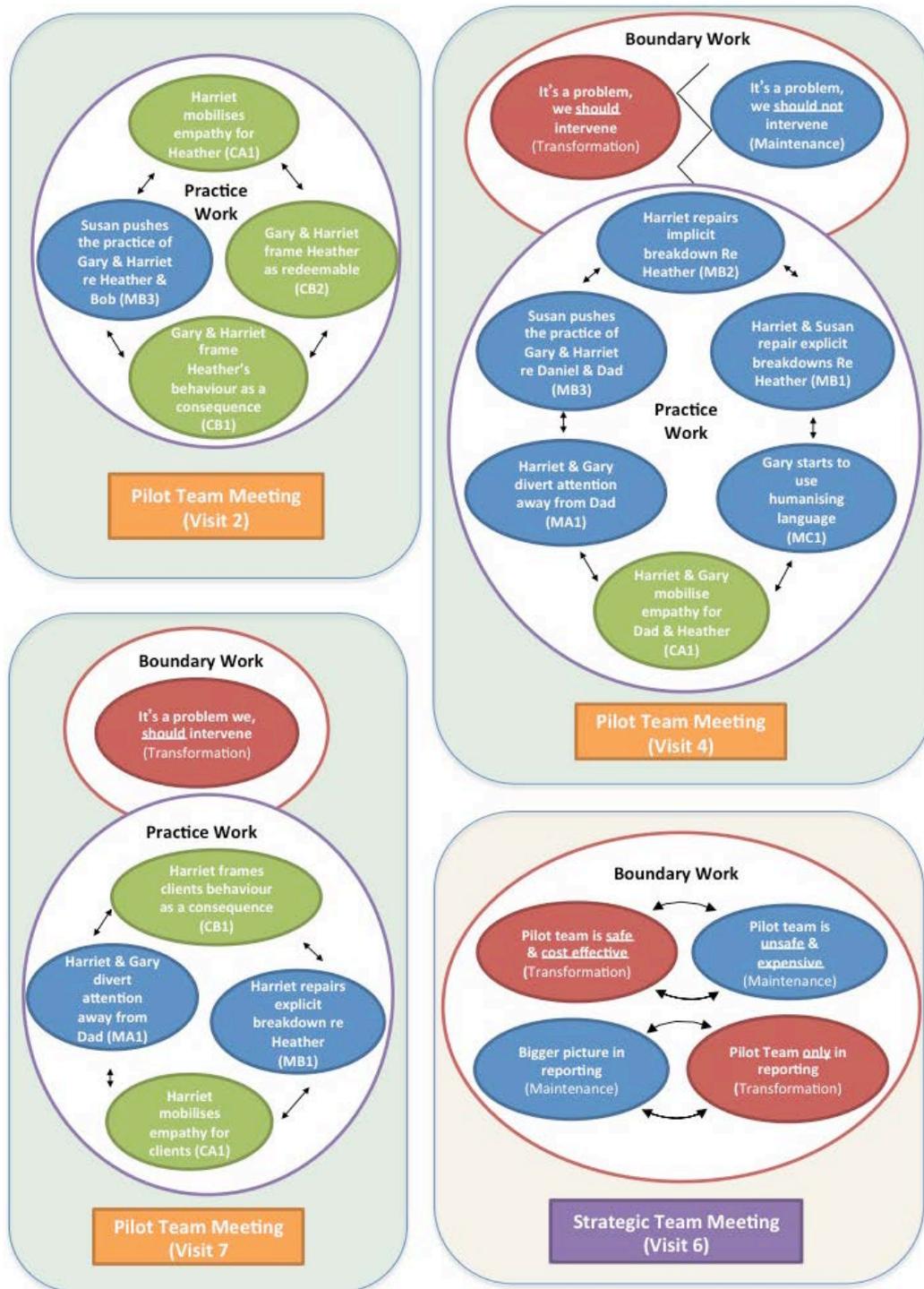
[37] Evoke emotions to recruit actors by mobilising empathy (CA1); Block negative emotions to the practice by framing dysfunctional behaviour as a consequence of situations (CB1) or reconstructing identities as redeemable (CB2); Divert disruptive emotions to fend off resistance by countering behaviours that could engender negative emotions (MA1); Repairing explicit practice breakdowns (MB1); Repairing implicit practice breakdowns (MB2); Pushing service quality in front line workers (MB3); Evidence of the co-opting of stories and rhetorical style by others (MC1).

Figure 13: continued
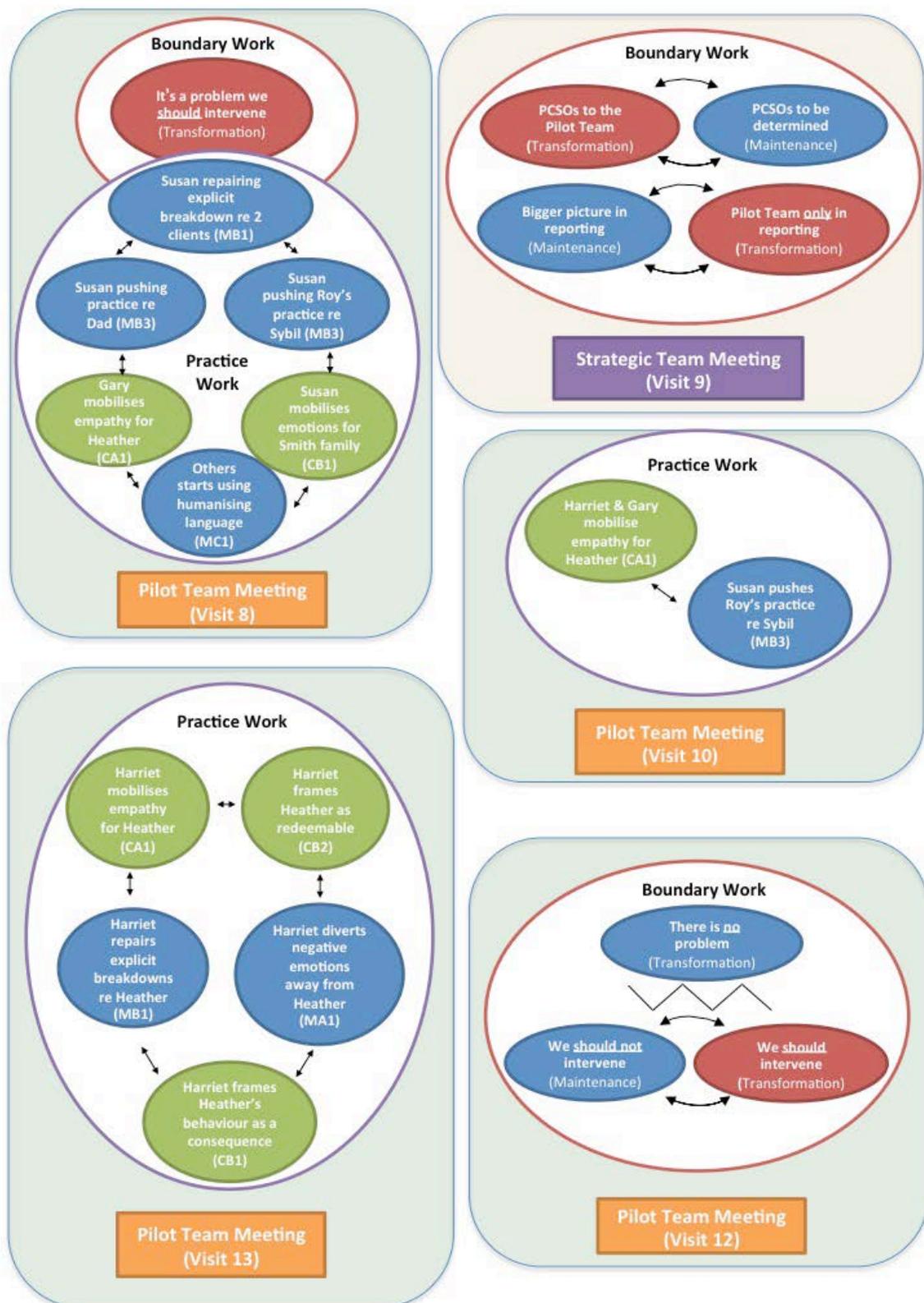
emotional storytelling, pathos based rhetorical strategies and discursive framing during routine activities like the discussion of clients. If we look at these instances of institutional work temporally, rather than discretely, new insights emerge regarding the nature of such work. Through the production of a new heuristic (see Figure 13), I am able to explicate how discursive practice or boundary work emerges from actors' social interactions, revealing the situational nature of institutional work.

For example, Figure 13 illustrates how in strategic team meetings [visit 6 (see Section 4.3.2) & visit 9 (see Section 4.3.3)], pilot team members engaged in boundary work as the social interactions in this space were focused on jurisdictional contestation over who controlled resources and power in the delivery of services to those with complex needs. Yet, during routine weekly discussion of clients, pilot team members engaged in *boundary work* [visit 12 (see Section 4.2.3)], *practice work* [visit 2, 10 & 13 (see Sections 5.2–5.3)] or a mix of *both* (visit 4, 7 & 8 (see Sections 4.2 and 5.2–5.3)] in their discussions. Again the variety of institutional work displayed was shaped by the nature of the conversations between members of the pilot team and who was around the table. For example, during visit 12 (see Section 4.2.3) someone external to the team attended to specifically challenge the expansion of the team's boundaries to include tackling amphetamine abuse on the estate. As a result, actors engaged primarily in boundary work as they fought over who had jurisdiction to engage such activities. When the pilot team discussed Sybil, the issue of amphetamine abuse emerged resulting in the team negotiating the expansion of their boundaries [visit 4, 7, & 8 (see Sections 4.2.1-4.2.2)]. Conversely, the variety of institutional work displayed during discussions of the Smith family or Heather [visit 2, 4, 7, 8 & 13 (see Sections 5.2–5.3.)], depended largely on the behaviour or progress of such clients. If they were making little progress, pilot

team members would tell emotional stories to evoke emotions to mobilise participation in the room (see Section 5.2.1), block negative emotions from others (see Section 5.2.1) and/or divert disruptive emotions to fend off resistance (see Section 5.2.2). Moreover, if the uneven progress of clients engendered feelings of frustration and disillusionment within the pilot team, Harriet and Susan would discursively work to challenge these attitudes and bring them back into line by telling stories to repair such breakdowns [(visit 2, 4, 7, 8 & 13 (see Section 5.3)]. Often when the team discussed all three clients (visit 4, 7 & 8) actors engaged in independent and autonomous instances of both boundary and practice work in the same discursive space. Here, the variety of the boundary and practice work was contingent on the situation and emerged from the interactions between individuals.

The situational nature of the institutional work demonstrated in the new heuristic (Figure 13) draws attention to the great deal of complexity and messiness involved in institutional work at the micro-level. Here institutional work is not a linear or discrete concept that smoothly transitions from creation to maintenance and then transformation in a simplified way. From my observations of the here and now presented in Figure 13, we can see how the micro-institutional processes associated with instances of institutional work are complex and overlap on the ground as evidenced by moments when: *creation and maintenance* [visit 2 (see Sections 5.2.1 & 5.3.4)], *creation*, *transformation and maintenance* [visit 4 (see Sections 4.2.1 & 5.2-5.3), visit 7 (see Sections 4.2.2 & 5.2-5.3) & visit 8 (see Sections 4.2.2 & 5.2-5.3)] and *transformation and maintenance* [visit 6 (see Section 4.3.2), visit 9 (see Section 4.3.3) & visit 12 (see Section 4.2.3)] are empirically co-terminus within a single discursive space. This overlap is a function of the ongoing and situated nature of such interactions. Boundaries were

not created or maintained in a singular discursive instance but instead emerged over a period time (visits 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12 – see Sections 4.2–4.3). This was a function of actors engaging in persistent cycles of drawing and re-drawing each others' boundaries over a number of instances as one group of individuals sought to expand and transform (pilot team) whilst the other responded by working to maintain existing boundaries (challengers). Even when a consensus appeared to be reached within the pilot team, actors still worked to maintain the boundaries they drew (visit 7 & 8 – see Section 4.2.2) in their routine conversations. Although the pilot team appeared as a cohesive unit, wholly on board with the innovative practice, individuals regularly and persistently discursively worked to create and maintain the practice in their everyday routines over the five months. Depending on the nature of the interactions between individuals in the group, individuals worked to mobilise participation or block negative emotions (creation – see Section 5.2.1) as well as repair practice breakdowns (see Section 5.3) and/or divert disruptive emotions (maintenance – see Section 5.2.2) within the room (visits 2, 4, 7, 8, 10, 13).

Using the new typology of micro-level institutional processes I created from mapping these processes over time (see Table 11), I am able to show the multi-dimensional and overlapping nature of these process, which contradicts how these processes are often presented in the literature. Specifically, the typology shows that no single or individual process is the preserve of any one type of institutional work (Table 11). For example, practice work is crucial to achieving creation, maintenance and transformation efforts in the field. Similarly, boundary work is deployed by actors when pursuing transformative or maintenance efforts in their field. If we drill down further, general discursive tactics like emotional storytelling or discursive framing are not the

Table 11: A new typology illustrating the overlap and multi-dimensional nature of micro-level institutional processes

Institutional Process	Type of Institutional Work	Discursive Tactic Used	Purpose of the Tactic	Point in Time (Visit)
Creation	Practice Work	Telling emotional stories of clients	Evoke emotions to mobilise participation	2, 4, 7, 8, 10, 13
			Block negative emotions to the practice	2, 7, 13
		Using pathos based rhetorical strategies	Evoke emotions to mobilise participation	2, 4, 7, 8, 10, 13
			Block negative emotions to the practice	2, 7, 13
Maintenance	Practice Work	Telling emotional stories of clients	Divert disruptive emotions to fend off resistance	4, 7, 13
		Using pathos based rhetorical strategies	Divert disruptive emotions to fend off resistance	4, 7, 13
		Telling emotional stories of clients	Repair explicit practice breakdowns	4, 7, 8, 13
		Telling emotional stories of clients	Repair implicit practice breakdowns	4
		Challenging frontline workers practice	Pushing service quality	2, 4, 8, 10
	Boundary Work	Discursive framing at the strategic level	Maintain dominance in regards to complex needs service delivery	Visits 3, 6, 9

Institutional Process	Type of Institutional Work	Discursive Tactic Used	Purpose of the Tactic	Point in Time (Visit)
		Discursive framing at the operational level	Maintain newly expanded boundaries to include tackling amphetamine abuse	Visits 7 & 8
			Maintain existing boundaries that exclude the pilot team from leading on amphetamine abuse	Visit 12
Transformation	Boundary work	Discursive framing at the strategic level	Establish the team as a credible alternative to complex needs service delivery	Visits 3, 6, 9
		Discursive framing at the operational level	Expand team boundaries to include tackling amphetamine abuse	Visit 4
			Challenge team's attempts to tackle amphetamine abuse	Visit 12

domain of a singular outcome but instead can be used to serve multiple purposes. Discursive framing is frequently adopted in boundary work and practice work, playing a central role in creation, maintenance, and transformation efforts. Similarly, emotional storytelling is pivotal to creating and maintaining their practice in their routine everyday actions.

The situated nature of institutional work, and such process, generates an inherent flexibility to such concepts in practice (see Figure 13 and Table 11). In the case of the pilot team and its associates, there is great flexibility on offer in terms of the discursive tactic, type of work and the outcome that can be achieved by their work on the ground. Rather than having one 'go-to' source for achieving specific goals or purposes, actors' exercise discretion in not only what they choose, but how, and when they use it, at particular points in time (see Figure 13 and Table 11). This is similar to McPherson and Sauder's (2013) ethnographic study of a drug court. During their observations they found that at a micro-level, actors have to hand a series of 'local tools' that can be picked up and used to achieve varying goals. In this context, actors drew on available institutional logics (logics of criminal punishment, rehabilitation, community accountability and efficiency) when negotiating decisions. Conversely in this study, pilot team actors do not rely on a specific field resource like logics but instead use a mix of resources like emotions, insider knowledge gained from experiences as well as normative and rational desires in the field. Such insights into the structure of institutional work and institutional processes are important to furthering our understanding of key features of actor agency like intentionality and effort, which will be returned to later on in the chapter.

This exploration of action during front-line service delivery suggests that Lawrence & Suddaby's (2006) seminal one-dimensional typology of institutional work over simplifies this complex phenomenon by conceptualising it as a set of discrete categories focused on a specific activity or outcome. Conversely, the heuristic (Figure 13) and the typology (Table 11) demonstrate that institutional work and institutional outcomes do not fit in a discrete one dimensional typology, as on the ground actors use different types of work in a single discursive setting, and the same discursive tactic is used to achieve a multitude of different outcomes (creation, maintenance and disruption). Similarly, Currie et al., (2012) found elite actors delivering a national change programme used institutional work that was delineated as the preserve of creation efforts to maintain institutions and vice versa. Whilst Lok and de Rond (2013) found varying combinations of different types of work depended on the severity of the breakdown during an ethnographic study of the Cambridge Boat Race. Although this study is set in a highly institutionalised context similar to the public sector – understanding is garnered from a university athletic team, not a work organisation. In light of these findings derived from different empirical contexts, I suggest the taxonomy only appears helpful when studying institutional work from a macro perspective when the focus is on change at an institutional field level or driven by strategically motivated, highly organised entrepreneurs (Scott et al., 2000; Greenwood & Suddaby 2006; Battilana et al., 2009; Gawer & Phillips, 2013), largely because such approaches provide a simplified view of such processes (Delbridge & Edwards, 2008; Smets et al., 2012). But, once the focus shifts to micro-level action, the seminal typology is no longer 'fit for purpose' as it is unable to adequately represent the complexity and messiness of such processes in everyday life.

6.1.2 Who does institutional work? – The critical role of low power actors and collective action when influencing practices

One way of advancing our understanding of institutional work is by exploring *who* engages in creating, maintaining and transforming institutions. Most studies explore how elite actors like professionals, (Battilana, 2011; Currie et al., 2012) executives and leaders (Rojas, 2010; Riaz, Buchanan & Bapuji, 2011; Gawer & Phillips, 2013) – actors with high levels of perceived legitimacy, expertise and access to resources - drive change. Although Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) suggest those who disrupt institutions are likely to not be powerful, there are only a few empirical studies that explore how actors with limited resources can make change happen (exceptions include – Reay et al., 2006; Hardy & Maguire, 2009; Martí & Mair, 2009). My study extends such work by drawing attention to how low power actors, like frontline public service delivery agents and middle managers within services, can influence elements of institutions in an institutionalised field (see Chapter 4 & 5). Although the design of study does not facilitate exploration into the personal motivations of these individuals, it does offer insight into the conditions that facilitate their activity. This is important because external factors play a critical role in shaping not only who participates in change activities, but how influential their change activities can be (see Battilana, et al., 2009; van Wijk, Ziestma, Dorado, de Bakker & Martí, 2019). Drawing on this understanding I present a new heuristic that explicates the antecedents and dynamics of low power actor agency (see Figure 14).

Overall, the heuristic shows that field conditions, field position and social conditions facilitated these low power actors to not only seek change but enabled embeddedness of actors in the field, their social group and the narrative and rhetorical skills of particular

actors were central to their institutional work. In the below sub-sections, I will discuss each dimension presented in the above to help explain how low power actors initiate change through the delivery of their innovative public service.

Figure 14: A new heuristic explicating the antecedents and dynamics of low power actor agency
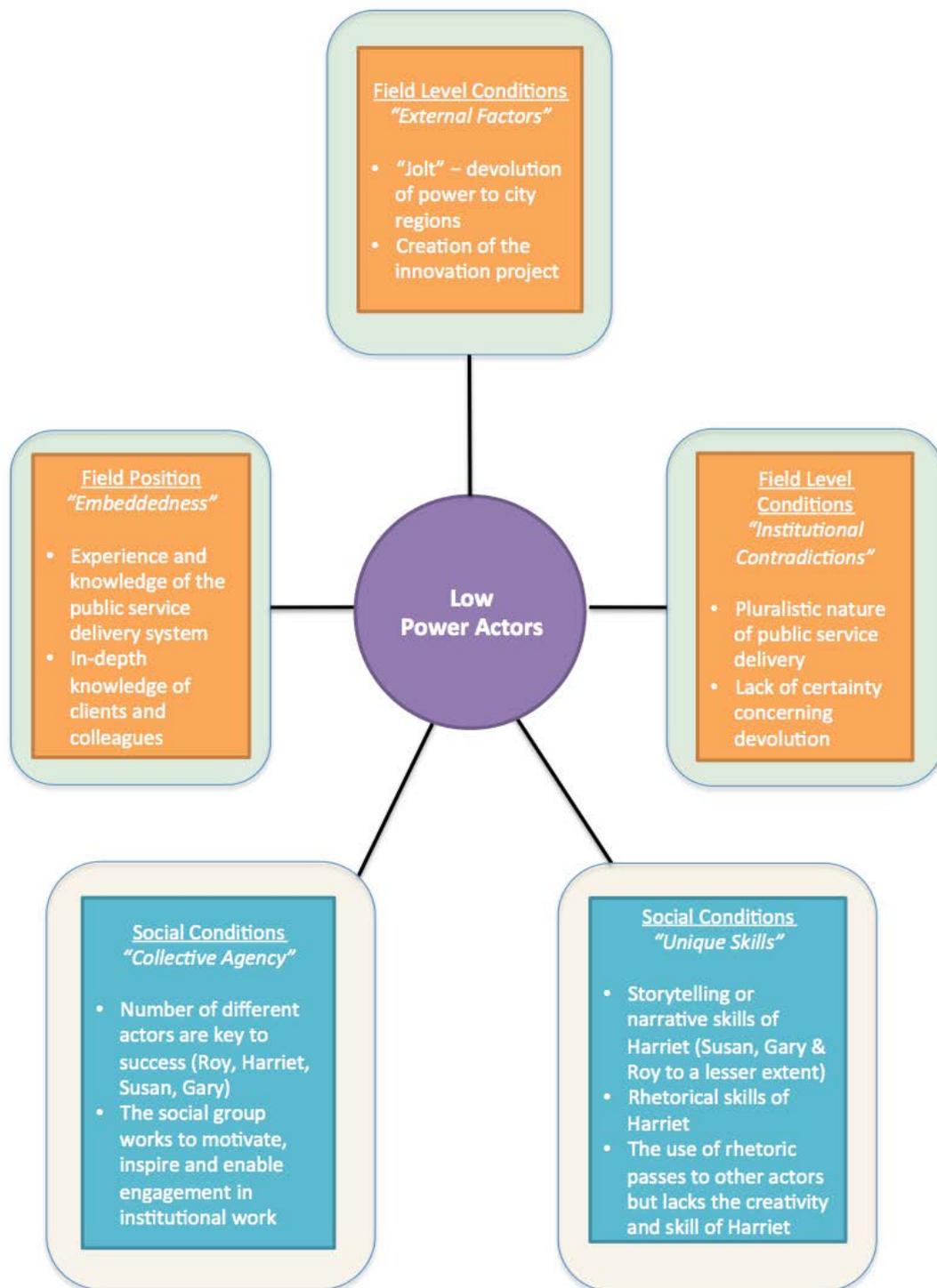
Field-level conditions – external events and institutional contradictions

Individuals realise their change agency by breaking free from their taken for granted assumptions and beliefs to innovate by experiencing some external event or exogenous jolt that disturbs the consensus and raises the awareness of alternatives (Thornton and Ocasio, 1999; Scott et al., 2000; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006) or endogenously, by experiencing contradictions in the environment that make them aware of alternatives, motivating them to pursue more favourable alternatives (e.g. Zilber, 2002; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Pache & Santos, 2010; Smets et al., 2012; Van Dijk et al., 2011). In this research, actors are experiencing both exogenous and endogenous sources of agency.

The public service delivery system is notoriously pluralistic, as such actors regularly face competing and contradictory ideologies and multiple sources of what constitutes legitimate practice (Coule & Patmore, 2013). Such, field level contradictions like those experienced by the actors in the case study have been shown to trigger change in many different contexts (e.g. Zilber, 2002; Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Pache & Santos, 2010; Smets et al., 2012; Van Dijk et al., 2011). Irrespective of the inherent complexity of the system generally, actors were also experiencing exogenous jolts in the form of legislative and social reform. The central government's programme of austerity saw local governments enduring significant cuts to their budgets (HM Treasury, 2010, 2013) resulting in councils having to cut service delivery and staff numbers (see Section 4.3). In addition, decision-making powers and financial control of budgets were being devolved from central government to combined authorities (Localism Act 2012; Taylor-Goodby & Stoker, 2011; Padley, 2013). Actors expressed uncertainty concerning how the different authorities in the city region would centralise functions, collaborate on commissioning and pool budgets for various services going forward (see Section 4.3).

These shocks meant actors were facing pressing and contradictory issues like balancing increasing service demand with decreasing resources and managing local needs alongside city-region policy objectives and agendas.

These structural conditions triggered executives in the local authority to form the MPSIP (strategic team) and task the group with trying new and innovative ways of working to reduce the demand on public services in a pilot area. The creation of this team opened up an opportunity for middle managers and frontline workers interested in innovation to experiment with new ways of working. Participation in such activities was voluntary and this is reflected in not everyone choosing to participate as certain services had little to no representation at either the strategic or pilot team. Although the teams were given support from senior executives, actors had to purposeful choose to 'activate' their change agency by exploiting these opportunities. Arguably, such low power actors could try to seek such change without such support, but given the degree of maintenance work actors faced both internally and externally to pilot and strategic teams over the course of the fieldwork, it is highly unlikely such efforts would be successful. Therefore, the confluence of external events and institutional contradictions were a much needed and valuable resource for low power actors to transform practices in their local environment.

Field position – the critical role of embeddedness

The degree to which "*actors and their action is linked to their social context*" (Reay et al., 2006, p. 978) or their "*embeddedness*", was crucial to the effectiveness of their institutional work. Actors in both the pilot and strategic teams are deeply embedded in their highly institutionalised and bureaucratic environment. They have worked in the

public sector for many years[38] and have cultivated a profound awareness of the people and established practices, values, and beliefs that define their environment. It is this in-depth knowledge of the public service delivery system, their workplace, clients and colleagues that facilitated their institutional work to achieve specific outcomes.

For instance, experience and knowledge of the system plays a critical role in the discursive boundary work of actors. Roy's in-depth knowledge of drug treatment practices as well as other frontline services (i.e. mental health and welfare services) helped him to withstand, and ultimately reverse, the maintenance efforts of Blanche during the 'Great Amphetamine Debate' (see Section 4.2.3). Roy discursively drew on his first-hand experience of the system to provide credible and relevant responses, whenever attempts were made to threaten the expansion of the pilot team's boundary and jurisdiction by undermining his knowledge and judgement. During the 'The Who Controls Complex Dependency' turf war, Rosie uses her experience of complex dependency practice to identify relevant rational and normative debates to cast her team as a safe and credible choice over the pilot team (see Sections 4.3.1-4.3.2). Rosie's understanding of the changes pending in the wider organisational field was necessary to establish the credibility of her 'bigger picture' frame to expand reporting boundaries (see Sections 4.3.2-4.3.3). This knowledge meant she could be a 'thorn' in the side of team, by slowing their boundary expansion and making them 'work' for their place in the service delivery system.

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[38] Gary worked for many years as a police officer and then transitioned to working for a local housing association relatively recently. Betty had previously worked in the private sector and only recently started working in the public sector. Barbara, Claire, Susan, Rosie, Harriet, Roy, Marie, Chris and Tim have long (10+ years) experience working in the public sector.

In-depth knowledge of clients and their colleagues was a necessary feature of actors' discursive practice work as well. Actors like Harriet, Gary, Roy and Susan needed in-depth knowledge of their clients to facilitate the telling of emotional stories when fending off resistance from others or mobilising participation in their efforts (see Section 5.2). The stories that were told about the Smith family and Heather would not have the emotional appeal or impact on the audience without the vivid details concerning their clients lives (see Vignettes 4 & 5 p. 172). Moreover, embeddedness enables actors to recognise the "*right time and the right place to take action*" (p. 993) which is crucial to accomplishing change (Reay et al., 2006).

This awareness is fundamental to the successful repairing of practice breakdowns (see Section 5.3). Once a colleague starts to either overtly or subtly veer away from the shared local understandings, custodians evoke emotions or telling stories to bring attitudes and practice back in line with shared expectations. These breakdowns happen in the 'moment', therefore they are not something custodians like Susan and Harriet can prepare for in advance. Moreover, they need intimate knowledge of their colleagues to recognise when a breakdown is happening as these can be subtle and indirect. Although these breakdowns might appear minor, they can accumulate over time and lead towards possible derailment, threatening key organising principles of the practice (Lok & de Rond, 2013). Therefore, these breakdowns need to be restored by custodians as and when they surface if they are to maintain or protect the practice (Lok & de Rond, 2013). Ultimately such a state of constant preparedness (Barley & Tolbert, 1999; Reay et al., 2006) is only made possible by a deep working knowledge of one's environment. Therefore, embeddedness is not a constraint (see Battilana et al., 2009; Battilana 2011)

but instead is an important resource for low power actors when working to legitimise a new way of working in an established environment.

Social conditions – the power of a collective group and the unique skills of individuals

Often studies of institutional work tend to focus on a lone, heroic individual with the foresight, skills and resources needed to advance their interests (see Lawrence et al., 2013; Battilana et al., 2009). Scholars like Dorado (2005, 2013) and Delbridge and Edwards (2008) have challenged such notions by arguing that change agency can be distributed amongst several actors rather than a single individual. This thesis highlights how a number of different actors were crucial to the creation and maintenance of a novel practice over time. In particular, some of these actors possess unique skills (Fligstein, 1991) – narrative and rhetorical skills - that was crucial to success.

Similar to the work of Dorado (2013), I found that change agency in the thesis is very much a group-bounded endeavour rather than an individual one. A number of different actors play pivotal roles in the creation and maintenance of the team's innovative practice over time. Operational actors like Roy, Harriet and Gary are important because they are out in the field, delivering the new practice successfully amongst those using traditional methods of service delivery (see Sections 4.2 & 5.2). Their success stories are important to not only establishing the credibility of the practice with external audiences but are also important to keeping the team motivated through the disruption of negative emotions and the repair of practice breakdowns (see Sections 4.2.3, 5.2 & 5.3). Roy's operational knowledge was necessary to defuse Blanche's attempts to derail the efforts of the team to expand their boundaries (see Section 4.2.3). Whilst Harriet is central to creation efforts as she regularly mobilises support and blocks

negative emotions to the practice within the group (see Section 5.2.1). Significantly, Susan and Harriet are essential to maintaining the practice as they work to repair both implicit and explicit breakdowns in team members' practice (see Section 5.3) as well as diverting emotions that could foster resistance to the practice (see Section 5.2.2). Susan arguably has the most significant role in the team as she is in the position to influence strategic players who have the resources and authority needed to spread the practice across the borough (see Section 4.3). Therefore the creation and maintenance of the practice and team boundaries are not a function of single individual but instead relies on a number of actors to achieve such institutional outcomes.

Importantly, some of these actors possess unique skills (Fligstein, 2001), like narrative and rhetorical skills. Such skills are important because they are necessary to convince those embedded in existing arrangements that change is required, necessary or acceptable (see Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005; Zilber, 2007; Hardy & Maguire, 2010). Crucially for low power actors, language costs nothing in financial terms because it is predicated on having skills rather than financial resources. Although everyone can tell a story or use rhetoric, that does not mean everyone has the ability to persuade audiences and shape meaning because of the skill and creativity associated with such tactics (see Greenwood & Suddaby, 2005; Gabriel & Griffiths, 2008). Harriet is a source of such skills and creativity as she frequently tells emotional stories laced with pathos based rhetorical strategies (humanising language, use of metaphors and affective vocabulary) of her clients regularly to create (see Section 5.2.1) and maintain (see Section 5.2.2) the team's innovative practice and also repair practice breakdowns. Her skilfulness and creativity is made evident through how the stories speak to shared local understandings and expectations, the emotional richness and vivid detail in each story and their unique,

one-of-a-kind nature (see Sections 5.2-5.3). The power of her skills is demonstrated not only by how successful they were in achieving particular outcomes but by the spread of these features throughout the group (see Section 5.2.2). Harriet's use of humanising language and affective vocabulary spreads from Harriet to Susan, then to Gary and onto Edward and Sally. Here these discursive features become routine and embedded in everyone's everyday talk. Although Harriet is the main storyteller, as time progresses actors like Gary, Susan and Roy start to tell stories to achieve institutional outcomes. Gary helps tells a story about Heather to mobilise participation in the practice (see Section 5.2.1). Susan tells a story about the Smith family to divert attention away from their dysfunctional behaviour and maintain the practice (see Section 5.2.2). Even Roy tells a story about Sybil to counter Blanche's attempts to frame him as lacking the experience and knowledge to tackling amphetamine abuse on the estate (see Section 4.2.3). Arguably, these efforts lack the creativity of Harriet but they do help these actors to achieve their intended outcomes.

6.1.3 What constitutes institutional work? – Furthering our understanding of agency by exploring the effort involved

Another shortcoming of the institutional work literature is a lack of understanding of how institutional work manifests itself in our everyday interactions (Hwang & Colyvas, 2011; Lawrence et al., 2013; Smets & Jarzabkowski 2013). Studies tend to favour strategically motivated foresighted actors (projective agency) or the habitual reproduction of institutions (iterative agency) over what actors do in the here and now to get the job done (practical-evaluative agency) (Lawrence et al., 2013; Smets & Jarzabkowski, 2013). The *in vivo* nature of the data collection method allows us to gain

insight into the intentionality and effort involved in the institutional work that emerges during actors' daily judgements.

The study shows that during routine activities (pilot team meetings and strategic team meetings) actors make active and creative choices regarding the discursive tactic employed (see Section 6.1.1). Here, the work is intentional, but not foresighted, as it is crafted in the discursive moment to respond to the "*demand and contingences of the present*" (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 994). From these observations, it appears the effort and intentionality varies depending on social situation.

The main site of boundary contestation during the great amphetamine debate illustrates the variance in the degree of intentionality and effort in the moment (see Section 4.2.3). Roy did not plan on having to defend his professional practice (boundary expansion) at this meeting; rather he started to report on his progress with Sybil in a normal and routine manner. As he starts to discuss Sybil, Blanche immediately discursively works to establish her 'there is no problem' frame. It was suggested prior to this meeting that a manager in the drug service was unhappy with the team's claims concerning amphetamine abuse on the estate. The veracity of Blanche's work and the range of evidence she presents when establishing this frame suggests she had come with the intent of shrinking the team's newly expanded boundaries. She then moves beyond the 'there is no problem' frame and starts to undermine Roy's professional practice, specifically. The act of framing Roy as lacking knowledge or capacity to devise appropriate solutions or practices to support Sybil appears as an intentional act to demonstrate to the team that they lack the appropriate skills and knowledge to intervene. Roy could have easily backed down but instead he persistently and repeatedly crafts credible and relevant responses to her attempts to surface a lack of

knowledge or capacity in his professional practice. The length of the exchange (nearly an hour long) and the rapid fire and aggressive nature (interrogation style) demonstrates this is "hard" work. Both Blanche and Roy have to put in a great deal of effort into this moment, which is arguably a routine and mundane activity (i.e. reporting on client progress at the weekly team meeting).

The work of practice custodians (see Section 5.3) again demonstrates intention but with varying degrees of effort. Susan or Harriet discursively work to repair to breakdowns in pilot team members' practice during routine discussions of their clients. Susan and Harriet do not have to repair these breakdowns, instead they could easily ignore these deviations. Yet, they repeatedly and routinely challenge these behaviours and keep working until the actor displays shared social expectations and local understandings. Therefore acting as a practice custodian requires effort and intention but that effort can vary depending on the moment. For example the episode with Richard (see Section 5.3.1) requires a prolonged debate between Susan and Roy to smooth over this deviation. Whereas in episode 3 (see Section 5.3.3), Harriet only has to narrate the short and effective story of Heather sitting along in the car saying "*no one cares about girls like me*" to bring everyone back in line. Sometimes during meetings there are no breakdowns observed and therefore no need for intervention. The repair work that is conducted during routine activities can vary from hard, to light, to no effort at all depending on the situation. But the intent of these actors always remains - whenever a breakdown appears, either Susan or Harriet would work to repair it regardless of its nature (see Section 5.3).

Similarly, the telling of stories varies depending on the social interactions of the time (see Sections 5.2-5.3). These stories are told to achieve a particular outcome be it to

mobilise participation, block negative emotions, divert disruptive emotions or repair breakdowns which shows intention but also creativity. Although the stories being told refer to overarching narratives of grief or vulnerability, each story is unique with different plot devices, affective vocabulary or metaphors. If actors lacked intention and creativity, they would arguably tell the same stories over and over again during their routine interactions. Effort is difficult to ascertain in regards to storytelling because of the narrative and rhetorical skills of Harriet. From interacting with her over a period of 5 months, storytelling and rhetoric are a regular and almost natural feature of her everyday talk. Such features can be observed out of pilot team meetings in regular social interactions. This suggests there is a natural ease to such work, making it difficult to ascertain the degree of effort when skills are an inherent personal characteristic.

Whilst the above examples provide an insight into the everyday routine activities of those delivering the institutional work, I also observed the reactions of those being subjected to such work in the here and now. This maintenance work - triggered by the transformation work of the pilot team - is not habitual or mindless reproduction (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006) but is intentional and requires significant effort. The complex dependency turf war (see Section 4.3) highlights the persistent and dogged determination of Rosie as she tries to undermine the efforts of Susan to expand the team's boundaries to position the pilot team as a credible way to tackle complex dependency. In each strategic team meeting, Rosie seizes opportunities to reframe the pilot team as "unsafe", "expensive" and to include her team in their reporting efforts. During our scoping work, Rosie spent considerable time working to convince me that the pilot team is unsafe and her team should be the lead on all complex dependency services. Equally, Blanche's efforts to challenge the pilot team's expansion into the

realm of tackling amphetamine abuse involved a lengthy and prolonged period of vehement contestation. The amount of effort and intentionality observed in this case is in opposition to other micro-level studies of maintenance work. For instance both Dacin et al., (2010) and Lok & de Rond (2013) suggest such work is less strategic and purposeful than what is often conceptualised by theorists (see Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Lawrence et al., 2009). Although both of these studies involved ethnographic observations in a highly institutionalised environment (i.e. University of Cambridge), these observations were not conducted in work organisations. In particular, work organisations that were facing significant uncertainty and turmoil as financial resources were being significantly reduced with little clarity over who held what decision-making powers. It is possible that these institutional conditions facilitate actors to actively engage in the maintenance of existing arrangements with more intentionality and effort than those in more stable and less contradictory environments.

These findings show that agency is neither mindless reproduction or unconstrained agency often painted by institutional theorists but instead is much more nuanced in real time. Actors picked and chose different types of boundary work, practice work or both in the discursive moment to enable them to get the job done. These explorations of actors exercising their practical evaluative agency demonstrate that the institutional work employed during such activities varies in intentionality and effort. In some instances such institutional work is highly intentioned and is "hard" work as they have to repeatedly debate and persuade others at regular intervals. Whilst at other times the work has intention but requires less creativity or effort to achieve the intended outcomes. These discussions are important because they shed light on the lived experience of actors when engaging in or being subjected to institutional work.

6.2   Contributions to Public Service Innovation

This is one of a few empirically based studies that explore how frontline public service delivery agents challenge legitimated ways of working and reconstruct taken-for-granted practices when delivering an innovative public service (see De Vries et al., 2016). More importantly, it provides a rare insight (exception Cloutier, Denis, Langley & Lamonthe, 2016) into what actors actually do in the here and now as they design and deliver innovative public services, shedding light on the micro-processes we know little about (Vickers et al., 2016). Early on in this chapter (see Section 6.1.1), I discussed what these processes were and how they interacted on the ground. To provide more depth of understanding, I present the resources that underpinned these processes (see Finn, 2008; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010; Battalina 2011; Werner & Cornelissen 2014).

Using a new typology of resources, field position and status, I first discuss the role of each of these factors in facilitating the delivery of an innovative public service. I start by discussing the different field resources actors draw on in boundary and practice work when pursuing an innovative public service. Then I discuss the role of field position and status on the effectiveness of the work when delivering the innovative service. Next, I consider how certain field conditions enable actors' agency to engage in the delivery of an innovative public service. I discuss how the pilot team meetings act as a relational space (Kellogg, 2009) which provides a safe space to build credibility in pilot team actors' talk, mobilising participation in the innovative way of working and maintaining commitment to practice over time. Overall, the findings provide valuable theoretical insights but also have important policy and practice implications by demonstrating the conditions that facilitate innovation activities.

6.2.1 Field level resources, actor status and position in the pursuit of an innovative public service

One of the essential activities pilot team actors engaged in during the design and delivery of their innovative service was the management of jurisdictional boundaries. Here, actors inside and outside of the pilot team engaged in discursive boundary work aimed at legitimatising or delegitimising who has jurisdiction to engage in specific activities or practices in their field by discursively (re)drawing boundaries. Institutional fields play a critical role in such work because they provide actors with multiple discourses that can be drawn down and used as resources when engaging in such activity (Weber & Dacin, 2011). The new typology of resources, field position and status presented below (see Table 12) shows that actors use rational, normative and experiential resources in their discursive boundary work. This is crucial to furthering our understanding of public service innovation because little is known in regards to how low power actors deliver such activity on the ground (Lipsky, 1980; Thomann, 2015 – see Section 2.1.1). Importantly, the typology highlights the crucial role of field position, rather than status, in regards to how actors access these resources, and their effectiveness in terms of achieving intended institutional outcomes (maintenance vs innovation). This is significant as often the related literature on institutional change (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2006; Battilana et al. 2009) and institutional work (Lawrence et al., 2013) tends to privilege status over field position. Drawing on the typology below, I will discuss these points in more depth.

Table 12: Typology of resources, field position and actor status during discursive boundary work[39]

Resource Type	Discursive Resource Used in Boundary Work or Practice Work	Actor (Status[1] & Field Position[2])
Rational	Formal statistics	Blanche (middle, outsider)
	Academic 'research' reports	Blanche (middle, outsider), Susan (middle, insider)
	Outcomes	Susan (middle, insider), Rosie (middle, outsider)
	Humanising of drug abusers to rationalise their drug user and lack of engagement	Roy (low, insider), Harriet (low, insider), Susan (middle, insider)
Normative	'Human rights – personal choice' (discourse)	Amy (low, boundary), Blanche (middle, outsider)
	'Human rights – protection' (discourse)	Roy (low, insider), Harriet (low, insider), Gary (low, insider), Susan (middle, insider)
		Rosie (middle, outsider)
	'Risk' (discourse)	Susan (middle, insider)
Experiential	Technical language	Blanche (middle, outsider), Rosie (middle outsider)
	Strategic insight / access	Blanche (middle, outsider), Rosie (middle outsider)

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[39] Note: (1) "Insiders" are members of the pilot team (Susan, Roy, Gary, Amy, Harriet) and "outsiders" are those that are members of competing groups and teams whose jurisdictions are being encroached upon by the pilot team (Rosie and Blanche). (2) Operational staff (Harriet, Gary, Amy, Roy) are "low status" actors because they are the bottom of the hierarchy with limited access to power and resources. Service managers (Rosie, Blanche, Susan) are "middle status" actors as they have control over services and lines of communication to senior managers. They have more power and resources than operational staff but they do not control decision-making or distribution of finances like senior managers who sit at the top of the hierarchy.

Resource Type	Discursive Resource Used in Boundary Work or Practice Work	Actor (Status[1] & Field Position[2])
	Policies, Procedures & Processes	Blanche (middle, outsider), Rosie (middle outsider), Roy (low insider)
	Longevity of service	Blanche (middle, outsider), Rosie (middle outsider)

Middle status actors both inside and outside of the team are frequent users of rational resources like formal statistics, academic research reports and "improved outcomes" in their framing as these are seen as reliable forms of knowledge and a sound basis for effective action in the field. The use of quantitative or "scientific" data to inform policy decision-making in the UK is a longstanding practice. Since the New Labour government's modernising agenda (Cabinet Office, 1999), the public sector has been preoccupied with grounding policy making in reliable forms of what works through a process of evidence based policy decision-making (Shaw, 1999; Cabinet Office, 2001; Sanderson, 2002). Here, the government is deemed effective when it demonstrates it does the work that needs doing and promotes change in social systems (Shaw, 1999; Sanderson, 2002). By drawing on data derived from rational, reliable and valid sources like quantitative methodologies, public service delivery agents demonstrate accountability and improvement in their work. It is largely unsurprising that service leads draw down statistics, evaluation reports or scientific studies when issue framing, justifying, self-casting and alter-casting (see Sections 4.2-4.3).

However, it is the discursive use of "improved outcomes" as a rational resource that is of particular empirical interest in this case. The institutional field within which the

case actors are situated is permeated with ambiguity and contestation concerning the meaning of "improved outcomes". The British preference for collectivist and publically accountable welfare solutions set against a backdrop of public sector austerity, results in actors being faced with the contradictory and conflicting logics of efficiency (saving money) and effectiveness (quality of services) (Bennett, Coule & Patmore, 2017). Notably, complexity in a field can provide actors with a resource for their creation, maintenance and transformative efforts (Greenwood et al., 2011). At the strategic level, Rosie draws attention to the high financial costs of the pilot team's model (altercasting) and positions this against the relative lower cost of her approach (self-casting) when challenging the boundaries and practices of the pilot team in her framing (see section 4.3). Susan retorts that their approach is 'working' and getting 'results', suggesting it achieves better outcomes for service users than traditional approaches used by Rosie's team (mix of altercasting and self-casting) (see Section 4.3)

Conversely, operational staff mobilise what I label as indirect or secondary rational resources in their framing. Rather than drawing on an existing word, phrase or cultural phenomenon – or a direct, primary rational resource - front line workers instead narrate identities of drug abusers as those who have 'rational' reasons (previous traumatic experiences, mental health issues, self-medication) for their drug abuse and lack of engagement. By rationalising their behaviour as reasonable, these individuals are seen as 'worthy' or within the jurisdiction of treatment and help by the team (see Section 4.2).

Importantly field position appears to enable access to these rational resources used in their discursive boundary work. Only insiders to the pilot team have access to the examples of financial savings and improved social outcomes of service users. Middle

managers have access to statistics and research reports concerning instances of drug use and effectiveness of treatments as well as a general knowledge of the cost of their services in comparison to others. In contrast, only low power actors have intimate knowledge of service users that can be used to rationalise their behaviour and subsequently frame issues.

One key feature of the cognitive process of framing is the use of words rooted in motivating cultural background knowledge (Fillmore, 1982). In ongoing speech actors access prior latent meaning structures but also consciously draw verbal associations with other ideas or cultural values to suggest how practices or boundaries in a particular field can be (re)considered or experienced (Goffman, 1974; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005). Therefore, common cultural frames of references concerning how things *should* be done are normative resources actors draw on in their framing. Of particular importance is the prominent role normative resources like the risk culture in public service delivery and moral arguments concerning the human rights of service users have in actors' discursive boundary work during both turf wars (see Sections 4.2-4.3)

For instance, middle status actors like Blanche and Rosie, discursively frame the practices of the pilot team as 'risky' to front line staff and citizens in each turf war. Here, actors draw on the notoriously risk adverse culture of public service organisations (see Brown & Osborne, 2013; Currie et al., 2012) as a normative resource in the delegitimisation of pilot team's new practice and the expansion of the their boundaries. Middle managers work to maintain existing practices and jurisdictions by drawing discursive attention to the risky nature of the pilot team's work and juxtapose this against more established, traditional approaches with known degrees of risk. Here actors like Rosie and Susan, Blanche and Roy discursively debate what *should* be done

when tackling those with complex dependency or amphetamine abuse by drawing on normative arguments that support either traditional or innovative working practices.

Again, field position appears more important than status when employing risk-based normative resources in these turf wars. Such knowledge is not restricted to 'elites' and instead can be used as a resource by low as well as middle status actors. It is the centrality to the pilot team that appears to engender credibility in frames irrespective of the audience. Blanche's attempts at altercasting the pilot team's practices as 'risky' is largely unsuccessful as the audience not only has an understanding of risk management, but more importantly, intimate knowledge of how the team works in practice (see Section 4.2.3). Indeed, Roy counters the altercasting tactics of Blanche through self-framing but it is the consensus the team has reached that the practice meet existing norms and rules for service delivery that result in her efforts having little impact on practices and boundaries. Similarly, Susan has insider knowledge of the work of the pilot team as well as other members of the strategic team meetings (Claire, Betty, Barbara, Tim and Dave) therefore Rosie's altercasting tactics concerning risk are largely ignored and easily re-buffed by self-framing tactics (see Section 4.3).

In the Great Amphetamine turf war, actors spend time having moral arguments concerning what is "right" and "wrong" (Vaisey, 2009) when (re)framing boundaries and practices of the pilot team (see Section 5.2). Early on, Susan, Harriet, Gary, Roy and Amy discursively contest what is the "right" thing to do concerning Sybil and her amphetamine abuse (see Sections 4.2.1-4.2.2). Here, organisational actors draw on two opposing and contradictory interpretations of the human rights discourse in their framing tactics to justify the (de)expansion of the team's boundaries. Some actors (Blanche, Amy and Roy to a lesser extent) draw on a "personal choice" interpretation

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which argues that public services should only intervene when an individual seeks treatment as it is their human right to "use drugs". Morally the team should not intervene as it breaches Sybil's human rights until she actively seeks treatment. Conversely, others (Susan, Harriet, Gary and Roy) counter this with a protectionist reading of the human rights discourse. Here, Sybil is framed as vulnerable and unaware of the increasing danger she faces due in part to her deep entrenchment. Everyone has a "right to life" regardless of the situation, therefore the pilot team should intervene or Sybil will die. The discursive presentation of the intervention as a moral imperative – everyone is aware of the danger she faces and therefore they have a "duty" to protect her - is highly persuasive and helps to gain buy-in of Roy and Amy who initially oppose the boundary expansion in the early stages of meaning contestation.

Once again, field position rather than status appears more significant when using moral arguments as normative resources in framing as actors of all status levels have knowledge and awareness of human rights, therefore this resource is not the preserve of the institutional elite. Instead, it is the centrality to the pilot team and ongoing involvement in meaning contestation that plays the important role. Although Blanche uses the previously aired "personal choice" human rights reading in her framing, this happens arguably too late (see Section 4.2.3). Her infrequent participation meant she missed a period of ongoing contestation (see Sections 4.2.1-4.2.2) in which pilot team actors worked towards signing up to the protectionist reading as a moral justification behind the expansion of their boundaries. Therefore her frames carry little credibility and do not influence decision-making or alter institutionalised practices.

The use of experiential resources in framing is not limited to actors of a particular status level but the nature of the resources used does differ (see Sections 4.2-4.3). For

instance, middle status actors use; technical language, refer to their involvement in strategic decision making, longevity of service and knowledge of policies, procedures and processes in their framing. Conversely, low status actors draw on their observations from the front line and knowledge of policies, procedures and processes when framing. Interestingly, the use of experiential resources during these turf wars appears situational and contingent on context. For example, in the complex dependency turf war (see Section 4.3) there was little use of experiential resources being mobilised. Instead, actors at this level use primarily normative and rational resources to justify and strengthen their frames. In this context actors are at similar levels of experience and positions in the hierarchy therefore experiential resources carry much less weight than normative and rational justifications with that audience. Yet, in the great amphetamine turf war (see Section 4.2), experiential resources were used when boundary expansion was being actively challenged. Blanche used experiential resources like technical language, citing involvement in strategic decision-making, longevity of service, and knowledge of policies, procedures and processes to establish credibility in her frames that undermined the practices and boundaries of the pilot team. In response, low status actors backed up their claims with evidence from the frontline and knowledge of policies and procedures to position themselves as credible and strengthen their claims when facing delegitimation. When the audience is predominately low status actors (see Sections 4.2.1-4.2.2), actors use a mix of rational, normative and experiential resources in their framing. This is not unsurprising, as low status actors often have to use experiential resources to build their credibility to overcome the authority inherent in higher status actors (Lefsrud & Meyer, 2012; Bucher et al., 2016).

These findings illustrate the range of resources actors (rational, normative and experiential) draw on in their discursive boundary work when maintaining and transforming jurisdictional boundaries. Often the access to particular types of resources or the effectiveness of the resources is dependent on the actor's position to the pilot team (insider v outsider) rather than status in the field. This enables low power actors to effectively challenge the attempts of outsiders with higher status to undermine their efforts. Arguably, status does play a role, but this is in relation to direct rational resources like statistics and outcomes. Middle status actors have access to such data, and the ability to demonstrate this knowledge to higher status individuals is not within the purview of lower status actors.

In addition to discursive boundary work, pilot team actors also engaged in discursive practice work during the design and delivery of their innovative service model. This type of work manifests itself regularly in the routine everyday interactions of pilot team members over the course of the 5 months of fieldwork. In particular, this work is essential to creating and maintaining the innovative practice over time. Emotions are central to nearly all of the discursive practice work observed. For instance, pilot team actors tell emotional stories of clients and use pathos based rhetorical strategies to achieve a variety of outcomes:

- Mobilise empathy for a client's situation and create a sense of duty to help them by evoking emotions in the audience to recruit actors into the new practice (see Section 5.2.1)
- Reframe dysfunctional behaviour of the clients as a consequence of the situation they are embedded to block negative that could engender resistance to the new practice (see Section 5.2.1)

- Reconstruct client identities as redeemable rather than hopeless to block negative emotions that could engender resistance to the new practice (see Section 5.2.1)
- Divert disrupt emotions to fend off potential resistance to the practice, maintaining commitment to the innovation (see Section 5.2.2)
- Repair explicit breakdowns in pilot team members' practice by reminding the team of the emotions, attitudes and behaviours to maintain their commitment (see Sections 5.3.1-5.3.2)
- Repair implicit breakdowns in pilot team members' practice by reminding others of the emotions, attitudes and behaviours to maintain their commitment (see Section 5.3.3)

Upon reflection, the reliance on emotions as the main resource in actors' ongoing discursive practice work is not particularly surprising *per se*. Emotions affect what we care about, the things we are invested in, how we act, our connection to groups, and significantly, are a powerful motivator for action (Voronov & Vince 2012; Lok et al. 2017; Zietsma & Toubiana 2018). Most significantly, emotions are ubiquitous and a "free" resource. As the actors in the pilot team are front-line service delivery agents who lack power and traditional resources, this is salient. Arguably, the ability to deploy emotions effectively in one's discourse is dependent on actors having the rhetorical and narrative skills. But in this case, the pilot team has one such gifted actor (see Section 6.1.2) and this actor has helped to transfer these skills to others (see Section 5.2.2) in the team. Such findings echo recent work by social innovation scholars who suggest emotions play a role pivotal in fostering social innovation[40] as the experience of emotions trigger the

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[40] Although social innovation differs from public service innovation, both seek to address wicked problems (Rittel & Webber, 1973) and involve the re-negotiations of established institutions among a range of different of actors (Helms, Oliver & Webb, 2012).

reflexivity needed to seek change and create the emotional energy needed to sustain commitment in such activities (see van Wijk et al., 2019).

All in all, these discussions highlight that the complexity in the social world is important for actors' institutional work because they are presented with a diverse selection of free resources they can pick and choose to suit particular situations and achieve specific outcomes. The range of resources used and the creativity displayed support that such low power actors are "*artful exploiters*" (Seo & Creed, p. 231) and creative in their efforts (see Martí & Mair, 2009; Coule & Patmore, 2013). Therefore, the findings extend the few studies that suggest discursive strategies are an important source of power when delivering innovation in public services (Coule & Patmore, 2013; Cloutier et al., 2016).

6.2.2   The role of relational spaces in public service innovation

Another critical feature that supported pilot team members to introduce a new way of working in their established field was the creation and use of strategic and pilot team meetings. In particular, the pilot team meetings provided actors with a *relational space* (see Kellogg, 2009) – a form of free space where reformers can meet, separate from everyday working conditions to develop frames of understanding which can be used to challenge defenders of the status quo. In this thesis, these meetings were spaces away from the "day job" where a confluence of multiple voices came together to discursively struggle over issues they perceived to be of consequence (Hauser, 1999) – reducing the demand on public services and improving the lives of citizens. These types of spaces are important because they provide the isolation, ongoing sustained interaction, and inclusion needed for actors to mobilise and subsequently challenge institutionalised

practices (Heimer, 1999; Battilana et al., 2009; Kellogg, 2009; Hardy & Maguire, 2010; van Wijk et al., 2019).

The Great Amphetamine Debate (see Section 4.2) illustrates the pivotal role these spaces play in helping low power actors to develop frames of understanding and challenge defenders of the status quo. This turf war starts when frontline workers in the pilot team create opposing frames concerning whether or not they should intervene in the case of Sybil by expanding their boundaries (see Section 4.2.1). The ongoing and sustained interactions over time enable Harriet and Gary to bring Roy and Amy around from maintaining the status quo, to agreeing to seek the groups' transformation interests (see Section 4.2.2). Once the team starts to disrupt the status quo in the field, a challenger steps into their relational space to stop their efforts (see Section 4.2.3). Here, the manager of the drugs and alcohol service attends a pilot team meeting and attempts to maintain existing boundaries by discursively working to undermine their frames, but does so with little success. This is surprising in a hierarchical setting like the public service delivery system, as it would be expected that a service manager should be able to re-direct the action of frontline service delivery agents. In this instance, field position and professional status had little impact on institutional outcomes, instead it was the frequent and persistent interactions provided by the relational space that influenced action.

Roy, Harriet, Gary, Amy and Susan's frequent and persistent interactions in meaning construction over time, resulted in their framing tactics carrying significant credibility in the group. In a similar hierarchical setting like healthcare, Heimer (1999) found that jurisdictional contestation processes are influenced not just by who is present, but how frequently those individuals are present during the ongoing debate. Although Blanche

vigorously attempted to alter practices and boundaries of the group, she only attended one meeting (see Section 4.2). In this discursive instance, Blanche occupied the role of a "*determined one-shotter*" (Heimer 1999, p. 61), and such individuals often have to be satisfied with ceremonial rather than instrumental attention to their demands due to infrequent participation. This outsider status meant her discursive frames engendered little traction in the group and therefore her maintenance work was not able to alter decision-making. Whilst the team agreed to "look" into her requests, they continued with their invention with Sybil and other amphetamine users with no visible change to their existing practice or boundaries.

Whilst these spaces were critical to successfully defending off challengers, they were also important to sustaining the commitment to the shared local understandings in frontline service delivery agents. An important feature of pilot team's relational space is the level of intimacy that resulted between actors due in part to their isolation and ongoing interactions (see Section 6.1.2). Attendance at these meetings was tightly controlled. Actors signed detailed data sharing protocols that created a highly confidential and 'safe' space where new things could be said (Fletcher, Blake-Beard & Bailyn, 2009). As a result, frontline workers openly shared the negative emotions they were experienced towards their clients like frustration, disillusionment, and disappointment. These negative feelings represent a divergence from the principles of hope, redemption and optimism that underpin the innovative practice (see Section 5.1). Because these clients are deeply entrenched in their 'wicked' problems (Rittel & Webber, 1973), success was rarely straightforward, and these setbacks occurred often and regularly. Such setbacks triggered for negative emotions in the frontline workers (see Section 5.2.2 & 5.3). On the surface, such breakdowns might seem minor as they

only create a temporary disruption to the flow of the practice (Yanow & Tsoukas, 2009), but given the frequency with which these breakdowns occur, they could easily build to threaten the existence of the practice if not repaired (Dacin et al., 2010; Lok & de Rond, 2013). The ongoing and sustained nature of the meetings allows custodians (Lok & de Rond, 2013; Micelotta & Washington, 2013) like Harriet and Susan to engage in discursive maintenance work to challenge these emotions and bring them back into line with organising principles in real time (see Section 5.3) Regardless of how institutionalised a practice may be, breakdowns do occur and they need to be repaired through some form of maintenance work to continue their stability over time (Dacin et al., 2010; Lok & de Rond, 2013). In this thesis, the pilot team meetings provide such a space where breakdowns can surface and then be subsequently repaired sustaining individual's commitment and solidarity with the practice.

Kellogg's (2009) study of micro-institutional change in highly institutionalised environment, like hospital operating theatres, found that relational spaces which included reformers from each work position (directors, staff surgeons, chiefs, seniors and interns) rather than one group of similarly situated and like-minded actors was far more effective in driving change. Yet, here the relational space was largely populated by a group of similarly situated actors but was successful in creating a new practice. The feature that enabled the group to overcome the disadvantages of homogeneity (see Kellogg, 2009) was the presence of boundary spanning actors like Susan, Betty and Marie. These actors attended both operational and strategic level meetings in their local field, which meant they could serve as a conduit for communication between these levels. Such actors were able to draw on the frames of understanding created by frontline service delivery agents and transfer these understandings to middle managers

and vice versa, to build a cross-position collective. This was pivotal for a number of reasons. Firstly, middle managers like Betty and Susan would not have been able to influence executives and other middle managers without the success stories and evidence base provided by frontline staff during the pilot team meetings. Moreover, frontline service delivery agents would not have insider knowledge of the evidence needed to influence executives nor have direct communication channels to such individuals. Here, Susan and Betty were able to translate the knowledge gained from the frontline into frames that reflected strategic objectives and resonated with other middle managers and senior executives. Arguably, in a hierarchical and bureaucratic environment like the public service delivery system, frontline service delivery agents would have limited lines of communication to executives and other middle managers outside of their own services. Influencing at this level was central to establishing the legitimacy of the practice beyond the relational space of the pilot team. Whilst Kellogg (2009) suggests the space should be heterogeneous in population to be effective, this study suggests a primarily homogenous space can deliver change if boundary spanning actors are present to connect groups across the field.

6.3   Summary of the Discussion

In this chapter I discussed how the research has contributed to furthering our understanding of institutional theory and institutional work, and innovation in public services. In particular, I focused on how the findings contributed to neglected areas in the institutional work literature such as how institutional work occurs, who does institutional work and what constitutes as work. Using a new heuristic, I demonstrate the situated nature of institutional work in everyday interactions, suggesting Lawrence & Suddaby's (2006) seminal one-dimensional typology of institutional work over

simplifies this complex phenomenon by conceptualising it as a set of discrete categories focused on a specific activity or outcome. Rather my new typology on micro-institutional processes explicates how such processes are multi-dimensional, overlapping and disordered in nature because they are situated in social interactions. Next, low power actors with limited resources, rather than institutional elites (see Currie et al., 2012; Lawrence et al., 2013) can influence elements of institutions in an institutionalised of field like the public service delivery system. Next, my new heuristic summarises the antecedents and dynamics of low power actor agency explicates how field conditions, field position and social conditions facilitate such actors to not only seek change, but enabled some to be more successful with their institutional work than others. Specifically, the presence of institutional contradictions and external events, embeddedness of actors in the field, their social group and the narrative and rhetorical skills of particular actors were central features of their institutional work. Lastly, the *in vivo* nature of this data collection method allows us to gain insight into the intentionality and effort involved in the institutional work that emerges during actors' daily judgements. These findings show that such agency is neither the mindless reproduction or unconstrained agency often painted by institutional theorists (see Lawrence et al., 2013; Smets & Jarzabkowski, 2013) but instead is much more nuanced in real time. These explorations of actors exercising their practical evaluative agency demonstrate that the institutional work employed during such activities varies in intentionality and effort. In some instances such institutional work is highly intentioned and is "hard" work as they have to repeatedly debate and persuade others at regular intervals. Whilst at other times the work has intention but requires less creativity or effort to achieve the intended outcomes.

In regards to furthering our understanding of public service innovation, this is one of the few empirical studies that examine this complex phenomenon (see De Vries et al., 2016). Importantly it provides a rare insight (exception Cloutier et al., 2016) into what actors actually do in the here and now as they deliver an innovative public service. Using a new typology of resources, field position and status, I illustrate the different range of resources actors (rational, normative and experiential) used in their discursive institutional work. In particular, the typology shows how when maintaining and transforming jurisdictional boundaries, access to particular types of resources or the effectiveness of the resources is dependent on the actor's position to the pilot team (insider v outsider) rather than status in the field. This enables low power actors to effectively challenge the attempts of outsiders with higher status to undermine their efforts. Arguably, status does play a role but this is in relation to the use of direct rational resources like statistics and outcomes. When creating and maintaining the innovative practice over time, emotions are a key resource in such work. Here, low power actors can effectively use this free and readily available resource because they have rhetorical and narrative skills within the team. Lastly, the creation of the pilot team was fundamental to the pilot team's success as it created a relational space where reformers could mobilise and subsequently challenge dominant practices, develop social bonds and commitment to the practices, work to repair breakdowns to shared local understandings that underpinned the practice. Although the space mostly contained actors of a similar background, the presence of those who spanned both operational and strategic levels was important to overcoming the disadvantages of such homogeneity. Actors like Betty, Susan and Marie were able to transfer frames of understanding between both levels which played a crucial role in establishing the legitimacy of the practice with other middle managers and executives.

In the final chapter, I will summarise the key learning from the study by considering how I have addressed the research questions and contributed to institutional and public service innovation literatures. Attention will also be paid to study limitations, future areas of research and policy and practice implications.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I re-summarise how the study provides empirical and theoretical insight into the nature of institutional work aimed at instigating an innovative public service. I start by focusing on interpretative insights concerning how organisational actors change established institutional structures, and the resources they use in such activities, to advance their innovation interests. Within these discussions attention is paid to how these interpretative insights contribute to developing the institutional theory and public service innovation literatures. I then consider the limitations of the study and consider potential future avenues of research. Lastly, I consider the policy and practice implications of the research findings by presenting a heuristic of public service innovation practice to inform and develop the practice of policy makers and senior managers in relation to the design and delivery of innovative public services. This heuristic summarises the various drivers, barriers and solutions to such barriers employed in the case study during the experimentation and adoption phases of the innovation process. The aim is to help provide practical solutions by helping practitioners to identify synergies between their own context and that of the pilot team to consider the different ways they could exploit existing opportunities or overcome potential barriers to innovation activity.

7.1   Public Service Innovation & Institutional Work

The institutional work observed as actors in an inter-organisational collaborative team delivered an innovative public service was largely discursive in nature. During routine and everyday social interactions, actors engaged in discursive boundary work and discursive practice work to create, maintain and transform their innovative service

delivery model over time. Team members used a variety of different discursive framing tactics (create, justify, altercast, self-cast) and field resources (rational, normative and experiential) to establish new boundaries, or disrupt existing boundaries, as a means to legitimise their new innovative practice. In response to such institutional work, actors outside of the team used similar tactics and resources to challenge and undermine their efforts as a means to maintain existing boundaries. Additionally, team members told emotional stories and used pathos based rhetorical strategies to create their innovative practice by mobilising participation in their practice and blocking negative emotions towards the new practice. Emotional storytelling and pathos based rhetorical strategies were also used to repair any explicit, as well as subtle and implicit, practice breakdowns within the team to maintain the practice over time. In all these instances of institutional work, actors drew on free and readily available resources in their field like emotions, reports and statistics (rational resources), beliefs and attitudes concerning risk and morality (normative resources) and their experiences as practitioners to persuade their audiences and legitimate their interests in the eyes of others.

Because there are few *in situ* and *in vivo* studies of institutional work (see Lawrence et al., 2013) or pubic service innovation (see Cloutier et al., 2016 for a rare exception) in the literature, there is very little understanding into how these concepts play out on the ground (Barley, 2008). This study shows that the micro-processes of change and maintenance in this inter-organisational and multiple actor context is far more elaborate and convoluted than what is often portrayed in the literature. Specifically, the new heuristic on the situated nature of actors' institutional work and the new typology illustrating the multi-dimensional nature of micro-institutional processes at play in the case demonstrate; how actors combine different types of work

in a single discursive setting, use one discursive tactic but for a multitude of different outcomes (creation, maintenance and disruption) and work aimed at a particular outcome can produce unintended consequences. Therefore, Lawrence & Suddaby's (2006) seminal typology of institutional work over simplifies this phenomenon and is not fit for purpose when exploring micro-level social interactions. Again, we gain a rare insight into the processes and contributions of individual actors from different organisations in delivery of an innovative public service (see Osborne & Brown, 2013; De Vries et al., 2016; Vicker et al., 2017).

Although a limited number of empirical studies exist on public service innovation, these rarely consider low power actors who are pursuing their own innovation interests. Similarly, much of the institutional work literature focuses on powerful actors with high levels of perceived legitimacy and control of resources. Therefore, there is little understanding of public service innovation or institutional work conducted by the majority of the population that make up work organisations. This research addresses that gap by illustrating that low power actors (e.g. frontline service delivery agents and service managers) can indeed pursue innovation in public services by influencing elements of institutions. Although these actors may lack resources, that does not preclude them from being able to change established practices in their field. For instance, the new heuristic presented on the antecedents and dynamics of low power actor agency explicates how such actors can achieve their innovation interests. In this case, institutional conditions such as an exogenous jolt, a field rife with institutional contradictions, the high degree of embeddedness of actors, their unique skills (narrative and rhetorical) and the distributed and collective nature of action helped to facilitate such actors' institutional work.

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In particular, the new typology presented on field resource, field position and actor status suggests the creation of relational spaces in form of the pilot team meetings was pivotal to enabling these less powerful actors in the successful pursuit of their innovation interests. Pilot team meetings created an ongoing safe space where reformers could mobilise and subsequently challenge dominant practices. Such spaces fostered frequent and persistent interactions in meaning construction over time that meant outsiders' talk carried very little credibility regardless of their status. Therefore challengers' efforts resulted in ceremonial rather than instrumental attention to their demands, and little derailment of the team's innovation efforts. Moreover, such persistent interactions were also crucial to maintaining momentum of the innovation as actors developed social bonds and commitment to the practices and worked to repair breakdowns to shared local understandings that underpinned the practice. Importantly actors from the pilot team, also attended strategic team meetings and were in boundary spanning roles. Here, actors like Susan and Betty drew upon their insider knowledge gained from their participation in pilot team meetings to legitimise the innovation practice in the eyes of senior managers by demonstrating how it achieved strategic outcomes. They also could use this knowledge to rebuke attempts from other middle managers who challenged the credibility of the practice, and the team, as an alternative form of service delivery to traditional methods. This was crucial to legitimising the innovative practice as it provided a vital link between operational and strategic spaces and action.

Lastly, little is known about the intentionality and effort involved in institutional work (see Lawrence et al., 2013) and public service innovation (see De Vries et al., 2016; Vickers et al., 2017) because few *in situ* and *in vivo* studies of such concepts have been

conducted in the literature. The study found that the institutional work conducted in the here and now, varies in intention and effort. In some instances such institutional work is highly intentioned and is "hard" work as actors have to repeatedly debate and persuade others at regular intervals. Whilst at other times the work has intention, but requires less creativity or effort to achieve the intended outcomes. In particular, those experiencing the institutional work and reacting with maintenance work do so with intention and great and sustained effort. Therefore agency is much more nuanced in real time than what is often painted by institutional theorists (see Lawrence et al., 2013; Smets & Jarzabkowski, 2013) and public management scholars alike (e.g. hero-innovator Mejier, 2014). Even in a context where top powerful actors have sanctioned such activity, created a space for it to grow and hailed its successes, actors still had to repeatedly work and work hard to create and maintain the innovation over time. As a result the study provides valuable insight into the lived experience of actors, which is distinctly lacking in both institutional (Lawrence et al., 2009, 2011; Voronov & Vince, 2012; Lawrence et al., 2013) and public service innovation literatures (Cloutier et al., 2016; Vickers et al., 2017).

7.2   Limitations of the Study and Future Research

Although the pilot team and the Marion Public Service Innovation Project provided a window into the institutional work of low power actors in their everyday social interactions, that is not to say the context was without its limitations. Although, I was able to view the action over time (five month period), this occurred during the piloting phase when the innovation was being created and implemented to test the efficacy and efficiency prior to widespread diffusion across the borough. The public service innovation literature demonstrates that such innovations often fail to progress

from implementation to diffusion (see Boyne et al., 2005; Damanpour & Schneider, 2009; Osborne & Brown, 2013; Walker 2014) and often if adopted widely their original intentions might be diluted (see Cloutier et al., 2016). Therefore, it would have been interesting to explore the institutional work of pilot team actors during the diffusion stage to compare and contrast the nature of such activities with other stages of the innovation process.

Also, there was a lack of access to perspectives of senior executives or service users. Although I was able to hear about whether the senior executives were supportive of the team's activities through attendance at the strategic team meetings, I was unable to ask executives direct questions concerning their perceptions of the institutional work of pilot team members. Because the innovation sponsor plays a well-known influential role in the implementation and diffusion of public service innovation (see Osborne & Brown, 2013), the study would have benefited from gaining insight into how such powerful individuals received these actors work – specifically, what was more influential in establishing the legitimacy and credibility of the innovation in their eyes. Similarly, the vulnerable and chaotic nature of the service users meant it was not appropriate for the researcher to meet or have discussions with service users like Sybil, Heather or the Smith family. It would have been beneficial to understand whether service users perceived the innovative practice as new or different from what they had experienced in the past and in what ways. Particularly, as those undermining the credibility of the team and the practice often made claims the practice was indeed not new or innovative. I would recommend future studies of such real time social interactions try to span multiple phases of the innovation process and involve perspectives beyond

organisational actors in the thick of it, to provide a more holistic picture of public service innovation and the micro-institutional processes of change and maintenance.

Moreover, if I were to conduct this study again, I would alter the design to improve the insight gained into the intentionality and effort of the institutional work of actors. There was not time to discuss with actors their intentions and the level of effort they experienced during the many different instances of institutional work. With hindsight, I should have built in space to interview key members like Susan, Harriet and Gary at the end to discuss their emotions and feelings concerning specific social interactions. This would have allowed me to understand the intentionality and effort of different types of work at a more nuanced and direct level. This is particularly important as little is understood about how actors experience engaging in, and being subjected to, institutional work (Lawrence et al., 2013).

Nevertheless, even with these limitations, the study still has made significant contributions to the institutional and institutional work literatures and public service innovation literature (see previous section). Although there have been calls to increase the usage of ethnographic or observational studies to understand how people actually influence elements of institutions on the ground (see Powell & Colyvas, 2008; Lawrence et al., 2013), there are still few published studies that adopt such methods. If we are to develop a more sophisticated understanding of institutional work and public service innovation there needs to be more studies of how such work happens in the here and now and by a variety of different actors as well. Therefore, future research of such concepts should adopt such methodological approaches to help take this important, yet emerging area forward.

7.3 Public Service Innovation Policy and Practice Implications

One long-standing criticism of single case studies and ethnographic methodologies is their focus on the micro worlds of actors, resulting in a lack of attention to the wider generalised context (Tellis, 1997; Yin, 2003). One way the thesis aimed to overcome these criticisms was by using the interpretive insights gained from empirical observation to inform the construction of practical theories (see Cunliffe, 2011). Here, I connect the micro world of the pilot team back to the general public service delivery context by focusing on how the findings can inform and develop the practice of policy makers and senior managers in relation to the design and delivery of innovative public services.

I achieve this aim by discussing the various drivers and barriers of the pilot team's innovation activity using De Vries et al.'s (2015) four categories of innovation drivers and barriers - environmental, organisation, innovation and individual. I use their framework to help simplify my discussion by focusing on areas that are salient to practitioners and policy makers to demonstrate how academic research can be useful to solving practical problems (Van de Ven & Johnson, 2006). It is important to recognise that innovation is a process that moves from idea generation, experimentation, to diffusion and wider adoption (Hartley et al., 2013). Therefore, I discuss the drivers, barriers and solutions to such barriers in relation to the experimentation (i.e. piloting) and adoption (i.e. formalisation / roll-out) phases. I do this because it is important for practitioners to not only understand how to pilot innovative ideas but also how to reap the benefits of such activities further down the line. Very often in the public sector innovative ideas are trialled but they fail to be adopted after the experimentation phase or diffuse beyond their original point of entry (see Walker, 2006; Walker et al., 2011; Walker, 2014).

Moreover, there is very little understanding of what happens after innovations are initiated (De Vries et al., 2015). As a result, I will discuss what factors were central to the up-take and spread of the innovative service delivery model across the borough to gain insights into how the pilot team moved from a pilot to a formalised team operating in three different locales.

7.3.1. Environmental drivers, barriers and solutions

The different demands and pressures that stem from the local and national environment influence the nature and adoption of innovation in public services (see Osborne et al., 2008; Osborne and Brown, 2011; Bekkers et al., 2011). A similar phenomenon was observed in regards to the formation and support for the pilot team's innovative way of working. Specific environmental conditions like the central government's programme of austerity and the devolution of powers to the city region were important drivers for the team's innovation activities (see section 6.1.2). Experimenting with new ways of working was necessary if local agencies were to survive the increasing demand for services alongside shrinking financial resources (HM Treasury, 2010, 2013). Thus, agencies could no longer deliver services as they did in the past if they were to survive doing substantially more, with substantially less. Moreover, the devolution of power to the city region created an opportunity for agencies to craft their own budgets and service delivery solutions to local needs rather than relying on central government mandated programmes or decisions (Localism Act 2012; Taylor-Goodby & Stoker, 2011; Padley, 2013). In addition, senior leaders in the city region had made public service reform a priority, resulting in an impetus across the organisational field for agencies to fundamentally change how their services were received by citizens (see National Audit Office, 2016). Therefore, austerity measures, devolution of powers

and decision-making, and the emphasis on public service reform were central environmental conditions for encouraging experimentation with new ideas and ways of working in the local area.

Interestingly, the necessity and desire to change which served to drive innovation activity, also had deleterious effects. With such changes came significant amounts of uncertainty concerning how different authorities would centralise functions, collaborate on commissioning and pool budgets which fostered entrenchment in a number of different agencies and services on the Marion estate and the wider borough (see Section 6.1.2). This is largely anticipated as public sector organisations are risk and change adverse and suffer from organisational inertia in periods of relative calm (see Brown and Osborne 2010:2011). Therefore when faced with significant amounts of uncertainty during a period of radical change, it is not surprising that agencies would protect their own turf by engaging in maintenance work to protect their access to resources and position in the field. The operational and strategic turf wars discussed in Chapter 5 is one such example of the maintenance work faced during the design and implementation of the pilot team's innovative service delivery model.

The pilot team overcame such barriers by using a number of different discursive frames and framing tactics, pathos based vocabulary, and emotional stories to overcome these barriers regarding what activities were credible and legitimate and who should be leading specific services in the area (see Chapters 4 & 5). What is crucial here is the tone of the language used by pilot team members in their social interactions. Here actors were careful to not overtly criticise, disrespect or disregard others views but instead advocate for their new way of working by focusing on the service user rather than themselves (see Sections 4.2, 5.1 & 5.2). Moreover, such activity did not happen

on a one off basis; instead pilot team members engaged in this way regularly and persistently over time, chipping away slowly at those contesting their efforts and eventually bringing them onside, rather than forcing change on them immediately (see Section 4.2). Arguably, the ability to overcome such environmental barriers significantly rests on the ability of individuals but this will be discussed in a later section.

At the end of the 12-month piloting phase, a formal team was created by partner agencies with dedicated resources and rolled out to two other estates in the borough. The adoption of the innovative service was largely driven by the ability to demonstrate both the efficiency and efficacy of the service delivery model to partner agencies (see Section 6.2.1). Using an approved cost benefit analysis methodology, the pilot team were able to demonstrate a significant return on the existing resources invested in the programme (over £3 for every £1 spent). In addition, the team gathered detailed stories and feedback from service users to demonstrate that the service received was different to what they had received before, it was life changing and in some cases lifesaving, for some citizens and that outcomes were achieved more quickly using this new way of working over traditional approaches. By positioning the innovation as achieving both efficiency and efficacy in service delivery, both of which are significant drivers in the environment (see Bennett et al., 2017), the team was able to establish the legitimacy and credibility in this way of working to facilitate the roll-out beyond the experimental site.

As with the previous discussion on barriers, the ability to demonstrate the efficiency and efficacy of the service delivery model was predicated on the skills and abilities of team members (see Section 6.2.1). Marie (pilot team administrator) was highly skilled in cost benefit analysis (CBA) as well as other evaluation techniques. Of

particular relevance was her in-depth working knowledge of the CBA model advocated by the city region. Therefore, the team had the skills and capacity to collect data (statistical figures and qualitative comments) over the entire piloting phase and convert this is into evidence that was seen as robust by key strategic decision-makers. Most importantly, evaluation efforts started from the beginning of the pilot. As a result, the team could demonstrate how the innovation was meeting strategic objectives set by key decision makers regularly and persistently over time, particularly when faced with maintenance work from those opposing the innovation.

7.3.2 Organisation level drivers, barriers and solutions

At the organisation level, the creation of the Marion Public Service Innovation Project by senior executives generated a space for middle managers and frontline workers interested in innovation to experiment with new ways of working. In a bureaucratic and hierarchical setting like the public sector, it is difficult to imagine that such groups would be able to experiment with new ways of working without such support. The empirical findings show that even with support from senior executives, actors faced significant degrees of maintenance work from those within and outside of the pilot and the strategic team over the five-month period (see Chapters 4 & 5). It does appear highly unlikely that such efforts would be successful without strategic sponsorship.

The composition of both the strategic and pilot teams was voluntary, therefore only those interested in experimenting with new ways of working chose to be involved. But a lack of financial resources at the organisation level meant those choosing to work in these teams had to balance their day jobs alongside any innovation activity. In the

main, this was both a driver and a potential barrier to innovation. On one hand, this created a 'coalition of the willing' as participants had to be committed to the cause to take on the extra workload and responsibility which was central to facilitating the innovation. Yet, on the other hand, it was a potential barrier as the success relied on a few key individuals who were highly susceptible to 'burn-out', and their loss would have likely stymied any innovation activity (see Section 4.3). The pilot team managed to overcome such a barrier by using different supervision activities to ensure key workers were managing workloads and the emotional toil involved in working with highly vulnerable and chaotic individuals. Such activities included; regular one-to-one meetings, open lines of communication between workers and line managers (i.e. calls in the middle of the night) and regular reflective workshops where key workers mentored each other by sharing thoughts, fears and practices.

Another vital organisation driver was the creation of a relational space in the form of pilot team meetings (see Section 6.2.2). Different agencies, like housing and the police service, provided a dedicated space where workers could meet regularly to discuss clients or work. Such a space was pivotal to the innovation's success as it provided the isolation, ongoing sustained interaction, and inclusion needed to: mobilise and subsequently challenge dominant practices; develop social bonds and commitment to the practices; work to repair breakdowns to shared local understandings that underpinned the practice. Moreover, Roy, Harriet, Gary, Amy and Susan's frequent and persistent interactions in meaning construction over time, resulted in their framing tactics carrying significant credibility in the group. Therefore, whenever anyone new to the team entered their space and challenged their credibility, their efforts carried little weight and had limited impact on innovation activities (see Section 4.2). Although the

space mostly contained actors of a similar background, the presence of those who spanned both operational and strategic levels was important to overcoming the disadvantages of such homogeneity (see Kellogg, 2009). Actors like Betty, Susan and Marie were able to transfer frames of understanding between operational and strategic levels which played a crucial role in establishing the legitimacy of the practice with other middle managers and senior executives (see Section 6.2.2).

An essential feature of the pilot team's relational space is the level of intimacy that resulted between actors (see Section 5.3 and 6.2.2). Attendance was controlled and participants were required to sign detailed data sharing protocols, which help to create a highly confidential and 'safe' space. As discussed earlier, pilot team members often experienced moral dilemmas and negative emotions due to the type of issues facing individuals and nature of the service user population. Recent scholarship has started to draw attention to negative emotions that can be experienced when tackling wicked societal issues like those faced by the pilot team (see van Wijk et al., 2019). The relational space of the pilot team meeting provided an opportunity for actors to help each other cope with such feelings over time, which left unnoticed, could have affected the workers mental and physical wellbeing. It allowed for a natural cycle of breakdowns (negative emotions like frustration, disillusionment, disappointment) to emerge and then be subsequently repaired, sustaining individual's commitment and solidarity with the practice.

The relational space was not only important to experimentation but also the adoption of the innovative service delivery model. Koschmann, Kuhn and Pfarrer (2012) suggest that when communication practices increase meaningful participation, manage individual and collective interests and create a distinct and stable identity within a cross

sector collaboration, the potential for collective agency and its capacity to create value is realised. The relational space helped to foster this collective agency by allowing diverse interests to be included regularly in decision-making when identifying problems and crafting solutions to these problems (see Sections 4.2 & 5.2). The environment of the pilot team meetings permitted individual interests to emerge and Susan and Harriet used discursive repair work (see Section 5.3) to manage, rather than resolve, these differences which is crucial to increasing value potential (Koschmann, Kuhn & Pfarrer, 2012). Lastly, the pilot team meetings provided space for actors to create a distinct identity with its own tacit rules concerning the people they helped (causes and continuation of dysfunctional behaviour) and the attitudes and behaviours workers should display (see Section 5.1). Arguably, without such collective agency the team would not have been as successful in creating the value necessary for senior executives to formalise the team and roll-out this way of working to other areas of the borough.

7.3.3 Innovation level drivers, barriers and solutions

There has been very little empirical attention given to how characteristics of the innovation itself can influence experimentation or adoption in the literature (De Vries et al., 2016). In the case of the pilot team, the autonomy and discretion afforded to frontline workers - a central feature of the innovative service delivery model - was a driver for encouraging actors to participate in experimenting with innovation and adopting this new way of working further down the line. Traditional frontline service delivery is often driven by tick-box exercises that limit the discretion and autonomy of the workforce (Rees & Rose, 2015). Whereas this new innovative model enabled workers to tailor solutions to clients' specific needs that often did not fit into predetermined protocols (see Chapters 4 & 5). As a result, workers reported increased

levels of job satisfaction by being able to help their clients more effectively than using traditional service delivery methods. Additionally, service users reported outcomes were more transformative in nature and realised more quickly than those achieved from traditional approaches. Therefore, the innovation had a clear relative advantage for both service users and frontline workers.

With increased autonomy and discretion came intensified scrutiny from others, which at times served as a barrier during the experimentation phase. The inherent risk adverse culture that permeates public service delivery (see Borins, 2001; Brown & Osborne, 2011) meant those external to the team perceived such autonomy as 'risky' and placed the key workers under intense scrutiny (see Chapter 4 and Section 6.2.1). Pilot team members reported during the fieldwork feeling like people were waiting for them, or their clients to fail, but that they felt their team lead and fellow workers "had their backs" which helped them to cope with such experiences. Moreover, the characteristic of autonomy was used by challengers to frame the success of the pilot team as a product of the individual worker and not the service delivery model to discredit the innovativeness of the approach (see Section 4.3 & 6.2.1). Largely, key workers were able to overcome such delegitimation strategies by discursively distancing themselves from their successes and framing the success as a direct result of the service delivery model or generic skills any key worker could already have or gain through training.

7.3.4   Individual level drivers, barriers and solutions

Generally, the pilot team had creative individuals who were able to think outside of the box and employees who were empowered to participate in experimenting with

new ways of working (see Borins, 2000). Such individual characteristics are known to be important sources of successful innovation (De Vries et al., 2016). Importantly, some of the pilot team members possessed skills like narrative and rhetorical skills that were crucial to the experimentation phase (see Section 6.1.2). These skills are crucial because they convince those embedded in existing arrangements that change is necessary and acceptable. For instance, Harriet frequently tells emotional stories of her clients laced with humanising language, use of metaphors and affective vocabulary to mobilise participation in the innovative practice and block negative emotions that could be used to resist the practice (see Section 5.2). Moreover, both Susan and Harriet use their narrative and rhetorical skills to repair any overt or subtle practice breakdowns to maintain the credibility and participation in the innovation activity overtime (see Section 5.3). This is particularly important to maintaining the innovation's success over the experimentation phase.

One potential barrier to innovation experimentation is the uniqueness of such skills. Although everyone can tell a story or use rhetoric, that does not mean everyone has the ability to persuade audiences and shape meaning because of the skill and creativity associated with such tactics. Luckily for the pilot team, they had members who possessed these unique skills and they played necessary and pivotal role enabling the experimentation phase (see Section 6.1.2). For example, Harriet in particular is highly skilled at creating and employing emotional stories and using pathos based rhetorical strategies to achieve specific outcomes (see Chapter 5). Here, these stories are unique and individual and are deployed at the right time to the right person to achieve lasting effect. Interestingly, Harriet was able to spread these skills throughout the group (see Section 5.2). Harriet's use of humanising language and affective vocabulary spreads

from Harriet to Susan, then to Gary and onto Edward and Sally. Although Harriet is the main storyteller, as time progresses actors like Gary, Susan and Roy start to tell stories to achieve institutional outcomes. Importantly, other actors start to develop and use these skills to convince others of the credibility of the innovation and encourage their participation. Although these skills maybe unique they can be learned and transferred to others.

7.3.5 Towards a heuristic of public service innovation practice

Based on the discussions in the previous subsections, I have distilled key messages and presented them in a heuristic for policy makers, managers and frontline workers involved in public service innovation (see Table 13). Innovation is a notoriously complex process of which there is no one-size-fits-all approach to its management (Dodson, Gann & Phillips, 2014). Therefore, the heuristic is designed as a cognitive aid which quickly and efficiently presents key points of learning based on the experiences of the pilot team in relation to the drivers, barriers and solutions to barriers faced during the experimentation and adoption phases of a public service innovation. The aim is for practitioners to use this heuristic to identify any synergies between their own activities and operating context, and that of the pilot team, to help inform the ways they might exploit existing opportunities or overcome potential barriers when engaging in public service innovation activity.

Table 13: A heuristic of public service innovation practice - drivers, barriers and solutions

Innovation Antecedents	Experimentation		Adoption
	Drivers	Barriers	Drivers
Environment	Government programme of austerity; devolution of power to city region; emphasis on public service reform across the city region	High levels of uncertainty *Solution - use different discursive strategies (discursive frames and framing tactics, pathos based vocabulary, emotional storytelling) to advocate for the innovation rather than disrespect or disregard existing views*	Having access to evaluation skills to demonstrate how the innovation achieved strategic objectives – specific approved cost benefit analysis methodology was used to calculate financial savings (ROI) whilst testimonials were collected from service users to demonstrate the how quick and effective by different the new way of work was to traditional approaches; Decision to evaluate impact from the point of inception
Organisation	Senior executive support; voluntary nature of enrolment; commitment fostered by managing two workloads; creation of a relational space; boundary spanner actors (those that sit at the operational and strategic interface)	Substantial workload caused by having to balance innovation activity with the day job *Solution - different supervision activities that were used to monitor and help workers avoid burnout and the level of intimacy in the relational space*	Successes hinged on the collective agency fostered by the relational space – specific communication practices like meaningful participation, managing individual interests and creation of an identity were important features to realising value potential
Innovation	Autonomy and discretion attracted workers to experiment	Autonomy and discretion placed workers under intense scrutiny and was used to frame success an individual rather than service outcome.	Autonomy and discretion were linked to increased job satisfaction. Also provided a relative advantage over other methods in terms of achieving outcomes for service users

Innovation Antecedents	Experimentation		Adoption
	Drivers	*Barriers*	*Drivers*
		Solution – support from line managers and colleagues and framing successes as product of the service delivery or generic skills that could be learned by anyone.	
Individual	Creative and empowered individuals; possessing narrative and rhetorical skills which are central to mobilising participation, convincing others of credibility and repairing breakdowns	Not everyone can possess such skills, but the example shows how these skills are transferable and can be learned	See environmental adoption drivers above

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