

A Visible Difference:

an evaluation of the second phase of the
Police Community Support Officers
in West Yorkshire

Dr Matthew Long and Anne Robinson
with Professor Paul Senior

September 2006

Hallam Centre for Community Justice



**Sheffield
Hallam University**

SHARPENS YOUR THINKING

A Visible Difference:

An Evaluation of the Second Phase of Police Community Support Officers in West Yorkshire

Dr Matthew Long and Anne Robinson
with Professor Paul Senior

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Foreword

West Yorkshire Police has been keen to extend the policing family and is proud of the achievements which have led to the Force employing more Police Community Support Officers than any other Force in England and Wales outside the Metropolitan Police area. West Yorkshire Police has been a pioneer in developing their role in the extended policing family.

The Police Authority, Local Authorities and the Private Sector have all played their part in supporting this extension by providing match-funding and for this support I am grateful.

Achieving this level of PCSO engagement has not been without challenges. The original intention of the Home Office in developing this important policing support role has seen much evolution since PCSOs were first recruited under the Home Office Phase 1 funding during the Street Crime Initiative. This was followed by a further phase under the Police Reform Agenda and now Neighbourhood Policing, which is pivotal to the way that we, as a Force, deliver services to our communities.

Right now the Force has more sworn Police Officers than at any time in the last ten years. This is in addition to the PCSOs. However, it is our responsibility to ensure we are utilising these extra resources as effectively and efficiently as we can. PCSOs are a fundamental and integral part of Neighbourhood Policing Teams, and add value to modern day policing. However, we needed to take stock and identify how we move forward the PCSO agenda.

That is why we commissioned this evaluation, in 2004, of the second phase of the introduction of PCSOs. This evaluation report is comprehensive. In many areas it supports existing views and perceptions but it is also provides an evidence based rationale for moving forward in the future.

Finally, I am grateful to all those who have contributed to this report.

Colin Cramphorn
Chief Constable

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to all those who contributed to this report, including interviewees from West Yorkshire Police and partner agencies, who shared their time and experience, and those who provided financial, human resources and crime data for our analysis.

We would also like to thank our colleagues at the Hallam Centre for Community Justice, and, specifically, Ian Buczynski, Katherine Wilkinson and Liz Austen for their invaluable advice and assistance with this evaluation.

Executive Summary

Background to the study

- i. In West Yorkshire 60 PCSOs recruited under Round 1 funding were placed in Leeds and Bradford city centres from March 2003. At the same time, West Yorkshire Police engaged the Centre for Criminal Justice Studies at the University of Leeds to undertake an evaluation of their use of PCSOs after 12 months in post.
- ii. In November 2004, the Hallam Centre for Community Justice was engaged to conduct a follow-up evaluation on the second phase of PCSO deployment to consider the impact of PCSOs, their integration and management within West Yorkshire Police, and the experience and perceptions of key stakeholders. This report is the outcome of this evaluation.
- iii. In the period since *Patrolling With A Purpose* was published, there have been a number of developments that have altered the context in which PCSOs are deployed. This evaluation has had to take account of this changing picture locally and nationally including the National Evaluation of Community Support Officers which was published in January 2006.
- iv. This evaluation considers PCSOs in four local authority areas (6 police divisions) in West Yorkshire. All four local authorities are either currently match-funding or are in the process of agreeing match-funding for PCSOs.
- v. Data has been collected for this evaluation through a range of quantitative, qualitative and secondary data. This report is organised into 8 chapters reflecting the themes that emerged from our findings. Each chapter, therefore, draws on a range of data sources to inform its discussion and conclusions.

Strategic Vision

- vi. The major political and policy context for the introduction of PCSOs and their role within the neighbourhood policing initiative is outlined and incorporates the ACPO strategic vision and that of West Yorkshire Police.
- vii. An understanding of how and why PCSO roles have developed has to be set in the much wider context of civilianisation within policing. The impetus for the growth of civilian roles has been partly driven by concerns about cost and effectiveness, but also about what structures are best able to respond to the complex nature of modern policing.
- viii. The first *National Community Safety Plan 2006-9* (Home Office 2005) envisaged PCSOs working to objectives set by partnership bodies. Partnership working between the police, local authorities and other crime and disorder partners are critical to achieving progress on these priorities, and PCSOs are increasingly working alongside representatives from those partner agencies.
- ix. The range of PCSO powers has increased as the sense of what is appropriate, effective and achievable within their role has grown with experience. Newer powers enhance their ability to respond to anti-social behaviour, truancy, alcohol and drug-related crime and environmental enforcement specifically, all areas where there is an overlap with other agencies.
- x. In order to gain a sense of how the strategic vision from the Home Office and from ACPO is being interpreted and implemented in practice, semi-structured interviews were conducted with two Assistant Chief Constables. These were supported by interviews with senior managers from 4 local authorities engaged in strategic partnerships. The following strands to ACPO's vision and West Yorkshire's policy with regard to the development of PCSOs were highlighted:
 - PCSO core role of visibility and engagement.

- Minimal powers and equipment
- Robust recruitment and training
- Supervision within Neighbourhood Policing Teams
- Benchmarking for good practice
- Partnership working

Reducing Crime in Local Areas

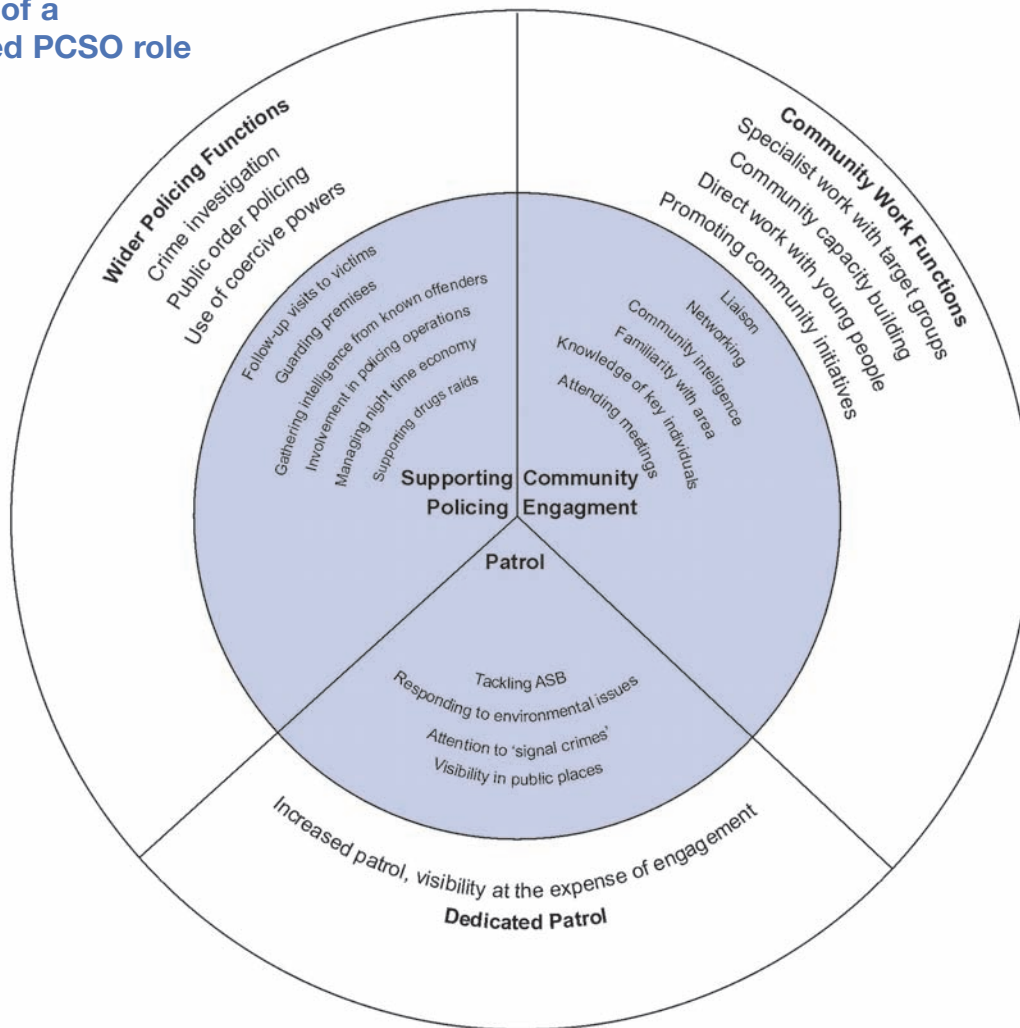
- xi. This chapter examines the partnership arrangements between police and local authorities and how PCSOs, and more broadly NPTs (Neighbourhood Policing Teams), contribute to the wider partnership agenda and local priorities, as crime and disorder partners seek to translate the broader strategic vision into meaningful local actions.
- xii. Partnership relationships at a local level are strong, but still developing. Since the initial PCSO funding in 2003 two major changes have occurred: significantly moving PCSOs away from an exclusive focus on city centre policing and the involvement of partners in providing match-funding. Seven issues emerged as significant:
 - Influence upon the focus of PCSO activity
 - Initial deployment
 - Views of elected members
 - Relationships between PCSOs and wardens
 - Contribution to crime and disorder strategies
 - PCSOs, public relations and NPTs
 - PCSO powers
- xiii. Managers from one local authority raised some important questions about the roles of PCSO and local authority staff and decisions for local partnerships about which group of employees are best placed to take on which tasks.
- xiv. The two areas most frequently mentioned in terms of PCSO impact were tackling anti-social behaviour and responding to low level crime. Managers from both local authorities and the police were clear about the benefits of PCSOs in terms of public relations.
- xv. Quality of interaction with the public was seen as critical, in order to reassure and to respond to problems, as well as the ability to build positive relationships with young people
- xvi. Senior police and local authority managers interviewed were cautious about extending the enforcement role and were generally in favour of PCSOs using their communication and “street skills” to deal with situations. It is significant that these views differ from those of the PCSOs themselves, the majority of who said they were in favour of an increase in powers.
- xvii. Real concerns were reported about the different organisational boundaries for police, local authorities and other partners though more positively, the advent of NPTs has enabled partners to reduce some of the difficulties.
- xviii. This evaluation did not set out to explore partnership relationships explicitly, but clearly there are areas that have emerged in the course of this work that would merit further consideration and/or specific research.

Community Engagement

- xix. This chapter examines the reassurance effects of PCSO activity, and how their reassurance potential is now seen to come from a diverse range of activities that has expanded their role beyond the primary function of high visibility patrol.

- xx. West Yorkshire Police have moved a long way in the past five years towards providing a visible foot patrol presence, using PCSOs and other members of the extended policing family. The evaluation reveals a role that is both wider and more complex than a straightforward patrol function.
- xxi. A number of key issues in relation to community engagement have been highlighted by this evaluation. These include:
- Community involvement
 - PCSOs and young people
 - Community engagement and reassurance
 - Gathering community intelligence
 - Match-funded PCSO posts
 - Relationships with the extended policing family
- xxii. There may be a risk of PCSOs becoming involved in levels of interaction with the public that may have intrinsic merit in terms of community cohesion, but which cannot in themselves directly contribute to a reduction in crime. The findings are that, in practice, community engagement is balanced with other aspects of the PCSO role.
- xxiii. Building relationships with young people in communities are clearly important for PCSOs, and this can be facilitated in a number of ways, over and above the day to day contact that they might have in parks, streets and other public spaces.
- xxiv. PCSOs are in a unique position to pick up information about what is happening in areas, the movements of key individuals and generally the sort of “on the ground” information that accumulates to a rich body of valuable data.
- xxv. PCSOs can be a catalyst for improved police-community relations, through elected members, and the management structures of community projects and initiatives.
- xxvi. Relationships with other members of the extended policing family are critical in order to maximise the impact of PCSO presence in local communities. The rather hybrid role of PCSOs, with some enforcement functions and a focus on reassurance, low level crime and environmental issues, has interesting spin offs in terms of partnership working.
- xxvii. The findings suggest that the most appropriate mix of activities is a blend of community engagement, visible patrol and activities with support for policing (see figure overleaf). A balanced role is one that would ordinarily stay within the central circle of the diagram, whilst a focus upon tasks towards the outer edge would have implications for public perceptions of PCSOs and the visibility, familiarity and accessibility aspects of reassurance.

Model of a rounded PCSO role



PCSO perceptions and practices

- xxviii. This chapter moves on to consider how the PCSO role has developed by incorporating the views of both PCSOs and their managers with regard to the competencies and skill sets required for the role of PCSO within Neighbourhood Policing Teams.
- xxix. 44% of PCSO respondents compared themselves to sworn police officers more than any other occupation. More PCSOs viewed their role as most similar to community workers than noted in the previous evaluation
- xxx. 72% of PCSOs stated that they existed primarily to perform high visibility patrol. The second most commonly cited reason for existence was to provide 'reassurance' (26%), followed by 'working with the public and community'(16%).
- xxxi. No NPT managers interviewed were of the opinion that the primary reason for PCSO existence was that of crime fighting. This appears to suggest that their philosophy of the PCSO role is in line with what the Phase One evaluation referred to as the "dedicated patrol officer model".
- xxxii. Crime investigation was not explicitly referred to by any of the interviewees, in contrast to crime prevention, raising public awareness and other contributions that PCSOs were felt to make.
- xxxiii. Data collated by force headquarters reveals that the average time which PCSOs spent on patrol was 80% in April 2004. By April 2005, this figure had peaked at 85% and had stabilised at 83% by April 2006.
- xxxiv. There was a marked sense of diversity in terms of the range of work which PCSOs were expected to engage in. The evidence suggests that PCSOs are now more confident in exercising their discretion over the use of powers of detention.

- xxxv. PCSOs identified that the most important skills to have were communication and listening. This was endorsed by NPT (Neighbourhood Policing Team) police managers.
- xxxvi. Neighbourhood policing teams are a key vehicle for the integration of PCSOs and this was viewed as an overwhelming positive. No officers reported overt hostility or animosity from police officers but 61% reported 'mixed' receptions from police officers. PCSO reception by police staff who were based within NPTs was overwhelmingly good.
- xxxvii. 67% of NPT police managers felt that the introduction of PCSOs had actually reduced the workloads of the sworn police officers that they managed.

Infrastructure

- xxxviii. A number of themes were explored concerning recruitment and retention; training; management structure; HR matters; possibilities for career progression and finance and contracts
- xxxix. Of the 624.5 PCSOs recruited, 40% were female. Recruitment of minority ethnic candidates stands at 7.5%, which compares favourably to the proportion of minority ethnic recruits to PC roles. West Yorkshire Police faces significant challenges in recruiting PCSOs to meet the projected increase in numbers and retaining PCSOs currently in post.
- xl. Almost half the PCSOs expressed the view that the training was too short and could be improved by including more input from experienced PCSOs and wardens,
- xli. Management of PCSOs has been an addition to traditional first line manager roles in the police and three themes emerged - the supervisory burden; understanding of PCSO role and the day-to-day involvement of police officers.
- xlii. Terms and conditions vary not only between police officers and PCSOs, but between police forces also. Discussions are currently ongoing in respect of standardisation of national terms and conditions.
- xliii. Establishing some form of career progression is clearly a matter that cannot be indefinitely shelved and, in view of the required rise in PCSO numbers, a greater variety of roles and responsibilities could usefully be considered.
- xliv. The complexity of dealing with the financial side of PCSOs was described by one member of central West Yorkshire Police staff as "like a big jigsaw really". It is clear that the demands of accounting for match-funding income were a challenge in the initial stages. This kind of accountability is new for the police and is another aspect of the cultural shift that has been part and parcel of the growth of PCSOs in the service.

PCSO Effectiveness

- xlv. Using the public surveys conducted across West Yorkshire forms the primary source of data for evaluating the impact of PCSOs with a total sample for the public surveys in West Yorkshire was 346.
- xlvi. The data is complemented by semi-structured interviews with NPT managers and match funded partners and an analysis of the targeted focus groups.
- xlvii. Fear of personal attack was highest in city centre areas, most notably in Bradford and in Leeds.
- xlviii. The aggregated data with regard to fear of property crime shows a relatively even split between respondents. On the whole, it would seem that of the residents in West Yorkshire who were surveyed, more expressed a fear of property crime e.g. burglary or theft, than those who expressed a fear of personal attack.
- xlix. Across West Yorkshire, slightly more than half the respondents in the public survey (60%) reported that they had either been a victim or had been aware of anti-social behaviour in their neighbourhood within the last twelve months.

- i. Almost exactly half (52%) of public survey respondents across West Yorkshire stated that they would recognise PCSOs if they saw them out on patrol. The statistics suggest that there is more work which could be done in terms of publicity and marketing in order to further raise the profile of PCSOs.
- ii. 75% people surveyed in West Yorkshire felt reassured by the presence of PCSOs on the streets.
- iii. The data presented in this report suggests that PCSOs do make a valuable contribution in terms of supporting the wider policing effort with regard to (1) achieving reductions in crime and (2) improving the detection rate.
- iv. Most NPT Managers interviewed felt that PCSOs had indeed provided 'value for money' in terms of making an economic, efficient and effective contribution to policing across West Yorkshire.
- v. What was evident from the evaluation is that there is an opportunity for West Yorkshire Police to develop and engender a more robust performance culture with regard to PCSOs, in order to gain firmer indications of where and how PCSOs have most impact.

Issues and Themes to Consider

- iv. The government clearly sees PCSOs as having a role in terms of tackling anti-social behaviour. This is specifically with regard to contributing to the regeneration of local communities and increasing feelings of public safety.
- vi. Evidence from both NPT managers and senior police managers at BCU level suggests that there is a growing cultural acceptance of PCSOs within West Yorkshire and this was shared by more senior officers
- vii. There is a need to co-ordinate an appropriate division of labour - roles and responsibilities - between the various members of the "extended policing family". Public safety can only be maximised if these diverse policing efforts are more successfully co-ordinated.
- viii. By continuing to foster positive relationships with match funding partners, West Yorkshire police can utilise PCSOs to make an invaluable contribution towards achieving targets and goals outlined in crime and disorder strategies.
- ix. The evaluation has highlighted that much of the reassurance and high visibility work conducted by PCSOs cannot easily be measured by the development of quantifiable performance indicators.
- x. The issue of legal powers and equipment for PCSOs is an issue which needs further consideration by West Yorkshire Police in the future.
- xi. Career progression needs to be flexible enough to allow for PCSOs to transfer into sworn officer status where that is the intention whilst at the same time being clearly demarcated as a role in its own right.

Recommendations

1. We recommend that West Yorkshire Police establishes a strategy for analysing its contribution to partnership working at a CDRP level and exploring its relationship with local elected members
2. We recommend that West Yorkshire Police conducts a more thorough audit of the range of community engagement activities that NPTs are involved with and disseminates the findings across all CDRP areas.
3. We recommend that West Yorkshire Police further considers the feasibility of establishing a performance indicator for community engagement.
4. We recommend that West Yorkshire Police reviews its PCSO deployment practices with a view to sharing and disseminating good practices across divisions.
5. We recommend that West Yorkshire Police reviews PCSO activities which may contribute to wider force or CDRP objectives but which may undermine the reassurance potential of PCSOs and their public image.
6. We recommend that West Yorkshire Police conduct a review of PCSO roles with a view to establishing a preferred route for career progression.
7. We recommend that West Yorkshire Police reviews and monitors their Personal Development Review (PDR) completions for PCSOs, and links PDR goals to specific performance targets.
8. We recommend that West Yorkshire Police explores the potential for developing relevant in-service training, based on identified need for PCSOs and police officers based in NPTs.
9. We recommend that West Yorkshire Police considers what management support and induction might be beneficial to assist police officers joining NPTs to adjust to the nature of NPT work and taking day-to-day responsibility for PCSOs, where this is required.
10. We recommend that West Yorkshire Police maximises appropriate consultancy and advice to senior police managers involved in negotiating and setting contracts with match-funded partners.
11. We recommend that West Yorkshire Police considers more strategic means of identifying potential new match-funding partners, and that opportunities are sought with partners in the public, voluntary and private sectors.
12. We recommend that having established a performance indicator for community engagement, West Yorkshire Police develops a small, defined number of performance indicators specifically for PCSOs.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

Following the government White Paper *Policing a New Century: A Blueprint for Reform* (Home Office, 2001), the Police Reform Act of 2002 introduced the Police Community Support Officer (PCSO). The first PCSOs were recruited to work in 27 police forces from April 2003. As a civilian role, PCSOs were originally intended to provide the police with further capacity for tackling low level disorder and anti-social behaviour, and contributing to an overall reduction in the fear of crime.

According to the Association of Chief Police Officers, PCSOs could contribute,

"Primarily through highly visible patrol with the purpose of reassuring the public, increasing orderliness in public places and being accessible to communities and partner agencies working at local level".

(ACPO, 2005: 6)

PCSOs were introduced with a clear primary function as dedicated patrol officers. They would provide a high visibility presence and reassure the public about their personal safety. The original role designated was seen as relatively straightforward and about interaction and engagement, rather than coercion, even though they were envisaged as a key mechanism to control and effectively to manage public space. In line with this vision, the original powers of PCSOs were limited under Part 1, Schedule 4 of the Police Reform Act of 2002, and these are illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Subsequent legislation, such as the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005, has significantly extended those powers (see Appendix 4 which details the range of powers that can be designated to PCSOs and indicates those given to the PCSOs in West Yorkshire).

The first round of central government funding was announced for 1,206 PCSOs across 27 forces in late 2002 and the first PCSOs came onto the streets in West Yorkshire in March 2003. From these first few original post-holders, PCSO presence has grown exponentially and under a Labour Party manifesto commitment in the 2005 general election (Labour Party 2005), numbers will rise nationally to 24,000 during the financial year 2007/8, through the Neighbourhood Policing Fund (NPF). This translates to 1074 in West Yorkshire Police, and PCSOs will therefore represent a significant group of employees within the service.

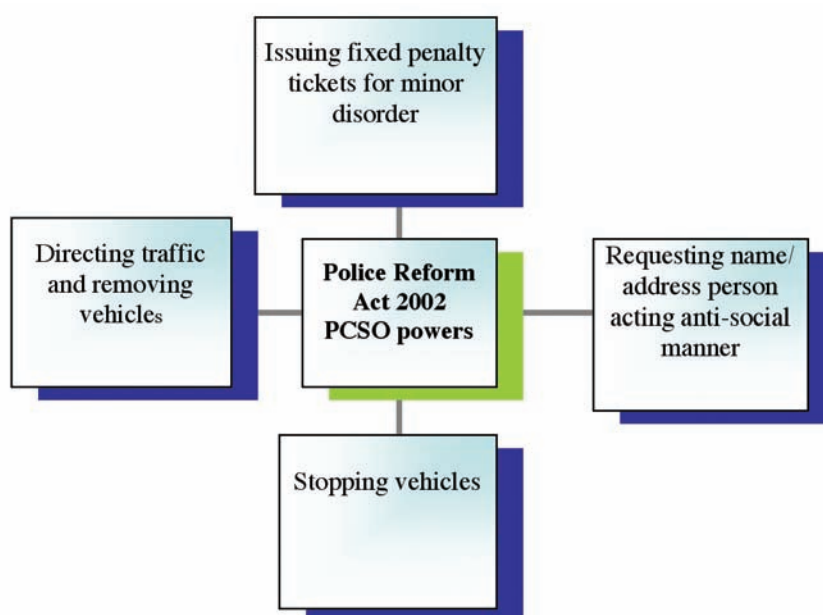


Figure 1: Original powers of PCSOs under the Police Reform Act 2002

In West Yorkshire 60 PCSOs recruited under Round 1 funding were placed in Leeds and Bradford city centres from March 2003. At the same time, West Yorkshire Police engaged the Centre for Criminal Justice Studies at the University of Leeds to undertake an evaluation of their use of PCSOs in the original two police divisions of City and Holbeck and Bradford South after 12 months in post (Crawford et al 2004).

1.2 Phase One Evaluation

The report *Patrolling With A Purpose: An evaluation of Police Community Support Officers in Leeds and Bradford City Centres* prepared by Adam Crawford et al in 2004 set out to:

- consider the effectiveness of PCSOs with regard to their impact on crime and public reassurance
- assess the effectiveness of the PCSO management and deployment
- assess the contribution of PCSOs to the “extended policing family” and the local co-ordination of community safety
- identify lessons learnt and to make recommendations on the role and future deployment of PCSOs

The methodology combined a range of quantitative and qualitative methods, as well as data analysis and desk research. These included a survey of members of the public, interviews with members of the police force, including PCSOs, uniform patrol, police staff and managers, as well as a sample of key stakeholders.

From the findings of this research, 17 key recommendations were made in relation to the future role and deployment of PCSOs. These are attached as Appendix 1 and will be reviewed in each of the chapters of this report.

1.3 Phase Two Evaluation

In November 2004, the Hallam Centre for Community Justice at Sheffield Hallam University was engaged to conduct a follow up evaluation on the second phase of PCSO deployment to consider the impact of PCSOs, their integration and management within West Yorkshire Police, and the experience and perceptions of key stakeholders. This report is the outcome of this evaluation.

This evaluation will particularly focus upon a review of the recommendations of the Round 1 PCSO evaluation and identify where these have been implemented by West Yorkshire Police. This evaluation will concentrate on four broad themes: stakeholders; integration and management; impact; and future strategy.

With regard to stakeholders, the evaluation has sought to:

- identify stakeholders' perspectives on PCSOs and to evaluate the extent to which expectations are being met.
- identify community perceptions and to explore what is envisaged of a PCSO to satisfy community needs.

In relation to integration and management the evaluation has sought to:

- examine the interaction of PCSOs with other uniform patrol and their contribution to strategic objectives set by partnerships such as CDRPs.
- identify issues pertaining to PCSOs funded by different mechanisms.
- ascertain the extent to which PCSOs are being ‘managed and deployed consistently across West Yorkshire Police and to identify local initiatives and innovations that could be used elsewhere.
- assess the effectiveness of the support structure for PCSOs at a Force level.

With regard to impact the evaluation has sought to:

- assess the impact of PCSOs in relation to reassurance, community involvement/awareness/engagement in problem solving.
- assess the impact of PCSOs in relation to anti-social behaviour.

Concerning future strategy the aim is to:

- inform future strategic decisions about the employment of PCSOs.

In the period since *Patrolling With A Purpose* was published, there have been a number of developments that have altered the context in which PCSOs are deployed. These are changes in Home Office strategy to deal with crime and, increasingly, anti-social behaviour, the police reform agenda and the growing significance of the “extended policing family”, that is, the range of personnel from statutory, voluntary and private bodies who contribute as part of their role to community safety and the reduction of crime.

This evaluation has had to take account of this changing picture locally and nationally. *The National Evaluation of Community Support Officers* was published in January 2006 (Cooper et al), joining a growing body of literature and knowledge about PCSOs, and this has been drawn upon in this Phase Two evaluation.

In addition a request by West Yorkshire Police to extend the remit and reach of the evaluation was made in March 2006 and the evaluation agreed to incorporate two more local authority areas in the work and to build in some of the other developments that have influenced the scope and approach of the evaluation including:

- The deployment of PCSOs throughout all police divisions in West Yorkshire Police
- Implementation of the neighbourhood policing model and establishment of Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs)
- Partnership initiatives and, more generally, the learning that has taken place about partnership working as a result of the structures established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- The funding regime for PCSOs and the involvement of partners – large and small – in part funding significant numbers of PCSOs

1. see *Police Community Support Officers: A Literature and Policy Review* by Anne Robinson (2006) HCCJ. available from hccj@shu.ac.uk

1.4 Research Methodology

This evaluation considers PCSOs in four local authority areas (6 police divisions) in West Yorkshire. These are Leeds (City and Holbeck, Chapeltown, Pudsey and Weetwood divisions), Bradford (Bradford South division), Wakefield and Calderdale. All four local authorities are either currently match-funding or are in the process of agreeing match-funding for PCSOs.

Data has been collected for this evaluation through the following activities:

- Examination of policy and literature relevant to PCSOs, in order to provide a context for discussing and evaluating their role and impact, and to identify relevant secondary data for comparative purposes¹
- A survey of 329 members of the public in the 6 case study police divisions
- Qualitative interviews with 3 PCSOs in each case study police division (total 18)
- A postal survey of PCSOs in each case study police division (69 returned)
- Qualitative interviews with 12 NPT sergeants and inspectors
- Qualitative interviews with 4 senior police managers responsible for partnership and community safety in the 4 local authority areas
- Qualitative interviews with 8 senior local authority managers responsible for different aspects of community safety, anti-social behaviour and the environment (exact role and remit varied according to different local authority structures)
- Qualitative interviews with two Assistant Chief Constables, including the Director of the National Neighbourhood Policing Programme who is also ACPO lead for PCSOs
- A small number of focus groups targeted at hard-to-reach groups particularly young people
- Analysis of crime and disorder strategies for the 4 local authority areas
- Analysis of PCSO workload, activity and performance data
- Analysis of crime statistics
- Analysis of PCSO recruitment, retention, finance and other relevant data
- Interviews with West Yorkshire Police managers responsible for recruitment, training, finance, legal matters and plural policing
- Interviews with three smaller match funding partners

1.5 The Structure of the Report

This report is organised into 8 chapters reflecting the themes that emerged from our findings. Each chapter, therefore, draws on a range of data sources to inform its discussion and conclusions. The findings from each data set are then summarised followed by a reflection on the recommendations of the Phase One Evaluation and suggestions for further action with new key recommendations. A final chapter pulls together those recommendations and identifies action points for each.

Chapter 2: Strategic Vision

2.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the major political and policy context for the introduction of PCSOs and their role within the neighbourhood policing initiative. It incorporates the ACPO strategic vision and that of West Yorkshire Police and refers to the national focus on low level crime and anti-social behaviour, as well as the increasing emphasis on quality of life and environmental issues for both police and their local authority partners.

2.2 The Growth of Civilians in Policing

An understanding of how and why PCSO roles have developed has to be set in the much wider context of civilianisation within policing. This is not a phenomenon unique to the UK but is apparent to a greater or lesser extent in other jurisdictions. Developments in policing in the United Kingdom do not occur in isolation, but are influenced by changes in working practices both in Europe and the rest of the world. Nevertheless, in the extent and scope of civilianisation, the UK seems to be leading rather than following (Loveday 2004).

Relevant roles elsewhere that are comparable to PCSOs, include the Dutch city wardens or *stadswachten*, which inspired the neighbourhood warden initiative, and the more recent civilian police auxiliary role in the Netherlands, which is more obviously a fore-runner to PCSOs (Burney 2005). Likewise in France, under a power available since 1891, municipal authorities have started to recruit personnel to perform uniform patrol functions. Whilst accountability is to the local Mayor and not the police chief as in the UK, these roles have some underlying similarities to the PCSO role (Loveday, 2004).

Outside of Europe, the continent of Australasia has seen New Zealand give authorisation to non-sworn members of staff to exercise police powers under the Police Amendment Act 1989. The Australian Federal Police have utilised legislation to ensure that, irrespective of their police or civilian status, positions are filled by those employees who have the appropriate skill sets and competencies. (Loveday, 2004).

The impetus for the growth of civilian roles has been partly driven by concerns about cost and effectiveness, but also a debate about what structures are best able to respond to the complex nature of modern policing (HMIC 2004). There are also political imperatives about levels of public fear and anti-social behaviour that have required a rethinking of conventional policing and police officer roles, allowing a complementary role to be developed that is able

"To reinforce, not replace, other methods of policing. PCSOs are able to increase our capacity to perform high level policing functions by increasing the ability of community constables to tackle quality of life and community safety issues."

ACPO 2005

2.3 Central Drivers for Change

The concept of 'reassurance policing' was first coined by Charles Bahn in the United States back in the 1970's. (Bahn 1974). This concept started to receive attention here in Britain from the early 1990s onwards. (Singer 2004). By the latter part of the decade, it was widely adopted by policy makers and formed a strand of Public Service Agreements (PSAs) which have included stringent performance targets on increasing levels of public confidence, reducing fear of crime and the proportion of police officer time spent on front-line duties. These targets were clear signals that visibility and reassurance would be part of the Home Office's future vision for policing.

The roots of the Home Office vision for the recruitment and development of PCSOs can be traced to the strategy document entitled *The Way Ahead*. (Home Office, 2001a). In the same year, the White

Paper, *Policing a New Century: A Blueprint for Reform* (Home Office 2001b) heralded impending structural change in the police service ahead of the Police Reform Act 2002.

The introduction of the PCSO role is an integral part of the Workforce Modernisation Agenda. This agenda included the work of the Policing Bureaucracy Taskforce chaired by Sir David O'Dowd (Home Office, 2002b) and the creation of the Police Standards Unit, which introduced a more rigorous performance framework for the police service.

After the start of the new millennium the prospect of PCSOs, in addition to an increase in police officer numbers, was welcomed at a strategic level and, once in place, increasingly at an operational level (Home Office 2004c). The Home Office strategy document *Confident Communities in a Secure Britain* (Home Office, 2004b) predicted that PCSOs would have a pivotal role to play as part of newly constituted Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs). Such teams are set to become an institutional part of policing, with a Labour Party manifesto commitment to have a NPT in every neighbourhood by 2010 (Labour Party 2005).

The Home Office's Interim Evaluation report (Home Office 2004c) referred to PCSOs as complementing the work of police officers - in NPTs and elsewhere - by concentrating on low level crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour. In this document, they were presented as being a natural development in statutory policing, thus mirroring changes which had occurred elsewhere in the policing functions of other members of the extended policing family.

Furthermore, their role in providing general reassurance to the public is intended to complement the various initiatives which collectively constituted the *Together: Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour Campaign* (Home Office 2003b).

The National Policing Plan 2005-8 further identifies a core requirement for PCSOs to be equipped with the tools, know-how and determination to tackle anti-social behaviour, and to be trained in the powers available to them (Home Office 2004d), including additional powers to issue fixed penalty notices and to disperse groups of young people under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.

The first National Community Safety Plan 2006-9 (Home Office 2005a) envisaged PCSOs working to objectives set by partnership bodies such as the Crime Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) and Local Strategic Partnerships. This partnership working would enhance their role in tackling anti-social behaviour:

"It is not only crimes like burglary, robbery, domestic violence and assault that we need to tackle. As CDRPs have discovered when they consult their local residents, the public feel threatened by joy-riders, alcohol-fuelled disorder and noisy neighbours too. So it is as important to us to deal with anti-social behaviour as with the traditional forms of neighbourhood crime. We must provide high quality and responsive services to the public, resting on the bedrock of neighbourhood policing."

Home Office 2005a: 6

The plan set five priority areas:

- making communities stronger and more effective
- further reducing crime and anti-social behaviour
- creating safer environments
- protecting the public and building confidence
- improving people's lives so they are less likely to commit offences or re-offend

Partnership working between the police, local authorities and other crime and disorder partners are critical to achieving progress on these priorities, and PCSOs are increasingly working alongside representatives from those partner agencies. The ways in which they do so are addressed in later chapters in this report.

The range of PCSO powers has increased as the sense of what is appropriate, effective and achievable within their role has grown with experience. Newer powers enhance their ability to respond to anti-

social behaviour, truancy, alcohol and drug-related crime and environmental enforcement specifically, all areas where there is an overlap with the activities of the local authority and other agencies.

The question of increasing powers naturally raises a debate about the PCSO role and whether PCSOs should be given further coercive powers, so bringing them closer to police officer colleagues. At present the specific powers that are invested in PCSOs are at the discretion of Chief Constables, and there has been considerable variation nationally in the powers that have been given. Designation of powers was considered by the HMIC report, *Modernising the Police Service*, which concluded that there was a lack of consistent thinking about how and what powers are designated (HMIC 2004). Picking up this debate, in 2005 the Home Office launched a consultation exercise, in which it sought the views of police forces and other stakeholders.

In responding to this consultation exercise, the Home Office (2006c) acknowledged the need to find an appropriate balance between enforcement and community engagement. Whilst a standard set of powers was envisaged, this document outlined how the devolvement of certain powers and decisions about deployment which may result in confrontation, would remain at the discretion of local police chiefs. This includes the most controversial power, which is the power of detention.

2.4 A Vision from within Policing

The question of police auxiliary officers was first looked at in 1995 by the Cassells Inquiry which had been established by the Police Foundation and the Policy Studies Institute to look into the roles and responsibilities of the police. In the mid 1990's, proposals for such officers were rejected by ACPO on the grounds that they were unworkable. The Audit Commission report, *Streetwise*, cited a document from the ACPO Patrol Project Working Group which expressed the view that their introduction may lead to a reduction in sworn officers, that auxiliaries would inevitably be seen as 'second class PC's' and they would put pressure on the organisation by having to face situations which they were untrained to deal with. (Audit Commission, 1996).

Despite these trenchant views, there was clearly a disparity between what the general public wants and what the police can actually deliver in terms of patrol, in the context of competing requirements for a rapid emergency response and the strategic management of crime (Audit Commission 1996). This was confirmed by the *Narrowing the Gap* report by HMIC for Scotland which found that in the 8 Scottish police divisions surveyed, only 4% officer time was dedicated to foot patrol (HMIC for Scotland 2002).

By the new millennium, the traditional focus of police activity on crime reduction and tackling criminality was being challenged and there was a growing recognition of the need, expressed in the HMIC thematic report, *Open All Hours* (HMIC 2001), and elsewhere, for a significant cultural change within the police in order to respond to current issues around reassurance and public confidence:

"Enhancing public reassurance is central to what the police service and partners are trying to achieve and all police officers and staff appreciate the role of visibility, accessibility and familiarity in an overall strategy for achieving this. Forces will therefore be pursuing the core objectives of reducing crime and disorder in a way that maximises these three elements."

HMIC 2001:17

As mentioned previously, the Government White Paper *Policing a New Century: a Blueprint for Reform* (Home Office, 2001) was quickly followed by the Police Reform Act of 2002 and the arrival of PCSOs within police forces. Shortly after their introduction, the HMIC report *Modernising the Police Service* (HMIC 2004) discussed the role, management and deployment of PCSOs and other police staff, as part of the wider workforce modernisation agenda.

The debate at that time about the appropriate use of PCSOs and their relationship with other police staff and officers was summed up by *Modernising the Police Service*. Role boundaries, cultural patterns, institutional practices and barriers to change were all addressed, but more powerfully there was a clear articulation of the characteristics of a modernised police organisation. This includes a partnership orientation, an absence of fixation with internal boundaries and functional silos, and an inclusive culture.

Furthermore, it would be an integrated service with a clear vision of its future direction and the people and skills required to deliver this (HMIC 2004). Whilst this is aspirational and the police forces where PCSOs are employed may not currently evidence these characteristics, all these factors have relevance to the successful deployment and integration of PCSOs into policing, as a key element of a diverse workforce.

Specifically regarding where PCSOs are located in the spectrum of enabling and controlling public servants, PCSO Guidance issued by ACPO in 2002 and updated in 2005, identified PCSOs as being most appropriately at the “softer” end of policing, emphasising the need for engagement and communication skills rather than the use of enforcement powers (ACPO 2005).

2.5 From Strategic Vision to Policy in West Yorkshire

In order to gain a sense of how the strategic vision from the Home Office and from ACPO is being interpreted and implemented in practice, semi-structured interviews were conducted with two Assistant Chief Constables. These were supported by interviews with senior managers from 4 local authorities engaged in strategic partnership at CDRP level with West Yorkshire Police.

The two police interviews revealed the following strands to ACPO’s vision and West Yorkshire’s policy with regard to the development of PCSOs:

- PCSO core role of visibility and engagement.
- Appropriate powers and optimum equipment
- Robust recruitment and training
- Supervision within Neighbourhood Policing Teams
- Benchmarking for good practice
- Partnership working

2.6 PCSO Core Role of Visibility and Engagement.

It is clear that visibility and engagement are at the heart of ACPO’s vision for PCSOs. The role of a PCSO is not simply limited to high visibility patrol but encompasses also the need proactively to engage the community:

“The key aspect of their role is the ‘C’ in their title - the community aspect of their role. Best suited to public reassurance, public confidence and the impact that has mainly around anti-social behaviour.”

ACC

Patrolling hot spots, shops, school patrols and youths causing anti-social behaviour were mentioned as part of ACPO’s vision of high visibility and community engagement. This was endorsed by the second ACC interviewee:

“It is to reassure the public and it is to be visible where police officers can’t be because of all the other demands on police officers. They are the eyes and ears...they get close to the community, get their confidence, work along side them to resolve the problems that they have.”

ACC

Whilst there are no national deployment agreements and acknowledging that the nature of deployment is in reality often at the discretion of the first line supervisor, this interviewee suggested that ACPO’s philosophy was that PCSOs should not ordinarily operate in pairs or work directly alongside sworn police officers.

2.7 Appropriate Powers and Optimum Equipment

The ACPO vision encompasses the notion that PCSO powers should be kept to the minimum but proportionate to the tasks being required of PCSOs. ACPO would appear to reject the notion that PCSOs should come to represent a kind of ‘junior police officer’ (Crawford and Lister, 2004) as this would create an unhelpful blurring of the boundaries between PCSOs and sworn officers. The vision incorporates the belief that, whilst ACPO can make recommendations, flexibility dependent on local need is still appropriate:

“Local circumstances dictate local needs. We need to be careful of ‘mission creep’ and overloading PCSOs with powers.”

ACC

Whilst the need to conduct risk assessments on working environments is a necessity, the ACPO position appears to be that equipment such as CS spray and handcuffs are not always appropriate, although handcuffs can be issued to PCSOs at the discretion of the local force. One interviewee felt that:

“Body armour is not conducive to the message we’re trying to get across to some communities.”

ACC

This message was confirmed elsewhere in the interview, which emphasised communication and people skills rather than powers and equipment as being of paramount importance for PCSOs. This interviewee further went on to say that:

“By giving PCSOs a set of consistent minimum powers, whilst it gives consistency, there is a danger that there will be another set of powers that comes along. All the time that’s taking PCSOs closer to being police officers...that’s going to create more paperwork and will take them away from being out on the streets”.

ACC

There is therefore a sense of caution in thinking about the direction in which the PCSO role might move, both in terms of the potential for undermining the high visibility and reassurance potential, and preventing the PCSOs developing a useful set of interactive street skills. This is underpinned by an appreciation of what PCSOs have offered by way of accessibility and community engagement, which is distinct from what police officers bring to their role, and should be valued. These themes will be developed in later chapters.

2.8 Robust Recruitment and Training

After a fast throughput of PCSOs under the first round of recruitment, ACPO is evidently keen to make selection procedures as robust as possible whilst at the same time reaching stringent recruitment targets. This involves a projected target of 16,000 PCSOs in post nationally (an increase of 9,000) by the end of 2006/7 and 24,000 by the end of the following financial year. As of 31 March 2006, 6737 FTE PCSOs were in post, comprising 3% of the police workforce (Home Office 2006b).

It would appear additionally that part of the workforce modernisation agenda will involve moves to change recruitment processes thus facilitating progression from PCSO to police officer. In terms of training, Centrex together with Skills for Justice will continue to provide training packages but how these products are used will remain at the discretion of forces. Centrex training packages are based upon a competency framework outlined in the National Occupational Standards for PCSOs.

A tension between nationally prescribed training packages with robust standards on the one hand and the need for local variation and flexibility on the other was highlighted:

“Because we’ve got the national training, it’s great, but one of the disadvantages can be, and I’m not suggesting it has been so far, is we are not in a position to change it in the same way we would if it were totally our package.”

ACC

The West Yorkshire Police training programme is discussed further in Chapter Six.

2.9 Supervision within Neighbourhood Policing Teams

The use of PCSOs will continue to be seen as an integral part of a healthily functioning Neighbourhood Policing Teams. (NPT) This was corroborated by one ACPO interviewee who commented that

"Without PCSOs the NPTs wouldn't be such good teams as they are."

ACC

Rather than creating a separate career structure, it seems likely that supervision of PCSOs will remain the ultimate responsibility of NPT Sergeants. This raises the issue of work loading:

"There's been a massive increase in PCSOs but not a commensurate increase in supervisors and analysts. The Neighbourhood Policing Fund is purely for PCSOs at this time. There is no infrastructure cost for additional supervision. My worry is that they are not going to be effectively supervised and deployed. There's a real gap."

ACC

In the light of the above comments ACPO is likely to lobby government for funding to increase levels of supervision and numbers of first level supervisors. In addition to this, the future integration of PCSOs into NPTs is likely to see a requirement for a greater number of police officers to task and co-ordinate PCSOs on a day to day basis. One interviewee commented:

"There are now more people in the organisation that need supervising...we have actually increased the number of Sergeants - the Police Authority approved a growth bid. We want PCSOs to be supervised by PCs and Sergeants."

ACC

Again, supervisory structures are discussed later in this report and recommendations identified arising from the findings of this evaluation.

2.10 Benchmarking for Good Practice

In noting the results of evaluations, taking feedback from forces and from public surveys, ACPO's role in establishing benchmarking for good practice is likely to continue. An interview with the ACPO lead on PCSOs revealed that forces such as Lancashire, who had positioned their reform processes in response to the National Reassurance Programme, were more likely to achieve successful integration of PCSOs into the workforce.

It was felt that use of PCSOs in a co-ordinated fashion would make a significant impact on services to victims of crime through follow up visits. The citizen focus agenda in Surrey was mentioned as being part and parcel of a wider quality of service agenda, highlighting the distinctiveness of neighbourhood policing:

"This is one of the key tasks for the service. If we are to maximise this massive input of resource we've got to think about how we structure ourselves to deliver neighbourhood policing, cos it's different to community policing."

ACC

The Metropolitan Police (MPS) is the largest employer of PCSOs, having 34% of the national PCSO workforce as of 31 March 2006. West Yorkshire Police is currently the second largest with 7% (Home Office 2006b). MPS is therefore considered by West Yorkshire Police to be the most appropriate force to use for comparison purposes, although direct benchmarking is difficult due to demographic differences and scale. More broadly, West Yorkshire has taken an active role in terms of contributing to Plural Policing Fora at a national level.

2.11 Partnership Working

Funding for PCSOs is complex because of the diverse funding streams that have come from central government (see Appendix 3). The picture is further complicated by the involvement of a range of partners in match-funding PCSO posts. These involve a range of small organisations and the, obviously much larger local authorities. The particular relationships in West Yorkshire are explored in more depth in Chapter 3.

The two senior police interviews revealed a perception that match funding partnership issues were extremely important but bureaucratic:

"The match funding element. In a way I wish it could be 100% funded by government so I didn't have to worry about match funding but in another way it is actually forcing us to talk to partners."
ACC

"We now have I think at least 6 different funding streams which started at different times that are made up of different partners and percentage levels that we're managing. So it's a very complex area. ...We need to be moving forward in a much more rationalised way with less funding streams and a focus on delivery." ACC

The involvement of match-funding partners has been critical in ensuring that West Yorkshire Police has met growth targets and will continue to be important as growth continues over the next two years.

Match-funding partners, however, have a further significance in terms of progressing appropriate discussion about the role and activities of PCSOs in order to meet partnership objectives. Local authorities have an agenda that is wider than that of the police, encompassing responsibilities for quality of life and sustainability/liveability of local environments. Their influence on how PCSOs have developed has been shown in this evaluation to be significant, if less direct than that of the police as employers and line managers. The way that match-funding arrangements has secured interest and commitment from partners that might not otherwise have been there, was evidenced in one interview with a local authority manager:

"If the government were simply stumping up the cash for PCSOs, we probably would not give too much thought as a council to where they were going, how they were being used, what was their deployment, how they related to council – it's just something free you are getting – the fact that the police and council are having to sit down to have a serious conversation about money is forcing the council to ask questions about, well, if we are funding PCSOs using council money, ultimately instead of council officers wearing council jackets, with the council taking the credit, what's in it for us?"

Local Authority Manager

Discussion around and requirements in match-funding contracts has ensured that to some extent local authorities and the police have explored mutual expectations of the focus for PCSO activity. However, these have changed over the time the PCSOs have been in post, thus:

"For the first roll out of PCSOs, clearly the police and council agreed that city centre and town centre regeneration was a priority, but subsequent rounds have been about neighbourhood policing across the district."

Local Authority Manager

Some interesting issues emerged from the interviews with local authority managers on the strategic direction being given to local authorities, largely by the (former) Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). In some respects this runs parallel to Home Office policy, in pursuing neighbourhood management initiatives, for instance, at the same time as neighbourhood policing is being promoted. However, some managers noted a lack of "joined up thinking" between departments and one specifically commented upon the introduction of NPTs and the missed opportunity for involving partners:

"The neighbourhood policing approach has been sold through the police, it has not come through the partnership route at all – so nothing has come through to the Safer Communities partnerships, saying neighbourhood policing affects you, everyone's buying into it, you might like to buy into it too..... it seems a policing initiative, but it could have been more of a partnership initiative."

Local Authority Manager

However, elsewhere the importance of bringing the local authority and policing agendas together was highlighted and interviews revealed that efforts were being made at a strategic level to make sense of what are frequently "top down" central government initiatives. Consider the following two quotations:

"It is absolutely crucial that the local authority is working with the police, particularly in neighbourhoods. We are just entering into a LAA (Local Area Agreement), with three neighbourhood management pilots and there will be three of them, one in each of our geographical areas."

Local Authority Manager

"How do we manage the cleaner, safer, greener environment issues? we are looking at bringing partners from the council and police together to look at whether we are doing it in the right wayso it is all a bit up in the air at the moment as to how it will be done in the future. But I think we recognise that there are a lot of people around with those kinds of roles that could overlap."

Local Authority Manager

Partnership working, however, is still at a relatively early stage in most local authority areas and, whilst willingness exists, both police and local authority managers acknowledged in interviews that they were in a learning process. This was expressed by one manager as follows:

"Key to success is the partnership approach, so we are not making decisions in isolation.....we still have a lot of work to do on that, to be honest, I think we are some way there, but there is still a lot of work to do, particularly for the police to recognise that, if they get a problem, they have not got the only solution that exists to that problem."

Local Authority Manager

2.12 Conclusion

A number of issues have been covered in this chapter that will be explored in subsequent chapters. This strategic vision for PCSOs from the Home Office and from key senior bodies in policing has impacted upon their development within West Yorkshire Police.

Looking at their future role, Crawford et al in 2004 made 5 specific recommendations that impinge upon the strategy for PCSOs. These are as follows:

Recommendation 2

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police clarifies and articulates the defining principles of PCSO deployment together with their overarching aims and objectives

Recommendation 8

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police reviews the concentration of PCSOs in Bradford and Leeds city centres, but does not initiate dramatic reductions.

Recommendation 10

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police does not issue PCSOs with handcuffs, CS spray or batons. Such items of equipment may significantly alter their role into a more coercive and potentially confrontational one, placing them in more threatening situations.

Recommendation 13

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police tasks its Plural Policing Unit to explore ways to communicate, both externally and internally, the value and contribution, as well as the limitations, of PCSOs.

Recommendation 17

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police Tasks its Plural Policing Unit to share and disseminate good practice across the force regarding the use and co-ordination of the "extended policing family", drawing upon experiences from within and beyond the force.

Recommendation 8 has been overtaken by the expansion in PCSO numbers, and recommendation 2 to some extent by the diversification of PCSO roles, although clarity of purpose in maintaining high visibility and reassurance activities has remained paramount. As indicated in the previous discussion, use of handcuffs, batons and other equipment is not currently viewed by senior strategic managers as appropriate for their vision of the future PCSO role at this time.

The other two recommendations relate to the promotional and co-ordination activities of the Plural Policing Unit, which has been working on these issues, whilst recognising the increasing importance of such work initiated and carried forward at a divisional, rather than a force level.

Chapter 3:

Reducing Crime in Local Areas

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter looked at the strategic vision for the introduction of PCSOs into a police force in the process of reform and the wider policy framework around safer and sustainable environments to which PCSOs contribute.

This chapter will examine the partnership arrangements between police and local authorities and how PCSOs, and more broadly NPTs, contribute to the wider partnership agenda and local priorities, as crime and disorder partners seek to translate the broader strategic vision into meaningful local actions. Whilst this study did not set out to analyse and comment upon partnership relationships as such, a number of observations were made by interviewees reflecting upon working relations and their impact upon the introduction of PCSOs and subsequent development of their role.

Appendix 2 contains a summary of partnership structures in Leeds, Bradford, Calderdale and Wakefield, along with details of the priorities set by the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships. One of the issues that immediately come out of this is the disjuncture between police structures (Basic Command Units) and the way local authorities organise their services, the implications of which will be discussed in more detail later.

Following the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, local authorities, police and other “responsible authorities” are required to work in partnership to conduct audits of local crime and fear of crime, and to determine joint actions to reduce crime in their areas. Although establishing closer working relationships brought a number of challenges to the agencies involved in the initial stages, partnerships are now firmly established and are working to a third three year strategy in each area. Over time, the work of the Drug Action Teams has become more closely allied and increasing emphasis has been placed on low level crime and anti-social behaviour.

3.2 Evidence Base

This chapter is based upon interviews conducted with four senior police managers with responsibility for partnership work in their areas (in the case of Leeds and Bradford, across more than one police division). Equivalent managers in the relevant local authorities were also interviewed, although, because local authority structures differ significantly, the exact responsibilities and remit of these officers varied. In addition, crime and disorder strategies for all four areas were examined.

3.3 Working Relationships

What was clear from these interviews was that partnership relationships at a local level are strong, but still developing. It was also apparent that the individuals involved are committed to working together to solve problems and improve their areas. Whilst some frustrations were acknowledged, there was generally an understanding that other agencies have different priorities and requirements, and that partnership work intrinsically involves recognising and working with these differences.

For some local authority managers interviewed, there were strong feelings about having to respond to successive central policy initiatives from the Home Office and elsewhere that impinge upon autonomy and freedom to determine local responses to identified problems. However, it would appear that central directives and requirements, whether coming from a governmental or a force level, are to some extent mediated through the senior police managers responsible for partnership working in local authority areas. Together, therefore, they are able to make sense of what new initiatives – such as the

introduction of the PCSO role - might mean for their local area and how they can best make use of the opportunities they present.

3.4 Establishing Contracts

The initial PCSO funding in 2003, which placed PCSOs in Leeds and Bradford city centres, came from the Home Office and the West Yorkshire Police budget. These first PCSOs were the subject of the previous evaluation by Crawford et al (2004). A second larger recruitment of PCSOs followed shortly after, bringing two major changes. PCSOs were spread over 10 police divisions, whereas the first tranche of 60 had been divided between City and Holbeck in Leeds and Bradford South divisions. This significantly moved PCSOs away from an exclusive focus on city centre policing and the city centre problems associated with business and retail areas, the night time economy and street violence.

The second major change was the involvement of partners in providing 50% of the funding for 106 PCSOs, alongside a further 100 who were funded again through a mixture of Home Office and West Yorkshire Police monies. Whilst the majority of these match-funded PCSOs were backed by local authorities (Leeds, Bradford, Calderdale and Kirklees all bought in to different extents), there were also several smaller funders, such as Morley Town Council.

Reflecting on the process leading to the agreements to devote resources to the match-funded PCSOs, it was clear that the way that this offer came to the local authorities allowed only limited room for negotiation. It was a straightforward offer, where effectively two members of staff devoted to visible patrol could be available for the price of one (this was referred to by some interviewees in the supermarket terminology of Buy One Get One Free (or BOGOF)).

As contracts were established, some agreements were made in terms of geographical location and commitment not to take PCSOs away for other duties, for instance, two PCSOs being devoted to each council ward in Leeds. However, by and large the requirements in contracts with local authorities are general, rather than specific. This may have been due to the relatively short timescale in which to accept or turn down the initial offer, with local authority hands somewhat tied once the basic offer was accepted. It was also partly due to the concept of PCSOs being new to local authorities, who did not then have a clear vision or expectation of what activities they might be suited to or what they might be able to achieve.

From interviews, it was apparent that the partnership context was critical in setting up initial contracts for PCSOs. This was something other than a series of simple commercial relationships with the local authorities purchasing and the police providing a service. Seven issues appear significant

- Influence upon the focus of PCSO activity
- Initial deployment
- Views of elected members
- Relationships between PCSOs and wardens
- Contribution to crime and disorder strategies
- PCSOs, public relations and NPTs
- PCSO powers

3.5 Influence upon the focus of PCSO Activity

Local authorities have a mechanism for influencing the focus of PCSO activities through the crime and disorder structures, rather than through stipulations in their contracts with the police. The managers interviewed were satisfied that this was sufficient influence and felt it appropriate that the police retain all responsibility for day to day deployment.

Partnership relationships are relatively robust and this affected the quality and spirit of communication about initial teething problems. One local authority manager in particular made a distinction between the PCSO contractual relationships and those that the local authority has established with other

providers, describing the degree of trust and patience that existed while the police were establishing these new staff. Some benefits were experienced in Leeds due to their almost unique structural position in having a Chief Superintendent managing local authority community safety functions.

3.6 Initial Deployment

Local authorities indicated that, in the early stages, agreements made about deployment at a strategic level were not communicated to police managers on the divisions, who took some time to become fully aware of the requirements of the match-funding partners. One of the concerns that arose was that the police could not initially identify specific PCSO post-holders and provide information to the local authorities about who and what their money was purchasing. Some historical comments from local authority interviewees included the following:

“There was confusion at WYP end in terms of deployment especially and the way that the contract was operated. Basically what we said was that we wanted the match-funded PCSOs to work in certain areas and those areas were negotiated looking at crime data, looking at ward coverage and partnership data.....what then happened, was that PCSOs went to divisions..... with no mention made, and no cognisance taken of which ones were match-funded and which ones weren't.”

Local Authority Manager

“The message had not got through, or had not been taken notice of, that we were paying for PCSOs to be in certain areas. Of course, the police experience is that when they have PCSOs they are allocated to jobs as and when, that they want them to go on, so there was this operational function which police use to deploy them that did not match with their partners who were funding it, who wanted to see certain things taken into account.”

Local Authority Manager

It must be stressed, however, that interviewees also reported that these issues have been largely addressed by establishing appropriate tracking systems and through the greater familiarity of police managers with partnership working over time. The NPT structures and involvement of NPT managers with more area-based crime and disorder groups appears to have been helpful in this regard.

3.7 Views of Elected Members

Local authorities, as democratic bodies, have a different relationship with the public than do the police, and this has an effect upon what they might seek to achieve through the funding they give to PCSOs. Clearly the level of funding involved for the local authorities is over and above the decision-making authority of the council officers, and is therefore a political matter for local elected members. This, amongst other considerations, involves weighing up the relative merits of maintaining a council-based warden service against the benefits of increased PCSO presence.

One significant factor for councillors, mentioned by several of the local authority managers, was the initial feelings of lack of control in terms of PCSOs, relative to the influence they have over their own directly managed services. Consider the following:

“After the first round of match-funded PCSOs came into place, some of the issues coming out of that were very much about councillors feeling that they had lost control of their own resources where the PCSOs would replace wardens. In the past, a councillor could ring up their local warden and say “could you go down to see Mrs Bloggs because she has reported such and such” whereas it was not quite so easy for them to do that with PCSOs – we had a few run-ins with councillors”

Local Authority Manager

“(For councillors) it felt like there was a loss of controlI think we have worked through that with them now.....I don't think it is quite so much of an issue.....at first there was a perception that they had lost resources, rather than gained them through getting PCSOs.”

Local Authority Manager

However, as the second quotation above indicates, these feelings have changed over time and particularly with the relationships that elected members now have with NPT Inspectors, who they can approach on behalf of their constituents and local communities. One local authority manager referred to the current popularity of PCSOs with the public, which is due to their visibility and presence – facilitated by match-funding arrangements – in all areas including those which would not previously been a priority for policing:

“There is a political will for PCSOsin the old days we had CCTV bidding and everyone wanted a camera at the end of the street, well, the modern day equivalent is the PCSO down your street.”

Local Authority Manager

The scope of this study did not extend to interviewing local elected members or the Executive Member with responsibility for community safety in each area, but this may be a fruitful avenue to explore further in future, as an aspect of the police and local authorities working together.

3.8 Relationships Between PCSOs and Wardens

Local authority managers and police both recognise the importance of PCSOs and the various warden roles working alongside each other. They are all perceived to make a contribution to strategic partnership priorities and, in the words of one local authority manager:

“If the public are going to pass on information, it probably does not matter if it's a warden or a PCSO; it's who is accessible at the time and available to speak to.”

Local Authority Manager

In some areas, such as Calderdale, PCSO and warden roles were seen as being mutually beneficial in the sense that the smaller warden service is able to be flexible and physically to move in to deal with a local problem quite swiftly, whereas the police officers and PCSOs attached to the NPTs could provide a basis of local knowledge as wardens come into an area and continuity of work when they move on.

In other areas, there was recognition that the local authority has wider responsibilities in terms of maintaining a safe and sustainable environment, and that the focus of work may be different for wardens, whilst there is clearly some overlap between their role and that of PCSOs. PCSOs as well as wardens were specifically identified by one local authority manager, for instance, as contributing to the council's liveability and street scene agendas. Two interviewees pointed to the desirability of having both distinct roles, with slightly different foci:

“Over time we have realised the benefits of having both and you almost get the best of both worlds by still having some wardens for your own resources whilst having match-funded PCSO. They complement each other.”

Local Authority Manager

“There have been switches of opinion as time has gone on about what is best. What you probably need is a mixed economy because they do slightly different things. If they were all doing the same thing, they might as well all be police.”

Local Authority Manager

The extent of overlap in roles varies from one area to another, depending on the powers that have been given to council wardens and their designated responsibilities. For instance, in Wakefield MDC, a neighbourhood patroller service has been established and accredited by West Yorkshire Police, so their wardens are relatively empowered in comparison to other areas and with a greater number of powers similar to those of PCSOs.

Managers from one local authority raised some important questions about role demarcations and decisions for local partnerships about which group of employees are best placed to take on which tasks. This seems an important debate for local areas, who have to determine how best to use resources to meet need in their communities, currently on the basis of little reliable information about the relative effectiveness of the different members of the policing family.

This links with Recommendation 11 from Crawford et al (2004) which suggests that the Plural Policing Unit West Yorkshire Police should take a lead role in facilitating discussions between the police and the managers of other members of the extended policing family to establish appropriate divisions of labour. This evidence from this evaluation suggests that such debate is taking place at a local level between police and partners, but that there is no overall co-ordination of the way respective roles and responsibilities are being divided in each area. The local discussions were expressed by two local authority managers in the following terms:

"The distinction between lots of different bits of the police and council are blurring, there are clearly areas of work now when it comes to reassurance and visible presence which can be done in a number of ways and that raises a whole load of issues about how the council and police manage the resources in that context."

Local Authority Manager

"Even now when we get to the stage where we are starting to think about things like all the new powers coming to the local authority and police under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act, you are thinking, you can fine people £50 for dog muck or for dropping litter, well, is that a PCSO job? Is it a street warden job? A neighbourhood warden job, an ASB Unit officer job?"

Local Authority Manager

3.9 Contribution to Partnership Crime and Disorder Strategies

Focusing on the goals outlined in the crime and disorder strategies for the four local authority areas, PCSOs were widely felt by interviewees to contribute to a range of partnership objectives, including targets for hate crime, violence and alcohol-related crime. Significantly, three of the four current strategy documents contained photographs of PCSOs and three had specific mention of an increase in PCSO numbers as a contribution to police visibility and reassurance. One police manager discussed the breadth of their contribution to strategic objectives and the effectiveness of intelligence-lead tasking processes:

"PCSOs will be deployed to an area as a result of our (crime) analysis, our analysis will tell us there are hotspots or problem areasso everything they do has a knock on effect for our strategic objectives if we have a target about reducing violent crime, we would deploy – and do deploy – PCSOs until 3 in the morningso they are deployed to be there, seen, high visibility, and to deter incidents of violent crime."

Senior Police Manager

The two strategic areas, however, most frequently mentioned in terms of PCSO impact were tackling anti-social behaviour and responding to low level crime. In addition to visibility and presence on the streets, a number of PCSO activities were identified as feeding in to a reduction in ASB and criminal damage, particularly. These will be discussed in more depth in later chapters, but include follow up visits to victims of low level crime, offering safety advice to car owners and others, and enforcing dispersal orders in relation to young people.

3.10 PCSOs, Public Relations and NPTs

Managers from both local authorities and the police were clear about the benefits of PCSOs in terms of public relations – an aspect of visibility and accessibility, but in the words of one manager:

"They still do high visibility patrol, but it is what they do whilst they are doing that patrol that impresses me."

Senior Police Manager

Quality of interaction with the public was seen as critical, in order to reassure and to respond to problems, and the ability to build positive relationships with young people, in particular, was appreciated by these managers. However, the impact of PCSOs in local areas cannot be entirely separated from the work of the NPTs in policing communities and adopting a problem-solving approach that involves local people.

In general, NPTs were viewed as a positive development and an appropriate structure for developing the PCSO role. Thus one police manager commented that:

"The NPT system has been a big plus for us with PCSOs because it drills the line management down to areas. We have individual Inspectors responsible for areas and then sergeants, and the way they work their areas, it's perfect for using PCSOs."

Police Manager

And another senior police manager said:

"Right from the word go, PCSOs were a key part of the vision for the NPTs."

Senior Police Manager

This raises questions that will be explored elsewhere in this report about the different skills required for work in smaller towns and communities, and the extent to which the PCSO role has changed to adapt from the original requirements for city centre work to new environments and new priorities. Most important in this is the focus on anti-social behaviour and low level crime, as well as general crime prevention work. Anti-social behaviour was raised specifically by two police managers, who said:

"With anti-social behaviour, we can deploy them to an area where it has come to our notice there is a problem, to do high visibility patrols, being there to discourage anti-social behaviour and to give that reassurance to the people that live there.....so people are told why they are there and straightaway think that, yes, the police are listening."

Senior Police Manager

"From a strategic point of view, the role of PCSOs is very clear, very much around the visibility aspect, presence on the street, community contact, providing that reassurance, intelligence and information flows. And, if we start to get down into the specifics, probably, out of all the areas, it is ASB and criminal damage where they have the biggest impact."

Senior Police Manager

3.11 PCSO Powers

In terms of the powers invested in PCSOs, the senior police managers interviewed were cautious about extending their enforcement role and were generally in favour of them using their communication and "street skills" to deal with situations. They were seen as having sufficient powers to deal effectively with the low level crime, nuisance and other tasks that formed part of the vision for these managers (although there was mention of an increase in enforcement powers relating to the environment). It was felt important also to retain the distinction between police officers and PCSOs and not to blur those roles. These views were broadly supported by the local authority managers.

It is significant that these views differ from those of the PCSOs themselves, the majority of whom in our survey said they were in favour of an increase in powers - mainly arrest and stop and search - and saw the development of their role as becoming closer to police officers. It would seem that the senior police managers value the use of interpersonal skills and community engagement as a means of reducing crime and fear of crime more than the PCSOs, who are perhaps more concerned with the basics of responding to and managing situations. Whilst managers recognised that PCSOs may be frustrated at the limitations in their powers, they felt that not having powers would often mean having to deal with a situation more creatively and in a potentially less confrontational way.

The dilemma for managers around PCSO powers was summed up by one police manager who commented that:

"I do think they should have powers of stop and search within reason, but I am always tempering that in my mind by, they are the PCSOs working the same areas, seeing the same young people and I think they get a lot more from those young people because they are not using those powers, and it is the art of communication sometimes."

Senior Police Manager

And by a local authority manager, who said:

"I think you take a different approach if you do not have the powers of arrest. I think you are liable to approach a situation rather differently if you think you have to use your skills of persuasion, negotiation and influencing."

Local Authority Manager

Some managers also referred to the benefits of having different members of the extended policing family with different levels and types of powers, so that there could be effectively a graded response to problems, which potentially could move through lower to higher levels of enforcement, in the form of constables and sergeants, if not resolved earlier – an escalation of enforcement and intervention in response to the seriousness and persistence of the presenting problem. What were clearly communicated, however, are a commitment to preventative and pre-emptive actions, rather than early recourse to enforcement, which has represented a shift in emphasis for the police and been a product of greater co-operation with partners.

3.12 Cultural and Organisational Barriers to Partnership

Some general observations may be drawn from the interviews in relation to partnership working, where police and local authorities were both perceived as being in a learning process. Some issues were raised from both sides about the action-orientated nature of the police force and its implications for partnership, in terms of a tendency for the police to take hold of processes and proceed at their own pace, rather than ensuring collective progress. However, this is changing and joint approaches are becoming more established. Indicative of this is one comment from a local authority manager in relation to more joined-up thinking and working:

"I have seen a change in xxxxx. It was very much, if you come up with a partnership idea, you give us the money and we'll do the job for you. It has turned round quite a bit really to them saying, OK, we know that our objective is to, say, reduce anti-social behaviour in neighbourhoods and what is the best way of doing that? Let's put a joint team together and we will fund our staff, you fund yours and we are happy to operate under your management....."

Local Authority Manager

Although partnership relationships in local authority areas are positive and there is an evident will to make partnership work, real concerns were reported about the different organisational boundaries for police, local authorities and other crime and disorder partners. This was particularly so in Leeds and Bradford, where the cities have more than one police division which do not match up with the council structures. Whilst this has impacted less at a strategic level, it has affected the ability to implement strategic decisions and priorities more locally.

More positively, the advent of NPTs has enabled partners to reduce some of the difficulties arising from lack of co-terminosity. The way they have been organised has been sufficiently flexible to allow for police constables and PCSOs to be attached to specific wards in some areas, a ward being an electoral and administrative unit that members of the public will recognise and relate to.

3.13 Conclusion

Firstly, to look at the one recommendation made by Crawford et al (2004) that relates to the discussion in this chapter.

Recommendation 11

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police tasks its Plural Policing Unit, in collaboration with relevant council departments, private security companies and others in the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships to co-ordinate an appropriate division of labour - roles and responsibilities - between the various members of the "extended policing family" so as to harness the diverse policing efforts in such a way as to maximise public safety.

As noted in Section 3.8, there does not appear to be any central co-ordination of the debates undoubtedly taking place at a local level and this would still be a useful facilitative role for the Plural Policing Unit, whilst still recognising the need for local autonomy and flexibility.

The discussion, however, in this chapter covered a range of areas over and above the respective roles of different members of the policing family. Partnership arrangements at a strategic local authority level were found to be strong, although it was acknowledged that both local authorities and police are still learning about how best to work together. Partnership generally and, more specifically, the contractual relationships involved with the match-funding of PCSOs has raised challenges for the police, not least in accepting a level of control and influence from partners over PCSO activity.

The police and local authorities differ significantly in organisational and cultural terms, and the local authorities, as democratic bodies, have a quite different relationship with the general public. This evaluation did not set out to explore partnership relationships explicitly, but clearly there are areas that have emerged in the course of this work that would merit further consideration and/or specific research. These include

- Decision-making within strategic partnership bodies
- The effectiveness of mechanisms by which strategy is communicated to staff and translated into partnership actions at a local level
- The key role of local elected members as a channel of communication and understanding between the police and communities
- The potential for re-aligning structural boundaries to facilitate closer partnership working

PCSOs are felt by both police and local authority managers to make a valuable contribution to partnership objectives in reducing crime and in responding to anti-social behaviour and disorder. In doing so, they work closely with police officer colleagues in NPTs and with other members of the extended policing family. The following chapter will explore these two areas in more depth and consider aspects of PCSO reassurance activities and community engagement.

Recommendations

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police establishes a strategy for analysing its contribution to partnership working at a CDRP level and exploring its relationship with local elected members.

Chapter 4: Community Engagement

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will examine further the reassurance effects of PCSO activity, and how their reassurance potential is now seen to come from a diverse range of activities that has expanded their role beyond the primary function of high visibility patrol.

First, however, it is necessary to look at the nature of reassurance and the way it has conceptually underpinned developments in neighbourhood policing and PCSO deployment, picking up themes already introduced in Chapter 1.

4.2 Background

Reassurance itself is not new as an object and a concern of policing and the concept of reassurance policing was first coined by Charles Bahn in the United States as long ago as 1974 (Bahn 1974), although it did not receive significant attention in Britain until the early 1990s (Singer 2004b). Nevertheless, by the late 1990s, it had been adopted by policy makers and in 2000 Public Service Agreements included related performance requirements relating to levels of public confidence, the proportion of police officer time spent on front-line duties and reducing fear of crime.

Bahn's original definition of reassurance was:

"The feelings of safety and security that a citizen experiences when he sees a police officer or a patrol car nearby."

Bahn 1974: 34

He further identified accessibility and visibility as key factors increasing public feelings of safety, which was later expanded by Sir Keith Povey, in the Thematic Inspection document, *Open All Hours* to include familiarity (HMIC 2001). The linked concepts of accessibility, visibility and familiarity are widely cited in the literature and in Home Office documents, as is Sir Keith Povey's definition of reassurance as:

"The extent to which individuals perceive that order and security exist within their local environment."

HMIC 2001: 20

Open All Hours sets a vision for what it hopes will be achieved within a 5 year period, one aspect of which is expressed as follows:

"Enhancing public reassurance is central to what the police service and partners are trying to achieve and all police officers and staff appreciate the role of visibility, accessibility and familiarity in an overall strategy for achieving this. Forces will therefore be pursuing the core objectives of reducing crime and disorder in a way that maximises these three elements."

HMIC 2001: 17

The importance of reassurance, as defined by *Open All Hours*, has been subsequently underlined in *National Policing Plans* (Home Office 2002a and 2003a) and in the Police Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF). PCSOs are one of the key mechanisms that have been developed for increasing reassurance, within the framework of neighbourhood policing.

The sight of a patrol officer - the proverbial and perennially popular "bobby on the beat" - would seem to be a powerful signal for communities that all is in order and under control. However, it is certain types of patrol that have most effect on reassurance. As noted by one ACC quoted in *Open All Hours*:

"A police officer in uniform on an unhurried foot patrol suggests, "All is well with the world". However, a marked police vehicle with flashing blue light and siren activated sends a different message. This is currently visible policing, but I would suggest it is far from reassuring."

HMIC 2001: 23

In contrast, one local authority manager interviewed for this evaluation described the type of local policing which communities are consistently expressing a wish for, representing perhaps a safety and stability that they perceive is lacking:

"In my 9 years experience in community safety, one of the biggest issues for communities is knowing who they can talk to. They want to go back to the Dixon of Dock Green days, they want a policeman cycling round their area who they know and can invite in for a cup of tea. That sounds very idyllic but most people when you unpick their arguments, that is what they feel most comfortable with.....PCSOs give us that opportunity, they give us that visible presence in communities, a name that local shopkeepers can have if they ring up with a concern, not just a generic switchboard facility."

Local Authority Manager

West Yorkshire Police have moved a long way in the past five years towards providing a visible foot patrol presence, using PCSOs and working in conjunction with other members of the extended policing family. The intention in devoting such resources to patrol activity is to promote public reassurance, but what is it about foot patrol that is so reassuring? Visibility alone is not sufficient, and the previous research conducted by Crawford et al (2004) in Leeds and Bradford highlighted some of the interpersonal skills necessary to perform the job well and be more than the "mobile scarecrow" controversially referred to by some of their less confident PCSO interviewees. The questionnaires and interviews with PCSOs in this study also identified the importance of listening, communication and problem-solving skills, as well as personal qualities such as empathy, resilience and patience. This clearly reflects a role that is both wider and more complex than a straightforward patrol function. The activities perceived as contributing to reassurance have grown as the PCSOs have become more established and with the introduction of neighbourhood policing, as noted by one interviewee who said,

"Nobody ever said what reassurance was, I think it was envisaged that reassurance was being seen.....and the role of reassurance has expanded, because what is reassurance? It is sometimes around customer expectations..... the understanding of what their objectives were has grown, I think, and that is in response to the public, not in response to us, that is the police service responding to what the public tell us they want."

NPT Manager

Whilst these two definitions from Bahn (1974) and Sir Keith Povey (HMIC 2001) have formed the main influence on developments in reassurance policing, one further and more recent concept has been gaining attention and influencing PCSO activities. This is the notion of "signal crimes", described as criminal incidents or social or physical disorders that are interpreted by individuals or communities as warning signs (Innes et al 2002). Research quoted in Crawford and Lister (2004) has sought to show how these "signals" affect the way that individuals experience and construct their beliefs about crime and disorder. These may include problems related to alcohol or anti-social behaviour, graffiti and vandalism, all issues which PCSOs are charged with tackling.

Conversely, "control signals" refer to ways in which actions performed by the police, local authorities or others may influence individual's judgement about the risks to which they believe they are exposed (Crawford and Lister 2004). Failing to deal with "signals" that cause public anxiety – even though they may not be classified as a crime - may be interpreted as a failure of "control", with consequent loss of confidence in relevant authorities. This has implications for the NPTs and PCSOs, who have capacity to take a proactive role in communities, in addition to the reactive police response to incidents. They are able to – and, from our research clearly do – deal with low level concerns that do impact on individuals' quality of life.

Before looking in more depth at the current study's research findings, reference should be made to findings of the *National Evaluation of Police Community Support Officers*. That study pointed to the need to gain a balance between PCSO deployment to hotspots and more proactive community

involvement and it would appear that local areas they researched are still in a process of finding that most effective balance (Cooper et al 2006). This is reflected in the present evaluation also.

In Cooper et al's three case study forces, 5% to 8% of PCSO time was devoted to community activities, the nature of which varied considerably between areas. PCSOs filling in a weekly diary sheet visited youth centres and engaged in public events, such as drug awareness and personal safety presentations. Some PCSOs went further and initiated diversionary and other activities for young people. From their PCSO survey, 40% of respondents indicated that they regularly (at least weekly) visited community centres, elderly people, victims and witnesses of crimes, and schools (Cooper et al, 2006). This is certainly a development in terms of skills and geographical penetration into residential areas from the PCSO activity evaluated by Crawford and colleagues in Leeds and Bradford. In that research, PCSOs coming out of their training were uncertain about the nature of community in a city centre dominated by business, retail and leisure outlets, and how best to work with it (Crawford et al, 2004).

4.3 Findings from the Evaluation

The following sections look more closely at a number of key issues in relation to community engagement highlighted by this evaluation. These include:

- Community involvement
- PCSOs and young people
- Community engagement and reassurance
- Gathering community intelligence
- Match-funded PCSO posts
- Relationships with the extended policing family

4.4 Community Involvement

Interviews with PCSOs, first line managers and more senior managers for this evaluation indicated that PCSOs engage with communities in a variety of different ways. Local areas and NPTs, it would appear, are still exploring the potential for the PCSO role, whilst still remaining focused on the primary function of reassurance and visible patrol. However, as indicated previously, the activities that contribute to reassurance can be diverse and PCSOs can be visible to the public in a range of settings, not just on the street. This was expressed by one senior police manager who said:

"Initially we were not quite sure what the right deployment would be and I still think we are pushing those boundaries."

Senior Police Manager

Some of the impetus has come from managers, who have directed or encouraged specific types of community involvement. Some, however, has developed more organically according to the needs of local areas, the opportunities available and, to some extent, the initiatives of PCSOs. Thus:

"They have naturally started to do the involvement in community areas, like going into schools, and we have encouraged that, so they are not just walking around an area and not taking part. They are there to get involved in some of the local issues as well. As far as I can see, we are quite happy to let that evolve, so when you start talking to individual NPTs and asking what that individual PCSO has got involved in, they are getting involved in all sorts of things."

Police Manager

Crawford et al in their evaluation (2004) raised questions about appropriate role boundaries and responsibilities for PCSOs and established a linked recommendation. Whilst their concern was with the potential for PCSOs being drawn into enforcement roles that undermine their primary reassurance function, there clearly is a potential for "drift" in other directions also.

Specifically in relation to community engagement, there could be a risk of PCSOs becoming involved in levels of interaction with the public that may have intrinsic merit in terms of community cohesion or

capacity-building, but which do not in themselves directly contribute to a reduction in crime. However, both senior and first line managers are aware of this potential and are keen to continue to emphasise the primary purpose of the role as reassurance patrol, even though that patrol may now encompass a greater range of contacts, visits and opportunities for interaction than was originally the case.

It is useful to separate the discourse around community engagement from the actual activities of PCSOs on the ground. The evidence suggests that community involvement tends to be reactive, rather than proactive, and is frequently in response to issues or concerns raised by the community. Community engagement is also driven by the organisational needs of the police – needs to know the movements of certain individuals, patterns of (potentially criminal or anti-social) activities in neighbourhoods, and key people who are channels of communication with communities or providers of information. In this sense the motives for engaging with the community can be differentiated from those of a community worker, for instance. Although there may be some common outcomes sought in promoting greater security and reducing nuisance and disorder, the responsibilities of PCSOs and community workers in the community safety arena are different and their ways of approaching their tasks will be informed by their different organisational priorities and cultures.

It should be recognised that being located within the police force and possessing enforcement powers may also set certain perimeters for PCSOs engagement with the community. There may be issues of trust and confidence for certain key groups, such as young people and minority ethnic communities, because of the history of relationships with the police force – PCSOs, however, would seem to be well placed to assist in building more positive relationships. There may also be limits on the extent to which PCSOs can be engaged in activities determined and led by the community, particularly where they might conflict with policing concerns or with the needs of other key groups in the area. They do not enter into community engagement as a neutral participant, but as a uniformed representative of an agency with a clear role and purpose; this in itself is a key determinant of the nature and extent of involvement with the community. Nevertheless, relationships with communities are critical to the success of the PCSO role, and strengthening such relationships is an important focus for their activities.

In terms of the organisational context for PCSOs, NPTs are clearly seen by senior managers as an effective vehicle for community engagement, as discussed above. This is particularly so where they are able to ensure a continuity of staff patrolling and working within a defined area. This evaluation revealed a clear sense of how work with communities is changing and developing, with the impetus being a commitment to providing a more responsive and effective service to the public as consumers. In the words of one manager:

“When the PCSOs first came in, neighbourhood policing was not on the horizon and as they have joined the NPTs, their role has diversified and linked in with that is reassurance and what people want. Because neighbourhood policing is very much public and community driven, their role has become driven by that. It has all rolled on together.”

NPT Manager

Another aspect of community involvement through the NPTs was mentioned by one manager, highlighting the way that the vision of what can be delivered has altered in the light of experience:

“The traditional view would never have been of PCSOs going to neighbourhood meetings, and meeting the local residents, looking at the problems there are and working with the residents to solve those problems.”

Senior Police Manager

As indicated earlier, in some local authority areas NPTs are organised with reference to electoral ward boundaries. In Calderdale, this is reinforced by an 8 weekly cycle of ward-based meetings which PCSOs attend. At present these are led by the police but the ultimate aim is that they will be taken over and chaired by the community and will involve relevant local authority officers also. This enables the police to be specific about the crime within that ward boundary, providing ward-based data and reporting on their policing responses to problems. The senior police manager responsible for that area commented:

"It is often quite low level issues you get at these meetings that are quite easy to fix, really, but it is great because people get to raise it with their local officer and that reinforces the service that they get from their local officer as well. But, better than that, when they raise an issue with us, 8 weeks later we can go back and say what we have done..... that's the thing with policing, we often do a really, really good job, but we won't tell people what we have done, and these 8 weekly meetings are our opportunity to say, this is what is going on in your area and this is what we are doing about it."

Senior Police Manager

PCSOs attend a variety of other meetings as well, including community fora and tenants associations. They also hold regular surgeries in their areas and we were told that they regularly receive invitations to go to speak to organised groups such as scouts and youth clubs. Thus from one manager:

"PCSOs do get to know the community – they get asked by community groups and scouts groups and all sorts to engage with the young people there, or elderly people or whatever. That is something we encourage. Again, the idea is that they are out on patrol, but I am not sure that is as meaningful as doing the community engagement maybe that should be measured as well. That is the stuff that people really appreciate and talk about when I go to meetings."

NPT Manager

A key aspect of this - touched upon several times already - is responsiveness to the demands or wishes of the community, which was expressed by one manager in terms of:

"The public say "this is what we want from our PCSO, we want them to come and talk to us at this club, we want them to call in at the library, and that's what we are getting so we say, lets do it."

NPT Manager

4.5 PCSOs and Young People

Building relationships with young people in communities are clearly important for PCSOs, and this can be facilitated in a number of ways, over and above the day to day contact that they might have in parks, streets and other public spaces. Regular visits to schools in the PCSO's "patch" are encouraged and in some areas, such as Bradford, this is being formalised so that every school – primary and secondary - has a named PCSO contact. We received reports of PCSOs working with schools and student groups to give safety advice. In one area, visits are also made to the local authority's children's homes, with a view to dealing with problems there and establishing positive, non-confrontational relationships between the young people and police.

There was evidence of a proactive approach to working with other agencies in touch with young people, exemplified by the following comment:

"They are getting involved with young people and that is positive interaction, actually problem-solving. Certainly some of the areas where they have had problems with young people, they have gone in there with outreach workers and are trying to do work there. •"

Senior Police Manager

PCSOs are aware of Youth Offending Teams but, where appropriate, are more closely in contact with Youth Inclusion Projects and diversionary activity schemes in their areas. Although, as expected, there were few examples of extensive direct work with young people, there were a small number of cases where PCSOs have taken the initiative and developed activities for and with young people, in the form of a drop in centre in one case and a football league in another (this has been subsequently adopted by the local youth service). Instances were cited of PCSOs supporting staff from the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit in one authority in doing family visits in order to set up Acceptable Behaviour Contracts with young people. There were therefore indications of a positive and early stage intervention in relation to anti-social behaviour, to counteract the heavier enforcement end to which PCSOs also contribute (gathering evidence for ASBOs, acting as professional witness in court, enforcing dispersal orders).

Two comments from interviewees illustrate some of the positive work taking place with young people and linking in with other agencies, as follows:

“PCSOs are getting to know young people on the streets and in school, they also maybe go and find out about the parents and get to know the families. And that is not just about moving them – that’s not the answer – it’s about engaging them and showing a different way of doing things. And for parents too, sometimes the parents are struggling to parent and we link them back in to other services via the PCSOsthey are actually talking to Social Services, YOTs, some of the diversionary schemes.”

NPT Manager

“Two PCSOs who work in xxxx are running a drop in service on a Monday for young people and they have about 20 coming.....they are linking in with the young people who are causing anti-social behaviour. The people that have turned up are all the ones that all the services are working with.....it has actually stopped the ASB in that area where we are holding the meeting which is the community building, because they are coming inside the building, rather than being outside.”

NPT Manager

4.6 Community Engagement and Reassurance

It is useful to look further at the nature of community engagement for the PCSOs and to distinguish where this fits into their reassurance role. Community in this sense may not be a geographical community but, for instance, a school or retail community, or, as discussed in the previous paragraph, a community of young people. Establishing trust and communication is critical in building relationships and achieving change, and this inherently involves both contact and the use of interpersonal skills. This may mean contact whilst on patrol, but increasingly will involve specific regular visits to public facilities such as libraries, businesses and community centres, as well as attendance at meetings.

Reference has already been made to the alternative models for PCSO role development proposed by Crawford et al (2004) in their previous research in West Yorkshire, these being the “dedicated patrol officer” and “junior police officer”. This evaluation did test the hypothesis that a further model might be developing, around the community engagement function, encompassing the roles of networking, liaison, advocacy, mediation and supporting grassroots initiatives. It would appear from our data that all these roles are taken by PCSOs, but that the other two models clearly still predominate. However, importantly, it is not evident from our findings that the PCSO role has tended to adopt one of Crawford's models over the other, but rather that both aspects of the role have developed over time. Community engagement, as a third element of the PCSO role, is presently a significant, if smaller, part of PCSO activity and will become more so as neighbourhood policing and its community/customer focus is embedded into the police organisational culture.

In the PCSO interviews and on the PCSO survey, PCSOs were clear that their primary function remains high visibility patrol and this was reflected in the NPT manager interviews also (although they cited a greater range of activities such as school patrol). However, 8 (12%) respondents to the PCSO survey cited working with the public/community as a core task – these were more likely to be older female PCSOs.

It is also significant that listening, empathy, communication and people skills were highly rated by PCSOs as necessary for their role. This indicates that their experience tends to be one of interacting with the public and offering support and advice whilst available in public spaces. This is further backed up by the fact that a minority of PCSOs surveyed, when asked the activity that takes up most of the time, described “walking” or “just walking about”, which suggests that for the other PCSOs who talked of high visibility patrol, that they perceived this as being a richer, more purposeful and more useful activity for the public. The research team observations of PCSOs also showed that they were interacting with the public and responding to requests for information and directions, as well as discussing local issues, such as noise and nuisance. This was expressed by two interviewees as follows:

“It is more than just stopping on the street, talking in a yellow jacket, being seen – which is the vision we had initially..... it is about what we are doing, going into communities, doing a bit more than we envisaged it has moved on really.”

Police Manager

"They are very much the eyes and ears of the force, so they have developed into an integral part of our deployment."

Senior Police Manager

4.7 Gathering Community Intelligence

Speaking to and advising the public is one important aspect of the PCSO role, but another aspect that is rapidly coming to the fore is the PCSO contribution to community intelligence. PCSOs are in a unique position to pick up information about what is happening in areas, the movements of key individuals and generally the sort of "on the ground" information that may not appear significant in itself, but accumulates to a rich body of valuable data. The phrase that came up repeatedly in interviews was that "they are the eyes and ears of the force" – an explicit recognition that they are present in communities, actively collecting and feeding back intelligence, and acting as a conduit for information. Consider the following comment:

"They are an excellent source of information and intelligence my dept is also responsible for collating community information and community intelligence the information we get is far better from PCSOs than from constables."

Senior Police Manager

PCSO interviews and surveys also referred to intelligence gathering as an important function, and where this is integrated with patrol, indicates a breadth of knowledge about a geographical area.

Knowledge of the local area, of course, is not limited to residents, and senior police managers, in particular, referred to the greater confidence that PCSOs now possess to deal with a range of problems and refer on appropriately to other agencies, such as housing, health projects and the youth offending team. Thus:

"Because the PCSOs work in certain areas and they are there and round and about, they are talking to council people and to the housing and everybody, they are starting to get a lot more knowledge. You can see it on our intelligence system – when you look at the intelligence coming through, a lot of that information now is coming from PCSOs."

Senior Police Manager

They are aware of a variety of local facilities and, to varying degrees, make use of community projects and other amenities. There was a sense, however, from one NPT manager in particular that this type of proactive work was more suited to some individuals than others:

"That is very much down to individuals – some are fantastic, they are out there talking to people, getting intelligence, thinking wider about solving problems. Others are happy to wander around and do very little."

NPT Manager

This is an important consideration for recruitment and for training and support of PCSOs placed within NPTs, to enable them to establish the most appropriate orientation in their work and the skills needed.

4.8 Match-Funded PCSO Posts

Another facet of community involvement appears in relation to the small number of community and other projects that have match-funded PCSOs. In West Yorkshire, this includes Holbeck Urban village, a regeneration area in Leeds, The Ovenden Initiative in Calderdale and a small number of town and parish councils. Representatives from Morley Town Council expressed very strongly the benefits that they had received from part-funding 4 PCSOs for the town, significantly in terms of quality and frequency of communication with their local police division, not just the PCSOs themselves. PCSOs, then, can be a catalyst for improved police-community relations, through elected members, and the management structures of community projects and initiatives.

Thinking more widely about the satisfaction of match-funders, this does appear to hinge upon the ability of PCSOs to be visible in communities and to provide a consistent and accessible presence. One local authority manager commented about the feedback from local residents:

“They like local services for local people – that is what PCSOs have given them and where it has been possible that PCSOs have been local people who come with local knowledge that has improved the perception of the service.”

Local Authority Manager

PCSO visibility and engagement varies between areas depending upon local structures and local need. For instance, in Wakefield, the PCSO presence on their Neighbourhood Action Stations, a mobile crime and disorder facility generated by their local partnership, is a key means by which they have contact with the community.

In some instances, the leverage gained from match-funding has been used to ensure that PCSOs are firmly based in defined areas and the community involvement and recognition has grown somewhat organically from there. Feedback from communities through democratic structures is generally positive, although still demonstrating a significant level of confusion in the public about the roles of different members of the policing family. Thus from one interviewee:

The perception is that what we set out and what we wanted is what we are getting.....we wanted them to get involved at a local level, being accessible and available, being involved in specific activities, being part of a problem-solving approach towards local areas, particularly when it comes to providing information and advice, or information and intelligence, about who is up to things, who is doing what.”

Local Authority Manager

4.9 Relationships with the Extended Policing Family

Relationships with other members of the extended policing family are critical in order to maximise the impact of PCSO presence in local communities. Interviews with local authority managers indicated that relationships with their warden services are generally good, although in some instances there was an initial defensiveness as wardens feared their jobs might be under threat. However, closer working practices have emerged, with joint tasking institutionalised to some degree in all areas and some discussion taking place about co-location (this is already happening for a small number of wardens in one part of Wakefield). As indicated previously, they are now seen as offering complementary roles and it does seem significant that PCSOs, both those surveyed and those interviewed, saw themselves as closer to police officers rather than neighbourhood wardens.

The rather hybrid role of PCSOs, with some enforcement functions and a focus on reassurance, low level crime and environmental issues, has interesting spin offs in terms of partnership working, because of the overlap in role with a range of other occupational groups. Certainly this was highlighted by one police manager interviewed who said:

“PCSOs fit perfectly well in the wider policing family. For too long we in the police have worked in silos and they bridge the gap nicely between police officers and the other community safety-type workers, the council workers, if you like”.

Police Manager

The question of role demarcations and relative responsibilities has been discussed elsewhere, but what seems significant here is how the prominence – and almost omni-presence – of this civilian role has the potential to bring the police force closer to their civilian partners. This has implications for the development of the PCSO role into greater enforcement and a quasi-constable capacity, the “junior police” model, if you like, because arguably that would undermine its potential for creating cultural and ideological shifts in policing.

These issues were brought to the fore during an interview with local authority manager, who reflected upon the broader policing and custodianship of communities, creating a vision where any one of a number of workers in different roles could respond to a given problem. So PCSOs and other members of the extended policing family, as well as officers with a more environmental focus such as park rangers, contribute to a cleaner, safer, greener environment:

"In neighbourhoods they have a better chance of interactions with citizens, with people who live there, with the vulnerable elements in neighbourhoods and providing a reassurance the way ahead for police in communities is to be looking at that and policing neighbourhoods with the widest possible approach that you can. Policing in its widest context in that they are managing the neighbourhood it is about taking ownership for the graffiti, the fly posting, for the street light that is not working and knowing the avenue for getting those things fixed."

Local Authority Manager

4.10 A Model of the PCSO Role

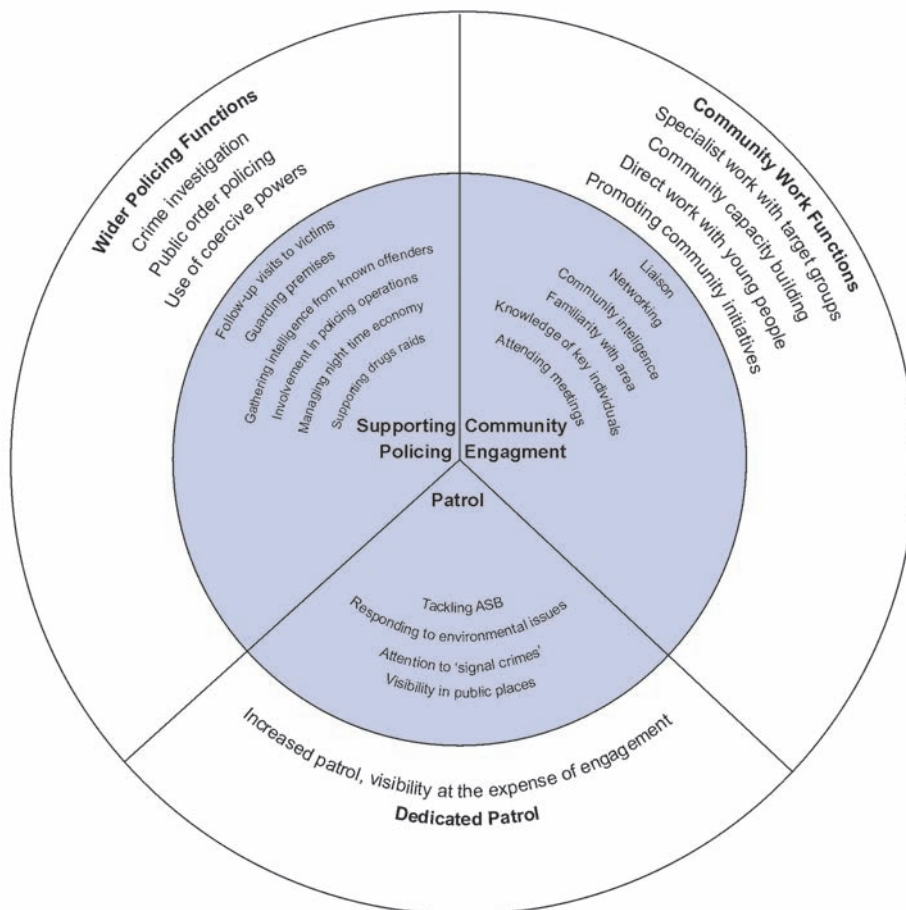
As already identified, there are currently three aspects to the PCSO role, which are:

- Activities that support policing
- Visible patrol
- Community engagement

Our evaluation evidence suggests that PCSOs are likely to be most effective within NPT structures if their roles involve a balance of all three elements, without an undue emphasis on any one. There is one important caveat to this, however, which relates to the discussion in subsequent chapters regarding the possible development of specialist PCSO roles. Although such roles may be less focused upon visibility and reassurance than the current generic PCSO roles, they may nevertheless prove an attractive option in terms of offering PCSOs career progression and in enabling the police service to meet the needs of particular groups of people, for instance young people, people with specific disabilities or those from particular minority ethnic communities.

Figure 2 attempts to express the appropriate range of policing, patrol and community engagement tasks for PCSOs, suggesting that a balanced role is one that would ordinarily stay within the central circle of the diagram, whilst a focus upon tasks towards the outer edge of the diagram would have implications for public perceptions of PCSOs and the visibility, accessibility and familiarity aspects of reassurance.

Figure 2, A Model of the PCSO Role



4.11 Conclusion

Two of the recommendations made by Crawford et al (2004) relate to the discussion in this chapter. These are:

Recommendation 6

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police introduces performance measurement indicators that encourage PCSOs to use patrol as a means of active engagement with local communities, as well as problem-solving and crime prevention activities in line with its defining principles of deployment.

Recommendation 12

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police maximises its lines and modes of communication with other partners in the "extended policing family" so as to avoid misunderstandings, sustain inter-organisational trust relationships and ensure synergy.

Performance measures are discussed more fully in Chapter 7. No performance indicator of this nature has been developed, partly because of the difficulty of establishing a meaningful quantitative measure of this type of engagement. However, some indication of activity patterns or number of community meetings attended could be gathered and would provide a more useful picture of how much time PCSOs spend on community engagement in comparison to activities that contribute to low level policing or enforcement.

Working relationships with other members of the extended policing family were generally described by interviewees as good, but still at an early stage of development. Work is evident in each local authority area to establish more robust arrangements for joint working and this area appears to be moving in a positive direction.

Looking more widely at the observations made in this chapter, PCSOs as part of NPTs are developing a profile and a useful role within communities, although their community engagement function clearly tends to be focused on community safety, visibility and reassurance objectives. Care should be taken to ensure that the aspects of PCSO work such as networking, advocacy, liaison, mediation and supporting grassroots initiatives are allowed to develop and are not undermined by a move into greater enforcement or more explicit functions.

The model of the PCSO role proposed represents the range of activities identified in this evaluation, and suggests, firstly, that community engagement is as important as policing and patrol tasks, and, secondly, that the most effective use of PCSOs within NPTs will involve an appropriate balance of all three areas of work.

Recommendations

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police conducts a more thorough audit of the range of community engagement activities that NPTs are involved with and disseminates the findings across all CDRP areas.

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police further considers the feasibility of establishing a performance indicator for community engagement.

Chapter 5: PCSO perceptions and practices

5.1 Introduction

The previous two chapters have discussed how PCSOs contribute to crime and disorder objectives and how they engage with local communities. This chapter moves on to consider how the PCSO role has developed by incorporating the views of both PCSOs and their managers on the competencies and skill sets required for the role of PCSO within Neighbourhood Policing Teams. As well as outlining the variety of tasks being undertaken by PCSOs throughout West Yorkshire, the chapter analyses how the original role has adapted to new working contexts, outside of the original city centre locations.

5.2 Evidence Base

A total of 69 PCSOs in Leeds, Bradford, Pudsey and Weetwood, Chapeltown, Wakefield and Calderdale responded to an anonymous questionnaire, a 39% response rate. Of these respondents, 39% were aged between 21 and 30 years. 60% of respondents were male and 50% recorded that they had more than 12 months but less than 2 years in service as PCSOs. In addition to the questionnaire, 18 PCSOs were interviewed across the six divisions using a semi-structured schedule. This data was triangulated with 12 semi-structured interviews with Sergeants and Inspectors from NPTs across the same six divisions. Data from qualitative interviews with senior police managers has also been drawn upon.

5.3 Occupational Comparisons

PCSOs surveyed by Crawford et al. (2004) were asked which occupations they felt were most comparable to their own role. The following examples were presented to them: sworn police officer; street warden; traffic warden; tourist information officer; community worker; security guard; neighbourhood warden; special constable; counsellor; car park attendant.

In the Phase 1 evaluation, less than one fifth of respondents compared themselves to regular police officers; the same number (19%) compared themselves to street wardens and 17% to traffic wardens. 10% compared themselves to community workers.

As PCSO roles have diversified this question was deliberately repeated in this evaluation so as to ascertain whether PCSO perceptions of similar occupations had changed accordingly. In our survey, overall 44% of respondents compared themselves to sworn police officers, significantly more than any other occupation and more than twice the proportion found by Crawford et al (2004) two years previously.

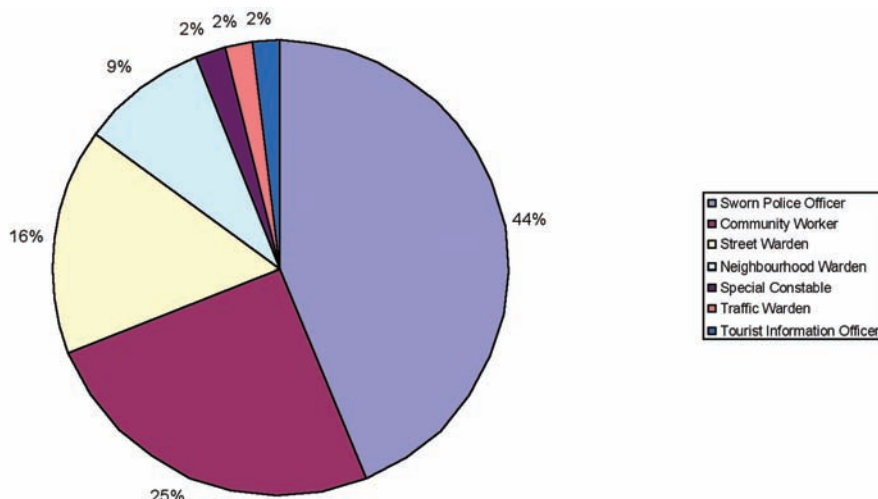


Figure 3: Occupational Comparisons

As with the questionnaires, 44% of PCSOs who were interviewed compared themselves most to police officers. The ones who explicitly made reference to this tended to refer to their requirement to engage in high visibility patrol. This was expressed by one PCSO as:

"The job we do, it's basically your old fashioned bobby"

PCSO

The proportion of respondents in both questionnaires and interviews who described their role as being most similar to police officers has been shown to have increased in this present evaluation. This may suggest that, as the PCSO role becomes more culturally embedded in the police organisation, PCSOs identify more with sworn police colleagues. This may also be a reflection of the number of PCSOs explicitly joining West Yorkshire police with aspirations to become a police officer.

Interestingly, as well as more PCSOs comparing themselves to police officers, there was an increase in the proportion of PCSOs who viewed their role as most similar to community workers. Of these questionnaire respondents, 40% were women compared to only 17% men. It may cautiously be inferred from this that females may be more community focused than males who may tend to see themselves more as junior police officers

Whilst a significant number of questionnaire respondents pointed to the fact that virtually all of the named occupations had some comparative value, most argued that the role of the PCSO was such a diverse one that it could not be relegated to the status of 'just' being, for instance, a traffic warden or a community worker.

5.4 Tasks, Functions and Deployment

When asked what they regarded as their core task, 50 respondents to the questionnaires (72%) stated that they existed primarily to perform high visibility patrol. The second most commonly cited reason for PCSO existence was to provide 'reassurance' (26%), followed by 'working with the public and community' (16%). 14% of respondents saw their role as being one of 'intelligence-gatherer'. Other tasks and functions cited included 'offering advice', 'traffic duties', 'stop checks', 'dealing with anti-social behaviour', 'dealing with young people' and 'problem solving'.

The data from the questionnaires was confirmed by the in-depth interviews. By far the most common themes which emerged was a consensus among the interviewees that their core task was one of public reassurance, which was to be achieved through high visibility patrol:

"I get out on my beat, get myself seen and reassure them."

PCSO

"We are basically the eyes and ears of the police. It's public reassurance. Many people don't want to talk to police officers but they are comfortable talking to us."

PCSO

This belief was shared by NPT police managers (92%) who overwhelmingly endorsed the view that the core role of a PCSO was that of reassurance. In addition to this, one police manager mentioned that PCSOs existed primarily to 'work with the community':

"It's the 'bobby on every corner' philosophy. They fulfil that criteria in the modern age".

NPT Manager

No NPT managers interviewed held the view that the primary reason for PCSO existence was that of crime fighting. This appears to suggest that their philosophy of the PCSO role is in line with what Crawford et al. (2004: 79) refer to as the "dedicated patrol officer model." Crime investigation was not explicitly referred to by any NPT interviewee, in contrast to crime prevention, raising public awareness and other contributions that PCSOs were felt to make.

Data from force headquarters reveals that Leeds City and Holbeck had the highest number of incidents attended between April 2004 and March 2005 (3,524), with Bradford (2,636) in second place. Incidents attended by PCSOs were lowest in Chapeltown (503) and Killingbeck (550). Out of a total of 17,000

PCSO incidents attended between April 2004 and March 2005, only 3,958 (23%) were recorded as being directly related to dealing with crime. Less than a quarter of incidents attended by PCSOs across West Yorkshire between April 2004 and March 2005 were crime related. Once again this data supports the view that the primary role of the PCSO is not one of the crime fighter.

The data above is confirmed by analysis of PCSO questionnaire responses. When asked what they spent most of their working day doing, respondents said the following:

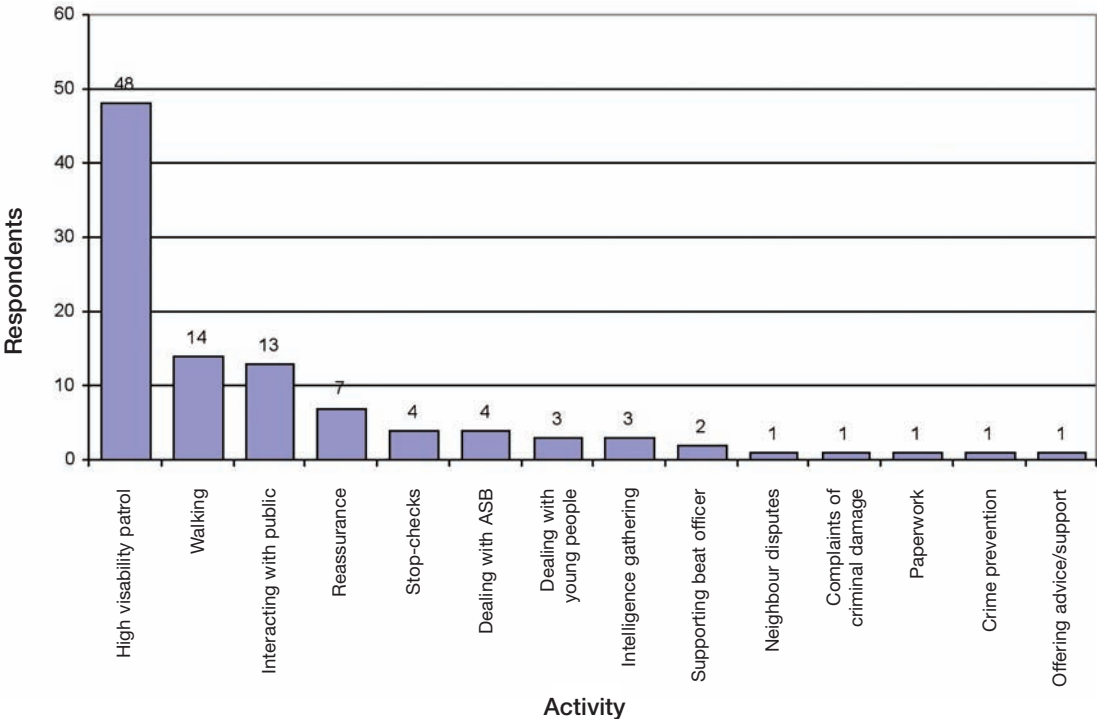


Figure 4: PCSO Working Practices

Unsurprisingly, the interview data confirms PCSO perceptions of their core task, as by far the most common answer was high visibility patrol. Interestingly, in both Chapeltown and Wakefield, PCSO use of mountain bikes as a means of increasing both mobility and high visibility were being used to good effect. As well as routine patrol work, the data in the above table reveals the fact that PCSOs are serving useful purposes in terms of intelligence gathering and delivering a quality of service to victims of crime, most notably in the area of criminal damage.

In terms of deployment, NPT police managers reported consistently that their PCSOs tended to work on their own in the daytime and were routinely ‘double crewed’ during the hours of darkness. The initiation of double crewing was variable between the hours of 4pm and 7pm and very much dependant on the time of year and daylight hours. This is in line with Crawford et al’s (2004) Recommendation 7, which addressed the practice of single and double crewing.

Confirming the views of PCSOs themselves, NPT police managers agreed that the most important task for PCSOs was undertaking high visibility patrol (33%). Data collated by force headquarters reveals that the average time that PCSOs spent on patrol was 80% in April 2004. In April 2005, this figure peaked at 85% and has since stabilised at 83% by April 2006. PCSO patrol time was highest in Chapeltown (91%) and in Bradford North (89%) and Bradford South (88%), well above the national Home Office target of 80% and Recommendation 1 made by Crawford et al. (2004).

5.5 Diversification of PCSO Role

In addition to the high visibility patrol function, what emerged from the interviews with NPT police managers was the sense of diversity and the range of work in which PCSOs were expected to engage. Follow up visits to victims of criminal damage offences and attendance at public meetings were

mentioned by 25% of police managers, whilst providing drop in services for youth, tackling anti-social behaviour and guarding scenes of crime were mentioned by 17% of interviewees. There were additionally mentions of work with children and young people, including school patrol, stop-searches for cigarettes or alcohol and liaison with youth offender teams.

Dealing with violent crime and the use of detentions were raised as a key area of PCSO activity, as well as visits to licensed premises and retail outlets, the issuing of fixed penalty notices for disorder, collecting property and dealing with beggars and rough sleepers. Gaining intelligence through the collection and utilisation of CCTV footage was also mentioned as impacting on the PCSO role. PCSOs have been engaged in handling calls from the public, in partnership working with local authorities, and in dealing with traffic policing, in terms of road closures and parking.

Chapter 4 made reference to the alternative models for PCSO role development proposed by Crawford et al in their previous research in West Yorkshire, namely the “dedicated patrol officer” and “junior police officer” models. As well as these two models, Chapter 4 alluded to the opportunity for the PCSO role to further develop in making inroads into community engagement. An ideal type of balanced PCSO role - incorporating all three elements - was proposed in the last chapter, with the intention that PCSOs be proactive in seeking out the needs, concerns and expectations of local communities. Chapter 4 explained that, where community engagement currently exists, it tends to be characteristic of the police wanting to gain intelligence for instrumental means which are driven by the wider organisational needs rather than genuine ‘bottom up’ community concerns.

The type of community engagement which PCSOs could increasingly be involved in the future would be compatible with the government’s wider civil renewal agenda. By engaging with the community in such a way, PCSOs could be instrumental in assisting local citizens to engage with the design and delivery of public services. At a time when the public are less inclined to engage in the formal political arena and with the increasing number of state agencies, this process could be paramount in attempting to counter-balance the “democratic deficit”. (Habermas, 1989). Moves towards civic participation and a more reinvigorated civil society could be achieved by attempting to engage the previously hard to reach. There is the real possibility that sustained improvements in community engagement could also have instrumental benefits for the police organisation, for example in terms of increased intelligence and crime reporting. This model offers real potential for PCSOs to be instrumental as builders of social capital through practices of community engagement. The opportunity for the public sphere to be utilised by policing as a potential mode of social integration has been noted by writers such as Loader (1996).

5.6 Detentions

A particularly contentious area of PCSO activity concerns the power to detain members of the public. The power of detention enables PCSOs to hold a suspect for up to 30 minutes whilst awaiting the back up of police officers. There are opposing views about this power, with some critics and indeed a number of PCSOs questioning the effectiveness of limited detention in comparison to full powers of arrest. Other views from within the police, as presented elsewhere in this report, would see benefits in restricting the coercive and enforcement powers of PCSOs in favour of engagement and enabling activities.

Between April 2004 and March 2005 there were 237 PCSO detentions across the whole of the West Yorkshire Police. 12 months later, by the end of March 2006, the aggregate figure for PCSO detentions stood at 1582, representing a significant increase over the latter period. In addition to the growth in PCSO strength over this time period, this may suggest a greater confidence amongst PCSOs in the appropriate use of detention powers. This contrasts with the early, rather tentative use of these powers by the first PCSOs in Leeds and Bradford, as described by Crawford et al (2004).

Within West Yorkshire, detentions in March 2006 were highest in Bradford South division (485), Wakefield (283), Chapeltown (227). This suggests that the volume of detentions is likely to be higher in more densely populated urban areas and lower in less populated and more rural areas.

Between April 2004 and March 2005, only 3% of PCSO detentions resulted in the detainee absconding, and between April 2005 and March 2006, this figure had further dropped to just 1% of cases. This suggests that PCSOs are effectively using their discretion about when it is most appropriate to make use of their detention powers. In 73% of PCSO detention cases, a police officer was subsequently able to affect an arrest.

5.7 Skills

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the most important skills for a PCSO to possess were communication skills, mentioned by 75% of PCSOs surveyed. The ranking of 'listening' (23%) and 'problem solving' (13%) skills highlights the perception that the PCSO role is not just one of being reactive but one where a proactive policing contribution can be made.

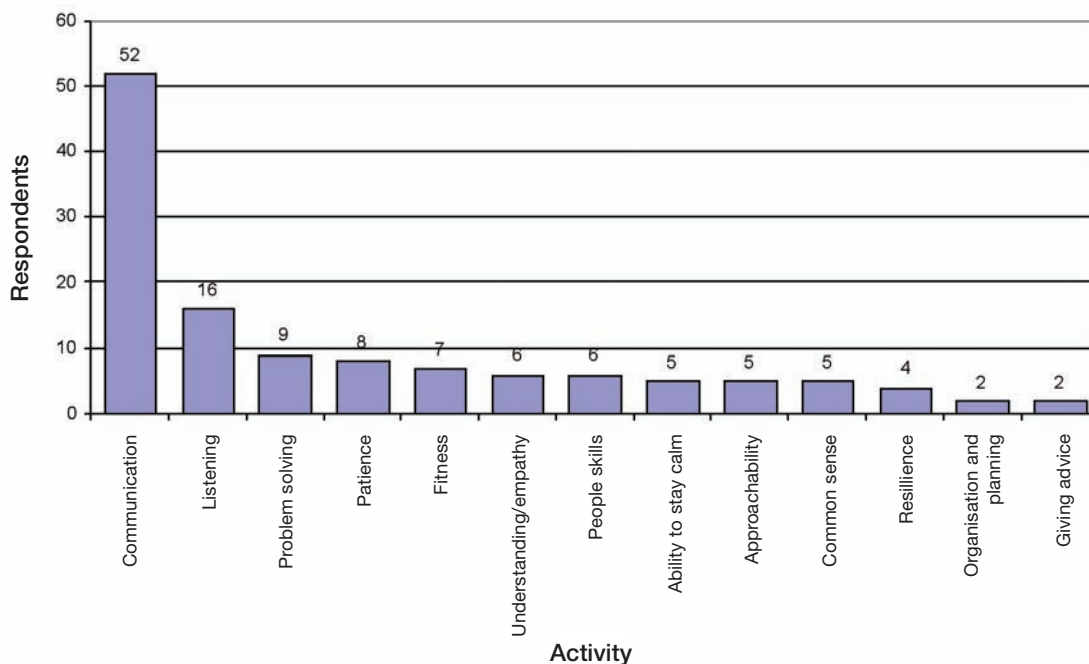


Figure 5: PCSO Prerequisite Skills

This data pattern was confirmed by the interviews with PCSOs with 78% of interviewees mentioning communication as the single most important skill for a PCSO to possess:

"Its communication. You have to treat everyone as an individual. It looks bad to the public when they see it taking three police officers to pick up a ten year old. Image and perception is important."

PCSO

"Good communication is the thing. You could be stuck with someone for half an hour. You've got to be a good listener."

PCSO

"Empathy is important. People don't have terrific lives and they hang on our every word."

PCSO

As indicated, good communication skills were felt overwhelmingly to be the one pre-requisite needed for the job of PCSO. Because PCSOs do not have the same legal powers and equipment as regular officers, communication skills may be even more vital in diffusing potential violence and maintaining personal safety in situations of conflict. The community engagements elements of the PCSO role also require interpersonal and communication skills. This is underlined in the National Occupational Standards for PCSOs. The continued recruitment and training of people with the ability to interact with the public in a variety of situations is therefore of paramount importance.

This belief that communication is of paramount importance was endorsed by 92% of NPT police managers. They also emphasised the need for an appropriate level of fitness in order to carry out extensive patrol duties, as well as the possession of effective writing skills, moral courage and - importantly - an awareness of issues around diversity.

What also emerged from the interviews was that 25% of police managers strongly valued the recruitment of PCSOs who could offer something to the policing context which they would bring from previous life and working experience:

"Communication and life experience is good. These make better officers. They need to be 30 years old or more as they have a lot to offer."

NPT Manager

5.8 Integration with Neighbourhood Policing Teams

Neighbourhood policing teams are a key vehicle for the integration of PCSOs because within their structure PCSOs are required to work alongside police officers. 78% of PCSO survey respondents reported that their daily working practices meant that they had 'a lot of contact' with police officers. Seventeen out of the eighteen PCSO interviewees (94%) reported that they had daily contact with police officers as members of Neighbourhood Policing Teams.

This level of integration within NPTs was viewed as an overwhelming positive, both in terms of the benefits to all parties and in terms of constructive working relationships. The fact that they work similar shift patterns as part of NPTs was felt to increase the massive potential for joined up working between regular officers and PCSOs:

"We all work the same hours in the same office. They regularly back us up."

PCSO

"There's lots of contact between police officers and PCSOs within the Neighbourhood Policing Team. We pass by each other on patrol every hour to hour and a half. Chapelton is really close knit. They are good with assistance."

PCSO

As well as integration within NPTs, PCSOs were asked how they perceive that police officers view them in terms of status. Some 58% of respondents reported that police officers viewed them either 'very positively' or 'positively', whilst a lesser proportion (39%) reported that they felt they were viewed by police officers as 'not very positive' or 'not positive at all'.

Evidence further suggests that PCSOs with less than 12 months service are more inclined to feel that sworn police officers view them positively than PCSOs who are longer in terms of service. This may be due to what police commentators such as Reiner (2000) have referred to as the tendency for longer serving police officers and members of police staff to develop a more cynical and hardened outlook on their work in general terms. An alternative explanation could be that more recently recruited PCSOs have been placed from the outset in NPTs where they have had a positive experience of working alongside sworn officers.

The data revealed that higher levels of PCSO contact with the police did actually seem to correlate with the perception that PCSOs were more positively regarded by police officers. Seven interviewees (39%) reported 'very positive' or 'positive' relationships with police officers. No officers reported overt hostility or animosity from police officers but 61% reported 'mixed' receptions from police officers. There is some evidence that regular officers value the contribution which PCSOs make to policing, hence the following perception from a PCSO:

"We have very positive relationships with police officers, there are no problems. Our knowledge is greater than theirs because we know the community. PCs appreciate the value of our information."

PCSO

What came from the interviews was a sense that PCSO reception by police officers based within NPTs was overwhelmingly good. On occasion, however, it was perceived by PCSOs that their reception by specialist units outside NPTs was not so good. This suggests that the more working contact that a sworn officer has with a PCSO the more likely he/she is to value their role and contribution to policing. Consider the following:

"We have to prove our standing with them. They don't really understand what our job is. NPT officers are fine. Outside of NPTs one or two will complain we're not worth the money we're paid. They grumble if we are offered overtime and they are not."

PCSO

A distinct positive which emerges from the data is the perception by PCSOs that their own reception and integration into policing has fundamentally 'changed for the better' in more recent months and that this again is in no small measure due to the creation of Neighbourhood Policing Teams. Take the following comments:

"It has changed. It was fairly bad at first. Working in line with NPTs has helped.."

PCSO

"At the start the police didn't know what we could and couldn't do. There's the odd one or two who are funny that haven't worked with PCSOs before. Generally there's very few negative vibes. The city centre ones are great.."

PCSO

In terms of PCSO integration into Neighbourhood Policing Teams, the views of NPT Sergeants and Inspectors provide much insight. Of the 12 managers interviewed, none reported a perception that PCSOs had failed to integrate with sworn officers as part of NPTs. Indeed 8 out of 12 interviewees (67%) reported that PCSOs were either 'well integrated' or 'very well integrated' within their respective NPTs:

"They are fairly well integrated. We work well as a team. The same shift patterns, briefings, duties and projects. I've not noticed any animosity.."

NPT Manager

The impact of the introduction of PCSOs on the wider 'extended policing family' was discussed with NPT police managers. 9 interviewees (75%) commented that PCSO integration within the extended policing family had been 'positive', with 25% specifically referring to the positive relationships engendered with members of the special constabulary:

"We used Specials for marches in the past. Now we use PCSOs a lot. PCSOs and city centre ambassadors, who walk round the centre in jackets, work very well together."

NPT Manager

At the heart of the perception of PCSOs by police officers, is the issue of whether PCSOs are thought to save police officers time by removing some of the more mundane and time consuming tasks from their workloads or whether they actually increase the amount of work regular officers have to do. Take the following statement as evidence of this tension:

"Some police officers say we make more work for them. They can do their work detecting crime. They are getting to know what we can and can't do."

PCSO

It would appear that PCSOs were introduced with the intention of reducing the workloads of regular officers, thus allowing them to be more focused on dealing with issues requiring their particular expertise and powers. It may be the case that, over time, because PCSOs are effective in terms of gathering intelligence, that there has been an impact in terms of increasing the ultimate workloads of the police officer colleagues in NPTs. In terms of delivering improved policing outcomes for society as a whole, this is certainly no bad thing if it means more crime is being detected.

67% of NPT police managers felt that the introduction of PCSOs had actually reduced the workloads of the sworn police officers that they managed, rather than increasing their respective work:

"PCSOs have not created more work but have freed police officers up to allow them to concentrate on NIM proactive work."

NPT Manager

"Generally speaking when they need assistance, police officers know it's genuine, its not trivia – it's usually more serious- not just youths giving abuse. Its cut down on the work of police officers in terms of dealing with lower level stuff".

NPT Manager

Upon reflection it would appear that certain activities which are undertaken by PCSOs have a reduction effect on the workloads of sworn officers, yet other activities have an amplification effect upon this workload. This is due to the amount of community intelligence and low level incidents which PCSOs bring to the attention of police officers.

In attempting to link how PCSOs felt they were perceived by police officers to job satisfaction, it was interesting that out of 25 PCSOs who did not feel that police officers viewed them positively, 22 of these still felt either 'satisfied' or even 'very satisfied' with their role.

5.9 Workplace Organisation

Paperwork

When asked about their views were on the paperwork which they have to complete, 64% of questionnaire respondents thought that paperwork was at a reasonable and manageable level. Likewise an overwhelming majority of interviewees (72%) reported that the amount of time spent on paperwork was 'not an issue'. Only 11% interviewees reported that they were fearful for the future in terms of the possibility of an increase in the burden of paperwork. Indeed, some PCSOs compared themselves favourably to police officers in this context

"Intelligence gathering requires paperwork but I couldn't say it's too excessive."

PCSO

"There's not that much paperwork apart from intelligence forms and debrief forms. On one occasion a PCSO became a sworn officer – he saw the amount of paperwork involved – and then went back to being a PCSO!"

PCSO

Only a minority of questionnaire respondents (7%) and interviewees (17%) felt that the amount of paperwork was currently an issue in terms cutting into the amount of time available for high visibility patrol. It has to be stated that the absence of paperwork is a pre-requisite for PCSOs being able to concentrate on high visibility patrol in the streets.

Working Hours

Most questionnaire respondents expressed satisfaction with their working hours and liked the flexibility that shift work gave them. Some PCSOs already work until 1am (and 3am in Bradford South) and most seemed happy, although there was some awareness that PCSO powers were limited in terms of the demands of policing a night time economy. Concerns were expressed by some about lack of powers and equipment. Transport to and from work was additionally mentioned as an issue by two female respondents dependent on public transport.

Of the fourteen interviewees who expressed a view, 86% said that they were comfortable working until and even beyond midnight if required:

"I like working after midnight. It's funny to see people under the influence (of alcohol). I've had the chance to use my first aid skills. One night, two blokes were covered in blood. One bloke comes up to me and says 'My brother has been glassed'. He could have lost an arm or even died if it wasn't for me and my first aid training at Bishopgarth."

PCSO

The above findings suggest that Recommendation 9 in the Crawford et al. (2004) evaluation has been undertaken in terms of reviewing the appropriateness of working hours.

Job Satisfaction

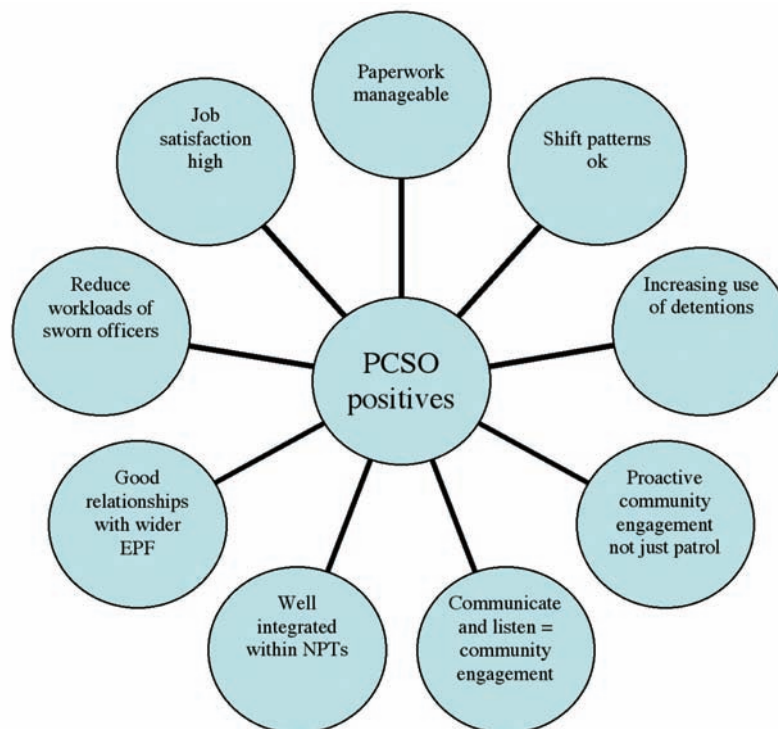


Figure 6: PCSO Positives

In terms of job satisfaction, it is pleasing that 91% of PCSOs interviewed reported being either 'very satisfied' or 'quite satisfied' with their work. Additionally, the most common rating of the PCSO role out of 10 (10 being most satisfaction and 1 being least) amongst interviewees was 7.50% of interviewees rated their job satisfaction as 7 out of 10 and, notably, a further 43% rated their satisfaction as at least 8 out of 10 or higher.

Female PCSOs (48%) were more likely than their male counterparts (17%) to report being 'very satisfied' with their role. Although when the data is aggregated for the 'very satisfied' and 'quite satisfied' categories, there are no material differences between the satisfaction rates of male and female PCSOs.

5.10 Conclusions

This conclusion begins with a specific review of the Crawford et al. (2004) recommendations. These were the following:

Recommendation 1

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police sets a visibility target of at least 80% of PCSO time to be spent out of the police station on the streets.

Recommendation 7

We recommend that West Yorkshire police reviews the deployment of PCSOs in pairs, notably in city centre environments during the day on the basis of a full risk assessment.

Recommendation 9

We recommend that West Yorkshire police reviews the working hours of PCSOs and whether it is appropriate or desirable for them to work beyond midnight in the light of its defining principles of deployment.

Recommendation 1 has been subsumed under the national visibility target for PCSOs. West Yorkshire Police regularly achieves over this 80% visibility target. Recommendation 7 has been achieved and PCSOs are no longer routinely deployed in pairs during daylight hours. Where they are deployed in pairs, this is based upon a risk assessment. Instances of more flexible pairings with sworn officers and members of the Extended Policing Family were noted.

Reflecting on Recommendation 9, clearly PCSOs in some divisions are working in the policing of the night time economy. Whilst there are pragmatic reasons for this, more evidence needs to be demonstrated in the future in terms of thinking through how the public may perceive this control and enforcement role in contrast to their role in daylight hours of reassurance and community engagement.

In conclusion, PCSO activity has diversified since the original evaluation by Crawford et al. (2004) and there is considerable variation in terms of how they are deployed across West Yorkshire. This is a result of management direction, in some instances and grass roots initiatives from NPT staff in others. However, this would be a timely point to consider the range of tasks and functions undertaken by PCSOs and to evaluate the extent to which they contribute to reassurance, feelings of public safety and crime reduction.

Recommendations

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police reviews its PCSO deployment practices with a view to sharing and disseminating good practices across divisions.

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police reviews its PCSO activities which may contribute to wider force or CDRP objectives but which may undermine the reassurance potential of PCSOs and their public image.

Chapter 6:

The infrastructure to support PCSOs

6.1 Introduction

Within this chapter a number of themes will be explored and the structure will be broken into six sections:

- Recruitment and retention
- Training
- Management structure
- Other HR matters
- Possibilities for career progression
- Finance and contracts

These sections will analyse the various systems that support PCSOs as they are brought into West Yorkshire Police and are deployed on divisions, and will then go on to examine whether these systems help or hinder their effective deployment.

6.2 Evidence Base

Interviews were conducted with relevant members of West Yorkshire Police staff, and insights have also been drawn from the qualitative interviews already referred to elsewhere in this report. Appropriate data has been sought, but there are some limitations on the analysis as certain data sets are not routinely collected by the police at force level (e.g. data regarding disciplinary matters and complaints involving PCSOs). Use has also been made of secondary data for comparative purposes.

6.3 Recruitment and Retention

The initial cohort of 60 PCSOs started work in Leeds and Bradford City Centres in March 2003, after what was then a three week training programme. Although the previous evaluation by Leeds University concentrated on these first PCSOs they were, in fact, joined very quickly by PCSOs deployed more broadly throughout West Yorkshire so that by September 2003, there was PCSO presence in all divisions of the force.

Appendix 3 outlines the funding streams and the build up of numbers from 2003 to the present date. As at 9 January 2006, 624.5 PCSOs had been recruited and the breakdown by gender is contained in the table below. Data on ethnicity was supplied only on a basis of white/ethnic minority status and no breakdown was available in relation to age.

Of the 624.5 PCSOs recruited, 40% were female, which has been roughly the same proportion since the first cohort reported upon by Crawford et al (2004) and is in line with the national picture as presented in the National Evaluation of PCSOs (Cooper et al 2006). This compares favourably to the proportion for police recruits (of all grades) where only 33% nationally were reported to be female in the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006, with 28% in West Yorkshire Police over the same period (Home Office 2006b).

Within West Yorkshire Police recruitment of minority ethnic candidates stands at 7.5% of the total as at 9 January 2006. Whilst the target for PCSOs in post by the end of the 2006/7 financial year is 546, as

of 1 June 2006, there were 455 in post, of whom 38.7% were female and 5.3% from minority ethnic backgrounds. This latter figure compares to 3.96% for police officers and 3.18% for other police staff (West Yorkshire Police data). It is lower than the national average of 15%, but this is heavily influenced by the figures from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) which employs a third of all PCSOs nationally from a local population with the highest proportions of non-white residents (Home Office 2006b).

More relevant data for West Yorkshire Police comes from the 2001 Census and the subsequent Labour Force Survey in 2002/3, which show that the non-white population of West Yorkshire comprises 11.4% of the total. Looking specifically at the population of working age (16-74 years), this rises to 12.4% (ONS 2004). This indicates that West Yorkshire Police is making some progress towards gaining a balanced representation of the diverse ethnic communities in the area, with PCSO recruitment assisting in these efforts. However, there is clearly further progress to be made in this area.

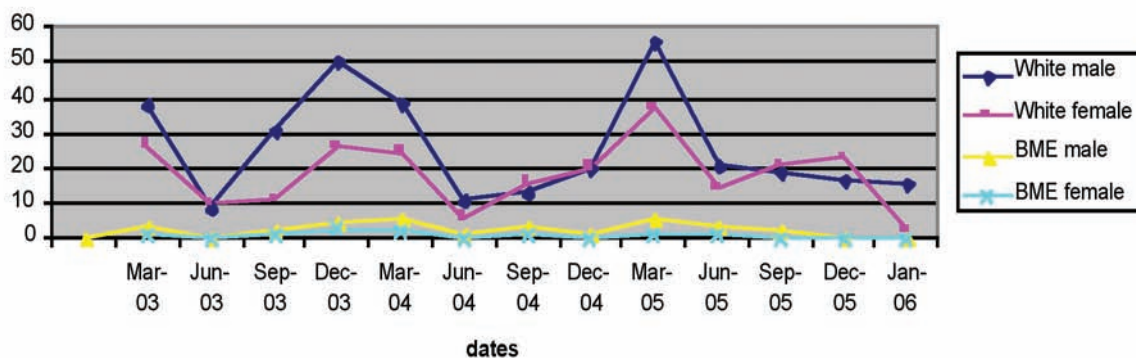


Figure 7: Recruitment of PCSOs by gender and ethnicity

The motivations for PCSOs joining the force are diverse, but the main reasons cited by the 69 PCSOs responding to the postal questionnaire were:

- Putting something back into the community (14 or 21%)
- Interaction with the public (9 or 13%)
- Interested in becoming a police constable (19 or 28%)

PCSOs starting by end of quarter	White male	White female	BME male	BME female	Total	Cumulative total
Mar 2003	38	27	4	1	70	70
June 2003	9	10	0	0	19	89
Sept 2003	31	11	3	1	46	135
Dec 2003	51	26	5	3	85	220
Mar 2004	39	24.5	6	2	71.5	291.5
June 2004	11	6	1	0	18	309.5
Sept 2004	13	16	4	1	34	343.5
Dec 2004	20	20	1	0	41	384.5
Mar 2005	56	37	6	1	100	484.5
June 2005	21	14	4	1	40	524.5
Sept 2005	19	21	2	0	42	566.5
Dec 2005	17	23	0	0	40	606.5
Jan 2006	16	2	0	0	18	624.5
Total	341	237	36	10	624.5	624.5

Table 1: PCSO recruitment by gender and ethnicity

A small number had been redeployed when traffic warden duties were decriminalised in Leeds, and others cited reasons such as a positive change of career, outdoor working, the variety of tasks and security and terms and conditions of the post.

This was reflected also in the qualitative interviews and is consistent with the findings of the National Evaluation of PCSOs, which similarly found that the group most likely to view the PCSO role as a “stepping stone” to becoming a police officer were the younger males (Cooper et al 2006). In our survey, this represented 13 (56.5%) of the 23 male PCSOs under the age of 30.

As of 31 March 2006, 149 PCSOs had left post, but 73 or 49% of these left to go into training to become police officers. Interestingly a slightly higher percentage of the women than men who left did so in order to join the regular police force (53.5% and 46.2 % respectively). Men were more likely than women to leave for other forms of career progression, and women more likely to leave for domestic reasons. Both of these factors seem significant in terms of the lack of structural career progression offered to PCSOs and the pattern of shifts and other work demands that may impinge upon family responsibilities, which tend to fall upon women disproportionately. The numbers of PCSOs from minority ethnic backgrounds is too small (11 in total) for there to be any discernable pattern in the reasons for their departure. However, four of these leavers went on to train to become sworn police officers and three left to pursue other opportunities for career development.

West Yorkshire Police faces significant challenges in recruiting PCSOs to meet the projected increase in numbers of 546 by 31 March 2007 and 1074 by the 31 March 2008. There is also an imperative to retain the PCSOs already in post. This will enable West Yorkshire Police to use their experience and expertise when introducing the anticipated large number of recruits into the organisation, but it is important also in meeting the target, that the increase in new people arriving is not cancelled out by existing staff leaving in any great number.

Whilst initial recruitment was adversely affected by negative press publicity, in which PCSOs were branded “plastic policemen”, more public recognition and a higher profile for PCSOs has ensured that there have been ample suitable candidates coming forward in subsequent recruitment rounds. This has been helped by positive publicity disseminated by the service and also by targeting individuals who had narrowly failed to pass the assessment to become a police constable. An information leaflet has been devised to be sent out with recruitment packs, which outlines the PCSO role and how it is distinct from a police constable role – vital in the early rounds of recruitment when the public (and other members of police staff making enquiries) had little knowledge about what being a PCSO might involve.

Recruitment is based upon the competency framework linked to National Occupational Standards and operates with the use of an assessment centre to evaluate skills and personal qualities of applicants.

In general feedback from the qualitative interviews about the suitability individuals coming into PCSO posts was extremely positive. One senior police manager commented:

“In relation to the skills and abilities, we seem to be attracting the right sort of people that want to have jobs where they are outdoors talking to people and trying to resolve problems, taking a mature approach.”

Senior Police Manager

Another referred to the rapidity of the initial PCSO recruitment and deployment, saying:

“Very quickly the officers were going from a position of not having had time to evaluate or to work out how we were going to use these people and what they could and couldn’t do, because it was all newbut from that point I have had nothing but admiration and praise for them.”

Senior Police Manager

However, one cautionary note was sounded in relation to the range of skills needed as the PCSO role has developed, and the possibility of less suitable candidates being accepted in the push to fulfil the expected increase in numbers. This is a key concern for West Yorkshire Police in respect of the forthcoming recruitment rounds and connects with the following discussions around training and management support for the PCSO role.

“I do not think that initially we have recruited the right people, with the right skills, because the role has developed, and I don’t think people understood the role of PCSOs and the powers and skills needed, what is involved, really. It is time we looked at, what is it they are doing and what sort of people do we want in these roles. I have some real fears when we are talking about how many we want to recruit over the next few years, that we are going to lose sight of what we have been trying to achieve.”

NPT Manager

6.4 Training

Once in post, recruits attend a 7 week training programme, again based on the competency framework and including modules on health and safety, empty hand skills, law, procedures, powers and policy. This is followed by 4 weeks mentoring by a more experienced PCSO. This training is not yet accredited but in due course will become incorporated into the Wider Policing Learning Development Programme (WPLDP).

The present modular programme is a development of the original 3 week training programme which West Yorkshire Police had put in place for the first PCSO recruits, and is based upon a national training programme, although delivered locally. Criticisms of the original programme, reflected by Crawford et al (2004), included perceptions that it was too classroom based, that information given on the training differed from the “on the job” reality and not all relevant subjects were covered whilst some unnecessary ones were.

The new programme is more systematic and seeks to deal with these criticisms by incorporating a week in the middle for community observation and extending the period of mentoring once PCSOs are placed on divisions. It is significant that almost half the PCSOs involved in qualitative interviews expressed the view that the training was too short. It was felt that training could be improved by

including more input from experienced PCSOs and traffic wardens, and, for some, by more experiential learning, such as role-plays. This feedback has already been incorporated to some extent into the training and experienced PCSOs are used as mentors once new trainees are placed in NPTs.

The positive changes that have been made are reflected in an improved level of satisfaction amongst PCSOs in the survey sample who have entered post more recently. 72% of those in post less than 12 months felt their training had prepared them well or very well, compared to 54% of those in post between 12 months and 2 years and 28% for those in post more than two years.

The more positive perceptions of newer PCSOs seem to chime with the views of NPT managers interviewed, who generally felt that the training had been good (none indicated very good). The competency framework against which PCSOs are recruited and trained includes modules on community and customer focus, effective communication, problem-solving and diversity. Whilst it will be impossible to cover the range of skills and knowledge necessary for the role in any real depth during what is still a relatively short seven weeks formal input. There has been, then, moves to adapt the training, both at national and local level, to suit the more diverse and flexible nature of the PCSO role. However, this could be further reinforced by a more robust commitment to on-going training for PCSOs, and possibilities of developing such training in partnership with other organisations involved in community safety could usefully be explored.

6.5 Management Structure

From the outset PCSOs have been managed by Sergeants and Inspectors on divisions. This was partly a product of their rapid introduction and subsequent expansion, which has not allowed for full consideration of alternative management structures. Management of PCSOs has therefore been an addition to traditional first line manager roles in the police. Thus one interviewee commented:

"The difficulty with PCSOs is that they came without any management or supervisory structure, which has caused a problem for us, so we have had to give the sergeants and inspectors the role of supervision – which they do, no problem with that – so inspectors would have to take that up with the call centre if they are sent to inappropriate calls"

Senior Police Manager

From our examination of management support and structures three themes emerged:

- The supervisory burden
- Understanding of role
- The day-to-day involvement of police officers

Firstly, the supervisory burden is considerable, with 7 of the 12 NPT managers interviewed describing the impact on their workload as dramatic.

Thus one manager who said:

"They have created more work with the PDRs and the conditions of service. There is an awful lot to learn. I have 14 staff to supervise."

NPT Manager

Whilst most first line managers felt that including PCSOs in their staffing responsibilities did give them more work, one manager indicated that in fact there may also be a change in the nature of the work:

"It has not increased the workload of management. My team is easy to manage. It is hands off management, the easy side to it. There is the impact of more staff but it makes the management of my area easier. I have to do PDRs and workloads, but I do not have to manage them like PCs. I just give them a task to do."

NPT Manager

This is an interesting insight and may relate to more to a difference in the nature of conventional policing and neighbourhood policing than between police officers and PCSOs. However, it may also refer to the more straightforward tasks that PCSOs are given and the relatively generous staffing levels of the NPTs.

Concerns about pressure on management feature also in the findings of the *National Evaluation of PCSOs*, which reported that the majority of PCSOs (70%) felt that their managers were able to support them. However, at the same time 34% recognised that their managers were overstretched and only 54% felt that managers had sufficient time adequately to monitor their work (Cooper et al 2006).

Although there are benefits to having PCSOs managed alongside police officers in NPTs, thought needs to be given to ensuring the robustness of management structures as the projected increase in PCSO numbers reaches the force. Several police managers acknowledged this as a key concern and one in particular commented upon the current lack of proactive thinking in this area:

"We are going to double the number of PCSOs over the next two years, so the problems we've got now are going to double....the force has looked at it and said, yes, we've got a problem. But we have not yet gripped that problem."

Police Manager

"I worry that the management structure will not be right and that we will end up doing a disservice to the public and to the PCSOs if we do not think about that in advance."

NPT Manager

This last interviewee also reflected concerns about accountability, particularly if the way roles develop involves PCSOs being located on non-police premises. Thus:

"The current infrastructure for PCSOs is manageable now because there are so few, but the increase in numbers is going to change that..... If we are talking about them – as we are - working from partners' buildings who is going to be supervising them day to day?"

NPT Manager

A second theme suggested that PCSOs are not always confident that managers – and colleagues – have a thorough understanding of the role and what they are and are not able to do. This was summed up by one senior police manager, who said:

"I speak to a lot of PCSOs and they really want (senior PCSO roles) because they see their skills as totally different, but when you scratch the surface of that argument, the main argument is that people don't understand what PCSOs do. If you talk to the acting officers in the patrol team they don't understand what they do, they think they are doing the same jobs, but they are not."

Senior Police Manager

A third issue was raised in relation to the NPTs, where some police constables have been empowered by taking on the day to day responsibility for the PCSO working the same "patch". Despite the stated intentions of senior management in West Yorkshire Police, this has not been formalised as practice and, where it does occur, would appear to suit the skills and abilities of some officers more than others. The NPT manager who discussed introducing this type of management felt it was a positive development but that:

"Some of the pairs, the partnerships, are working really well..... other ones we have to get more directly involved in supervising what's going on, but ideally it would be nice for them all to run as the good ones are doing..... some of them, I think, are natural supervisors, if you like, they have shown by doing that – and others prefer to rely on the radio for being given their work and they are struggling to make the link between that and finding out what is going on in their neighbourhoods. Some people have made the transition very easily, whereas some haven't."

NPT Manager

This raises questions, not just about the appropriate level of responsibility that police officers should take for others, when that was not part of their original role expectation, but also wider questions about how individuals are making the transition to the proactive, community based style of working needed for the NPTs to succeed. Further work may need to take place to evaluate the extent to which PCSOs and police officer colleagues perceive they are supported in making that transition and what factors might facilitate the cultural shift necessary in fully embracing the spirit of NPT work.

6.6 Other Human Resources Matters

Some of the issues raised above about lack of management familiarity with the PCSO role, are relevant also to in relation to knowledge of the range of HR arrangements for PCSOs. One senior police manager explained that:

“One thing we do have problems with is supervisors and managers knowing the difference in terms and conditions of employment between police officers and PCSOs. We are getting closer to overcoming it but we’ve had our fingers burnt a couple of times.”

Senior Police Manager

Unlike police officers, PCSOs have employee status and can therefore join a trade union. They also differ in terms of their pension scheme, the disciplinary code to which they are subject and arrangement for overtime. It has clearly taken some police managers time to appreciate and become familiar with the implications of these differences, and this was also the case for supervisors who took part in the focus groups for the *National Evaluation of PCSOs* (Cooper et al 2006).

Terms and conditions vary not only between police officers and PCSOs, but between police forces also. The concerns around this, particularly in the context of the need to recruit and retain a large number of PCSOs and the proposed merger of forces, are fully discussed in a report produced by the group, Accenture, for the Home Office (Accenture 2005). Discussions are currently on-going in respect of standardisation of national terms and conditions.

6.7 Possibilities for Career Progression

One further question addressed by Accenture (2005) and appearing in the interviews and surveys for this study, is that of PCSO career progression. Comments were made by PCSOs, such as:

“I would hope that there would be roles made available to progress into, otherwise my career will be developing elsewhere.”

PCSO

“No promotion or anything within this role, which is a bit of a disappointment.”

PCSO

And from managers also:

“Quite a few of the PCSOs who joined originally are starting to say, there must be more to this. Some forces have gone down the road of senior PCSOs and the Home Office is talking about having some sort of career progression line structure, but at the moment we aren’t, and it is something we are going to have to look at. We are short of supervisors anyway and we will have to get the force to consider it, but it’s currently in the too hot to handle box.”

Police Manager

A mixture of views were expressed in interviews about the introduction of a rank structure for PCSOs and two manager interviewees, in particular, were more keen to see the PCSO role developing as the gateway into the regular police force. Others reflected on possible innovations in specialist PCSO functions, for instance:

“We are missing a trick because we don’t have management of them built in – whether it’s their own, we could have senior PCSOs but then we would lose them from patrol..... I suppose there are two ideas; one is, let’s develop some of the good managers and skilled people who could manage..... there would be some scope to look at specialisms, some of the project work with young people, school liaison officers and so on.”

Senior Police Manager

Such specialist roles have been introduced elsewhere and include:

- Emergency Services PCSOs in Lancashire
- Youth PCSOs in Surrey
- Transport PCSOs in Merseyside and West Midlands
- Specialist PCSOs in Lancashire working on links with the gay, lesbian and bisexual communities and with responsibility for physical disability and sensory impairment

HMIC 2004

These roles do take PCSOs away from more conventional patrol and neighbourhood policing duties, but would have potential benefits in increasing the police force capacity to reach certain marginalised groups and to spread the reassurance effect further.

Another possible development mentioned by management interviewees was the introduction of the “tutor PCSO” role parallel to a tutor police officer. Experienced PCSOs are currently taking responsibility for mentoring and inducting new PCSO but with no financial reward, and establishing such an incentive would seem sensible in dealing with a key disparity between police officers and PCSOs, whilst also giving PCSOs a more formalised development opportunity. This was discussed by one interviewee, who drew comparisons with opportunities for police officers:

“The other thing is training, our tutor police constables all get an extra payment for tutoring but at the moment we have PCSOs tutoring other PCSOs and they get no recognition or payment for it.”
Police Manager

Establishing some form of career progression is clearly a matter that cannot be indefinitely shelved and, in view of the required rise in PCSO numbers, a greater variety of roles and responsibilities could usefully be considered. However, this should be done with regard to the warnings in the Accenture report about the implications of “mission creep”, both vertically where the role is further empowered and the distinction with police officers is blurred, or horizontally, where more roles are taken on which detract from the original focus on visibility and reassurance (Accenture 2005)

6.8 Finance and Contracts

The background of PCSO finance is complex and comprises a mixture of monies from the Home Office, West Yorkshire Police and match-funding partners, large and small. More recently growth has been expanded through the Neighbourhood Policing Fund (NPF), where cash is ring-fenced for PCSO posts for the financial years 2006/7 and 2007/8. Thereafter the NPF becomes incorporated into the main police grant.

The complexity of dealing with the financial side of PCSOs was described by one member of central West Yorkshire Police staff as “like a big jigsaw really”. It is clear that the demands of accounting for match-funding income were a challenge in the initial stages. Unlike local authorities, the police are relatively new to dealing with contracts and had to establish systems that would be satisfactory for match-funding partners.

One of the early issues that arose was the expectation of the local authority match-funding partners that they would receive confirmation that the PCSOs they were paying for were in post and were working within any stipulations made in their contracts. Initially the tracking systems were not sufficiently robust to allow for this, but subsequently individual PCSO posts were linked to specific funding streams and each PCSO who is match-funded is now made aware of their status. This was explained by one police manager:

“We have made sure that all the PCSOs who are match-funded know they are match-funded, because you do get local councillors who approach them and say “are you my match-funded PCSO?” and if they don’t know it causes us problems. Because of course the councillors want something for their money.”

Police Manager

This kind of accountability is new for the police and is another aspect of the cultural shift that has been part and parcel of the growth of PCSOs in the service. It means responding to the needs of partners and regularly reporting back. This is particularly important for local authorities, where elected members might request information from officers about the impact of their spending on PCSOs, but could equally be the case for the management committees, school governing bodies or other management arrangements for the smaller match-funders.

The negotiation of contracts is dealt with in the early stages at a divisional level, and then the legal departments of the respective organisations become involved in amending and agreeing the terms of the contract, not usually a speedy process. Discussions are around a standard contract, which tends to be varied relatively little, and is supplemented by a protocol or service level agreement negotiated at a local level which sets out the details of actual deployment.

There is a precedent for changing contractual arrangements in the light of experience and this is in relation to Metro, which oversees bus services throughout West Yorkshire and is responsible for bus stations. Due to concerns about incidents at bus stations, Metro provided 50% match-funding for 8 PCSOs, who in the first instance were attached to a police division in Leeds. They therefore travelled on a daily basis to other bus stations and when this was reviewed, it was felt to be inefficient. As a result the contract was changed so that, rather than having 8 match-funding posts, what Metro purchases is 8 x 37 hours of PCSO, which is spread across several divisions. This has the added benefit of ensuring that the PCSOs seen on the bus stations are part of the local policing teams and are aware of local intelligence.

It is the case, however, that initial contracts were set up without adequate regard for the need for review and without robust exit strategies. This is very much to the forefront in setting new contracts or renegotiating contracts, because of the time-limited nature of the contracts and, indeed, some of the monies coming into the local authorities and other bodies which are being used to pay for PCSOs. At present, whilst numbers are increasing, this is not an immediate concern because sufficient redeployment opportunities exist, but once PCSO numbers peak, as they may do in 2008, with the ending of the NPF, this could well be a matter of concern and needs to be addressed with match-funding partners.

Finance and income generation managers from West Yorkshire Police indicated that there has also been learning from early omissions in the costings associated with match-funding contracts, where pay awards were not fully taken into account and where flexibility was not built in to allow for the successful regrading of PCSOs in November 2004, incurring unanticipated costs for West Yorkshire Police.

The current range of match-funding partners is very dependent upon the contacts of senior police managers in local divisions and to date there has been no systematic attempt to market match-funding opportunities. There are certain initiatives, such as a school funding PCSOs and Bradford LEA also paying for PCSO posts and this practice could usefully be extended elsewhere. There is one example of an incursion into the private sector, with a PCSO being funded to patrol a motorway service station and there may be a number of opportunities of partnership with the private sector that could be developed in future.

Working with contracts and match-funding partners is new for senior managers and comments were made about feeling rather like a salesman in relation to PCSOs and being aware of unfamiliarity with the basics of negotiating contracts. Several issues emerge from this that would merit further consideration

- Whether involvement in promoting PCSOs might have an impact on constructive partnership relationships
- The benefits of additional briefings for senior managers on dealing with the business side of PCSO contracts
- Whether the sharing of good practice can be facilitated between divisions
- The merits of a more systematic marketing of opportunities for match-funding PCSOs and managerial direction as to which types of organisations might best be targeted (for instance schools, town or parish councils, private companies)

6.9 Conclusions

The infrastructure surrounding PCSOs is critical to their effective employment and deployment. This was also considered at an earlier stage by Crawford et al (2004) who made 4 key recommendations as follows:

Recommendation 4

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police reviews periodically both the content and breadth of the initial training programme and subsequent in-service training. Greater training in crime prevention and environmental awareness would assist in developing these aspects of the PCSO role.

Recommendation 5

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police establishes minimum standards of skills and competencies for the PCSO role and assesses these formally in order to provide suitable quality assurance processes at an early stage of recruitment.

Recommendation 14

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police considers creating a PCSO supervisor, so that experienced personnel can gain more supervisory responsibilities.

Recommendation 16

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police incorporates experienced PCSOs into the training and induction of recruits.

Recommendation 5 has been achieved through the establishment of a national set of competencies, which is used for recruitment and in the initial PCSO training programme. Experienced PCSOs are now used as mentors for newly trained PCSOs. However, progress on developing relevant in-service training is less satisfactory and this will be critical in enabling PCSO learning and acquisition of skills.

The option of creating a PCSO supervisory rank has not been pursued by West Yorkshire Police. Concerns about lack of career progression do, however, need to be addressed and tutor PCSOs or specialist PCSO roles may be other routes that could be explored.

Attention to an appropriate infrastructure is crucial to enabling West Yorkshire Police maximise the effectiveness of NPTs and the large increase in PCSO numbers planned for the financial year 2007/8.

A series of recommendations are therefore put forward to bolster the current infrastructure and make appropriate changes.

Recommendations

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police conducts a review of PCSO roles with a view to establishing a preferred route for career progression.

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police reviews and monitors their Personal Development Review (PDR) completions for PCSOs, and links PDR goals to specific performance targets.

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police explores the potential for developing relevant in-service training, based on identified need for PCSOs and police officers based in NPTs.

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police considers what management support and induction might be beneficial to assist police officers joining NPTs to adjust to the nature of NPT work and taking day-to-day responsibility for PCSOs, where this is required.

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police maximises appropriate consultancy and advice to senior police managers involved in negotiating and setting contracts with match-funded partners.

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police considers more strategic means of identifying potential new match-funding partners, and that opportunities are sought with partners in the public, voluntary and private sectors.

Chapter 7: PCSO Effectiveness

7.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the profile of members of the public involved in street surveys conducted in 6 police divisions across West Yorkshire, which together form an important source of data for evaluating the impact of PCSOs. After exploring public perceptions in terms of fear of personal and property crime, the chapter considers experiences of anti-social behaviour. The chapter moves on to explore public recognition of PCSOs, perceptions of their visibility and reassurance effects. The chapter then attempts to assess the impact of PCSOs on both crime and anti-social behaviour. Finally, reflections on the nature and extent of performance culture in policing tie into the concluding section which looks back at the original recommendations made by Crawford et al (2004).

7.2 Evidence Base

The total sample for the public surveys in West Yorkshire was 329. The public were surveyed in the following six areas:

- Chapeltown 51 respondents
- Calderdale 51 respondents
- Pudsey and Weetwood 60 respondents
- Wakefield 53 respondents
- Leeds 61 respondents
- Bradford 53 respondents

This data is complemented by semi-structured interviews with NPT managers and match funded partners as well as analysis of the targeted focus groups. Crime statistics and the available performance data available from West Yorkshire Police Performance Review Department has also been drawn upon to assess effectiveness.

In a broader sense PCSO impact is also dependent upon the community engagement, intelligence-led tasking and quality of working relationships with other members of the policing family discussed in earlier chapters. It is also inherently connected with the NPTs and their ability to respond proactively to communities.

7.3 Profile of the Public Survey Sample

The following section outlines the profile of the 329 members of the public surveyed.

Breakdown by age

The following reveals a relatively even breakdown between age categories:

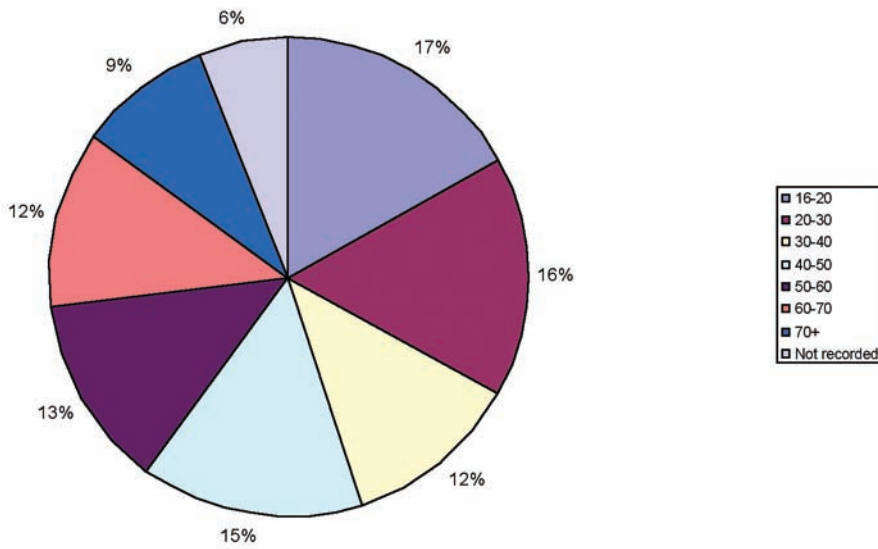


Figure 8: Public survey by Age

Breakdown by gender

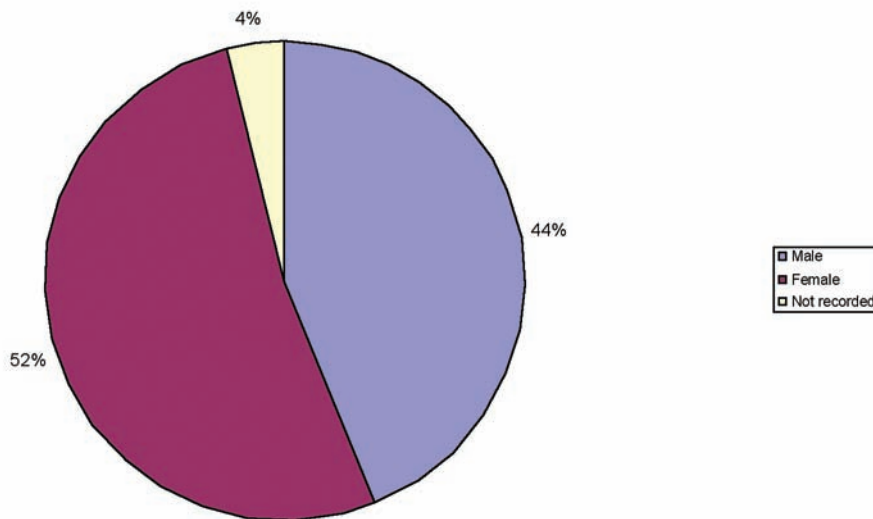


Figure 9: Public survey by Gender

The above reveals that more women than men were in the sample. This is explained partly by the number of women who reported that they were not in paid employment. These people were more likely to be in retail areas and other public spaces at the times which the surveys were conducted. i.e. 10.00 am - 2.00 pm.

Breakdown by ethnicity

The following reveals that four out of five respondents classified themselves as being ‘white’ and from the UK. These figures reflect broader demographic trends across the six areas surveyed. There were a comparatively high number of Pakistani/ Bangladeshi respondents in Bradford and a relatively high number of Black Caribbean respondents in Chapeltown, again reflecting the wider demographic profile in these areas. Overall, the proportion of non-white respondents was slightly higher than in the population of West Yorkshire as a whole.

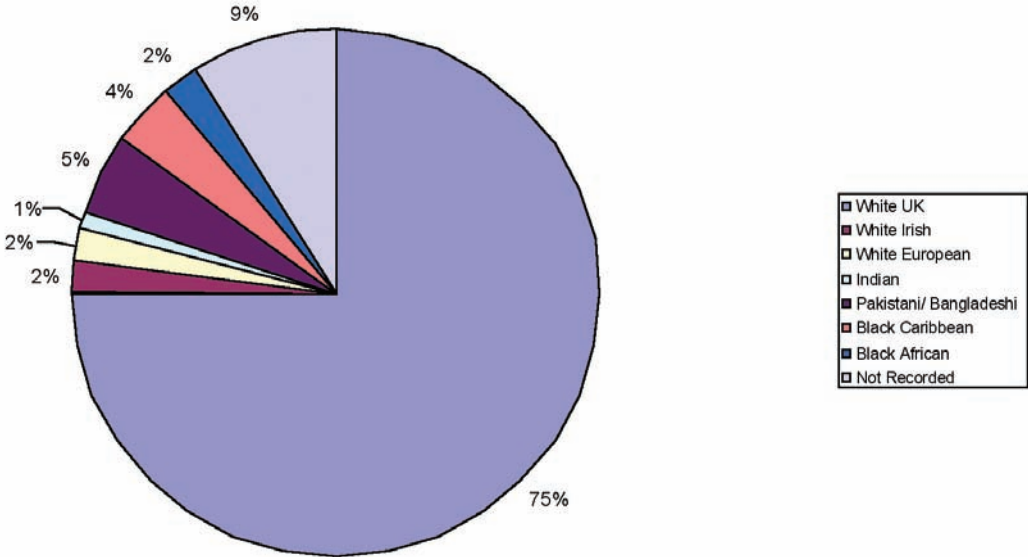


Figure 10: Public survey by ethnicity

7.3 Fear of Crime

Fear of personal attack

The aggregated data with regard to fear of crime shows that more public survey respondents in West Yorkshire were either not very fearful or not fearful at all about personal attack (59%) compared to those who expressed some degree of fear about personal attack (40%).

Fear of personal attack was highest in city centre areas, most notably in Bradford, where 58% respondents were either ‘fearful’ or ‘very fearful’ about crime and in Leeds (48%). Fear of personal attack was 40% in Calderdale, 36% in Wakefield, 25% in Chapeltown and just 23% in Pudsey and Weetwood. In five of the six areas surveyed fear of personal attack was higher for females than for males, the exception being Chapeltown. In Bradford, fear of crime amongst females was at its highest, with it standing at 73% who reported being either ‘fearful’ or ‘very fearful’. Leeds city centre rated second highest, with fear of crime amongst females standing at 57%.

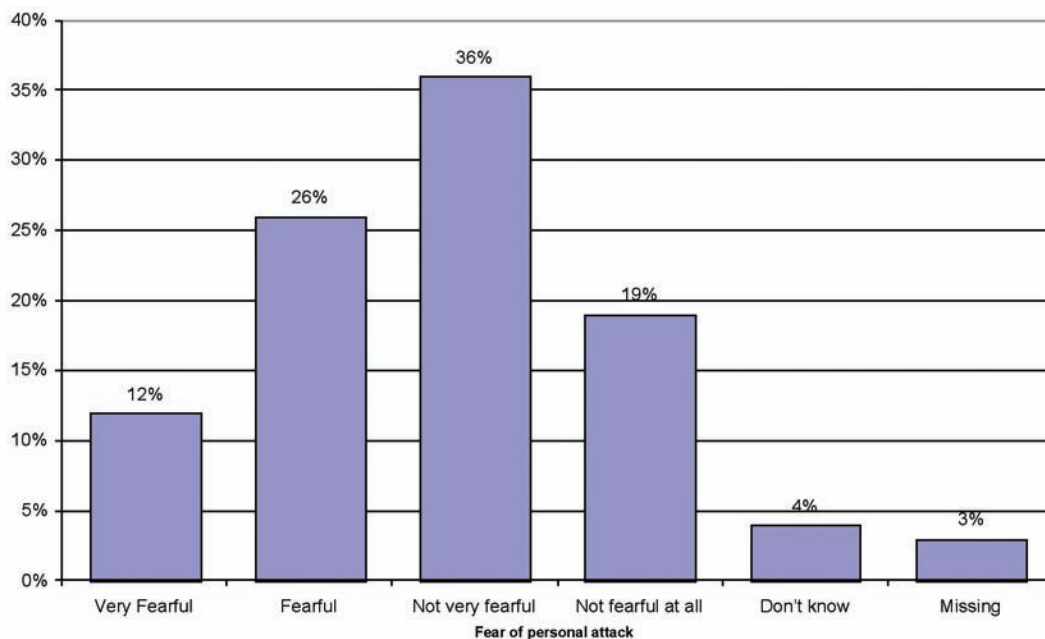


Figure 11: Fear of personal attack

In terms of the relationship between age and personal attack, it was notable that 51% of those between the ages of 60 and 70 years, said that they were either 'fearful' or 'very fearful' of being the victim of a property attack. With the exception of this age category, respondents across all age categories tended to express the view that they were 'not very fearful' about being the victim of a personal attack. On the whole, women were more likely to fear being the victim of personal attack than men (47% to 30%). In terms of ethnicity, 40% of respondents who identified themselves as being 'white UK', were either 'very fearful' or 'fearful' about crime. This figure was not markedly higher for Pakistani and Bangladeshi respondents (44%). Whilst 50% Indian respondents and 83% of Black African respondents were either 'very fearful' or 'fearful; about crime, caution about jumping to conclusions has to be expressed due to the low numbers of respondents of those ethnicities in the sample.

Fear of property crime

The aggregated data with regard to fear of property crime shows a relatively even split between respondents who stated that they were either 'fearful' or 'very fearful' of property crime in West Yorkshire (49%) and those that said they were either 'not very fearful' or 'not fearful at all' (50%). On the whole, it would seem that of the residents in West Yorkshire who were surveyed, more expressed a fear of property crime e.g. burglary or theft, than those who expressed a fear of personal attack.

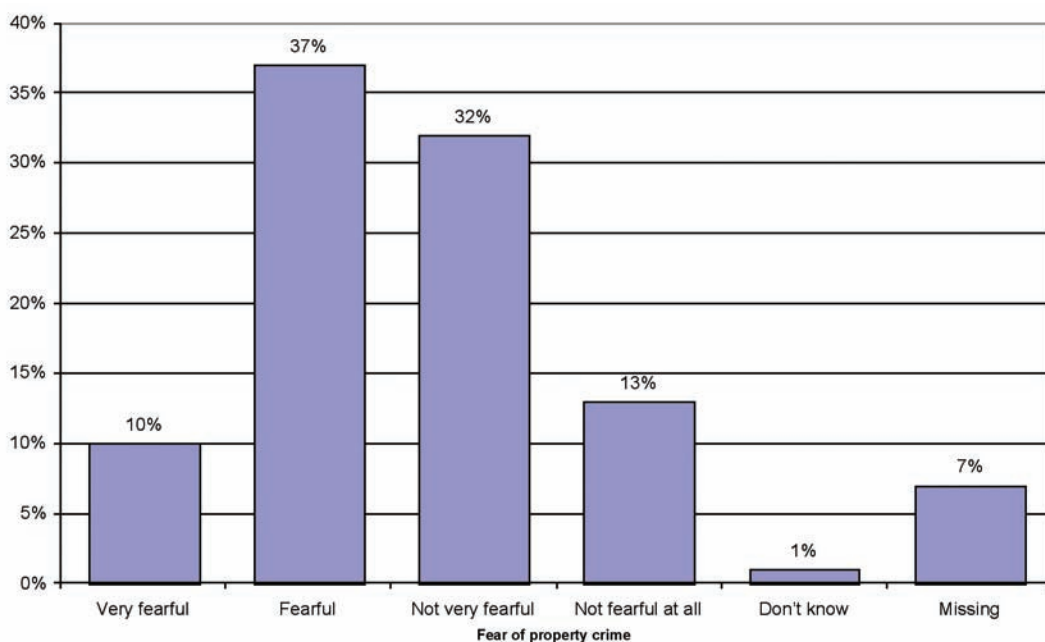


Figure 12: Fear of property crime

Fear of property crime was at its highest in Wakefield, with 66% of respondents identifying themselves as either 'very fearful' or 'fearful'. Fear of property crime was at its lowest in Chapeltown, where only 35% of respondents reported that they were either 'very fearful' or 'fearful'. In four of the six areas surveyed, fear of property crime was higher for females than males. Fear of property crime amongst females was at its highest in Wakefield, standing at 67% who were either 'fearful' or 'very fearful'.

In terms of the relationship between age and property crime, fear tended to be highest between the ages of 30 and 70 years. 72% respondents between the ages of 40 and 50 years were either 'very fearful' or 'fearful' about property crime. Interestingly, fear of property crime tailed off after the age of 70 years with only 36% of respondents expressing the view that they were either 'very fearful' or 'fearful'. As with the fear of personal attack, females tended to be more fearful of being the victim of property crime than males. Indeed, only 46% males were either 'very fearful' or 'fearful' of property crime compared to 52% females. 51% of respondents who identified themselves as being 'white UK' said they were either 'very fearful' or 'fearful' of personal attack compared to 67% of white Irish respondents, 67% Black African respondents and 56% Pakistani/ Bangladeshi respondents. Once again due to the relatively low numbers of minority ethnic persons in the sample, caution must be exercised with regard to drawing conclusions from these figures.

7.4 Experiences of Anti-Social Behaviour

Across West Yorkshire, slightly more than half the respondents in the public survey (60%) reported that they had either been a victim or had been aware of anti-social behaviour in their neighbourhood within the last twelve months. This was in comparison to some 40% who stated that they had not experienced any forms of anti-social behaviour over the last 12 months. Of the six areas surveyed, experience of anti-social behaviour was at its highest (72%) in Leeds city centre.

When respondents were asked to identify the behaviours they had experienced anti-social, a wide variety of acts were cited, some more serious and bordering on the criminal and others causing a minor annoyance or upset. The presence of young people was frequently associated with anti-social behaviour and perceived threat, as were drugs and alcohol. The variety of issues raised by members of the public reflects the ill-defined and frequently ambiguous nature of anti-behaviour, as well as the importance of how the act is received or interpreted by those upon whom it impacts.

From our survey data, it would appear that experience of anti-social behaviour was at its highest (75%) amongst those aged between 50 and 60 years of age and at its lowest (45%) amongst those aged between 60 and 70 years.

At face value, these statistics would suggest that the fact that more than half of the respondents in the survey experienced what they identified as anti-social behaviour, indicates that the role of a PCSO is a valid one in terms of its focus on anti-social behaviour and low level criminality.

7.5 Recognition of PCSOs

Slightly over half (52%) public survey respondents across West Yorkshire stated that they would recognise PCSOs if they saw them out on patrol. Recognition of PCSOs was at its highest (75%) within the 60-70 age category and its lowest (28%) within the 16 to 20 age group. Almost two-thirds of males (61%) and slightly less than half the females surveyed (45%) said they were able to recognise PCSOs. Of the six areas surveyed, recognition of the PCSO role was at its highest in Leeds city centre (59%).

When asked whether they could identify differences between PCSOs and sworn police officers, 42% of respondents correctly specified at least one legitimate difference, most frequently relating to levels of powers.

When asked whether they recognised other members of what is called 'the extended policing family', some 40% respondents across West Yorkshire said that they did. Most typically, respondents pointed to the recognition of the presence of traffic wardens. Recognition of other members of the extended

policing family, excluding PCSOs was highest in Bradford at 54% and lowest in Wakefield at 26%, broadly reflecting the numbers of PCSOs and thus visibility in those areas.

These statistics suggest that there is more work which could be done in terms of publicity and marketing in order to further raise the profile of PCSOs so that they are more easily identifiable.

7.6 Visibility of PCSOs

Some 51% of respondents across the six areas surveyed reported that they saw PCSOs frequently i.e. anything from three times a week to several times a day. A further 21% reported that they saw PCSOs on patrol 'regularly' i.e. at least once a week. Conversely, 22% of respondents reported only 'occasional' sightings of PCSOs, whilst a further 7% reported that they 'never' saw PCSOs. 64% of those surveyed aged 20 to 30 years reported that they experienced 'frequent' sightings of PCSOs. 59% of males and 45% of females reported that they experienced 'frequent' sightings of PCSOs.

Not surprisingly, respondents who were surveyed in city centres such as Leeds, Bradford and Wakefield, tended to report that PCSOs were most commonly sighted in those city centre areas themselves. Encouragingly, in both Pudsey and Weetwood and in Chapeltown, respondents cited more sightings of PCSOs in 'residential' rather than city centre areas. This reflects the more geographically diverse deployment of PCSOs across West Yorkshire that has occurred since Crawford et al. (2004) reported on the original intake of PCSOs in Leeds and Bradford.

7.7 PCSO Reassurance

Members of the public surveyed were asked to identify the extent to which different community safety personnel and CCTV cameras had a reassuring effect, based upon a scale of "very reassured" to "not at all reassured".

25% respondents reported that they felt 'very reassured' by PCSOs, whilst a further 50% reported being 'reassured' by PCSO presence, an aggregate of 75% reporting a positive reassurance effect. Within West Yorkshire, reassurance was highest in Leeds city centre (84% being 'very reassured' or 'reassured') and lowest in Bradford (58%).

Key Finding:

75% people surveyed in West Yorkshire felt reassured by the presence of PCSOs on the streets.

The reassurance value of PCSOs was highest for those within the age category of 50-60 years, with 93% of these respondents stating that they were either 'very reassured' or 'reassured' by PCSO presence. Women tended to feel slightly more reassured by PCSO presence than men (79% to 70%).

Comparing the reassurance effect attributed to police officers to that attributed to PCSOs, the public were equally likely to be satisfied by the presence of PCSOs. 28% of respondents reported that they were 'very reassured' by the police and 51% reported that they were 'reassured' by the police. Reassurance associated with police presence on the streets was at its highest in Pudsey and Weetwood (86%) and its lowest in Bradford (63%).

Key Finding:

The public surveyed in West Yorkshire said they were no less likely to feel reassured by the presence of PCSOs than they would by the presence of police officers on the streets.

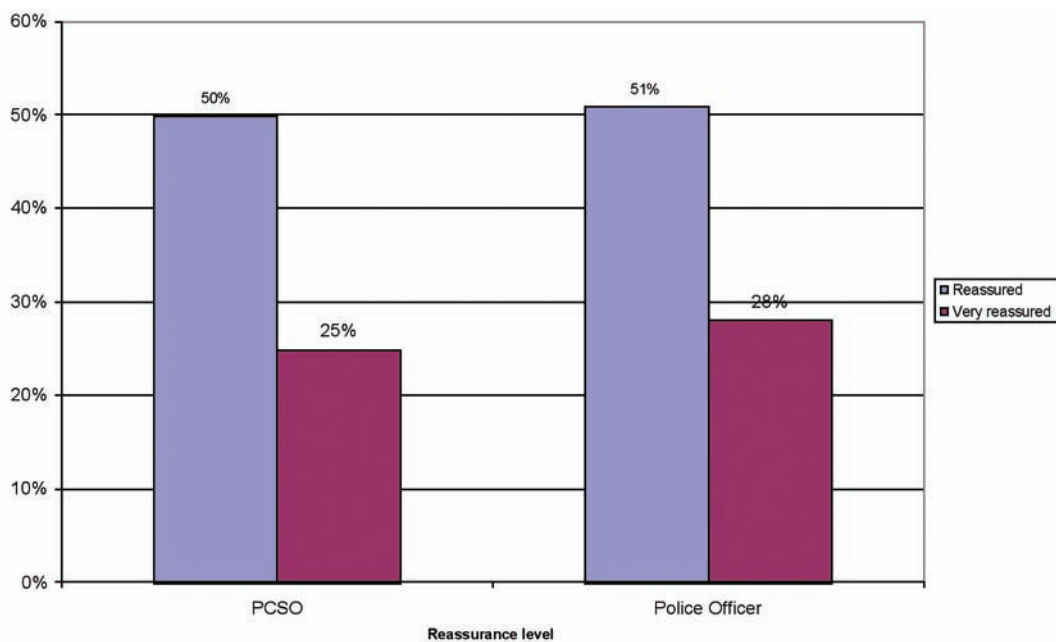


Figure 13: Reassurance levels for PCSOs and sworn officers

PCSO reassurance rated far higher as judged by the public surveys than the presence of private security. Only 3% respondents reported being 'very reassured' by the presence of private security with 24% reporting that they were 'reassured'. This compares to the 75% of the public who were "reassured" or very "reassured" by PCSOs. In addition, PCSO reassurance rated far higher than the presence of local authority wardens. Only 6% of respondents reported being 'very' reassured local authority wardens, with 26% reporting that they were 'reassured'. It should be noted, however, that local authority wardens have a wider brief than PCSOs, with reassurance patrol perhaps less central to their role, and that the overall numbers of wardens in local authority areas is likely to be lower than PCSOs.

As well as the relatively high level of reassurance attributed to PCSO presence compared to other members of the extended policing family and private security, PCSO reassurance also compared favourably in contrast to public reassurance by means of CCTV. The reassurance effect associated with CCTV (56% of respondents felt either 'very reassured' or 'reassured'), whilst far higher than for both private security and local authority wardens, was still below that of 75% for PCSOs.

The evidence from the public surveys when triangulated with the NPT manager interviews suggests that PCSOs in West Yorkshire continue to make a significant contribution in terms of their reassurance value:

"It makes people feel safer. Now we have 30 PCSOs and it used to be just 2. So we've got 15 times the amount of presence and that will have an effect."

NPT Manager

"You would lose reassurance without them. The lower level stuff wouldn't get done."

NPT Manager

The evidence presented above is endorsed by the findings from a focus group of female students at Leeds University, conducted in June 2006. The findings from this focus group suggested that PCSOs did have a significant reassurance effect with regard to feelings of personal safety for a group of women who perceived that they may be vulnerable to personal attack.

7.8 Quality of Service of PCSOs

A minority of only 7% of respondents in the public surveys actually reported that they had had face to face contact with PCSOs in the last 12 months. The highest areas in terms of PCSO contact were in Bradford (15%) and in Chapeltown (12%). Conversely, the lowest areas of contact were in Pudsey and Weetwood and Wakefield.

In comparison, 31% of respondents across West Yorkshire reported that they had interacted with police officers in the same period. The highest rate of contact was 43% in Leeds and the lowest was in Wakefield (23%). There is a marked contrast between the contact figures for police officers on the one hand and PCSOs on the other, with a 24% difference between the two, but this may be explained by the reactive nature of the police officer role in responding to reported incidents.

The findings suggest that whilst only a minority of residents in West Yorkshire have interacted with PCSOs, that experiences were positive. For example, in Leeds, Chapeltown and Pudsey and Weetwood, no 'not at all positive' interactions were reported. In this respect, PCSOs in West Yorkshire can be seen to be delivering a beneficial quality of service.

Satisfaction with PCSO quality of service was mirrored by satisfaction with interactions with sworn police officers. In this respect, 33% respondents reported 'very positive' interactions and a further 31% reported 'positive' interactions. Conversely, only 12% and 17% reported 'not positive' or 'not positive at all' interactions. The highest area where positive interactions with police were reported was in Pudsey and Weetwood, with 73% respondents reporting either 'positive' or 'very positive' interactions and the area with the lowest level of satisfaction - Bradford (53%) - still reported that the majority of respondents were satisfied that interactions had been at least 'positive'.

Taken as an aggregate the data reveals far more satisfaction with police officer interaction than dissatisfaction.

7.9 Impact on Crime Reduction and Anti-Social Behaviour

Whilst not introduced with the specific intention of making a direct contribution as crime fighters, one has to note the contribution made by PCSOs within NPTs to changes in crime patterns across West Yorkshire. Since the first evaluation by Crawford et al. (2004) overall crime in West Yorkshire has dropped from 23,696 recorded offences for the month of April 2004 to 21,261 recorded offences for March 2006. Over this two year time period recorded offences in West Yorkshire have decreased by 10% and are on a continuing downward trend. As well as an overall reduction in recorded offences, detections across West Yorkshire have increased by more than a quarter (27%) in the two year time frame between April 2004 and March 2006. Furthermore, in April 2004 only 20% of recorded offences were detected, compared to a 31% detection rate by March 2006.

It is not possible to establish any direct causal link between the employment of PCSOs, reductions in recorded offences and improvements in detection rates simply because, as members of Neighbourhood Policing Teams, the work of PCSOs cannot be disaggregated from that of both sworn officers and other members of the extended policing family, nor from the contribution of wider partnerships initiatives that might impact upon crime.

However, whilst direct causal links cannot be established, the data presented in this report suggests that PCSOs do make a valuable contribution in terms of supporting the wider policing effort with regard to (a) achieving reductions in crime and (b) improving the detection rate. These include involvement in target-hardening campaigns, giving safety advice, advising car owners whose cars are at risk of crime and helping ensure the smooth running of the night time economy.

As dedicated patrol officers who are intended to be highly visible, one would expect PCSOs to be able to make an even greater contribution in terms of tackling anti-social behaviour and lower level disorder. Across West Yorkshire, reported anti-social behaviour has dropped by a total of 41% over the two years between April 2004 and March 2006. Additionally, since November 2005, recorded incidents of anti-

social behaviour have fallen consistently below 10,000 incidents per month, with the average over the 5 month period between November 2005 and March 2006 being 8,735 incidents recorded.

Reductions in anti-social behaviour were most marked in Bradford South (48%) and Wakefield (46%). Bradford North, Calderdale and Kirklees all achieved reductions of 41%, with Pudsey and Weetwood and Chapeltown achieving a 40% reduction. The lowest achieving divisions in Killingbeck (39%), Keighley (36%) and City and Holbeck (29%) all still managed to achieve significant reductions in recorded instances of anti-social behaviour of around one-third. This data suggests that as integrated members of NPTs, PCSOs appear to be having in terms of significant reductions in anti-social behaviour in West Yorkshire. This view is corroborated from the data from the semi-structured interviews with NPT managers.

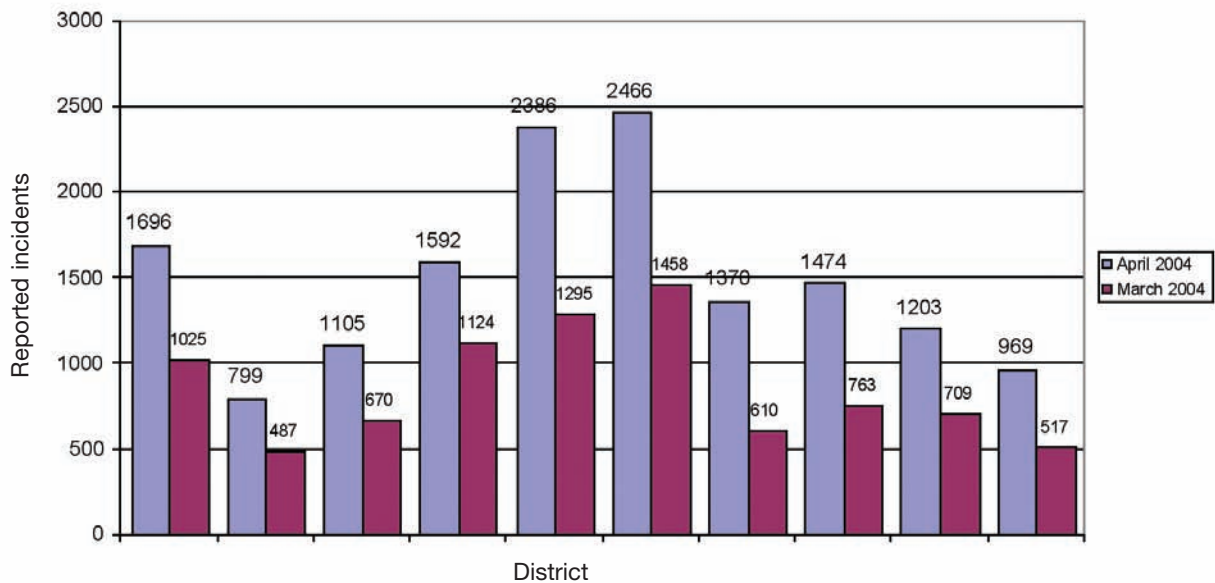


Figure 14: Anti-Social Behaviour by district

Case study: Metro

Metro is the West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority (PTA) and Executive (PTE). The organisation exists to champion public transport on behalf of the people of West Yorkshire. Metro took a special interest in PCSOs after the Social Exclusion Unit reported that people may be unwilling to use public transport. This was identified as a specific problem in Leeds. As a result the Leeds City Bus Station Initiative was launched. This involved Metro providing funding for the equivalent of 8 PCSOs who patrol West Yorkshire bus stations regularly with the intention of achieving reductions in both criminal damage and anti-social behaviour.

"PCSOs have done a great job for what they were put in to do... we've used them and I've been impressed with the quality of the PCSOs."

Security Manager

Anti-Social Behaviour

There is strong evidence from the data which supports the view that PCSOs make a valuable contribution in terms of reducing crime and an even more valuable contribution in terms of reducing anti-social behaviour. As indicated in previous chapters, relationships with young people can be critical in finding means of addressing anti-social behaviour. Some young people can be readily engaged,

whilst others have more intractable problems and difficult attitudes to authority, which PCSOs are attempting to break down.

One focus group of seven young males aged approximately 13-18 years was conducted at a Youth Offending Team premises. All seven readily identified the existence and presence of PCSOs both in the city centre and residential areas on foot, pedal bikes and buses. Whilst for most people increased PCSO visibility is viewed as a positive, these young people understandably expressed more ambivalent attitudes and a certain degree of bravado towards the police. Nevertheless, most members of the group had experienced some contact with PCSOs and there were reports of positive interactions.

7.10 Overall Effectiveness of PCSOs

Evidence for the overall effectiveness of PCSOs is provided by the semi-structured interviews with NPT managers. When asked the question as to whether PCSOs had contributed to 'value for money' in policing of the 11 interviewees who expressed an opinion, 91% felt that PCSOs had indeed provided 'value for money' in terms of making an economic, efficient and effective contribution to policing across West Yorkshire.

When asked the question as to what would happen if PCSOs were withdrawn or phased out in the future, the overwhelming majority of respondents reported that this would be an entirely negative development. Respondents mentioned that policing in general would suffer. More specifically respondents said that policing would be less visible, public confidence would decline and there would be less public reassurance. Some mentioned that less community interaction would result in less intelligence gathering, with an increase in crime. Some managers spoke about the negative impact this would have on sworn police officers in terms of the potential for them to lose arrests:

"It would be a terrible thing now they've found their feet. It would slice off a huge percentage of the police force. People would say 'We never see a police officer'. That's not true now with PCSOs."

NPT Manager

"Policing would suffer in my area if they were withdrawn. There would be a dramatic increase in crime as we would not have the resources to cover things."

NPT Manager

"If we sacked them all and got 100 police officers in as extra, the police officers would all be in cars."

NPT Manager

7.11 PCSO Performance Culture

What was evident from the evaluation is that there is an opportunity for West Yorkshire police to develop and engender a more robust performance culture with specific regard to PCSOs, in order to gain firmer indications of where and how PCSOs have most impact.

Whilst much of the reassurance and high visibility work conducted by PCSOs cannot easily be measured by the development of quantifiable performance indicators, there is an opportunity to explore ways of doing so in the future. Best practices are currently being piloted in Belle Vue, Horsforth and Pudsey and Weetwood. In these areas, PCSO profiles around general visibility hours, detections, arrests, visits to ASB complaints, ASBU liaison and curfew and stop checks are being developed amongst other such indicators of performance. Data collected between September 2005 and April 2006 is disaggregated to the extent that accountability for individual PCSOs can be identified in quantifiable form.

Whilst teething problems, in terms of recording practices for such an ambitious project, are to be expected, West Yorkshire police should consider continuing this corporate effort to invest in this area for a number of reasons:

1. It would be compatible with the wider police reform agenda in making sure that services are economically, efficiently and effectively delivered under the Best Value regime established by the Local Government Act of 1999.
2. Match funded partners currently receive performance data on PCSOs which pertains to PCSO strength, intelligence reporting, incidents attended and patrolling time. In the future when political pressure is increasingly exerted on match funded partners to account for their use of funded resources, a more robust performance culture will assist West Yorkshire police is being able to clearly account for and evidence the need for partnership working in terms of resource allocation.

One down side of the institutionalisation and development of this kind of performance culture is that it could further impact on the workload of police managers - both BCU command teams and NPT first level supervisors - because of bureaucracy. The development of performance culture in order to achieve accountability must not reach the point where police managers are overburdened with paperwork and West Yorkshire Police should ensure that it does not impact on the amount of time that PCSOs rightly spend on high visibility patrol and reassurance.

7.12 Performance indicators

Chapter 4 concluded that there were three fundamental aspects to the PCSO role and it would seem appropriate to develop performance indicators relating to these three areas:

- a) **Activities that support policing**
- b) **Visible patrol**
- c) **Community engagement**

Data capture needs to be longitudinal i.e. taking place over a period of time. This is in order (a) to compare PCSO performance over a period of time. Secondly, data capture needs to be comparative i.e. involving all divisions. This is in order (b) to compare PCSO performance across all divisions within West Yorkshire police.

Indicators could be divided into those of 'output' and those of 'outcome'. 'Output' indicators tend to be crude measures in terms of their constituting aggregates of data capture. 'Outcome' indicators are more refined and attempt to capture the contribution made by PCSOs to the wider policing effort within West Yorkshire. Distinction between 'output' and 'outcome' performance measures is important because periods of data capture tend to be shorter for the former and much longer for the latter.

This evaluation focuses in particular on the role and functions of PCSOs. The development of NPTs will force attention on performance measures across the wider policing family within which PCSOs operate.

The following are suggested items around which the suite of PCSO performance indicators might be developed:

a) **Activities that support policing**

WYP already collects the following data:

- number of incidents attended
- number of intelligence reports
- hours on patrol
- numbers in post

We would suggest the following additional measures for routine collection

- follow-up visits to victims of crime
- logging of visits to complainants of anti-social behaviour
- hours of PCSO time spent on policing events

b) Visible patrol

WYP already collects the following data:

- number of hours on patrol

We would suggest the following additional measures for routine collection

- hours of availability to the public through attendance at meetings, surgeries, time spent on Neighbourhood Action Stations etc
- number of environmental concerns addressed following observation or reports whilst on patrol (e.g. graffiti, abandoned cars, faulty street lighting)

c) Community engagement

WYP as a force does not currently collect any data regarding community engagement activities.

We would suggest the following measures for routine collection

- visits to schools
- visits to projects and establishments for young people e.g. children's homes, YIPs
- attendance at neighbourhood meetings

7.13 Conclusion

Two of the recommendations made by Crawford et al. (2004) relate to the discussion in this chapter. These are:

Recommendation 1

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police set a visibility target of at least 80% of PCSO time to be spent out of the police station, on the streets.

Recommendation 6

We recommend that West Yorkshire Police introduce performance measurement indicators that encourage PCSOs to use patrol as a means of active engagement with local communities, as well as problem-solving and crime prevention activities in line with its defining principles of deployment.

The first of these recommendations has been met by virtue of the national Home Office target for PCSOs. Comments on Recommendation 6 have already been made in the conclusion of Chapter 4, which then went on to make two further recommendations (1) with regard to the conducting of a more thorough audit trail of the range of community engagement activities and (2) with regard to the feasibility of establishing a performance indicator for community engagement. The recommendations below build further on these earlier recommendations.

Recommendations

We recommend that, having established a performance indicator for community engagement, West Yorkshire Police develops a small, defined number of performance indicators specifically for PCSOs.

Chapter 8:

Issues and Themes to Consider

8.1 Introduction

This chapter explores how current governmental policy developments reflect a continued focus upon tackling anti-social behaviour and moves on to consider the contribution which PCSOs can make to this wider political commitment. Further themes around integration of PCSOs into the police force, development of a partnership approach to work and consideration of accountability and performance are also considered.

8.2 A Continued Commitment to Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour

The Government acknowledges the seriousness of the issue of anti-social behaviour through its RESPECT agenda. The Respect Action Plan details the government's commitment to tackling anti-social behaviour by:

- supporting families
- a new approach to the most challenging families
- improving behaviour and attendance in schools
- activities for children and young people
- strengthening communities
- effective enforcement and community justice

www.respect.gov.uk

The Government's commitment to tackling anti-social behaviour can be evidenced by the launch of the new national 'Respect Squad', by the Home Secretary, John Reid, in June 2006. As a trouble-shooting squad consisting of frontline staff from the police and local authorities these people are to be tasked by the Government's Respect Task Force to tackle incidents of persistent anti-social behaviour across the country. This squad is designed to be utilised by councillors and MPs, police chiefs, Crime and Reduction Partnerships and local authorities (www.respect.gov.uk).

Launching the creation of the squad, Dr. Reid announced:

"Anti-social behaviour ruins lives and fragments communities- particularly those in some of the most deprived areas of our country. The Government's new Respect Squad will ensure there is no let up in tackling anti-social behaviour, until every community in every part of the country gets a swift and effective response to their problem."

*The Home Secretary,
26 June 2006*

In relation to PCSOs, Chapter 6 of the Respect Action Plan, entitled Strengthening Communities, identifies the development of Neighbourhood Policing Teams as one of its key action points. In a cross-departmental and cross-agency agenda, this will operate alongside other measures such as mandatory respect and ASB outcomes in all Local Area Agreements by April 2007 and neighbourhood management and neighbourhood warden schemes in all areas, backed by the Safer, Stronger Communities Fund.

This gives PCSOs and other members of the extended policing family a significant part in taking forward actions to tackle ASB and low level crime, from the structures of NPTs and neighbourhood management teams.

8.3 PCSOs Tackling Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

The Government has clearly seen PCSOs within NPTs as having a role in terms of tackling low level crime and anti-social behaviour, in conjunction with staff from other agencies. Their specific contribution is likely to be assisting in the regeneration of local communities and increasing feelings of public safety, as well as improving police links with the community and relationships with young people.

Recognising the value of PCSOs in multi-agency initiatives, in July 2004, the Government had announced its intention to expand PCSO numbers to 24,000 by March 2008 through the mechanism of the Neighbourhood Policing Fund (Crawford et al 2005). The Labour Party manifesto for the 2005 general election reiterated this pledge, together with a commitment to provide every local community with a neighbourhood policing team (Labour Party 2005).

More recently, the Audit Commission report, *Neighbourhood crime and anti-social behaviour: Making places safer through improved local working* identified four key factors affecting safe, strong neighbourhoods. These are depicted in the diagram below as being:

1. Quality of life
2. Support for the neighbourhood
3. Feeling safe outside the home at night
4. Confidence in incident handling

Audit Commission 2006: 42

The findings from this evaluation would suggest that PCSOs in West Yorkshire are making a valuable contribution in terms of points 1-3 in neighbourhoods, whilst also being able to support sworn officers in terms of point 4. We would suggest that a balanced role for PCSOs, as discussed elsewhere and most particularly in Chapter Four, is likely to make a contribution to all four of these areas, without an undue emphasis on any one.

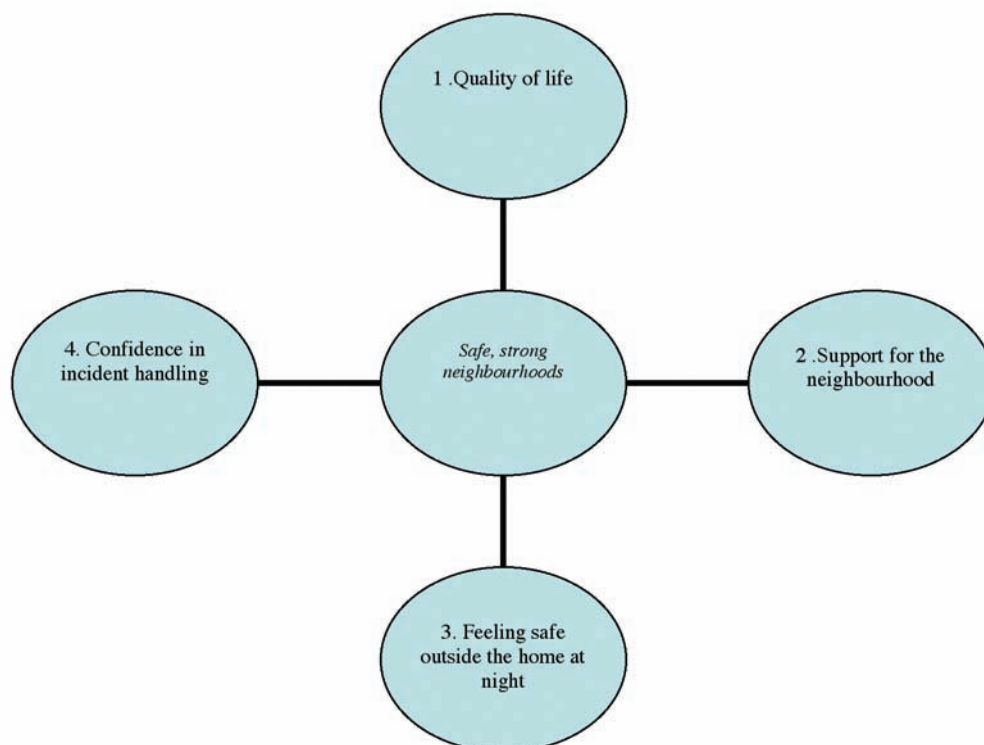


Figure 15: Safer, Stronger Neighbourhoods

8.4 The Cultural Acceptance of PCSOs in to the Police Service

This evaluation suggests that there is cause to be optimistic about the future of PCSOs as evidence from interviews with both NPT managers and senior police managers at BCU level indicate a growing cultural acceptance of PCSOs within West Yorkshire Police.

When asked about their initial thoughts when PCSOs first appeared in West Yorkshire Police in 2003, 50% of NPT managers expressed sentiments to the effect that PCSOs were introduced as a means of 'policing on the cheap'. Consider the following:

"I was fairly dubious. I saw them as a second tier of policing. They were lower paid, like policing on the cheap."

NPT Manager

"I was concerned about a Government agenda with regard to the status of constables. I thought it was policing on the cheap to get public spending under control."

NPT Manager

When asked to reflect upon whether their attitudes had changed over time and in what ways, the majority of NPT managers were positive about PCSO work and the contribution they are able to make to policing. Take the following as evidence:

"My view has changed big style because of their visibility, crime reduction and dealing with anti-social behaviour in the city centre. They are doing the basic job we used to do before we went into cars."

NPT Manager

"I was surprised how quickly they picked up the faces of nominals and villains in the city centre when doing stop checks. They are better than PCs with a lot more service because they are doing it daily."

NPT Manager

This view was not just restricted to NPT managers but it was shared by senior officers operating more strategically at BCU level. Hence this comment:

"They really do impress me and that is a view shared by the partners, when you talk to partner agencies and you look at some of the comments you have about PCSOs and they really are very good."

Senior Police Manager

8.5 Working Relationships with Match Funded Partners

Chapter Three has discussed the need for West Yorkshire Police to enter discussions with relevant council departments, private security companies and others in the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships to co-ordinate an appropriate division of labour - roles and responsibilities - between the various members of the extended policing family. Public safety can only be maximised if these diverse policing efforts are more successfully co-ordinated and it would seem appropriate for the Plural Policing Unit in West Yorkshire Police to take a leadership role in relation to this, whilst allowing for local autonomy and flexibility.

It has been acknowledged that partnership arrangements at a strategic local authority level are strong. West Yorkshire Police at this level must meet the future challenges of accepting a degree of control and influence from partners over PCSO activity, in line with the responsibilities and agendas of those partners. Understanding of the requirements and accountability frameworks for match-funding partners will be critical to the development of sound joint working practices. In addition, the role of elected members in fostering a culture of understanding and communication between police and communities deserves further consideration.

8.6 The Embracing of the Culture of Partnership Working

By continuing to nurture positive relationships with match funding partners, West Yorkshire Police can utilise PCSOs to make an invaluable contribution towards achieving targets and goals outlined in crime and disorder strategies for local authority areas. This is with specific regard to responding to tackling anti-social behaviour and responding to low level crime, but also in terms of managing and maintaining the neighbourhood environments. Fully embracing this approach will require a wider cultural shift and continued commitment to the ethos of partnership working and consultation.

8.7 PCSO Accountability and Performance

Chapter Seven has acknowledged that much of the reassurance and high visibility work conducted by PCSOs cannot easily be measured by the development of quantifiable performance indicators. Recommendations made in this area would be compatible with the wider police reform agenda about making sure that services are economically, efficiently and effectively delivered under the Best Value regime. Developments in this area would also assist match funded partners to account for their use of funded resources.

8.8 The Future Role of PCSOs

The issue of legal powers and equipment for PCSOs is an issue which needs further consideration by West Yorkshire police in the future. When NPT managers were asked whether PCSOs should have more legal powers, 75% interviewees stated their desire to see PCSO powers increased.

When specifically asked what legal powers they would like PCSOs to have, the following were mentioned by NPT managers:

- Search
- Enforcement
- Fixed penalties for litter
- Conducting basic interviews
- Parking tickets
- Powers of arrest for volume and priority crimes

Consider the following statement in relation to stop-searches:

"They do stop encounters which are a complete waste of time. I searched a known criminal the other night and found stuff on him. If a PCSO were on their own this wouldn't have happened as they don't have the power."

NPT Manager

However, a more mixed picture emerges from analysis of the interviews with BCU level police managers, the overwhelming majority suggesting that powers should remain at their current standards. Take the following:

"Once you start saying 'Yes, you can lay hands on, or we feel vulnerable here, you need batons and you need cuffs', that's up for debate, because once you start doing that then the public have a different perception. It could raise the ante, so I am for sticking with the role they are in, which is providing high visibility reassurance, and being the eyes and ears."

Senior Police Manager

Whilst not wishing to make a formal recommendation, West Yorkshire Police would benefit from revisiting the issue of appropriate powers for PCSOs, perhaps relating certain powers to specific contexts in which they operate, for instance, city centres or night time economy.

As well as legal powers, the issue of the adequacy of equipment used by PCSOs was discussed in the interviews with NPT managers. Out of the eight NPT managers who discussed this issue, seven of them

felt that at present, PCSOs were not adequately equipped. The following were specifically mentioned by interviewees:

- CS Spray
- Handcuffs
- Clothing
- Batons

Again, the question of the adequacy of equipment is something which the force needs carefully to consider in the future.

When asked where they saw PCSO involvement in policing in five years time, NPT management responses were split between those who thought that PCSOs would continue to be aligned with what Crawford et al. (2004) referred to as the 'dedicated patrol officer' model and those who saw the role developing to the extent that PCSOs would come to represent 'junior police officers'. Consider the tensions between the two following statements:

"They will become more like police officers. The Government will increase their powers. It will be like two tier policing. You will have sworn officers at the strategic level and PCSOs dealing with neighbourhood issues. It's only a matter of time before a PCSO rank structure is introduced."
NPT Manager

"I don't think they'll become like police officers. We've guarded against this happening. NPTs will expand with PCSOs not with PCs. They might get the odd power more but I can't see them being more like PCs."

NPT Manager

Whilst there is a tension between these two possible directions, discussion in Chapter Four suggested that a balance of policing, community engagement and patrol tasks is a viable way forward for PCSOs, enabling their roles and skill sets to develop. Such a balance was not explicitly articulated by those who contributed to this evaluation, but the messages from many interviews showed that PCSOs are valued for the variety of tasks that they perform and for their flexibility. The challenge for West Yorkshire Police would seem to be how to maintain those qualities whilst giving greater clarity about role purpose and possibilities for personal progression for PCSOs.

Having considered the pertinent issues and themes which this evaluation has highlighted, the conclusions are presented overleaf.

9. Conclusions and Recommendations

In reflecting back on the original Phase 1 recommendations made by Crawford et al. (2004), the following adjudications are made:

- Achieved.
- Some progress.
- Not achieved.
- No longer relevant.

Crawford et al. recommendations:

Recommendation	Has it been met?
1. Sets a visibility target of at least 80% of PCSO time to be spent out of the police station, on the streets.	Achieved This is now a national target and WYP are performing well against this target.
2. Clarifies and articulates the defining principles of PCSO deployment together with their overarching aims and objectives	Some progress WYP has achieved a balance between maintaining a role focused upon visibility and reassurance and allowing local divisions freedom to develop PCSO activities and involvements. The principles articulated have therefore remained quite general, in order to allow such freedoms.
3. Specifies those activities that PCSOs can undertake and the circumstances in which they should do so as well as those activities that are inappropriate for them to undertake.	Not achieved This has not been done in a rigid way in the interests of permitting innovation and a degree of experimentation within the PCSO role.
4. Reviews periodically both the content and breadth of the initial training programme and subsequent in-service training. Greater training in crime prevention and environmental awareness would assist in developing these aspects of the PCSO role.	Achieved The initial training programme has been revised in line with the national Centrex programme and National Occupational Standards.
5. Establishes minimum standards of skills and competencies for the PCSO role and assesses these formally in order to provide suitable quality assurance processes at an early stage of recruitment.	Achieved A set of National Occupational Standards is now in place for PCSOs.
6. Introduces performance measurement indicators that encourage PCSOs to use patrol as a means of active engagement with local communities, as well as problem-solving and crime prevention activities in line with its defining principles of deployment.	Not achieved This remains outstanding and features as an item in the new set of recommendations.

7. Reviews the deployment of PCSOs in pairs, notably in city centre environments during the day on the basis of a full risk assessment.	Achieved
8. Reviews the concentration of PCSOs in Bradford and Leeds city centres, but does not initiate dramatic reductions.	No longer relevant This recommendation was overtaken by the expansion of PCSO numbers.
9. Reviews the working hours of PCSOs and whether it is appropriate or desirable for them to work beyond midnight in the light of its defining principles of deployment.	Some progress This has tended to happen on divisions rather than at force wide level, and practices vary according to the policing need of the divisions.
10. Does not issue PCSOs with handcuffs, CS spray or batons. Such items of equipment may significantly alter their role into a more coercive and potentially confrontational one, placing them in more threatening situations.	Achieved West Yorkshire Police has chosen not to issue such equipment.
11. Tasks its Plural Policing Unit, in collaboration with relevant council departments, private security companies and others in local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships to co-ordinate an appropriate division of labour - roles and responsibilities - between the various members of the "extended policing family", so to harness the diverse policing efforts in such a way as to maximise public safety.	Some progress Discussions of this kind are taking place at CDRP level but initiated by divisions and local authorities rather than led by Plural Policing Unit.
12. Maximises its lines and modes of communication with other partners in the "extended policing family" so to avoid misunderstandings, sustain inter-organisational trust relations and ensure synergy.	Some progress There is evidence of good progress being made in divisions, but relationships and working practices are still developing.
13. Tasks its Plural Policing Unit to explore ways to communicate, both externally and internally, the value and contribution, as well as the limitations, of PCSOs.	Some progress Promotional work has taken place through road shows and public events
14. Considers creating a PCSO supervisor, so that experienced personnel can gain more supervisory responsibilities.	No longer relevant This option has been considered but a decision has been taken at Force level not to proceed.
15. Avoids introducing policies and practices that (inadvertently) accord to the PCSO a lower status to that of sworn officers and other police staff.	Some progress There is evidence of some cultural shifts in perceptions of the status of PCSOs, but this has been a by-product of work with police colleagues in NPTs, rather than a strategic Force directive.

<p>16. Incorporates experiences of PCSOs into the training and induction of recruits.</p>	<p>Some progress This has taken place within the Force review of PCSO training and PCSOs are now used in mentoring roles, although not in the delivery of training.</p>
<p>17. Tasks its Plural Policing Unit to share and disseminate good practice across the force regarding the use and co-ordination of the "extended policing family", drawing upon experiences from within and beyond the force.</p>	<p>Some progress Through roadshows and public events.</p>

Key Recommendations

1. We recommend that West Yorkshire Police explore the potential for developing relevant in-service training, based on identified need for PCSOs and police officers based in NPTs.

This will be achieved by:

- scoping the aims and purposes of the exercise
- identifying individuals to take on allotted tasks
- identifying leadership of project
- setting deliverable timescales
- ensure active engagement by all partner, to be promoted by an initial partnership event

2. We recommend that West Yorkshire Police conduct a more thorough audit of the range of community engagement activities that NPTs are involved with and disseminates the findings across all CDRP areas.

This will be achieved by:

- engaging relevant divisional and NPT staff in this exercise
- collation of information
- identifying key internal and external audiences for information about community engagement activities
- dissemination of findings e.g. road shows, public events

3. We recommend that West Yorkshire Police further consider the feasibility of establishing a performance indicator for community engagement.

This will be achieved by:

- establishing a consensus around the definition of community
- engagement ensuring the input of PCSOs and NPTs actively in this process
- identification of suitable quantitative measures
- piloting a new performance measure
- setting a benchmark threshold for achievement

4. We recommend that West Yorkshire Police review its PCSO deployment practices with a view to sharing and disseminating good practices across divisions.

This will be achieved by:

- a review of tasking and the range of activities to which PCSOs are tasked
- developing a matrix of deployment practices and working shifts
- establishing a mechanism for dissemination of good practice

5. We recommend that West Yorkshire Police review PCSO activities which may contribute to wider force or CDRP objectives but which may undermine the reassurance potential of PCSOs and their public image

This will be achieved by:

- a clear identification of core and ancillary function, contained within a Force policy
- considering each function to assess appropriateness, compatibility between functions and the balance of activities

6. We recommend that West Yorkshire Police conducts a review of PCSO roles with a view to establishing a preferred route for career progression

This will be achieved by:

- considering career development within grade e.g. specialist PCSO roles

- considering the potential for a tutor PCSO role
 - establishing a mechanism to feed PCSO views into future decisions regarding career progression
7. We recommend that West Yorkshire Police reviews and monitors their Personal Development Review (PDR) completions for PCSOs, and links PDR goals to specific performance targets. This will be achieved by:
- establishing current completion rates for PDRs
 - sampling the quality of PDRs at specified intervals
 - supporting NPT first line supervisors to achieve improved completion rates
 - setting baseline thresholds to inform divisional targets
8. We recommend that West Yorkshire Police explore the potential for developing relevant in-service training, based on identified need for PCSOs and police officers based in NPTs. This will be achieved by:
- ensuring a fit with the National Occupational Standards for PCSOs and the future requirements of the National Police Improvement Agency
 - conducting a training needs analysis
 - exploring the potential for joint training with relevant crime and disorder partners
 - assessing the benefits of accrediting PCSO training
9. We recommend that West Yorkshire Police considers what management support and induction might be beneficial to assist police officers joining NPTs to adjust to the nature of NPT work and taking day-to-day responsibility for PCSOs, where this is required. This will be achieved by:
- appropriate induction and in-service training
 - ensuring that all courses on diversity run by WYP address the issues associated with their own diverse work force and the different status of occupational groups in the Force
10. We recommend that West Yorkshire Police maximise appropriate consultancy and advice to senior police managers involved in negotiating and setting contracts with match-funded partners. This will be achieved by:
- establishing the existing levels of competence of BCU managers in dealing with negotiations and setting contracts with partner agencies
 - identifying appropriate sources of support - both internal and external - for those managers at key points in the contracting process
11. We recommend that West Yorkshire Police considers more strategic means of identifying potential new match-funding partners, and that opportunities are sought with partners in the public, voluntary and private sectors. This will be achieved by:
- developing effective marketing strategy to reach all potential partners
 - disseminating to key partners information about the potential of PCSOs e.g. in schools
12. We recommend that, in addition to a performance indicator for community engagement, West Yorkshire Police develop a small, defined number of performance indicators specifically for PCSOs. This will be achieved by:
- establishing individuals to take on this work and leadership for the exercise
 - ensuring consultation with match funding partners is both extensive and inclusive

- identifying a pilot site to trial new PIs utilising the suggestions made in paragraph 7.12
- ensuring that, when established, the collection of data for these performance indicators is applied uniformly across the divisions within West Yorkshire.
- ensuring that achievements against performance indicators is reported in relevant public documents and Policing Plans

Concluding Remarks

This evaluation has demonstrated that PCSOs are instrumental in tackling anti-social behaviour, low level crime and disorder. They are engaged in a diversity of roles and tasks which have become an integral part of Neighbourhood Policing Teams. A range of infrastructural issues which their presence creates provides both a challenge and an opportunity for West Yorkshire Police in the future.

Appendix 1: 'Patrolling with a Purpose' Key Recommendations

We recommend that WYP:

1. Sets a visibility target of at least 80% of PCSO time to be spent out of the police station, on the streets.
2. Clarifies and articulates the defining principles of PCSO deployment together with their overarching aims and objectives.
3. Specifies those activities that PCSOs can undertake and the circumstances in which they should do so as well as those activities that are inappropriate for them to undertake.
4. Reviews periodically both the content and breadth of the initial training programme and subsequent in-service training. Greater training in crime prevention and environmental awareness would assist in developing these aspects of the PCSO role.
5. Establishes minimum standards of skills and competencies for the PCSO role and assesses these formally in order to provide suitable quality assurance processes at an early stage of recruitment.
6. Introduces performance measurement indicators that encourage PCSOs to use patrol as a means of active engagement with local communities, as well as problem-solving and crime prevention activities in line with its defining principles of deployment.
7. Reviews the deployment of PCSOs in pairs, notably in city centre environments during the day on the basis of a full risk assessment.
8. Reviews the concentration of PCSOs in Bradford and Leeds city centres, but does not initiate dramatic reductions.
9. Reviews the working hours of PCSOs and whether it is appropriate or desirable for them to work beyond midnight in the light of its defining principles of deployment.
10. Does not issue PCSOs with handcuffs, CS spray or batons. Such items of equipment may significantly alter their role into a more coercive and potentially confrontational one, placing them in more threatening situations.
11. Tasks its Plural Policing Unit, in collaboration with relevant council departments, private security companies and others in local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships to co-ordinate an appropriate division of labour - roles and responsibilities - between the various members of the "extended policing family", so to harness the diverse policing efforts in such a way as to maximise public safety.
12. Maximises its lines and modes of communication with other partners in the "extended policing family" so to avoid misunderstandings, sustain inter-organisational trust relations and ensure synergy.
13. Tasks its Plural Policing Unit to explore ways to communicate, both externally and internally, the value and contribution, as well as the limitations, of PCSOs.
14. Considers creating a PCSO supervisor, so that experienced personnel can gain more supervisory responsibilities.
15. Avoids introducing policies and practices that (inadvertently) accord to the PCSO role a lower status to that of sworn offices and other police staff.
16. Incorporates experiences PCSOs into the training and induction of recruits.
17. Tasks its Plural Policing Unit to share and disseminate good practice across the force regarding the use and co-ordination of the "extended policing family", drawing upon experiences from within and beyond the force.

Appendix 2: Local Authority Details

Bradford

Local Authority area	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
Population	467,665 (Census 2001). Minority ethnic groups form 21.75%
Crime & Disorder Partnership Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer Communities Partnership • 5 area-based Anti-Crime Committees
Strategic Priorities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Visible responses 2. Supporting vulnerable people 3. Preventing offending 4. Enforcing the law
Police Basic Command Units	<p>Three, Bradford North, Bradford South and Keighley</p> <p>Street surveys and case study work was conducted in Bradford South, which covers the city centre as well as residential areas</p>
Neighbourhood Policing Teams	<p>Bradford South 3 Bradford North 3 Keighley 2</p> <p>Each has 10-12 constables and 10-12 PCSOs</p>
Local Authority community safety structure and staff	The 5 Anti-crime committees are supported by an Anti-Crime Partnership worker, located in neighbourhood support services within the city council
Non-police patrollers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street wardens, predominantly in the city centre and Keighley town centre • Park rangers • Neighbourhood wardens
Current PCSOs funded and rounds	<p>28 in Round 2 30 in Round 5</p>
Projects within the local authority area funding PCSOs	Bradford Education Dept 2
PCSO contribution to CDRP priorities	All of them, but particularly anti-social behaviour and law enforcement around low level crime

PCSO roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety campaigns with students and in schools • Collecting intelligence • Assisting in publicising partnership activities e.g. showcasing work about domestic violence at public events • Identifying vehicles that may be subject to crime and advising owners
PCSO initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Named PCSO for every primary and secondary school • PCSOs are enabled to engage in investigative work on low level crime e.g. criminal damage
Other information	<p>There are significant issues about the different boundaries for council and police structures, although working relationships on ground level are reported to be positive</p>

Halifax

Local Authority area	Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Population	192,405 (Census 2001) Minority ethnic groups form 7% of the population, mainly resident in Halifax
Crime & Disorder Partnership Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer Community Partnership • 5 area-based Action Planning Teams
Strategic Priorities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To reduce overall crime 2. To reduce anti-social behaviour 3. To create communities where people feel safer 4. To reduce the harm caused by drugs 5. To have safer and more attractive public spaces 6. To help local communities contribute to, and influence, the work of the Safer Communities Partnership 7. To reduce crime in high crime areas, helping all areas of the borough share in prosperity 8. To reduce the harm caused by alcohol 9. To help young people stay safe, gain employment and make a positive contribution to their communities
Police Basic Command Units	One co-terminus with the local authority
Neighbourhood Policing Teams	There are four teams in Halifax town centre, Upper Calder Valley, Lower Calder Valley and Halifax Outer
Local Authority community safety structure and staff	There are 5 community development officers attached to the 5 Action Planning Teams
Non-police patrollers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street wardens (local authority) • Town Centre Ambassadors (employed by the Town Centre Forum) <p>Both are encouraged to attend police tasking meetings</p>
Current PCSOs funded and rounds	8 in Round 2
Projects within the local authority area funding PCSOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hartshead Moor Service Station 1 • The Ovenden Initiative 1
PCSO contribution to CDRP priorities	PCSOs contribute to all targets, but particularly reducing anti-social behaviour and promoting feelings of safety

PCSO roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guarding premises to support drugs raids • Missing from homes enquiries • Follow up visits to victims of hate crime • Supporting dispersal orders • PCSO surgeries
PCSO initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCSOs are routinely used to conduct follow up visits to victims of criminal damage • Assisting the local authority in establishing a Pubwatch scheme • One PCSO has started a football league for young people
Other information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every council has a dedicated constable and PCSO • The police have established public meetings in each ward on an 8 weekly basis which are attended by PCSOs

Leeds

Local Authority area	Leeds City Council
Population	715,402 (Census 2001) Minority ethnic groups form 8%, but are unevenly distributed throughout the city and in some areas are as much as 40% of the population
Crime & Disorder Partnership Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safer Leeds Partnership • 5 district crime and disorder partnerships, each of which has an Area Committee
Strategic Priorities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acquisitive crime 2. Anti-social behaviour 3. Drugs 4. Reassurance 5. Violent crime, including domestic violence, hate crime and alcohol-related crime
Police Basic Command Units	Four, shortly to become three Street surveys and case study work was conducted in the first three of the above
Neighbourhood Policing Teams	Neighbourhood Policing Teams City and Holbeck 4 Chapeltown 4 Pudsey and Weetwood 3 Killingbeck 2
Local Authority community safety structure and staff	The council organises its services in 5 “wedges”, each of which has an Area Committee serviced by a community safety co-ordinator, with a sixth officer having responsibility for the city centre area
Non-police patrollers	Street wardens and neighbourhood wardens, although these two services will become merged and patrolling presence withdrawn from the city centre
Current PCSOs funded and rounds	37 in Round 2 34 in Round 5 urrent bid being considered for additional 33 in Round 6
Projects within the local authority area funding PCSOs	Holbeck Urban Village 4 John Smeaton School 2 Morley Town Council 4 Gildersome Parish Council 1 Leeds Market 2

PCSO contribution to CDRP priorities	Anti-social behaviour and reassurance in particular
PCSO roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional witness in ASBO proceedings • Attendance at community fora and tenants associations • Target-hardening campaigns and property-marking • Assisting in consultations regarding ginnel-closures • Accompanied visits with other agencies, for instance environmental health and housing
PCSO initiatives	PCSOs are deployed as part of large multi-agency operations
Other information	<p>The match-funding requirement is for two PCSOs to be attached to each council ward and to work within that ward</p> <p>Leeds is unique in West Yorkshire having a local authority community safety department, headed by a senior police manager, ensuring closer partnership working and integration</p>

Wakefield

Local Authority area	Wakefield Metropolitan District Council
Population	315,172 (Census 2001) Minority ethnic groups form 2.25%
Crime & Disorder Partnership Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wakefield District Community Safety Partnership • 3 area-based strategic groups chaired by a Chief Inspector
Strategic Priorities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anti-social behaviour 2. Violent crime, including hate crime 3. Domestic abuse 4. Acquisitive crime 5. Substance misuse (drugs and alcohol)
Police Basic Command Units	One co-terminus with the local authority
Neighbourhood Policing Teams	<p>Wakefield was a pilot area for NPTs which were established from January 2005</p> <p>There are three teams in Wakefield, The South East and the Five Towns.</p> <p>Case study team: Wakefield, where constables and PCSOs are paired up to cover an area that as far as possible reflects local communities</p>
Local Authority community safety structure and staff	Enforcement Unit comprises Anti-Social Behaviour Team and Neighbourhood Patrollers
Non-police patrollers	<p>Neighbourhood patrollers are accredited by the Chief Constable and have a range of powers similar to PCSOs</p> <p>Fortnightly joint tasking and some co-location with police</p>
Current PCSOs funded and rounds	<p>7 were funded from Round 2 through SRB, but this has now ended</p> <p>Currently in negotiation over Round 6 over a project number of 28 PCSOs</p>
Projects within the local authority area funding PCSOs	N/A

PCSO contribution to CDRP priorities	Particularly relating to anti-social behaviour
PCSO roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accompanying officers from the ASB Team to interviews with young people to agree Acceptable Behaviour Contracts • Public contact through the Neighbourhood Action Stations • Talks to community groups, for instance Scouts groups, and visits to local amenities such as libraries
PCSO initiatives	Drop in service for young people established at Lupset
Other information	<p>The district has three mobile Neighbourhood Action Stations, one for each crime and disorder area, which are moved on a 6 monthly basis, depending on the hotspot areas highlighted in the Strategic Incident Analyses</p> <p>Effectively these are mobile police stations, but it is intended that they will be used more widely by a range of crime and disorder partners</p>

Appendix 3: PCSO Recruitment

Local Authority Area	Round 1 2003/4	Round 2A 2003/4	Round 2B 50%/50% 2003/4	NRF	WYP	Leeds Market	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5 2005/6 growth	Round 6 2006/7	Total
	HO/WYP	HO/WYP	WYP/ match-funders	100% NRF	100% WYP		+ 50% Metro	NPF	WYP/ match-funders	NPF	
Leeds	30	37	43			2	26	34	41	33	246
Wakefield		13	7				6	18		28	72
Bradford	30	25	28	10	1		6	11	32		139
Calderdale		9	8		3		8	7	2		37
Kirklees		16	20				2	14			52
Total	60	100	106	10	4	2	44	84	75	61	546

Appendix 4: PCSO Powers

Table 1

Power	Relevant Legislation	WYP
Power to issue penalty notices for disorder	Paragraph 1 (2)(a) of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002	✓
Power to issue fixed penalty notices for truancy	Paragraph 1 (2) (aa) of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002 (inserted by section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003)	✗
Power to issue fixed penalty notices for cycling on a footpath	Paragraph 1 (2)(b) of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002	✓
Power to issue fixed penalty notices for dog fouling	Paragraph 1 (2)(c) of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002	✓
Power to issue fixed penalty notices for graffiti and fly-posting	Paragraph 1 (2)(ca) of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002 (inserted by section 46 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003)	✗
Power to issue fixed penalty notices for littering	Paragraph 1(2)(d) of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002	✓
Power to issue fixed penalty notices in respect of offences under dog control orders	Paragraph 1(2)(e) of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002 (see section 62(2) of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005)	✗
Power to require name and address	Paragraph 1A of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002 (inserted by paragraph 2 of schedule 8 to the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005)	✓
Power to detain	Paragraph 2 of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002 (Paragraph 3(2) of Schedule 8 to the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005)	✓
Power to enforce bylaws	Paragraphs 1A(3), 2(3A), 2(6)(ad), 2(6B), 2(6C), 2(6D), 2(6E), 2(6F) of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002 (see paragraphs 2, 3(4), 3(7), and 3(8) of Schedule 8 to the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005)	✗
Power to deal with begging	Paragraphs 2(6)(ac) and 2(3B) of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002 (see paragraphs 3(4), 3(5), 3(6) and 3(7) of Schedule 8 to the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005)	✓
Power to enforce certain licensing offences	Paragraph 2(6A) of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002 (see paragraphs 3(3) and 3(8) of Schedule 8 to the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005)	✓

Power	Relevant Legislation	WYP
Power to search detained persons for dangerous items or items that could be used to assist escape	Paragraph 2(A) of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002 (inserted by paragraph 4 of Schedule 8 to the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005)	✗
Power to require name and address for anti-social behaviour	Paragraph 3 of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002 (paragraph 3(10) of Schedule 8 to the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005)	✓
Power to require name and address for road traffic offences	Paragraph 3A of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002 (inserted by paragraph 6 of Schedule 8 to the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005)	✓
Power to use reasonable force to prevent a detained person making off	Paragraph 4 to Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002	✓
Power to disperse groups and remove persons under 16 to their place of residence	Paragraph 4A of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002 (inserted by section 33 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003)	✗
Power to remove children in contravention of curfew notices to their place of residence	Paragraph 4B of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002 (inserted by section 33 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003)	✗
Power to use reasonable force to transfer control of detained persons	Paragraphs 2(4A), 2(4B), 4ZA and 4ZB of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002 (see paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of Schedule 9 to the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005)	✓
Power to require persons drinking in designated places to surrender alcohol	Paragraph 5 of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002	✓
Power to require persons aged under 18 to surrender alcohol	Paragraph 6 of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002	✓
Power to seize tobacco from a person aged under 16 and to dispose of that tobacco	Paragraph 7 of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002	✓
Power to search for alcohol and tobacco	Paragraph 7A of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002 (inserted by paragraph 8 of Schedule 8 of the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005)	✗
Power to seize drugs and require name and address for possession of drugs	Paragraphs 7B and 7C of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002 (inserted by paragraph 8 of Schedule 8 to the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005)	✗
Power to enter and search any premises for the purposes of saving life and limb or preventing serious damage to property	Paragraph 8 of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002	✓

Power	Relevant Legislation	WYP
Limited power to enter licensed premises	Paragraph 8A of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002 (inserted by paragraph 9 of Schedule 8 to the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005)	✓
Power to seize vehicles used to cause alarm	Paragraph 9 of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002	✓
Power to remove abandoned vehicles	Paragraph 10 of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002	✓
Power to stop vehicles for testing	Paragraph 11 of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002	✓
Power to stop cycles	Paragraph 11A of Schedule 4 to the Prison Reform Act 2002 (inserted by section 89(3) of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003)	✓
Power to control traffic for purposes other than escorting a load of exceptional dimensions	Paragraph 11B of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002 (inserted by paragraph 10 of Schedule 8 to the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005)	✓
Power to direct traffic for the purposes of escorting abnormal loads	Paragraph 12 of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002	✓
Power to carry out road checks	Paragraph 13 of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002	✓
Power to place signs	Paragraph 13A of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002 (inserted by paragraph 11 of the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005)	✓
Power to enforce cordoned areas	Paragraph 14 of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002	✓
Power to stop and search in authorised areas	Paragraph 15 of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002	✓
Power to photograph persons away from a police station	Paragraph 15ZA of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002 (inserted by paragraph 12 to Schedule 8 to the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005)	✗

Table 2**Offences for which CSOs may issue penalty notices for disorder under Chapter 1 Part 1 of the Criminal Justice and Police Act**

Offence	Relevant Legislation	WYP
Sale of alcohol to a person under 18	s146 of the Licensing Act 2003	✓
Purchase of alcohol for a person under 18	s149(3) of the Licensing Act 2003	✓
Delivery of alcohol to a person under 18 or allowing such a delivery	s151 of the Licensing Act 2003	×
Destroying or damaging property (under £500)	s1(1) of the Criminal Damage Act 1971	×
Breach of fireworks curfew	Fireworks Regulations 2004 under s11 of the Fireworks Act 2003	✓
Possession of a category 4 firework	Fireworks Regulations 2004 under s11 of the Fireworks Act 2003	✓
Possession by a person under 18 of an adult firework	Fireworks Regulations 2004 under s11 of the Fireworks Act 2003	✓
Supply of excessively loud fireworks	Fireworks Regulations 2004 under s11 of the Fireworks Act 2003	×
Wasting police time, giving false report	s5 of the Criminal Law Act 1967	×
Using public electronic communications network in order to cause annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety	s127(2) of the Communications Act 2003	×
Knowingly giving false alarm to a person acting on behalf of a fire and rescue authority	s49 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004	×
Causing harassment, alarm or distress	s5 of the Public Order Act 1986	×
Throwing fireworks	s80 of the Explosives Act 1875	✓
Drunk and disorderly behaviour	s91 of the Criminal Justice Act 1967	×
Consumption of alcohol by a person under 18 or allowing such consumption	s150 of the Licensing Act 2003	✓

Offence	Relevant Legislation	WYP
Buying or attempting to buy alcohol by an under 18	s149(1) of the Licensing Act 2003	✓
Sells or attempts to sell alcohol to a person who is drunk	s141 of the Licensing Act 2003	×
Trespassing on a railway	s55 of the British Transport Commission Act 1949	×
Throwing stones at a train	S56 of the British Transport Commission Act 1949	×
Drunk in the highway	s12 of the Licensing Act 1872	×
Drunk in a designated public area	s12(4) of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001	×

Appendix 5: PCSO Job Description

Role Title Section Tenure	Police Community Support Officer Neighbourhood Policing Team	Reporting to Division/Department Rank/Grade	Sergeant Divisions Scale 4
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Overall purpose of role	To undertake focused visible uniform patrols, as tasked, throughout the neighbourhood area in order to support police officers and the community team in minimising incidents of anti-social behaviour and reducing the fear of crime.
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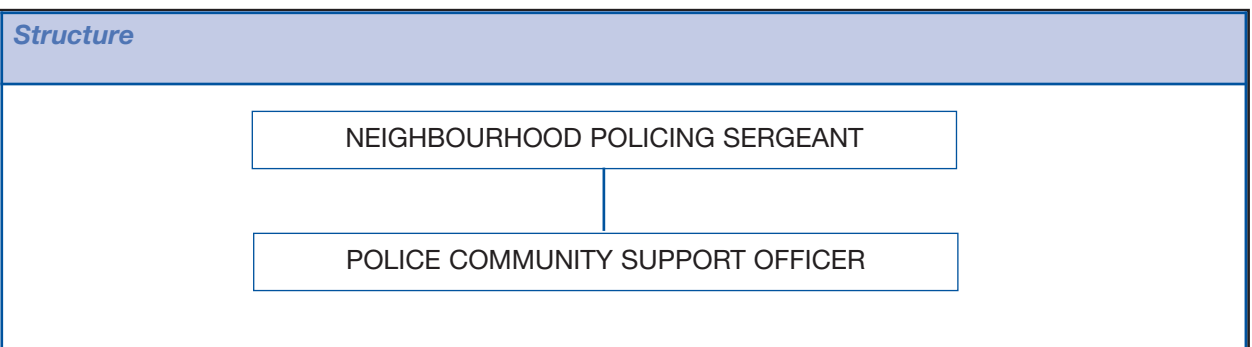
Key outputs for role	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Undertake regular pro-active uniformed foot patrols throughout the area, responding promptly to calls and requests for assistance ensuring that all highlighted problems are reported promptly to the relevant police team. 2. Assist police officers to take control of incidents, and undertake enquiries in relation to specified incidents as required to assist in the detection and prevention of crime. 3. Provide support and assistance at local galas, sporting events, pop concerts and other similar events to ensure crowd control and public safety. 4. Pro-actively participate in neighbourhood policing initiatives or in community support matters in the area to tackle anti-social behaviour whilst acting in accordance with the relevant legislation, policy, protocols and codes of practice to maintain high levels of community safety and confidence. 5. Exercise the Power of Detention on individuals where appropriate to enable the processes of law and order to be fulfilled. 6. Gather and generate relevant information and intelligence to support any enforcement action required. 7. Attend court when required to give evidence in accordance with legislation to aid prosecution and conviction of offenders. 8. Compilation of daily incident reports to assist policing activities. 	

Dimensions <i>(Financial/Statistical/Mandates/Constraints/No. of direct reports)</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive contact with public. • Regularly attend and participate in community contact point. 	

Work/Business contacts	
Internal:	Divisional policing teams.
External:	Members of the general public, voluntary and statutory agencies e.g. Local Authority, Probation Service, Housing Associations, and Schools.

<i>Expertise in Role Required (At selection - Level 1)</i>	Essential or Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic knowledge of and the ability to operate computer packages e.g. Microsoft office. • Ability to pass the relevant assessment centre. • Demonstrates a basic understanding of Policing issues. • Displays an awareness of the roles of other agencies/groups and how they impact on social issues. • Basic knowledge of the geographical Force area. <p><i>(Framework page 23)</i></p>	<p>Essential</p> <p>Essential</p> <p>Essential</p> <p>Desirable</p> <p>Desirable</p>
<i>Other (Physical, mobility, local conditions)</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to pass an appropriate medical. • Requirement to work all weather patrols. • Requirement to work at various locations throughout the Force where necessary. 	<p>Essential</p> <p>Essential</p> <p>Essential</p>

<i>Expertise in Role - After initial development - Level 2</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic knowledge of relevant legislation, policies, protocols and codes of practice. • Basic knowledge of the geography/demography of the Division. • Completion of Police Community Support Officer training package. <p><i>(Framework page 23)</i></p>



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Glossary of Terms

ACC	Assistant Chief Constable
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
ASB	Anti-Social Behaviour
BCU	Basic Command Unit
CDRP	Crime and Reduction Partnership
FTE	Full-time equivalent
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
HR	Human Resources
LAA	Local Area Agreement
LEA	Local Education Authority
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
MDC	Metropolitan District Council
MPS	Metropolitan Police Service
NIM	National Intelligence Model
NPF	Neighbourhood Policing Fund
NPT	Neighbourhood Policing Team
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
PC	Police Constable
PCSO	Police and Community Support Officer
PDR	Personal Development Review
PI	Performance Indicator
PSA	Public Service Agreement
PTA	Passenger Transport Authority
PTE	Passenger Transport Executive
WPLDP	Wider Policing Learning Development Programme
WYP	West Yorkshire Police
YOT	Youth Offending Team

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Dr Matthew Long graduated from the University of Nottingham with the Sir Arthur Radford prize for top Social Science student in 1993. He received a scholarship to study at Cambridge University and graduated from the Institute of Criminology in 1994. Between 1998 and 2004 he worked as a lecturer at the National Police Training Centre at Bramshill, and in 2002 was appointed Visiting Professor at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice within the City University of New York in 2002. Matthew joined the Hallam Centre for Community Justice at Sheffield Hallam University in 2004.

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About the Publisher

Under the direction of Professor Paul Senior, the Hallam Centre for Community Justice is part of the Faculty of Development and Society at Sheffield Hallam University.

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