'Surfing the edge of chaos':

An ethnography of police joint working

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To Mutti, Daddy, Edward, Granny, Grandpa and last but not least Anthony.

Declaration

This thesis is the result of my own work and has not been submitted in support of an application for another degree at this or any other university. This project is a registered N8 Policing Research Partnership (N8 PRP) PhD studentship, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), however the views expressed are those of the author and not necessarily that of the N8 PRP or ESRC.

Abstract

Police joint working is a messy area of enquiry, which has thus far been somewhat compartmentalised in previous research. This thesis reflects the complexities of police joint working amidst an era of austerity. It advances complex adaptive systems (CAS) as a theoretical construct, through which to study and comprehend the process of joint working. The principal aim is *to provide a deeper and richer understanding of joint working*, by drawing primarily on observations and experiences of warranted police officers and civilian police staff. The more specific objectives are to identify the utility of police joint working as a solution to social problems; investigate how joint work is accomplished using an ethnographic approach; contribute to understanding how joint working challenges might be approach differently. Through the application of CAS, a holistic and contextualised account of joint working is provided. In this respect, the thesis differs from previous atheoretical studies and literature employing a 'communities of practice' (CoP) approach. Whilst acknowledging the relevance of shared cultural factors, this thesis seeks to shift attention to wider – personal and structural – contextual influences that give rise to the 'punctuated' progress in working together, generally overlooked in existing joint working theory. Ethnographic methods were applied as a key to unlock the intricacies and diversity of joint working experiences – both front- and back-stage – as the researcher was immersed in a large police force in England for 18-months. Fieldwork insights exposed the fragmented, unpredictable and interconnected ways in which joint working changes over time. Thus, networked policing was revealed as messy, evolving and seemingly out of control. The implications section stresses the importance of developing a formalised supervision model as a source of stability through, which employees can find ways to navigate change 'churn' and 'surf the chaos'.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AMHP – Approved mental health professional.

ANT – Actor-network theory.

ASB – Anti-social behaviour.

ASC – Adult's social care.

BCUs - Basic command units.

CANW – Child action north west.

CAADA-ric – Coordinated action against domestic abuse risk identification checklist.

CAS – Complex adaptive systems.

CASP – Critical appraisal skills programme.

CBM – Community beat manager.

CID – Criminal investigations department.

CoP – Communities of practice.

CPS – Crown Prosecution Service.

CRC – Community rehabilitation company.

CSC – Children's social care.

CSE – Child sexual exploitation.

DA – Domestic abuse.

DCS – Detective chief superintendent.

DHSS – Department for Health and Social Services.

DV – Domestic violence.

DWP – Department for Work and Pensions.

EAIT – Early action integrated team.

EBP – Evidence-based policing.

FIN – Families in need.

HMO – House in multiple occupation.

HQ – The police headquarters site.

IDVA – Independent domestic violence advisor.

INTL – Intelligence[1].

IOM – Integrated offender manager.

IOMU – Integrated offender management unit.

IR – Immediate response department.

LFRS – Lancashire fire and rescue service.

LSOA – Lower-layer super output area.

LVP – Lancashire volunteer partnership.

LVS – Lancashire victim services.

LWC – Lancashire women's centre.

LWS – Lancashire wellbeing service.

NHP – Neighbourhood policing.

NHS – National Health Service.

NSPCC – National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

NVQ – National vocational qualification.

NWAS – North west ambulance service.

OD – Organisational development.

N8 PRP – N8 Policing Research Partnership.

PAVA – Pelargonic acid vanillylamide.

PCSO – Police community support officer.

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[1] Intelligence – is an area of policing in England and Wales. The police 'Intelligence' department in Lancashire Constabulary is staffed by police officers and civilian staff, its purpose is to track and predict crime with a view to preventing it. Intelligence analysts investigate who is committing crimes, how, when, where and why. As part of their role, analysts produce profiles of crime problems and individual suspects.

PDVS – Preston domestic violence services.

PIVOT – Prevention, intervention, vulnerability, outcome, transformation.

PIVOTAL – Prevention, intervention, vulnerability, outcome, transformation, awareness, learning.

PNC – Police national computer system.

PPU – Public protection unit.

PSD – Professional standards department.

RSPCA – Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

SCIE – Social Care Institute for Excellence.

SDVC – Specialist domestic violence courts.

SOM – Sex offender manager.

SOMU – Sex offender management unit.

SPOC – Single point of contact.

WPEH – Wellbeing prevention and early help.

YOT – Youth offending team.

YPS – Young people's service.

1 Introduction

1.1 Opening

In an age of austerity, cuts have seen a diminution of police officer and civilian staff resources across all areas of policing (HMIC, 2014a). The government's 2010 spending review enforced a 20 per cent funding reduction to police forces over the period 2011-2015 (HM Treasury, 2010). Whilst, more recently, police funding has increased in England and Wales in 2018/19, the increased spending comes from police and crime commissioners (PCCs) being allowed to raise council tax in their areas, rather than central government (Full Fact, 2018). However, since inflation is above two per cent, these budgets are likely to have faced overall reductions. According to estimates compiled by the National Audit Office (NAO, 2018), overall funding has fallen, from 2010/11 to 2018/19, by 19 per cent, taking inflation into account.

At the same time, problems faced by police forces are becoming increasingly complicated and the cost of failure is high. A gradually ageing population (Government Office for Science, 2016; ONS, 2018), a rise in mental health related incidents (College of Policing, 2015) and the introduction of new crimes (e.g. coercive control) (Serious Crime Act, 2015) – alongside innumerable further changes – have compelled forces to strive harder to find ways of tackling changing demand. Crime has shifted online, police

forces are expected to deal with crimes of today, as well as historic cases, and frontline officers are increasingly spending time, not just fighting crime, but safeguarding people across the whole life span. In essence, policing has become increasingly complex, whilst spreading in every direction (Deloitte, 2018). How can policing adapt to such evolving, complex and financially challenging demands? One response is joint working (Elston *et al.*, 2018).

Joint work between different professions is viewed as a way to turn fragmented human service agencies into a system of care that addresses the multiple needs of different publics through a more comprehensive and seamless service delivery (Walter and Petr, 2000). The 'Policing Vision 2025' (APCC and NPCC, 2016) acknowledges that a more sophisticated response is required – through police and partners working together – to tackle the increasing diversity and complexity of communities. Emphasis is placed on the need for professionals to identify and find solutions to complex problems that straddle disciplinary boundaries. Consequently, financial constraints, alongside the expansion of crime, disorder and safeguarding concerns, have prompted police forces to devise innovative, yet practical ways of complying with changing bureaucracy, whilst maintaining effectiveness and efficiency; a situation which has contributed to a need for agencies to pool together their reduced resources (HM Government, 2019a). One might argue that the mandate for joint working has never been greater.

1.2 Background and context

Although financial constraints have reinforced the necessity of collaboration, partnership approaches have a lengthy history in policing dating back to the years preceding the implementation of the Children Act 1989. Joint working emerged from the discourse of safeguarding. It reflects a 'rediscovery' of child abuse in the 1970s in the U.K. (although earlier in the U.S.), with the situation of what was formerly a private, family problem dealt with in a benign supportive way (e.g. Pfohl, 1977; Dingwall *et al.*,

1984). Once recognised as abuse it accentuated the criminogenic aspect and the need for police to be involved (Parton, 1979). What was traditionally a civil or private law problem became a criminal issue (Giovannoni and Becerra, 1979).

Since then the Government has produced a plethora of legislative, policy and review documents, which relate to police joint working in the sphere of child protection. For example, the Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Care and Supervision Provided by Local Authorities and Other Agencies in Relation to Maria Colwell and the Coordination Between Them (Secretary of State for Social Services, 1974); the Memorandum on Non-Accidental Injury to Children (DHSS, 1974); the Report of the Inquiry into Child Abuse in Cleveland (Butler-Sloss, 1988); and the Children Act 1989. The safeguarding discourse extended to adults in the 1990s particularly the field of community safety, whilst child safeguarding continued to exercise authorities. As a result, documents concerned with the need to safeguard and prevent crime through a partnership approach between police, local authorities, health, fire and ambulance services have continued to proliferate over recent decades. For example, statutory guidance on interagency cooperation, under the Children Act 1989, was first published in 1991. Although the original document has been reproduced, the name has changed and there have been various amendments over the years, working together has remained a common theme. The most recent version is titled 'Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children' (HM Government, 2018). Other documents include: Safer Communities: The Local Delivery of Crime Prevention through the Partnership Approach (Home Office, 1991); the Crime and Disorder Act 1998; the Victoria Climbié Inquiry (Laming, 2003); Every Child Matters (2003); the Children Act 2004; the Children, Schools and Families Act 2010; the Care Act 2014; Multi Agency Working and Information Sharing Project (Home Office, 2014); the Children and Social Work Act 2017; and the Policing and Crime Act 2017; Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding

services to children, young people, parents and carers (HM Government, 2018).

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a statutory duty on a number of responsible authorities to work in partnership to reduce crime and disorder. Community Safety Partnerships, formerly referred to as Crime and Reduction Partnerships in England, are made up of representatives from: the police, local authorities, fire and rescue, probation and health (clinical commissioning groups in England and local health boards in Wales). The organisations are responsible for working together to protect their local communities from crime, with a focus on local issues and priorities.

The Care Act 2014 sets out statutory responsibility for the integration of support for adults at risk of abuse or neglect, including the establishment of Safeguarding Adults Boards (SABs) of which the police are a statutory member. Meanwhile, the enactment of Sections 80-83 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017 amended Section 135 and 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983. The legislative changes place a new stipulation on police officers to work in partnership, if it is practical to do so, by consulting a registered medical practitioner, registered nurse or approved mental health professional, before removing a person to, or keeping them at, a place of safety.

In the same year, Section 16 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 replaced the model of local safeguarding children boards (LSCBs), introduced 13 years prior by the Children Act 2004; the equivalent but extended version of Area Review Committees. Since the establishment of Area Review Committees in 1970 (Parton, 1985), police, health and social care have been required to work together to promote the welfare of children. In revoking the LSCB requirements of the 2004 Act, the 2017 Act places a duty on safeguarding partners to make local arrangements. Her Majesty's Government (2018, p.72) defines *'safeguarding partners' as: 'a) the local authority; b) the clinical commissioning group for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area; and c) the chief officers of police for a police area any of which falls within the local authority area'*. The legislative amendments place responsibility for

joint working practice improvements at a national level but retain and strengthen decision making on the use of joint resources and funding to local social care, health and police bodies. The practice review panel may be motivated by continuing cases of child death and serious harm but the change in local arrangements are more closely aligned to policy on commissioning in public services, including the growth in private suppliers in all sectors. The 2017 Act was drafted in the context of the welfare economy, particularly the increase in privatisation in health, social care and law enforcement. These changes will have an unknown but inevitable impact on joint working practices, as services are privatised and regulation increases, particularly in light of the dependence of joint working on 'soft' contextual factors (discussed in Chapters Five to Seven of this thesis), which are not suitable for prescriptive regulations. The development of law in relation to joint working continues, with a new legal duty on public bodies to prevent and tackle serious violence announced in July 2019. The 'public health duty' will cover the police, local councils, local health bodies (such as NHS trusts), education representatives and youth offending services. HM Government (2019b, n.p.) states that the new duty '*will ensure that relevant services work together to share data, intelligence and knowledge to understand the roots causes of serious violence*'.

Continuing attention to legal reform appears to infer that legislative and policy changes will result in desired improvements in joint working. However, despite numerous attempts, a solution seems elusive. Over the years, highly publicised incidents of child abuse including the deaths of Victoria Climbié and Peter Connelly - alongside more recent serious case reviews (NSPCC, 2018; 2019) – continue to expose failings in interorganisational relations. Reviews are united by recommendations regarding a need to improve interoperability between services (HM Government, 2013; Kirby *et al*., 2014). Police joint working is clearly an ongoing and continually developing policy issue that warrants further exploration. Continuing concerns amidst the current climate

- particularly the impact of austerity, mounting demand, increasing scrutiny and ongoing changes to the recruitment and training of police officers and staff - provides a timely context for a re-examination of police joint working.

1.3 Research aims and argument

This thesis comes to the debate at a point in time when multiagency working has been a continual challenge for over four decades. In light of the consistent concerns, it is questionable whether 'top-down' attempts at reform will ever bring about a seamless joint working system. The principal aim of this thesis is therefore *to provide a deeper and richer understanding of joint working*, from the ground up, by exploring how the process is experienced in practice. In fulfilling this aim, the key argument presented is that *joint working is more complex* (e.g. chaotic, messy, out of control, fragmented, changing, unpredictable, interdependent and contextualised) *than currently accounted for* through regulation (Figure 1).

Joint working is more complex than currently accounted for through regulation

Joint working: **chaotic, messy and seemingly 'out of control'**

Fragmented: boundaried, separated, interrupted, punctuated

Changing: co-evolving, emerging, self-developing

Unpredictable: uncertain, unanticipated, unforseeable

Interdependent: interrelated, intertwined and connected

Contextualised: personal, cultural and structural factors

Figure 1: Development of the thesis statement

A summary of existing academic literature, which will be presented in Chapter Two, identified repeated barriers and facilitators to joint working, with inconsistent understandings of what 'effective' joint working is, or looks like in practice. Yet, at the same time, joint working is consistently considered to be beneficial. Furthermore, the majority of existing police joint working literature is atheoretical and therefore lacks explanation of how joint working fails or might succeed. An exception is 'communities of practice' (CoP), a theory which emphasises the central importance of developing a shared culture to cross organisational boundaries and work together effectively. In order to provide a deeper and richer understanding, to explicate the seemingly chaotic, messy and out of control nature of joint working and identify how joint working might work better for policing, Chapter Three theoretically constructs policing as a 'complex adaptive system' (CAS), which I later refer to as a 'policing CAS' (defined in Section 3.1). A CAS lens focuses on the non-linear and dynamic nature of policing and joint

working. It emphasises how understanding individual parts of the system does not necessarily provide better understanding of the whole system. At the same time, a CAS perspective shifts attention to the *complex* and *adaptive* networks of interactions, which *co-evolve* within changing environments. The theoretical value of systems and complexity theories, from which CAS derives, has long been emphasised in social science (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), and more recently, in the field of criminal justice (Pycroft, 2014). However, systems theory has been less applied in policing (Pearce and Fortune, 1995). In their paper presenting findings of a search of U.K. literature - exploring the extent to which systems have already been applied to policing - the authors find that there has been '*little official recognition of the benefits which the use of systems concepts can achieve in the analysis of problems and issues affecting it*' (p.704).

Only in more recent years has a 'whole systems' approach begun to creep in policing, through different channels (e.g. child protection and public health) (Munro, 2011; Public Health England, 2019a; 2019b). A recent Public Health England (2019a) resource, describes a collaborative, whole systems approach to preventing offending and re-offending in children. The publication acknowledges that there is '*no single solution*' (to youth offending) due to the '*complex and dynamic*' nature of problem, with a necessary move away from '*silo working*' and a need to have the '*flexibility to adapt plans*' (p.10). However, there is no discussion of how unpredictability might arise or be responded to within systems. Another recent Public Health England (2019b) source adopts the language of a whole systems approach in relation to multiagency working to prevent serious violence. It contains reference to a socio-ecological framework for understanding how an individual is situated within wider systems (e.g. families, communities and society). Yet, the resource lacks consideration of many of the core components of complex and adaptive systems, including non-linearity (i.e. disruptions and punctuated progress) or disproportionality (i.e. the impact of high

profile cases). Nor is there consideration of how these features might impact on systems, or the interrelated consequences for joint working practice. Furthermore, consideration of the role of non-human actants remains absent from guidance (Public Health England, 2019b). Thus, the application of *complex adaptive* systems theory (as outlined in Chapter Three), is new to the study of joint working, particularly from the angle of policing.

1.4 Joint working – Why? What does it mean?

Although a basic definition and understanding of joint working can be useful and motivating, it can be difficult to define and achieve in practice (Howarth and Morrison, 2007). When thinking, reading, hearing or talking about how professionals work together a diverse and confusing number of words spring to mind. These include (but are not limited to): working together, teamwork, multiagency working, multidisciplinary working, interagency working, interdisciplinary working, interorganisational, joint work, joined-up thinking, collaboration, coordination, partnerships, integration and interoperability. Although all of these terms are related, they have different meanings, are used in different contexts, in different ways, sometimes precisely and sometimes without intention (Whittington, 2003). However, these various concepts are argued to reflect differences in joint working arrangements. A key difference within the subsets of words is the use of the prefixes 'multi' and 'inter'. According to Whittington (2003) the term 'multi' tends to be used where professionals work in parallel yet maintain distinctive professional and organisational boundaries. On the other hand, the prefix 'inter' is associated with a greater degree of engagement, interaction, integration and merging of ideas to form new practices. The following section will outline some key descriptions arising from the literature, along with the proposed reasons for working together.

Partnerships, characterised as encompassing all types of collaborative arrangements (e.g. consortia, coalitions, and alliances) have expanded beyond the

inclusion of statutory bodies to now developing relationships with private third sector organisations (Weiss *et al.*, 2002). To meet the diverse needs of children and families *'partnerships enable different people and organisations to support each other by leveraging, combining and capitalising on their complementary strengths and capabilities'* (Lasker *et al.*, 2001, p.180). Working alone, potential partners frequently only see part of the problem and thus partial solutions (Gray, 1989). Working as a group, they can see issues from multiple perspectives and are therefore in a better position to provide a holistic approach to solving problems (Mattesich and Monsey, 1992).

Similarly, collaboration involves different professionals, organisations or disciplines working together, recognising that service users receive more effective and better help in such circumstances (Buchbinder and Eisikovits, 2008). Sometimes referred to as interorganisational or interdisciplinary collaboration, this process aims to facilitate better outcomes, which cannot be reached when working alone (Hallett and Birchall, 1992). Professionals work together to build on each other's expertise to solve complex problems (Bronstein, 2003). In comparison to working in partnership, collaboration indicates a more active form of joint working (SCIE, 2009). It moves beyond sharing knowledge and skills, to professionals translating joint work into effective practice to achieve shared aims (Whittington, 2003). Petri (2010) adds that in addition to recognising and embracing the complementary contribution each discipline makes, interdisciplinary collaboration also provides a means to address different professional values, that create challenges when attempting to find solutions to problems.

Despite differences in terminology and descriptions, the literature acknowledges some common themes: joint working often involves two or more professionals or organisations bringing different perspectives to a task in order to achieve better outcomes (Berg-Weger and Schneider, 1998; Graham and Barter, 1999; Bronstein, 2003; Longoria, 2005). The drive for joint work across professions is led by an

increasing awareness that clients are more effectively helped by capitalising on *different* expertise (Beatrice, 1990; Bronstein, 2003). For example, the establishment of joint police-social work youth offending teams is underpinned by the logic that, by working together, the *quality* of the work is different from what might be achieved by each agency working alone (MoJ, 2013).

Part of the reason why there is no clear definition of joint working stems from the argument that there are no absolutes in working together (Whittington, 2003; Frost, 2005). Rather, joint working consists of a hierarchy of working together arrangements (e.g. from communication to integration) (Gardner, 2004; Frost, 2005; Howarth and Morrison, 2007; Sundqvist *et al.,* 2015). Leathard (1994) adds that terminology, such as 'interprofessional' can have different meanings for different groups of people. Hallett and Stevenson (1980) describe 'ad hoc' co-ordination (e.g. variety of contact from telephone to face to face); systematic co-ordination (e.g. case conferences); and programme co-ordination (e.g. committees for local policy making). Meanwhile, Waterhouse and Carnie (1990) describe minimalist; collaborative; and integrated arrangements. Buchbinder and Eisikovits (2008) also refer to a minimalist maximalist continuum. The minimalist approach is described as a basic exchange of information, whilst a maximalist approach is conceived to be an attempt to integrate activities, which the authors argue requires long-term involvement.

Frost (2005) breaks joint working down into not three but four levels: cooperation, collaboration, coordination and integration. Co-operation, as the first step on what he terms '*a ladder of partnership'* is based on communication between organisations (p.7). Co-operation can comprise of occasional or sporadic communication, whilst collaboration, is more planned and sustained. Co-ordination, as the third level involves the establishment of formal rules, joint goals and common activities between organisations. Finally, level four involves integration during which organisations merge.

Earlier work by Davidson (1976) depicts a continuum of five typologies: communication, cooperation, coordination, federation and merger. Similar to other authors (Waterhouse and Carnie, 1990; Frost, 2005), Davidson (1976) argues that most interagency work occurs at levels one to three, from communication to coordination. Almost thirty years on, Howarth and Morrison (2007) identified five levels of joint working: communication, cooperation, coordination, coalition and integration. Beginning with communication, the authors suggest that collaboration, as a form of joint working, at its most basic level, begins with individuals from different disciplines talking together. Cooperation is described as a '*low key*' version of joint working (p.56). Where more formalised arrangements for joint working are established, this is referred to as coordination. Coalition involves some sacrifice of autonomy. Lastly, when organisations merge to create new joint identities this is termed integration and is considered to be the highest level of joint working.

In addition to different levels, other scholars have defined joint working based on different dimensions: formalisation, intensity, reciprocity and standardisation (Marrett, 1971; Ovretveit, 1996). Formalisation refers to specific agreements or contracts between agencies regarding the partnership. Intensity refers to the range of resources and activities that are drawn on to facilitate the process of working together. Reciprocity describes the degree of power imbalances and equality between partners. Standardisation concerns the extent to which arrangements for joint working are clearly outlined (Howarth and Morrison, 2007).

More recently, there has been increasing use of the term 'networks', particularly in describing joint working in policing. However, the term 'networked policing' is again used in a diverse sense, often without explanation of what is meant by the concept. Crawford and L'Hoiry (2017) refer to 'networked approaches' in their article exploring 'boundary crossing' and 'communities of practice' in safeguarding children. The authors provide discussion of how commentators have argued for a '*need*

to open up policing and crime control through interinstitutional and interdisciplinary collaborations with other public, private, and third sector providers' (p.637) through networks, alliances and partnerships.

To summarise, the process of joint working can be pictured along a continuum whereby informal conversations on joint topics might occur, to more formal single integrated services. The fact that different writers break joint working down into three, four or five stages suggests that there are inconsistencies in how joint working is understood in itself. Alternatively, it can be viewed as a fluid process, which varies in degrees of commitment and intensity over time, rather than one with a set of inherent standards. There is however general consistency across the literature, that 'integration' (involving a 'merging' of services) is the most intense form of joint working. Ambiguity in understandings regarding the meaning of joint working begins to paint a picture that joint working is complex and has yet to be adequately captured or addressed.

1.5 Joint working as a 'wicked problem'

Given that the challenges of joint working have been ongoing for decades - dating back to the death of Maria Colwell in 1973, if not earlier - this project does not aim to suddenly solve the issues faced by police and other agencies when working together. In contradistinction, police and partner agencies co-work on so-called 'intractable' issues (e.g. child abuse, domestic violence and mental health), which cannot be resolved in the short-term, if at all. From this perspective, the approach taken in this thesis is informed by the concept of 'wicked problems' (Rittel and Webber, 1973). There is no strict definition of a wicked problem, although according to Rittel and Webber (1973) wicked problems differ from tame problems due to certain characteristics (Figure 2)[2]. The problem lacks structure and can be perceived as an intertwined set of issues. There is

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[2] Adapted from Rittel and Webber (1973).

often broad disagreement over the nature of the problem, with different agencies holding conflicting views on the most appropriate solution (Roberts, 2000). An attempt to solve a wicked problem may reveal another aspect more complex and problematic. One might argue that working together is a wicked problem. The previous section identified how joint work is an ambiguous concept, understood varyingly by different scholars and practitioners. Individuals and organisations invest varying efforts into achieving different forms of joint working, which can create tensions in practice. Thus, the very attempt to work together can unintentionally reveal further issues that may push people apart.
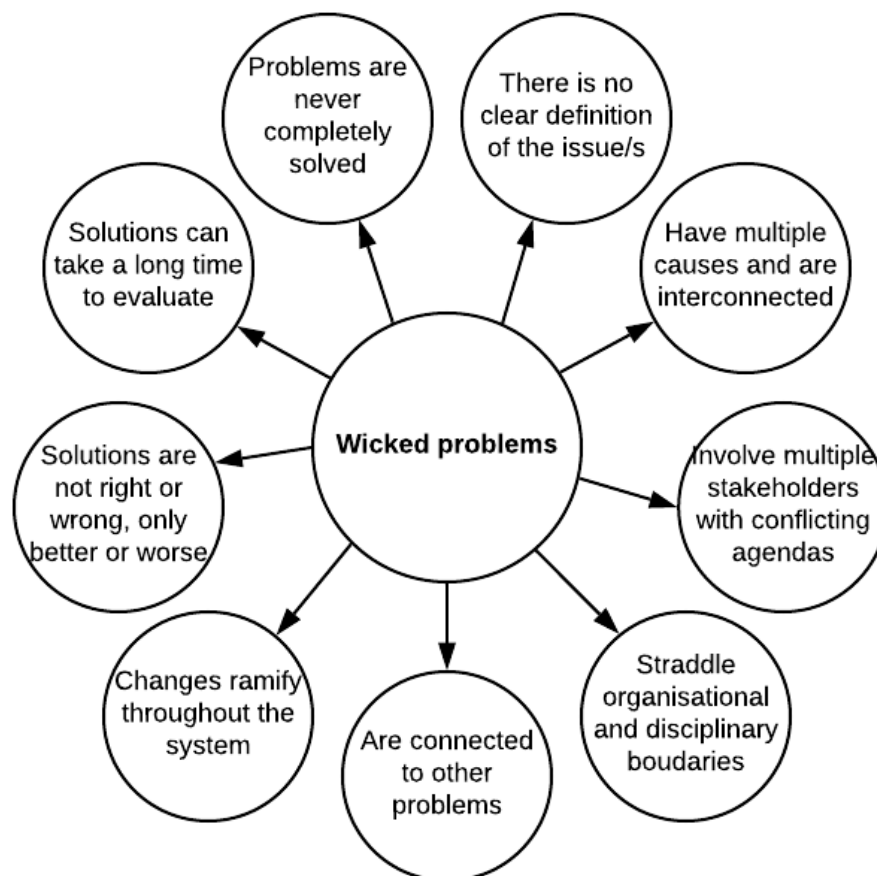
Figure 2: Characteristics of wicked problems

1.6 Theoretical approach

A longstanding tendency exists, whereby blame is placed on individuals or organisations where multiagency 'error' is found to occur – particularly in high profile public inquiries – without looking deeply into the causes and complexities involved. This inclination has been reinforced by heightened scrutiny, as concerns over police corruption continue to be prominent features in media reports (The Guardian, 2018). At the same time, the ever-increasing importance given to performance indicators and targets, which provide only part of the picture of practice, has skewed attention to process over the quality and effectiveness of safeguarding services provided (Munro, 2011). Attempts to provide a more transparent and accountable public service have created growing procedural and psychological pressures, leading to increasing bureaucracy, blame and risk aversion, in contrast to deeper complexity learning (Munro, 2005; Stevens and Cox, 2007; Hood, 2014), with limitations in explanations of the incessant issues experienced in 'networked' policing.

Given that making the wrong assessment or prediction can have significant consequences, probabilistic mechanisms have been designed to help make rational decisions about potential risks and threats (Zinn, 2008). Sometimes, such tools, are used to make predictions about future risk, in the short- or long-term. Predictive assessments and tools can relieve professionals of some of the pressures of accountability when working with and managing risk. If the tool is applied correctly, it will not be the professional's 'fault' if something goes wrong; the tool will be to blame (although a professional remains accountable; he or she is required to justify decisions and actions). Risk assessments have become commonplace in a whole variety of single and multiagency arenas, including for example the CAADA-ric in domestic abuse cases. These assessments vary between qualitative, open-ended questions and more discrete objective data, which often appears in a checklist form of risk factors (Murphy-Berman, 1994). However, the fixation with risk assessments could be argued to be symbolic of

a misconstruction of professional work as a rational, technical activity (Petch, 2001; Holloway, 2004).

It is not possible to know exactly when a perpetrator of domestic violence will next assault a victim, or whether a sex offender on license will reoffend. Yet, a common tactic is to reduce this complexity and strive to solve the associated uncertainty (e.g. through risk assessments and predictive policing models). Problem-solving discourse is common place in policing. The previous mental health co-ordinator for the College of Policing and National Police Chiefs Council, placed emphasis on determining what problem we are trying to 'fix' (Brown, 2014). That is not to suggest professionals should not strive to improve services, nor that innovation and predictive models (for example), do not have any place in policing (or other sectors for that matter). However, over-belief that complexity and uncertainty can be resolved, or that issues can be fixed, can result in the simplification of problems, focus on singular concerns and silo approaches (Tainter, 2000; Pourbohloul and Kieny, 2011).

Alternatively, this thesis adopts a CAS perspective: - a theoretical approach deriving from non-linear science, which presupposes that social life is not straightforward, precise or always predictable. Future predictions are necessarily fallible. A CAS approach draws, in part, on chaos theory. Chaos theory highlights how a small, everyday decision, can lead to large impacts or breakdowns in the system on a widespread scale, a phenomenon known as the 'butterfly effect' (Lorenz, 2000; Hilborn, 2003). In chaotic systems, constant adaptation means that the system is repeatedly self-organising and emerging, leading to the inevitability of disorder (sometimes referred to as volatility) (Capra, 1997). In response to the inevitability of disorder, the main lesson is the radical idea that the aim of the system is not to achieve control but to retain its position '*surfing the edge of chaos*' (Pascale *et al.,* 1999, p.235).

From a CAS perspective, there is no one single solution to public issues or achieving seamless services. Rather than aiming for solutions to problems, initiatives

are regarded as an iterative process, constantly evolving and constantly requiring refinement, reflection, learning and adaptation, both to local contexts and dynamically over time. A systems perspective accepts that there will always be uncertainties in the environment. Such instances provide pivotal opportunities for learning, in order to refine approaches, and thus the system adapts in response (Senge, 1990; Senge and Sterman, 1992). This adaptive property of systems is highly relevant to joint working; it indicates how blame cultures can develop through a lack of acceptance of inherent uncertainties and how a more positive framework can evolve (Munro, 2011).

Correspondingly, this thesis advances policing as a 'complex adaptive system', in order to study the interrelated elements and processes of working together. The theoretical approach capitalises on multiple related theories, namely: systems theory (e.g. von Bertalanffy, 1968), complexity theory (e.g. Stevens and Cox, 2007), complex adaptive systems theory (e.g. Casti, 1979), chaos theory (e.g. Lorenz, 1972) and an actor-network approach (e.g. Latour, 1993). Through this theoretical construct, the evolving, dynamic, unpredictable and self-organising nature of life is emphasised, whilst attention is also paid to the interdependence of both animate (e.g. people, relationships, cultures) and inanimate elements (e.g. technologies, space, buildings) of life. In doing so, this thesis will demonstrate that joint working is multifaceted, volatile and chaotic. Police joint working is revealed as embedded, intertwined and impacted by aspects of individual lives, cultures and societal structures, as both agency and context contribute to the co-emergence of practice. Through the application of CAS, this thesis seeks to challenge individual and organisation centred blame, and attributed failure, arguing for a holistic perspective that includes but moves beyond individual agency and organisational constraints, to encompass wider structural factors, which give rise to progress and disruptions in working together, overlooked in existing joint working theory. A more detailed case will be made for understanding policing as a complex and adaptive system in subsequent chapters (Three and Five to Eight).

1.7 Research methodology

If, as outlined in Section 1.3, the aim of this study is *to gain deeper and richer insights into joint working*, then the experiences of those practising joint working are central to understand how the processes of joint work evolve, as are understandings of how individuals interpret and respond to such experiences. Comprehending joint working from such a perspective necessitates an alternative approach to its study than is currently afforded within the wealth of literature reviewed in Chapter Two of this thesis. Consequently, the empirical basis of this doctoral study is ethnography; a method which provides access to rich, in-depth accounts, to explore police discourse, feelings, meaning making, material contexts, settings and how these features influence the way police *practice* joint working. The fieldwork drew upon a broad range of police joint working experiences across different (rural and urban) regions, departments, rankings and teams. Observations were employed to capture both front- and back-stage (Goffman, 1959) attitudes and behaviours of police employees. These observations were supplemented by informal conversations and document analysis, which explored the rich experiences as expressed (e.g. spoken, unspoken, written and unwritten) by informants. The ethnographic capture and analysis of data gave voice to 'bottom-up' perspectives, from ground employees to strategic leads. This process enabled police employees to express joint working significance and meaning through their experiences. Aligned to a CAS approach, the ontological foundations of ethnography accept that social life is not straightforward, precise or predictable. It is a method crucial to understanding complex social worlds and accepts the 'mess' and intricacy in everyday life. Crucially, ethnography is an ideal method to trace the workings of a CAS. Overall, the research design facilitates the emergence of key themes from first-hand experiences, forming the basis for further analysis and subsequent empirical discussion.

1.8 Research focus and objectives

There is a mass of literature focusing on what police and other agencies could do to improve joint working, but none has focused on the everyday complexities that police joint working entails. The focus of this study is intentionally on literature, research and practices of the police and joint working. It is acknowledged that there are a whole range of other professions involved in multiagency working, including local authorities, fire, health and non-statutory bodies. However, in this thesis, connections are reported only as they appear in a policing CAS. This is not to minimise the influence of these other professions, or different publics, and their practices. Rather it is to accentuate how they enter a policing CAS and in doing so, to enable reflections by these relevant others of how their relationships might also be understood or made differently.

The objectives of the project were to:

1) *Identify the utility of police joint working as a solution to social problems;*

2) *Investigate how joint work is accomplished using an ethnographic approach;*

3) *Contribute to understanding how joint working challenges might be approached differently.*

1.9 Research interest and motivation

My interest in multiagency working stems from my prior studies (psychology and social work), in addition to practice experience in education, mental health, domestic abuse and child protection settings. In practice, working together was not as smooth as (perhaps naively) I had envisaged. Firstly, there was a huge gap between working together on paper and the difficulties of joint working in practice. Secondly, the track record of joint working between public sector agencies, particularly influenced by media depictions of tragic incidents was poor to say the least. Third, the response to points one and two seemed to repeatedly result in developing more guidance, policies

and legislation, which were difficult to keep track of in fast-paced frontline environments.

As a master's degree student, I developed a research interest in understanding how in spite of increasing policy and legislative developments, joint working issues prevailed. From observations in practice, I formed the judgement that no one professional that I came across, aimed to do a 'bad' job of multiagency working. Legislation, policy and theory often played out very differently in the dynamics of practice. Yet the response to issues in joint working seemed to continue to focus primarily on imposing 'top-down' solutions. These experiences contributed to shaping the empirical and theoretical approach of this thesis.

1.10 Practical relevance and impact

The research is directly relevant to everyday police practice. This doctoral studentship is supported by the N8 Policing Research Partnership (N8 PRP[3]), which aims to build research co-production capacity. In line with the ESRC collaborative model, the project has been designed in conjunction with a policing partner and has entailed substantive knowledge exchange components, including early project focus meetings; quarterly update meetings; research briefings; and impact meetings. The research collaboration ensures that the project addresses problems of 21st century policing. This aligns with the view that policing research should be a co-production of knowledge; during which policing research should both inform and be informed by policing practice.

It has been the intention from the outset that the police officers and civilian staff who participated in my research would find it a useful and helpful experience, which would then have an impact on practice. In turn, this would hopefully improve the

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[3] N8 PRP website - https://n8prp.org.uk

service provided to the public. The research has produced ongoing impact in collaboration with the partner organisation, namely Lancashire Constabulary, including:

- A video exploring stalking from a victim perspective;

- Contributions to the child protection inspection action plan;

- Insights regarding the role of frontline supervisors;

- Guidance for the development of a child protection training package;

- A presentation on reflexivity in professional practice;

- Various briefings delivered to the public protection unit; evidence-based research hub; and the developing violence reduction unit;

- Ongoing contributions to the development of trauma-informed Lancashire[4];

- Ongoing work to co-develop a Lancashire Constabulary supervision model.

The project also brought about unintended impact. I was told on repeated occasions by different police officers and civilian staff that they were glad that the constabulary was supporting a researcher to speak to people working on the frontline. In particular, one officer commented: "*I'm glad someone's listening to us and seeing what it's like on the ground. I hope you're going to take these findings back and share them with the bosses*" (Dave, day 89). Employees expressed appreciation for the research process, particularly the chance to convey their perspectives *anonymously* to an 'outsider'. There were repeated comments regarding how the research has helped build bridges between frontline and senior officers. At times, I did feel like a mediator between operational

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[4] An initiative established in Lancashire in 2019, which aims to bring together agencies, including police, education, social care, youth justice, probation and health to embed a public health approach to violence prevention, including the development of trauma-informed workforce training.

police and strategic employees, a point which I return to in the discussion (Chapter Seven).

1.11 Thesis structure

This introductory chapter has situated the research within a wider context, including the ongoing drive towards integrated services. It has emphasised the relevance of a joint approach in policing and the timely nature of the research within a contemporary, changing policing landscape. To contextualise the current situation related legislation and policy have been indicated. The broader aims of the research have also been established.

Chapter Two provides a systematic literature review, focusing on existing literature in relation to joint working between the police and other organisations. The review highlights key themes and identifies gaps which have influenced the focus of this research.

The third chapter sets out the theoretical underpinnings of the research by advancing policing as a CAS. In doing so, the core components of a CAS are explained. A policing CAS draws on a number of related theories: systems theory, complexity theory, complex adaptive systems theory, chaos theory and an actor-network approach. The reason for drawing on not just one, but multiple theoretical approaches is to explain different facets of the research findings (Mähring *et al.*, 2004). Furthermore, bringing together different theoretical and conceptual resources establishes a more dynamic approach to understanding police partnerships, one which emphasises the complexity, constant evolution and influences of human and non-human factors. The chapter concludes with an outline of the research questions (see Section 3.8).

The fourth chapter outlines the methodological approach of the empirically based chapters. It begins by discussing the philosophical underpinnings, background and differences to classical ethnography, before exploring key considerations, including:

the research organisation, field setting, research sites, ethics, access, consent, confidentiality and data security. Explanation of the method of analysis is also provided. The chapter closes with reflections (self-reflection and reflections on the research paradigm, including validity, reliability and generalisability).

These reflections are followed by three chapters organised around key themes that emerged from an analysis of the data collected during 18-months of fieldwork. Within each 'main' theme are also central sub-themes (Figure 20). The first empirical chapter focuses on experiences of joint working for police employees. Findings raise insights into the fragmented, evolving, uncertain and intertwined nature of working together. These combined experiences give rise to feelings of a lack of control for police employees.

Chapter Six explores how joint working is influenced by various contexts, including personal, cultural and structural environments, through which joint working is practised. By taking a step back and exploring the 'bigger picture', the findings presented in the second empirical chapter emphasise the situated nature of joint work. In providing a contextualised and holistic perspective of policing generally, but particularly joint working as the focal topic of this thesis, ethnographic insights reveal how interconnected components give rise to progress and disruptions in working together, overlooked in existing joint working theory. These insights are pertinent in highlighting a need to consider how joint work, relationships and shared understandings and cultures, can be sustained in a changing landscape.

The seventh chapter unites the previous two chapters by opening with a discussion of the empirical findings, whilst highlighting the prevalence of change and 'churn'. Focus turns to summarise what can be learnt from a policing CAS and ethnographic approach. The latter part of the chapter outlines the research implications for joint working to the 'edge of chaos'. In particular, the discussion contributes suggestions as to how joint challenges might be approached differently. The research

provides evidence to promote the development of formalised supervision for police employees, as a source of stability through which employees can find ways to navigate change 'churn' and function at the 'edge of chaos'. Furthermore, joint supervision across agencies is proposed as a mechanism to underpin joint working.

The eighth and final chapter begins by responding to each of the research questions, before addressing the project objectives. The conclusion demonstrates how the research challenges and advances the joint working literature and fulfils the intended aim: *to provide a deeper and richer understanding of police joint working*.

2 Reconciling a compartmentalised literature

2.1 Introduction

Joint working discourse has proliferated in policing, the public sector and wider non-statutory organisations. This chapter aims to capture some of this abundant discourse by providing a literature review, which is divided into four key parts. The first part outlines and provides justification for how the review was undertaken, including inclusion and exclusion criteria, search terms and databases searched. Parts two to four draw on a systematic approach to summarise literature identified from over four decades. In particular, the findings presented in part two identify recurrent barriers and facilitators to joint working. However, much of what is known originates from a varied quality of somewhat dated and largely descriptive literature, which proposes hypothetical solutions. Often publications of primary research lack transparency regarding the methods, including sampling details for example (e.g. number of case files analysed or feedback sessions conducted). Several studies draw on only small samples or make judgements on the police, without consulting police employees themselves.

Whilst police consultation is not always necessary, it is seen as desirable. Empirical research tends to focus on specific projects (e.g. e-government systems) (Baines *et al.*, 2010), specialist departments (e.g. child protection) (Hallett and Birchall, 1992), particular models (e.g. co-location) (Atkinson, 2018) or involves single external agencies (e.g. ambulance service) (Charman, 2014), rather than endeavouring to understand the wider context in which joint working occurs.

Part three focuses on the 'effectiveness' of police joint working. The review identifies inconsistent understandings regarding what 'effective' joint working is or looks like in practice. At the same time, Chapter One of this thesis, has already identified the emphasis placed on joint working in legislation and policy, as a beneficial process. From the review it emerges that there are an abundance of barriers, and despite inconsistent understandings of 'effective' joint working, working together continues to be seen as optimal by policy makers.

The fourth part of the chapter turns to analyse the (notably limited) theoretical underpinnings of police joint working. The majority of literature is atheoretical, with the exception of 'communities of practice' (CoP) theory, which emphasises the central importance of shared organisational cultures in crossing boundaries and working together effectively. However, CoP is limited, in neglecting to take into account wider contextual influences, bypassing insights into the messiness of joint working. Thus, whilst CoP offers valuable insights into the importance of developing a shared culture, it is limited in terms of articulating how joint working is situated within the 'bigger picture' of policing, social life and the micro practices of its execution on the ground.

2.2 Part One – Literature review process

Rather than focusing on a particular policing problem, this paper updates and extends understandings provided by available literature reviews into joint working in child protection (e.g. Hallett and Birchall, 1992; Sloper, 2004; Frost, 2005) and crime and

disorder (Berry *et al.*, 2011). Advocating a move away from silo mentality (Fleming, 2010) - towards knowledge mobilisation across policing - the chapter consolidates cross-cutting themes from fields that intersect with policing relevant to joint working. These include: community safety, crime prevention, child welfare, youth justice, domestic abuse, sexual assault, asylum seeking, neighbourhood policing, anti-social behaviour, racial harassment, early intervention, mental health, serious and organised crime and counter terrorism. There is also a growing body of literature relating to police-mental health joint work particularly police-mental health triage schemes for instance.

Despite including any field of study involving joint working and policing, the majority of sources retrieved related to child protection. Thirty years ago, Stevenson (1989) noted that failure to work together often results in inadequate services and consequential suffering to many service users, yet there was an ascribed importance to child protection in terms of multidisciplinary work. She discussed how there is risk to life in many cases wider than child protection, for instance older adults living alone or the 'mentally ill'. This led her to question why more literature was dedicated to children, before suggesting that the publicity in part is '*an indication of social attitudes towards different groups*' (p.174). She argued that public concern about abused children, reflected by the media, exceeds other vulnerable groups. This may indeed explain the larger volume of literature dedicated to child protection. On the other hand, the prevalence of literature focusing on children's safeguarding might also be explained by the fact joint working was initially formalised and proceduralised in the child protection system, following the death of Maria Colwell.

A comparative critical summary of all 69 included texts was created, using the critical appraisal skills programme (CASP, 2018) checklist tools to form a guide to the analysis. For literature reviews, consideration was given to clarity regarding a focused topic or question; inclusion of relevant literature; assessment of the quality of the literature; feasibility of combining the results; as well as the clarity of the overall

findings from the review. For empirical work, critical summaries appraised the clarity of the research aims; the appropriateness of the methodology; the research design given the aims of the study; the recruitment strategy; data collection; relationships between the researcher and participants; ethical considerations; rigour of data analysis; clarity of findings; and overall value of the research. Whilst individual publications report on specific arrangements, the summary of the literature enables an overview of the quality of existing literature; consolidation of themes; and the development of more holistic insights into joint working.

2.2.1 Literature identification

Scoping searches identified the most commonly cited keywords (Table 1). These words and phrases formed search terms and were used in conjunction with one another to search different databases. Truncations were employed in order to search multiple iterations of a particular word stem.

Table 1: Review search terms

Tier 1: Police and associated terms	Tier 2: Joint work and associated terms
police	joint work*
policing	joined-up
law enforcement	multiagency
	multidisciplinary
	collaboration
	coordination
	coinvolvement
	community of practice
	interdisciplinary
	interorganisational
	interoperability

integration
interagency
working together
partnership
teamwork
network*

Employing the search terms outlined, a series of literature searches were conducted in February 2019 using computerised databases, which resulted in the retrieval of 291,946 initial citations. The materials were located through subject-specific search engines: HeinOnline International Collection, LexisLibrary, Social Care Online and SocINDEX. Interdisciplinary databases were also utilised: Academic Search Complete, Google Scholar, International Bibliography of Social Sciences, JSTOR, ProQuest, ScienceDirect, Scopus, Social Care Online and Web of Science. Search terms were limited to the title, abstract or keywords for each database. This reduced the number of hits and led to the identification of relevant literature, resulting in 128 citations. Additional citations were obtained via the reference lists of selected articles and author searching. The wider search strategy led to the retrieval of 32 additional citations, creating a total of 160 sources in the initial literature identification stage. An overview of the search process is highlighted in Figure 3, and will be discussed further in the following sections.
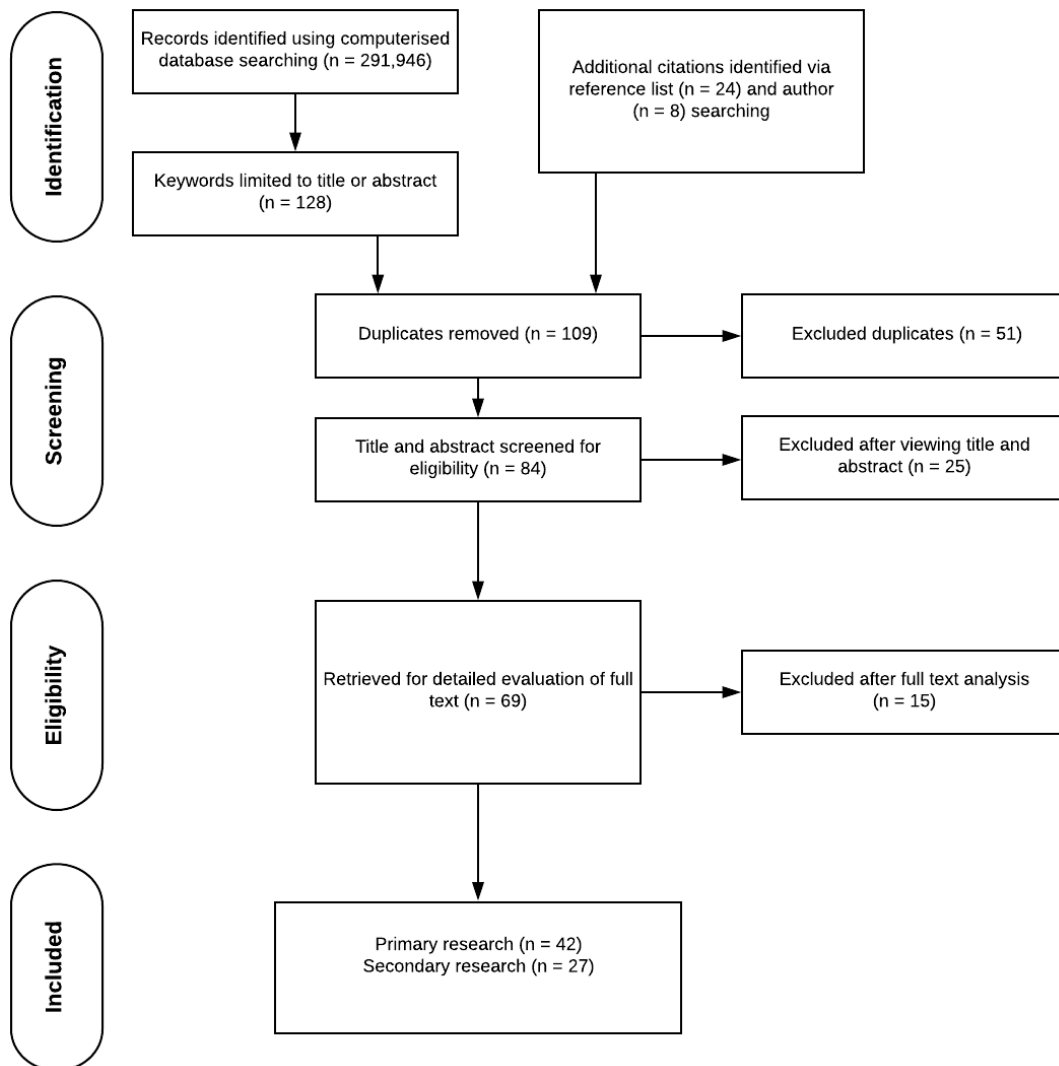
Figure 3: Literature review flowchart

2.2.2 Screening, eligibility and included literature

Of the 160 documents identified, 51 were duplicates providing a remaining total of 109 sources. Inclusion and exclusion criteria were established to screen for relevance. Literature directly relevant to the topic of policing and joint working was included. In order not to eliminate any potentially relevant sources, literature published in different countries in the English language were included, yielding results from: Australia,

Canada, England, Israel, Scotland, Sweden, the Netherlands, the U.S. and Wales. Whilst policing models and contextual factors vary (e.g. cultures, legislations and economies), the identification of broader geographical sources highlighted numerous consistent themes, and the international relevance of police partnership working. The search was not date limited, as it sought to capture joint working in policing over time. Sources beyond literature reviews, commercial publications (e.g. books or journal articles) or those relating to non-state policing were excluded. Whilst grey literature can provide an invaluable contribution, a preliminary search confirmed that the field of joint working is vast and thus, for a single chapter the systematic inclusion of grey literature would be unwieldy (Adams *et al*., 2016).

In light of the above inclusion criteria, the 109 titles and abstracts were screened for relevance, which resulted in the exclusion of 25 sources. All the 84 remaining texts were read in full to ascertain their relevance. Of these sources, 15 were excluded for not meeting the outlined criteria leaving a final total of 69 sources included in this literature review. Interviews and mixed methodologies characterised the majority of primary studies. Over a third of sources comprised of secondary analysis (see Table 2 for breakdown of literature in relation to methodology).

Table 2: Breakdown of source methodology

Methodology	Total no. of studies
Survey	8
Interviews	15
Mixed methods	13
Observational	3
Case study	1
Action research	2
Secondary analysis	27

2.2.3 Critical appraisal and analysis

The identified documents were uploaded to the qualitative data software programme Atlas.ti to support the organisation of materials and promote an iterative process to analysis. This cyclical approach to analysis would have been difficult to accomplish using handwritten notes, word processing or spreadsheets. There were three phases to coding the literature (Table 3).

Table 3: Literature coding

Coding Stage	Coding Activity
Stage 1: Open coding	A first attempt at systematically gathering together fragments that were of interest to the research.
Stage 2: Axial coding	Similar codes merged.
Stage 3: Selective coding	Data and codes revisited: concepts, relationships, patterns and emergent themes identified.

Critical analysis identified relationships between codes and concepts, which led to the identification of themes (Appendix A) deriving from a focus on the following topics prevalent within the literature: 1) *barriers and facilitators to forming partnerships between the police and other agencies*; 2) *the 'effectiveness' of multiagency working in policing*. These two topics form the structure for parts two and three of this literature review chapter.

2.3 Part Two – Barriers and facilitators to police joint working

2.3.1 Communication and information sharing

In terms of issues in communication between professionals, Naylor (1989) draws heavily on the Butler-Sloss inquiry into the events in Cleveland in her discussion paper, highlighting a lack of communication between agencies. Similarly, empirical research has identified communication issues as a barrier to joint working. Waterhouse and Carnie (1991) uncovered that in 20 per cent of 51 randomly selected cases of child sexual abuse, there were problems in relation to inter-agency communication, such as information sharing. Although the authors did not define what was meant by '*satisfactory communication*', they proposed that informal lines of communication between agencies were seen as more 'satisfactory' (p.377). In contrast, a U.S. empirically-based paper, recommended formal, written communication and agreements, which the authors argued allows for accountability (Sheppard and Zangrillo, 1996).

Further research has also emphasised the importance of communication for establishing police-social work relationships. In a qualitative study, Buchbinder and Eisikovits (2008) interviewed 25 senior social work and police staff in the field of domestic violence in Israel. The authors draw on a quotation from an interview with a social worker to propose that '*we need to keep talking so that everyone can explain their own position*' (p.6). From the evidence collected, Buchbinder and Eisikovits (p.6) assert that communication is '*necessary for maintaining clear-cut boundaries*'.

Communication was also a source of tension: police officers expressed a desire for '*less talk and more action*' from other professionals (Lardner, 1992, p.220). Social workers on the other hand were '*accustomed to discussing cases, worries, problems, experiences of stress with colleagues*' (p.220) and became dissatisfied with police reluctance to take part in discussions. Concerns arose from social workers who did not

feel able to talk to police colleagues. This led to feelings of isolation and lack of peer support. Part of the frustration was police '*defensiveness*' to '*constructive*' (p.220) criticism, which social workers offered in attempt to improve practices. Social work practitioners described how this contributed to difficulties communicating their viewpoints, resulting in a lack of honesty and openness. However, the latter findings were based on only a small cohort of a total number of 13 police officers and child protection social workers.

Information sharing was raised as a consistent issue across time, place and professionals, including for example police (Treger, 1972; 1976; Treger *et al.,* 1974), community partners (Blagg *et al*., 1988), education (Webb and Vulliamy, 2001) and social work (Pinkney *et al*., 2008). Over the years, there have been a range of concerns regarding information sharing, from professionals' ability to hold information in confidence (Treger, 1972; Treger *et al.,* 1974) to the secure storage of information (Webb and Vulliamy, 2001). Reflecting on his own experience as director of a three-year multiagency project in the U.S., Treger (1972, 1974) reported that over time as trust became established information sharing improved. However, other empirical data suggests that information sharing has remained problematic. In the field of crime prevention in three British localities, Blagg *et al*. (1988, p.213) found that community wardens expressed anxiety over sharing information with police as it might lead them to be '*alienated*' from the public living on the estate. In child protection, Birchall and Hallett (1995) identified that over 50 per cent of respondents who completed a large-scale postal survey (including the police) had concerns over confidentiality when working with other agencies. Studying crime prevention in schools, Webb and Vulliamy (2001) conducted interviews that captured police views that confidentiality was problematic. Despite the information being potentially very useful, '*copies [of 145 police forms] were not sent to schools or shared with teachers because it was thought that they might not appreciate their confidential nature*' (p.327). No detail was provided

as to whether this was the view of a single police officer or a shared perspective presented consistently by (the still small sample of) four officers involved in the research. Physical security was also seen as a reason for not sharing information, as school offices were frequently broken into.

More recent concerns attributed a lack of information sharing to confusion about what details could be legitimately shared and misunderstandings regarding data protection legislation, which were found to be prevalent (Pinkney *et al.*, 2008; Berry et *al.,* 2011; Crawford and Cunningham, 2015). In the first decade of the 21st century, information sharing topics widened to focus on information technology and electronic recording systems (e.g. the Integrated Children's System and Police Information Technology), working in isolation from each other (Hudson, 2005). One particular dilemma discussed in Hudson's commentary-based article centred around the need to balance safeguarding concerns with individuals' rights to privacy and confidentiality. In July 2003 to October 2004, an evaluation of local e-government projects took place using multi-methods including: transcripts of meetings, fieldnotes of observations, project documentation (e.g. minutes of meetings), interviews with eight participants, a questionnaire completed by 108 practitioners and feedback sessions with an unspecified number of participants. Findings yielded variable but predominantly negative results describing practitioner '*fatigue'*, '*lack of buy in'* and complaints of lack of '*user friendliness'* (Baines *et al.*, 2010, p.26). New systems – initially designed to provide a structure for the exchange and management of client information – were perceived as a burden, resulting in some employees avoiding difficult tasks to make their workloads manageable (Broadhurst *et al.,* 2009).

2.3.2 Joint training

Perceptions regarding joint training for joint working were mixed. Early critical commentaries contended that training did little more than bring people together

(Stevenson, 1994), accentuated professional differences, could engender bitterness (Thomas, 1994), whilst dynamic and contextual features of practice were perceived to overcome classroom learning (Fielding and Conroy, 1992). In their postal survey, Birchall and Hallett (1995) found that 41 per cent of professionals (police, social workers, health visitors and paediatric junior doctors) did not have any experience of interprofessional training at all. In spite of the difficulties in embedding effective joint training, the majority of authors continued to posit that multiagency training was crucial to the development of joint working partnerships (Jeffries, 1989; Hallett and Birchall, 1992; Lardner, 1992; Patterson, 2004; Pinkney *et al.*, 2008; Berry *et al.,* 2011; Crawford and Cunningham, 2015).

2.3.3 Stereotypes

The literature raised repeated concerns over stereotypical depictions of professionals (particularly police officers and social workers). Early literature reported police descriptions of social workers as '*social reformers'*, '*perpetual students'* (Kilby and Constable, 1975, p.49) and '*bleeding hearts'* (Parkinson, 1980, p.12), revealing impatience towards their '*namby-pamby'* (Hallett and Birchall, 1992, p.138), '*pussyfooting approach, distorted pity and sympathy towards offenders'* (Thomas, 1994, p.2). At the same time, social workers perceived police as '*rigid'*, '*punitive'* and '*intolerant of any deviant group'* (Kilby and Constable, 1975, p.47). Numerous primary research studies (quantitative and qualitative) and commentary articles pointed to conflicting views, stemming from incompatible police and social work personalities as authoritarian and do-gooders respectively (Trojanowitcz, 1971; Kilby and Constable, 1975; Parkinson, 1980; Thomas, 1994). Police were labelled a force, whilst social workers were seen to provide a service (Hallett and Birchall, 1992; Buchbinder and Eisikovits, 2008). The extent to which these perceptions continue, or reflect wider public attitudes and critique, remains unanswered. Meanwhile, more contemporary research into police partnerships with other agencies have yielded disparate findings.

Charman (2014, p.108) found that the relationship between police officers and ambulance staff was '*unremittingly positive*'. From a total of 45 semi-structured interviews, ambulance personnel were described as '*in tune with police*', '*like-minded*' and '*great*', whilst police officers reported a relationship of '*natural affinity*', '*reciprocal respect*' that was both '*friendly and fun*' (p.108). These diverse findings reinforce the need to better understand sources of heterogeneity and context in joint working.

2.3.4 Conflicting purposes

Numerous authors highlighted continuous issues with agencies reconciling conflicting purposes, objectives, aims, goals and priorities (Stevenson, 1989; Fielding and Conroy, 1992; Pearson *et al*., 1992; James-Hanman, 2000; Crawford and Cunningham, 2015). A comprehensive literature review carried out by Hallett and Birchall (1992) found that whilst shared agendas were established in protocols, it was less easy to agree on how to achieve them in practice. The review pointed to confusion in professional roles as an obstacle for joint working (e.g. Stevenson, 1989). Insufficient knowledge (Birchall and Hallett, 1995); lack of clarity (Hallett, 1995); key differences (Kilby and Constable, 1975); and overlap (Thomas, 1994) were reported to incite multiagency tensions. Early scholars suggested the primary duty of the police ('law enforcing') conflicted with the social work duty to supervise, advise, assist and befriend children (Kilby and Constable, 1975). For others, police-social work roles have never been clear-cut. Recent figures suggest that 'non-crime' work is on the increase (Institute for Government, 2019), with estimates indicating that 80 per cent of police calls are non-crime related (College of Policing, 2015). However, empirical research conducted for the Home Office in the '70s found that police time has consistently been taken up with social services work (Comrie and King, 1975). That said, the figure was noted to be only 35 per cent of police duties at the time. What has remained unchanged is the unresolved dilemma between arguments favouring clearly defined or flexible roles.

2.3.5 Power

The concept of 'power' was raised as both a blocker and enabler to joint working (e.g. Pearson *et al*., 1992; Frost 2005; Crawford and Cunningham, 2015). Sampson *et al*. (1988, p.479-480) use the phrase the '*conspiracy model of multiagency working*' to describe police power and dominance as resulting in the force '*taking over*' in a form of '*total policing*' and increasing social control rather than cooperative interagency working. In their two-year fieldwork in four localities (three in London; one in Lancashire) involving police, social services, housing and probation, the authors found both evidence that supports and contradicts the conspiracy model. On the one hand, the police attempted to shape and adapt multiagency agendas to their own interests and preoccupations. However, on the other hand, other agencies resisted various police-led agendas. Thus, Sampson *et al*. (1988, p.480) highlight the '*complexity within state agencies and between them which the conspiratorial model does not recognise*'. Contrary to depictions of power as boundary forming, divisive and restraining, power has also been conceptualised in the literature as creative; a means of getting things done through human actions (Crawford and Jones, 1995).

2.3.6 Relationships

Linked to making progress, relationships were perceived to be at the heart of joint working. Goodwill and networking at both local and strategic levels were argued to be fundamental to mediating tensions (Kilby and Constable, 1975; Jeffries, 1989; Lardner, 1992; Cambridge and Parkes, 2006; Buchbinder and Eisikovits, 2008; Westwood, 2012; Crawford and Cunningham, 2015). For example, from a large-scale qualitative study, involving 92 adult protection social workers across 26 local authorities, Pinkey *et al*. (2008, p.16) drew on a quotation from one social worker who summarised that when '*dealing with the police*' it was about '*goodwill [and] networking because it hasn't really been formalised*'. However, in practice relationships were typically disrupted through staffing changes. One police officer (drawn from a large sample of 81

interviewees and 90 questionnaire respondents) reported receiving phone calls for his predecessor and felt treated as an outsider until he or she had built close relationships over four and a half years, yet he expected to be moved in the next six months (Hallett, 1995).

2.3.7 Trust, time and mutual respect

Trust was a key feature associated with good quality relationships. The literature centred around barriers (a lack of trust) and facilitators for developing trust (sharing problems, getting to know other professionals, time, experience and mutual respect) (Kilby and Constable, 1975; Buchbinder and Eisikovits, 2008; Westwood, 2012). Time was argued to be a cardinal resource (time to trust, time to talk and time to do) and a shortfall (time to gain skills, time for training, time for practical collaboration and lack of time to develop relationships) (Hallett and Birchall, 1992; Lardner, 1992). Numerous time-related tensions arose, including: different shift patterns (Holdaway, 1986), judgements regarding the urgency of work (Hallett, 1995), conflicting timescales (Lardner, 1992), lack of time (Cooper *et al.*, 2009), disagreements about the timing of involvement (Jeffries, 1989) and different agencies prioritising time to different tasks (Pinkney *et al.*, 2008). Observations identified that a constant duty over 24-hours a day, separated police officers from 9 to 5 civilian workers and was a common source of unresolved frustration (Holdaway, 1986). A police officer requiring assistance with a 'mentally ill' person expressed: '*Fucking Social Workers. They never deem [sic] anybody and you can never get hold of them anyway because all the nutters we get are outside office hours*' (p.150).

A number of publications critiqued the eagerness of the police approach to seek out immediate solutions too quickly and simplistically, whilst social workers supported long-term commitment (Kilby and Constable, 1975; Cooper *et al.*, 2009). Accordingly, sergeant and inspector respect from lower ranks was found to be influenced by their ability to make quick decisions, contributing tensions to joint working (Holdaway,

1986). A case study carried out in Kent, involving 90 participants from health and social care, found that when police officers were dedicated to specialist roles (e.g. child protection), joint working was more timely and helpful (Cambridge and Parkes, 2006).

Alongside time, trust and mutual respect, engagement and experience were identified as vital to cooperative behaviours (Kilby and Constable, 1975; Hallett, 1995; Frost, 2005; Berry *et al*., 2011; Crawford and Cunningham, 2015). A police officer interviewed in Hallett's (1995) study explained that if trusted, a social worker's decision was accepted, if less experienced they would consider it more thoroughly. Crawford and Cunningham (2015) suggest that often each profession perceives their understandings as shared by all, when their underlying tacit assumptions are incompatible. The authors therefore postulate that partnerships require a move away from vertical, hierarchical, bureaucratic, authoritative and rule-driven systems towards building horizontal links, across organisations through a networked approach. Drawing on secondary sources, in a discussion section of their empirical article, Fleming and Rhodes (2005) propose that networks are characterised by diplomacy, trust and reciprocity. Findings regarding the importance of reciprocity were supported in semi-structured interviews with 22 ambulance staff and 23 police officers, from which Charman (2014, 2015) identified the importance of exchange-based behaviour, including sharing skills, respect, rapport and mutual understandings, founded upon trust.

2.3.8 Shared space

Numerous sources pointed to informal (e.g. canteens), formal (e.g. meetings), unplanned (e.g. the street) and planned (e.g. telephone calls) shared spaces as pertinent for multiagency working (Treger, 1972; 1976; Treger *et al*., 1974; Jeffries, 1989; Hudson, 2005; Charman, 2014; 2015). A number of large-scale empirical studies found that smaller spaces enabled closer working relationships, on first name terms, although

risked professionals making judgements on personalities, not skills, with reluctance to tease out areas of conflict (Birchall and Hallett, 1995; Hallett, 1995; Sheppard and Zangrillo, 1996). Other sources (literature reviews and interviews) suggested that co-located teams were an effective mechanism to enable transformative partnerships (Frost, 2005; Berry *et al*., 2011; Crawford and L'Hoiry, 2015). Yet at the same time co-location resulted in unintended consequences, as organisations on the periphery became further isolated (Frost, 2005; Atkinson, 2018).

2.3.9 Legal and therapeutic interventions

The balance between control and compassion remains unresolved and continues to impact on joint working. In a control-orientated model the focus is on implementing the law. In contrast, the compassion driven model focuses on therapeutic intervention. Literature identified that policing is dominated by law enforcement, catching villains and punishment, while social work is rehabilitative, therapeutic and treatment-focused in outlook (Wilk and McCarthy, 1986; Saunders, 1988; Hallett and Birchall, 1992; Trute *et al*., 1992; Thomas, 1994; Hicks and Tite, 1998; Frost, 2005). Other research, conducted in Israel, proposed that agency roles have shifted, with police advocating a therapy-orientated approach, whilst social workers have moved towards a more punitive position (Buchbinder and Eisikovits, 2008). Studying the relationships of 14 police officers and social workers through semi-structured interviews in a British context, Garrett (2004, p.91) identified that shifting roles run the risk of professionals becoming *'de-skilled'*. Years prior, Hallett and Stevenson (1980) questioned whether the issue of punishment versus rehabilitation was an interprofessional issue or a reflection of wider societal debates.

2.3.10   Conflict and consensus

There also remains dispute as to whether conflict or consensus are prerequisites for joint working (Westwood, 2012). A minority of literature proposed that meaningful

intervention relied upon a resolution of differences and consensus in professional ideologies (Naylor, 1989; Fielding and Conroy, 1992). However, the majority of authors argued that a degree of friction was healthy (e.g. Holdaway, 1986; Stevenson, 1994; Crawford and Jones, 1995; Buchbinder and Eisikovits, 2008; Crawford and Cunningham, 2015) and that joint working does not mean doing away with difference but living with diversity (Frost, 2005). However, Thomas (1994) warned that conflict should not occur at the expense of providing a service to the public.

2.3.11 Gender

Interagency working has been found to be influenced by gender (Sampson *et al*., 1991; McCarthy, 2013). Police forces across all countries in which research in this field has been undertaken are predominantly male, regulated by a patriarchal organisational structure, akin to the military (e.g. Sampson *et al.,* 1991; Franklin, 2007; Cooper *et al*., 2009; Atkinson, 2017). In comparison, other agencies (e.g. domestic violence and social services), are largely informed by feminist perspectives, founded upon human rights, social justice and advocating for the oppressed (e.g. Healy, 2009; O'Brien, 2011; Hall, 2015). Further, interview data highlighted that it was not uncommon for female probation and social workers to recount experiences or feelings of sexual harassment from police officers (Sampson *et al.,* 1991). One female court officer employed by a social services department recounted:

> *'I have been, and do get harassed by the police… some give you a lot of sexual harassment… It can make a difference to working relationships. I was once locked in a cell by a police officer and he wouldn't let me out and made sexual jokes about me in front of my client and all the other prisoners'* (p.128).

The authors found that positive interagency comments were of female officers who were helpful, understanding, skilled and closely aligned on moral issues.

2.3.12 Management, decision-making and daily practice

Management and leadership were considered necessary but often problematic for joint working (Berry *et al*., 2011). Police officers reported inconsistent decision-making by social work managers (Pinkney *et al*., 2008). A number of other empirical studies exploring British policing, found that police look for '*black and white*' (Holdaway, 1986, p.144; Lardner, 1992, p.221) evidence or '*facts*' (Lardner, 1992, p.221), whilst social workers introduced '*grey areas*' (Holdaway, 1986, p.144; Lardner, 1992, p.221), '*theory*' and looked '*a lot deeper into the dynamics of the family - and why something had happened*' when forming judgements (Lardner, 1992, p.221).

Similarly, Buchbinder and Eisikovits' (2008, p.5) concluded - from research involving a total of 25 interviewed social workers and police officers - that police officers need '*concrete instructions handed down to them in the form of menus that allow for no personal judgement or interpretation*'. In Cooper *et al.*'s (2008) Australian research exploring police-social work relations in the field of bikie-gang domestic violence and sexual offences, the researchers found that cases identified as most likely to create problematic relationships between social workers and police were the ones where people did not fit into one box or the other (i.e. where a person was both a victim and a perpetrator of crime). These grey areas led to differences in approaches. Social workers were concerned with providing support, whilst police saw the female victims as a source of criminal intelligence. However, the study by Cooper *et al*. (2009) was based only on a small sample of 10 social workers and police were not interviewed as part of the study.

Partnerships were found to be more developed at managerial levels (Crawford and Cunningham, 2015). Middle managers and policy makers suggested that strategically there was recognition of the need for partnerships, which was lacking in day-to-day practice (Birchall and Hallett, 1995; Buchbinder and Eisikovits, 2008).

Literature drawn together from a range of areas including crime prevention, child abuse, juvenile crime, domestic violence, drug misuse, racial attacks and sexual offences found that multiagency agendas arose from well-intentioned but naïve theory, driven to foster and improve co-operation, without sufficient consideration of the actualities and potential conflicts on the ground (Sampson *et al*., 1988; Pearson *et al.,* 1992; Cooper *et al.,* 2009). Strategic plans played out vastly differently in practice (Blagg and Stubbs, 1988; Sampson *et al.,* 1988; Thomas, 1994). Lower rank occupational culture acted *'as a lens through which [joint] policy directives are refracted in one direction or another'* (Holdaway, 1986, p.140). Thus, interagency working was argued to be required on macro- and micro-levels, including the legislative, strategic, formal tier and on the ground (Buchbinder and Eisikovits, 2008).

2.3.13   Responsibility and confusion

According to Waterhouse and Carnie (1990), who conducted 100 interviews divided equally between police and social workers, no one seemed prepared to take responsibility, leading to indecision and uncertainty. Role confusion, blurred lines of accountability and lack of procedural directives and leadership were reported to lead to agencies circumventing responsibility and engaging in multiagency approaches on an ad-hoc basis (Webb and Vulliamy, 2001; Frost, 2005; Buchbinder and Eisikovits, 2008; Berry *et al*., 2011). In contrast, over the years it has been argued that the police tend to initiate coordination (Horstmann, 1985), dominate other agencies (Sampson *et al.,* 1988; Skinns, 2008) and are *'particularly prone… to do it all'* (Crawford and Cunningham, 2015, p.81). One proposed antidote was the need for commitment from all agencies (Jeffries, 1989; Hallett, 1995; Frost, 2005). Other potential solutions offered were clearer area-wide policies (Waterhouse and Carnie, 1990; Crawford and Cunningham, 2015) and shared planning, commissioning, values, goals and procedures (Frost, 2005; Cambridge and Parkes, 2006).

2.3.14   Resources and change

Successful joint working was declared to drain resources (Naylor, 1989; Fielding and Conroy, 1992). Whilst a desire to maximise resources may lie at the heart of coordinated planning and integrated service delivery (Hallett and Stevenson, 1980; James-Hanman, 2000), empirical research concurred that at the same time, resource shortages (e.g. lack of police officers, secretarial support and venues for case conferences), constrained multiagency working (Fielding and Conroy, 1992; Birchall and Hallett, 1995; Hallett, 1995).

Incessant change was another relevant issue. In their literature review of coordination in child protection, Hallett and Birchall (1992, p.302) questioned the feasibility of aligning the discrepant '*nuts and bolts'* of a network of large organisations that are constantly changing due to frequent reorganisation of services. Staffing changes resulted in bridges having to be frequently rebuilt to re-establish trust (Crawford and Cunningham, 2015), which was proposed to contribute to stress and burnout (Buchbinder and Eisikovits, 2008).

2.3.15   Police culture(s)

Many of the barriers and facilitators related to police cultural characteristics, which were reported to include an action-orientation, crime-fighting image, imposing order, catching villains and making quick decisions (see for example, Holdaway, 1986). Interview findings from a sample of 25 participants (including police officers) found that differences in occupational cultures, such as police secrecy, prevented the development of trusting relationships (Buchbinder and Eisikovits, 2008). Boundaries were argued to arise as professionals were often known for what makes their roles distinctive, as opposed to what brings them together (Frost, 2005), including a unique body of knowledge, code of ethics and values, and different professional qualifications to gain entry. Hester (2011) conceptualised the contrasting ideological perspectives as

deriving from different professional 'planets', each of which have their own background (history, cultures, assumptions, policies and legislation), thresholds of harm and perspectives. However, literature suggested that values, attitudes and behaviours were not only acquired through professional socialisation but could be highly influenced by an intersection of social characteristics that individuals brought to their respective organisations (e.g. age, sex, gender, race and class) (Stevenson, 1989; Thomas, 1994; Cambridge and Parkes, 2006).

2.3.16   Summary

A number of key features have been identified as essential to joint working, yet often create obstacles due to their absence or associated issues. These include (but are not limited to): communication, information sharing, training, labour division, roles, responsibilities, stereotypes, prejudices, objectives, goals, aims, priorities, decision making, procedural directives, leadership, strategic direction, policies, procedures, guidelines, resources, relationships, trust, experience, commitment, time, technology, power, control and compassion orientated models, professional backgrounds, ideologies, cultures, conflict, consensus, gender, contact, change, staffing, boundaries and space. Whilst individual empirical studies, tend to focus on specific elements of joint working (e.g. training, communication or co-location), what is clear from the overview of the literature, is that these elements are connected. For example, time was crucial to develop trust and relationships. Thus, Crawford and Cunningham (2015) call for a move away from hierarchical, bureaucratic, authoritative and rule-driven systems towards a recognition of connections; a networked approach (Crawford and Cunningham, 2015).

At the same time, much of what we know originates from a varied quality of somewhat dated, descriptive literature, proposing hypothetical solutions, or reporting perceptions of specialist departments (e.g. child protection) (e.g. Birchall and Hallett,

1995), particular models (e.g. co-location) (e.g. Atkinson, 2018) and involve single external agencies (e.g. ambulance service) (e.g. Charman, 2014). The majority of sources construct a treatise of how joint working ought to be, rather than revealing how multiagency working actually is. Whilst the existing literature provides key insights into factors which positively and/or negatively influence joint working, they do not address how such influences are interrelated to wider contextual factors (including structural dynamics). Resultantly, a more profound insight into the *'unspoken'* (Crawford and Cunningham, 2015, p.78) and messy *'realities'* (Law, 2004, p.6) of joint working practices is required, one that aims to contribute greater comprehension of the role of the individual, and structural influences, in the process of working together. This relies upon deeper engagement with the experiences of people carrying out the process of joint working in practice. Therefore, the following research questions arise (see Section 3.8 for full list): *What is it to experience the process of joint working for police employees? To what extent do joint working experiences correspond with understandings of police joint working in existing literature?*

2.4 Part Three – The 'effectiveness' of police joint working

The literature provides a mixed picture regarding the effectiveness of joint working. Some sources suggest very little progress, others propose considerable improvements. According to Crawford and Cunningham (2015, p.71):

> *'Whilst much has changed in the intervening years to facilitate and embed partnership working, the goal of a genuine joined-up, holistic, and coordinated response to crime and disorder seems as stubbornly elusive as ever'.*

Obstacles are argued to be more *'substantial, entrenched and ingrained'* than acknowledged and an *'absence of genuinely critical debate about the processes involved in delivering multiagency partnerships'* may impede achieving a *'genuine*

partnership approach' in practice (Crawford and Cunningham, 2015, p.78). Development of good practice is suggested to require recognition and further exploration of many of the unspoken problems that practitioners face.

In stark contrast, a second body of literature cautions against outdated perceptions regarding joint working issues. From their literature review, Cross *et al*. (2005) found a decline in conflicts that fuelled earlier difficulties and suggested the shibboleth that police cannot work with other agencies should retire. In support, O'Neill and McCarthy (2014) presented positive findings, arguing that many changes have taken place over the years altering the way partnerships are understood and implemented. Partnerships were said to have become '*an institutionalised part of everyday police work'* (McCarthy and O'Neill, 2014, p.243). Interviews found police officers perceive partnerships as '*effective, crucial to their work and, at times, enjoyable'* (O'Neill and McCarthy, 2014, p.143). Rather than police culture preventing joint working, the 'new' pragmatism displayed by officers was found to complement it. The interviews and observations upon which these results were founded, involved mainly early intervention, prevention and neighbourhood policing. At the time of these successful observations, there had been a rise in neighbourhood policing and focus on community partnerships, which since the 2008 recession have been steadily eroded (HMIC, 2014a). The authors acknowledged that police in other departments may not be as open-minded to working with partner agencies.

More critical accounts have suggested that professionals make politically correct statements about good intentions and willingness to collaborate in conversations and interviews, which do not result in clear activity or improvements to partnerships in practice (Neyroud, 1992; Buchbinder and Eisikovits, 2008). Other research highlighted that the effectiveness of partnerships depended on individual practitioners and their level of engagement (Cooper *et al*., 2009). In reviewing the effectiveness of partnerships in a crime and disorder context, Berry *et al*. (2011) found pockets of excellent practice

and innovation, although these reports were evidentially limited in scope, with many relying on anecdotal accounts that agencies had come together to improve planning and interventions. Others critiqued inconsistencies in approaches and suggested that local variations can result in a postcode lottery (Davies and Biddle, 2017). None of the studies could attribute efficacy to partnership working alone. In the context of domestic violence, Stanley and Humphreys (2014) focused on multiagency risk assessment in the U.K. and Australia. From their secondary analysis, the authors proposed that some '*key obstacles remain*' (p.83), such as developing common risk assessment tools.

Notably, effectiveness is conceptualised and measured in different ways within the literature, making it difficult to draw findings. Research has judged effectiveness by focusing on a consensus of professional values, clear perceptions of the division of labour (Hallett, 1995); specific projects of innovation, practitioner perceptions (Reece-Smith and Kirkby, 2013); reductions in numbers of children interviewed regarding abuse, clarification of professional roles and the establishment of a support group (Moran-Ellis and Fielding, 1996). Others deemed success in accordance with the 'level' of joint working (Sundqvist *et al.*, 2015). Using Horwath and Morrison's (2007, 2011) five typology (communication, cooperation, coordination, coalition and integration), most collaboration was found to be at the lower end of the spectrum, suggesting a need for stronger collaborations (Sundqvist *et al.*, 2015).

More recently, in the field of mental health, a systematic review of police-mental health co-response captured mixed findings, outcomes and approaches: half the studies found an increase in hospitalisation, half found a reduction; there was a lack of evidence of service user perceptions; providers held positive perceptions and valued joint mental health triage, yet criticised operational hours and lack of staff availability; costs to police reduced, whilst health providers' costs increased (Puntis *et al.*, 2018). Another systematic review reported a decrease in arrest and jail time; as well as improved routes to mental health treatment (Kane *et al.*, 2018).

Overall, understandings regarding the effectiveness of coordination on outcomes remains limited due to the multifaceted nature of multiagency approaches; differing measures of impact; and paucity of outcome data. The evidence continues to lack strength: '*too often schemes are judged successful simply because they exist and have broken down barriers between personnel from different agencies*' (Blagg and Stubbs, 1988, p.15) - without understanding of the service received by the public - suggesting a need for more critical research and analytical evidence (Sampson *et al.*, 1988; Cross *et al.,* 2005; Jacobs, 2010; Kane *et al.,* 2018).

In summary, part three of this chapter has identified inconsistent understandings regarding what 'effective' joint working is or looks like in practice. Meanwhile, legislation and policy emphasise the beneficial (if not essential) nature of joint working (as outlined in Chapter One). Given the incongruous findings and ongoing debates, the following research question aims to explore (see Section 3.8 for full list): *What can be learnt from the ethnographic insights of informants to help better understand how joint working might work better for policing?* The literature review will now turn to theoretical insights into police joint working to understand on what basis 'effective' joint working is argued to be facilitated within existing accounts.

2.5 Part Four – 'Communities of practice' theory

Whilst the majority of literature is atheoretical, 'communities of practice' (CoP) theory proposes that cultures are not organisationally exclusive (Frost, 2005; Charman, 2014; Charman, 2015; Crawford and L'Hoiry, 2017). Focusing on partnerships between ambulance staff and police officers, Charman (2014, 2015) identified that mutual cultural traits can develop through a working relationship, which acts as the cement that bonds different organisations together. 'Boundary crossing' has been coined to describe the working relationship across occupational divides (Crawford and L'Hoiry, 2017), facilitated through shared characteristics, including for example humour and

storytelling (Charman, 2015). Adopting a CoP framework, situated learning has been reported to occur between multi-professionals, through shared social and cultural interactions, communication and exchange-based behaviour (Charman, 2014).

Originally coined by Lave and Wenger (1991) and later refined by Wenger (1998), CoP is a learning theory, which hypothesises that social interaction and mutual activity are key to learning. In this theory, collective knowledge is produced in the context of practice by people who are defined by their commitment and engagement in a process of shared learning in a shared domain (a shared interest, joint space and network of connections). In the case of police joint working the domain of interest might be child welfare or adult safeguarding (for example). The effectiveness of a CoP arises from shared interactions, learning, resources, experiences, tools, recurring problems, stories and humour (Wenger *et al*., 2002). These shared practices require sustained interaction and time (Wenger and Wenger-Trayner, 2015). Whilst formal training might contribute, learning is argued to be largely based on experiential knowledge, which arises during daily routines, not formal or prescribed procedures. It is not a mandate to work together that forms the practice but the community's own response to a mandate. From a social learning theory perspective, partnership working is never final, it must be continually worked out, re-defined and re-negotiated (Wenger, 1998).

Members of a CoP will belong to various different, overlapping and networked groups, whereby the boundaries are not clear and static but indiscrete, changing and overlapping. Wenger (1998, p.127) terms these '*constellations of interconnected practices*', although with relevance to the present study, others use the term networked policing (e.g. Crawford and L'Hoiry, 2017). Charman (2014, p.107) points out that a police officer might belong to a whole host of communities, including '*public services, emergency services, law enforcement, a particular force, a specific division… and firearms*'. Through situated learning, Charman found that police officers and ambulance staff crossed organisational boundaries and became members of a CoP through mutual

goals, observations, interactions, shared experiences and communal resources. This included communication and exchange-based behaviour, whereby both police officers and ambulance staff shared skills, for example, and the benefits of working together were reciprocated. Charman (2014) concluded by recommending that organisational change should focus on cultural interoperability, alongside the typically favoured procedural changes (e.g. technological solutions to interagency working). The shared culture observed between police and ambulance services was found to be bounded to those professions. That said, Crawford and L'Hoiry (2017) have since pointed to the potentials of boundary crossing in safeguarding children.

In summary, the fourth part of the chapter has analysed the limited theoretical underpinnings of police joint working. The majority of literature is atheoretical, with the exception of CoP theory, which emphasises the central importance of shared organisational cultures in crossing boundaries and working together effectively. Notwithstanding the importance of mutual activity, shared experiences and reciprocal behaviours, the CoP literature is limited, in neglecting to take into account wider contextual influences on joint working. Furthermore, CoP overlooks the lack of time and frequent changes, which often mean sustained interactions are impractical. By highlighting these limitations, it is argued that whilst CoP offers valuable insights into the importance of developing a shared culture, it is limited in terms of articulating the impact of heterogeneity and context on joint working. In light of these reflections, the following research question arises (see Section 3.8 for full list): *How do the ethnographic insights gathered within the research differ to how joint working is depicted within police joint working theory?*

2.6 Concluding remarks

This literature review chapter has summarised and synthesised findings from 69 papers and books. The summary identified that literature tends to focus on barriers, facilitators

and the effectiveness of police joint working. Individual publications often report on isolated components of joint working (e.g. training) or specific arrangements (e.g. co-location). However, the summary of the literature provides a more holistic picture of current understandings. This overview begins to shed light on the interconnected nature of elements of working together. For example, relationships require time and trust to be developed. Once relationships are established, commitment increases. However, staff changes mean that these relationships are not always sustained over time, leading to professionals having to continually invest efforts in re-establishing relationships; an unremitting process which has been found to contribute to stress and burnout (Buchbinder and Eisikovits, 2008). Whilst there have been significant changes to the bureaucracy of joint working, and emphasis on promoting partnership arrangements through different approaches (e.g. co-location, e-governance), progress remains limited; many of the issues remain consistent over time and across fields of study (e.g. child protection and crime prevention).

The review exposed ongoing debates in understanding what 'effective' joint working means and what this might look like in practice. The majority of sources identified prevailing issues (e.g. Crawford and Cunningham, 2015), some suggested marked improvements (e.g. McCarthy and O'Neill, 2014) and others provided a mixed picture between progress and unresolved dilemmas (Berry *et al*., 2011). Furthermore, the majority of accounts are limited in explaining how personal, cultural and structural factors interact and why despite presenting an ongoing issue, for at least three decade so many issues appear to be unresolved. The key argument is that current understandings and study of police joint working are restricted in their elaboration of the complexity of joint working. What can be ascertained from the review is that the effectiveness of joint working between the police and other agencies remains open to debate. Resultantly, it is evident that a different approach to the study of contemporary joint working is required to tap into the under-researched experiences of police officers

and police staff as they occur in practice. Findings indicate a need for further in-depth, attentive and longitudinal research to dig deeper into the 'unspoken' and messy practicalities of joint working implementation, to understand how oppositional discourses continue and how partnerships might work better for the police.

Comprehending joint working from such a perspective necessitates an alternative approach to its study than is currently afforded within the literature reviewed in parts two to four of this chapter. In response, the subsequent chapter will focus on the theoretical development of policing as a 'complex adaptive system', in order to facilitate an opportunity to tease out the dynamic processes of joint working. In doing so, this thesis will demonstrate that joint working is a multifaceted, co-evolving and volatile component of policing as a complex adaptive system.

3 Advancing policing as a complex adaptive system

3.1 Introduction

Chapter One (introductory chapter) highlighted a tendency to place blame on individuals and organisations in cases of 'multiagency error', with lack of deeper exploration of the complexities involved. It was argued that attempts to provide a more transparent and accountable service have created growing procedural and psychological pressures, leading to increasing bureaucracy, blame and risk aversion. These arguments, in combination with the review of existing literature (Chapter Two), identified a lack of holistic or contextualised understanding of joint working and the associated issues. The oversights identified so far have been summarised within the following three points.

First, much of the literature is atheoretical and lacks explanatory power. Thus, there is a gap in current theoretical understandings of police joint working. Communities of practice (CoP) provides an exception; it argues that a shared culture is fundamental to joint working. Whilst CoP theory acknowledges that communities exhibit network-like qualities, in the form of 'connectivity' (Wenger, 2010, p.191), focus remains on the importance of developing a shared culture between practitioners

to cross organisational boundaries, whilst wider contextual and systemic factors (e.g. the law, economy and politics) are absent from such explanations.

Second, the dominant focus has been on improving individual elements of joint working (i.e. training, communication, information sharing and police cultures), with the view that these improvements should contribute to better outcomes as a whole (i.e. if e-governance is better designed, then communication, information sharing and joint working should improve). This approach derives from conventional science, based on reductionism, where systems are reduced to their component parts for analysis (Devlin, 1996; Heng, 2008; Dekker, 2016). However, the literature review has identified that despite concerted efforts to improve particular aspects, joint working remains an unresolved dilemma in situations of its practice. Moreover, the very attempt to embed change in the system, can yield new and unpredicted challenges (such as employees avoiding tasks due to difficulties using a new e-system) (Broadhurst *et al.,* 2009).

Third, linear understandings and the misconception that if specific barriers were overcome, then the whole would also work better, has led researchers, policy makers and practitioners, as Frederick Taylor said, in search of the 'one *best* way' for every task in the organisation (e.g. Rees, 2001; Kanigel, 2005; Blake and Moseley, 2011). In Taylor's philosophy, 'proven fact', research and experimentation, replaced personal opinion (Locke, 1982, p.14). Such approaches persist today. For example, the report of the 'What Works Network: Five Years on' (What Works Team, 2018), advocates toolkits, which can be employed '*to access information on how and where interventions work **best'*** (p.22), '*guidelines on **best** practice'* (p.23), '*experiments'* to find out the '***best'*** way (p.18), to achieve the '***best'*** effect (p.3), through the '***best'*** (p.20) practice[5]. Although there is no denial of the importance of evidence to inform practice,

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[5] Bold emphasis added.

the theoretical perspective presented in this thesis advocates that there are often multiple ways to achieve a goal, rather than a 'best' way. Although it is valuable to take into consideration 'what works' and the 'best' evidence, it is equally important to remain aware that evidence is limited as people, programmes, practices, resources and wider societal factors change, evidence develops and new findings emerge. Evidence informs us about an intervention (for example), at a particular point in time, in a particular place, with a particular population. It does not mean that the same programme will necessarily have the same impact or be the 'best' approach elsewhere. Even within one geographical area, different communities will benefit from different interventions. Meanwhile – besides scholarly evidence – practice is highly influenced by intuitive expertise, which should also be recognised, promoted and developed (Munro, 2011).

The argument presented is that each of the forgoing approaches fail to capture the fluidity, situational and non-linear nature of joint working. This can be remedied, and a deeper and richer theoretical insight into joint working can be achieved, through a complex adaptive systems (CAS) approach. Consequently, this chapter provides my theoretical development for understanding policing as a complex adaptive system (hereafter a 'policing CAS'), which in this case is applied to study the interrelated elements and non-linear processes of joint working. In order to understand social beings, the context in which a person makes decisions and acts must also be considered (Devlin, 1996). Firstly, and in direct support of this viewpoint, conceptualising a policing CAS exposes the importance of wider environmental factors, including personal, cultural and structural influences on joint working systems. Understanding policing as a CAS holds value in providing a holistic theoretical understanding, one which has sight of the 'bigger picture', as embedded within other smaller and larger systems (e.g. the law, politics, health and the economy). Secondly, a policing CAS draws attention to the interrelation between components of the joint working system (e.g. training can impact on practice, whilst culture can prevent training from changing

practice) and overlapping neighbouring systems (e.g. criminal justice, children and adult's safeguarding, mental health and so forth). Thirdly, it provides a non-linear understanding of how improvements to individual components of the joint working system, do not always lead to better outcomes for joint working as a whole. Fourthly, it advocates exploration of multiple pathways to accomplish various goals, rather than the one best or right way. In response, as internal and external environmental factors (e.g. staff sickness, organisational re-structures, the economy and legislation), influence the policing CAS - and joint working - then responses to accomplish various goals necessarily require adaptation.

Rather than impose a ready-made theory or method to understandings of joint working, a working definition of a 'policing CAS' - drawing on systems (von Bertalanffy, 1968; Miller, 1975a; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Senge and Sterman, 1992; Bar-Yam, 1997), complexity (Dodder and Dare, 2000; Walby, 2007; Pycroft, 2014), chaos (Lorenz, 1972; Dubinskas, 1994; Lawson, 2011) and network (Callon, 1999; Latour, 2005; Law, 2009; Sayes, 2014) theories - is proposed as:

> *A complex, adaptive and dynamic system; interdependent and encapsulated within the wider environment; connected to neighbouring systems; and composed of smaller 'nested' systems: a system which through surfing on the 'edge of chaos' constantly adapts and emerges in response to non-linear and often unpredictable internal and external drivers, through a process of circular feedback.*

The relevance of advancing this theoretical construct is in providing a *contextualised and holistic understanding of individual, cultural and structural influences, which give rise to deeper and richer insights into the complexities of joint working*. Such a theoretical perspective is one that has the potential to provide insights into the punctuated progress and disruptions in working together, overlooked in existing joint

working theory, which has tended to lead to incomplete solutions and recurring problems. In support of a policing CAS, empirical evidence will be presented in the findings chapters of this thesis (Chapters Five and Six). The theoretical contribution will be examined further in the discussion chapter, including ways forward for working in a context of uncertainty (Chapters Seven).

By seeking to theoretically develop the concept of a policing CAS, I draw on a number of different but related theories. In this chapter a brief background to systems theory, the origins of complexity theory and more specifically, complex adaptive systems theory, is provided. From chaos theory, I adopt the notion of disproportionality (often known as the 'butterfly effect'); which accounts for how a small, everyday decision, can lead to large impact or breakdowns in the system on a widespread scale (Lorenz, 2000; Hilborn, 2003). Meanwhile, an actor-network perspective is insightful in emphasising joint working as, not solely based on relationships and human elements but, inherently comprised of inanimate actants (e.g. technology, buildings and space) (Latour, 2005). The theoretical approach advocates that joint working is not only dependent on cultural aspects (as described in police joint working CoP literature), but connects to a network of personal influences, practices, and internal and external environmental factors. The following research questions (see Section 3.8 for full list) are therefore developed and begin to be addressed: *How can the advancement of complex adaptive systems as a theoretical construct develop our understandings of what it is to experience joint working? What might this approach afford that is not provided within existing joint working literature and theory?*

If sustained, this theoretical approach holds methodological implications as firstly, it becomes necessary to study joint working contextualised within, rather than isolated from, other aspects of policing and social life. Secondly, it becomes fundamental to 'flatten' the network, and explore joint working as it is experienced from

within a policing CAS (Latour, 1996). The implications for research design will be returned to in the methodology chapter (Chapter Four).

3.2 Systems theory

Central to the theoretical advancement of policing as a CAS is the introduction of general systems thinking to the study of policing and joint working. This section will first introduce general systems theory, the foundations of which have led to the emergence of complexity theory and complex adaptive systems. Von Bertalanffy and Miller established the beginnings of general systems theory in the 1960s and 1970s (see for example, von Bertalanffy, 1968; von Bertalanffy, 1972; Miller, 1975a, 1975b; Miller, 1976). Systems theory emerged as a new theory, drawing upon many concepts, from pre-existing theories (including philosophy, science and mathematics for example), which were often limited to relatively specific areas of interest. It developed into a more abstract framework to be universally applicable to different domains (Bar-Yam, 1997). In order to draw such general relevance, systems theory starts with the abstract concept of a system, and then applies this to modelling various different phenomena, from biological (e.g. Wolkenhauer, 2001) to technical (e.g. Hubka and Eder, 2012) and social systems (e.g. Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Researchers in organisational studies imported a systems metaphor of the living biological organism, to pursue a richer understanding of how organisations work (Katz and Kahn, 1966). General systems theory challenges a previously dominant perspective, which viewed organisations as machines (Taylor, 1912). To provide a brief context, the preceding reductionist, classical management school of thought, otherwise referred to as 'scientific management' (or 'Taylorism', after its founder Frederick Winslow Taylor) developed in the U.S. during the 1880s and 1890s. The goals of classical management were improving the efficiency and productivity of workers (Gantt, 1903; Gilbreth, 1909; Taylor, 1912). Proponents thought that if each part of the

system was made to function better, then the overall output would also be better. As a consequence, it was believed that if analysts took a machine apart and studied the individual components, they would then understand the whole (Taylor, 1919).

In contrast, a systems approach views the world as systemic (Flood, 2010). A systems approach advocates exploration of multiple ways to accomplish various goals, rather than the one right way (Checkland, 1985). From this perspective, interest is on the whole organism or organisation (i.e. the 'whole' system) and how its parts fit together (Jackson, 2006). Critics have highlighted how difficulties occur for conventional management approaches, based on reductionism, when they are applied to real-world problems (Checkland, 1987). As Flood (1999, p.6) argues, reductionism *'has struggled primarily because it misunderstands the nature of human beings'*. A systems approach is built on the premise that providing a service to people, is very different from manufacturing a product; there are inherent differences in 'customer' wants and needs, hence the service should be designed to respond to individuals. The service should therefore be bespoke to individuals' needs, rather than expecting people to 'fit' into pre-defined services.

Various offshoots have emerged from systems theory, including the 'Vanguard Method', developed by Occupational Psychologist John Seddon and colleagues in the mid-1980s, which provides an approach used by service organisations to move - away from command and control - to applying a systems approach to the design and management of work. Seddon's published works (2005, 2008) describe the Vanguard Method in detail. The Vanguard approach uses a 'check-plan-do' cycle. This cyclical approach encourages workers to 'check' how the system is currently working. Stage two involves 'planning' and developing a new purpose from the perspectives of 'users' of services, in a broad sense (for example, in the case of policing, this could be victim, perpetrators, children or families). This process reflects the importance of having public interests at the centre of organisations. The Vanguard method then proceeds to

encourage the workforce to co-design a system – ideally in collaboration with the 'users' of services – to work towards the newly developed purpose, before implementing the plans in stage three. Whether described as systems theory, systems thinking, learning organisations or the Vanguard approach (alongside other versions), all of the applications of systems theory place emphasis on a more holistic and contextualised approach to understanding the world around us, which is fitting with the aim of this thesis; *to provide a deeper and richer understanding of police joint working*.

In order to explicate what I refer to as a policing CAS (see Section 3.1 for a working definition), in what follows, I outline the key principles of general systems theory. First, the systems model comprises of several different parts, often referred to as elements or components, which together form a whole, referred to as the system. The system exists within an environment and has a boundary, which differentiates the systems exterior from its interior (Figure 4). Building on the previous point, the system can also be modelled on various scales. Thus, elements can form part of systems that themselves form part of smaller and larger systems. Applying these principles to the research setting, Lancashire Constabulary can be viewed as a policing system, which is embedded within the national policing system in England and Wales. External to the policing system are (amongst many others) legal, political and economic systems, which form the environment within which policing in England and Wales, and Lancashire Constabulary more specifically, operates. On an even wider scale, the political and economic systems are impacted by international and global environments. At the same time, internally, police forces are comprised of bodies, people, teams, departments, basic command units and other elements. This is termed 'nesting' or 'encapsulation' and helps us to analyse a system on various levels.
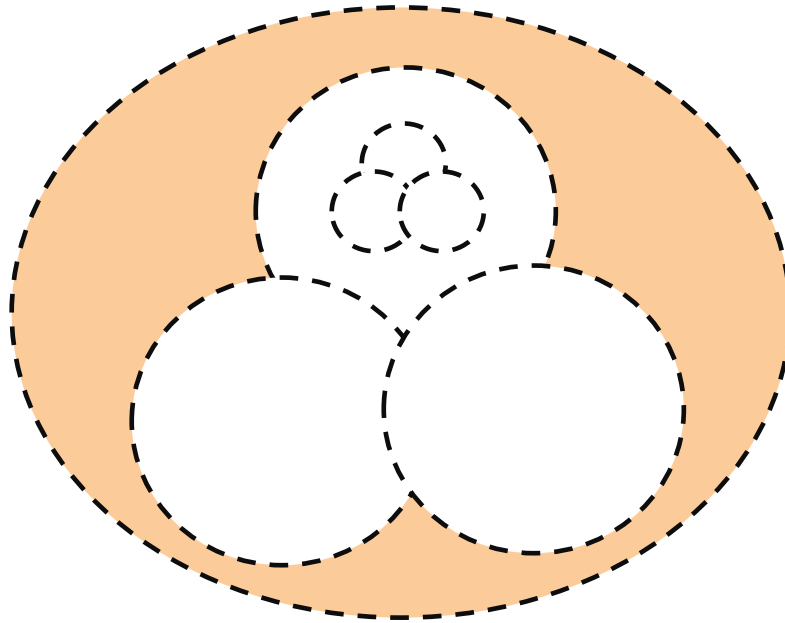
Figure 4: A systems diagram

One of the key concepts of systems theory is that organisations are open to their environment (von Bertalanffy, 1950). This means that information, resources and energy can flow both in and out (known as inputs and outputs) (Churchman and Churchman, 1968). In comparison, closed systems, are isolated from their environment and are deterministic, meaning that their outputs are certain (e.g. the past) (von Bertalanffy, 1972). However, open systems are systems in which the internal components (elements, actors or actants) are impacted by interactions with the external environment. Applying this notion, Lancashire Constabulary is influenced by national legislation, policies, practices, the climate, media, social trends and technologies and thus 'open' to environmental influences. Equally, the constabulary contributes to the development of national changes, through sharing innovative practices, engaging with the public and media, providing data to form a national picture, and partaking in HMICFRS inspections, aimed at assessing, reporting and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of policing in England and Wales.

An important characteristic of systems theory, is that the environments in which organisations function are very unpredictable (Tetenbaum, 1998; Laszlo and Laszlo, 2002; Skaržauskienė, 2010). For that reason, it is important for people in the organisations to keep up-to-date with the external environment. This involves knowing what changes are occurring both inside and around the organisation (e.g. economic developments, legislative changes and anticipating major events, including disaster planning). Keeping in touch and being aware of anything happening outside of the organisation, which might impact internally, enables relevant decisions to be made. Often people responsible for doing so are strategic leads who steer policy developments. Lancashire Constabulary also requests police officers to volunteer as 'SPOCs' (single point of contact) to keep updated on specific areas of work (such as dementia, mental health and child protection), sending them to supplementary training and events. On their return, these SPOCs are responsible for implementing learning across departments and teams. Their role involves 'environmental scanning' to keep adrift of a sea of change.

Another feature of systems is interdependence (Churchman and Churchman, 1968). Police forces are dynamic organisations, interconnected with their environment. The subparts *within* the system are also interrelated. Thus, the system is made up of intertwined and overlapping subsystems. The organisational system is connected to external individuals, communities (e.g. neighbourhoods), organisations (e.g. children's social care) and structures (e.g. the economy). Consequently, changes to one part of the system can directly or indirectly influence the way the system and its processes work (for example, if an officer rings in sick then someone else might have to pick up their work; an influx of new recruits impacts on the training department). This is often known as a domino or knock-on effect (Reniers and Faes, 2013; Wamsler and Brink, 2016). Joint working can be conceptualised as 'oil' within the system, connecting subsystems within (e.g. different departments) and externally (e.g. the child protection system,

criminal justice system, adult safeguarding system) to the police (depicted in Figures 5 and 6). Figure 5 was drawn during the fieldwork (day 144), whilst Figure 6 was sketched post-fieldwork, during the analysis. Both drawings aim to capture the various organisational systems, which together create larger systems. In particular, the diagram portrays joint working as oil within and between systems. However, on reflection Figure 5 was too 'tidy' and did not reflect the 'messy' nature of police joint working. Figure 6 therefore aims to portray the 'messiness', in addition to the intersecting, yet often misaligned, nature of 'cogs' from a systems perspective.
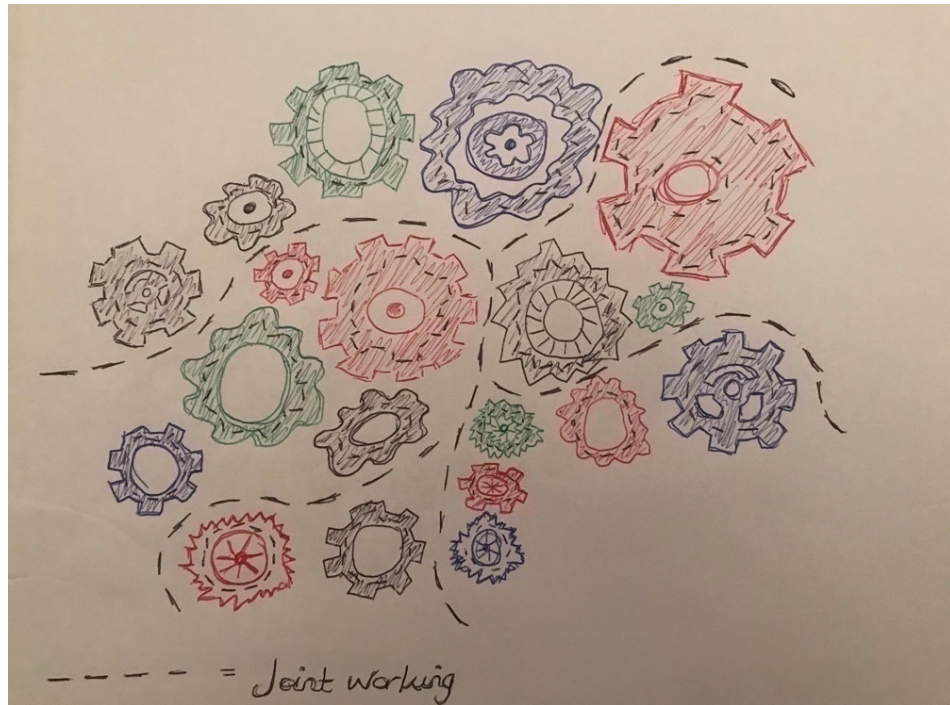
Figure 5: Joint working – the oil within and between systems

(during fieldwork)
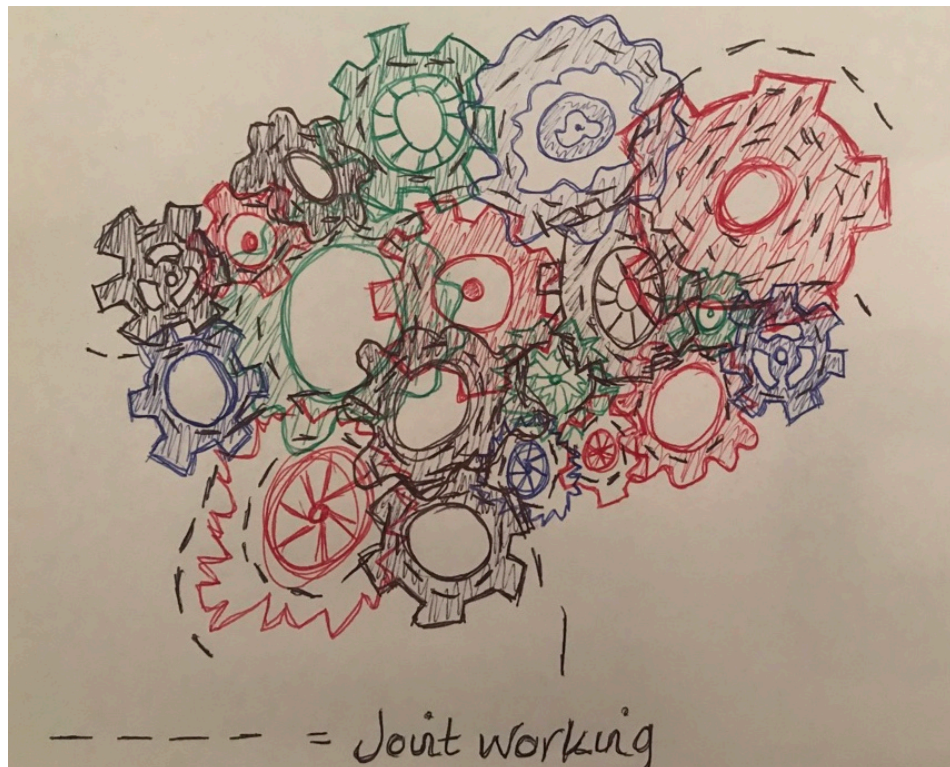
Figure 6: Joint working – the oil within and between systems

(post-fieldwork)

Systems theory also draws on cybernetics, the science of communication and transdisciplinary approach to explore the structures, constraints and possibilities of systems (Checkland, 1985). Cybernetics deals with the systems control mechanisms that allow it to respond to changes in the environment through positive and negative feedback (Beer, 1989). Feedback is crucial to the functioning of the system (Forrester, 1961). Negative feedback seeks to correct or reduce deviations in the system's processes to re-establish a steady course back in the direction of the system's goals, known as 'goal directedness' (Forrester, 1968). Meanwhile, positive feedback changes or grows the system in desired ways that reinforce, amplify and enhance the system's current processes (Wolstenholme, 1990). However, positive feedback does not necessarily represent 'good' behaviour. 'Bad' behaviour can also be reinforced (Kiriakidis, 2010). Positive feedback can embed negative culture or systems processes. For example, if a sergeant speaks adversely about joint working or invests little importance in developing relationships with external agencies, but gets promoted, he is likely to continue this behaviour and the people around him or on the team might also disengage in joint working. In order to get the system back on track, counteracting feedback is required (Kiriakidis, 2010). This might involve, for instance, promoting the relationship a police officer has developed with a particular social worker or a team from children's social care.

A system's goals are contingent, negotiated, require constant adaptation and are described using the term 'equifinality' (Kruglanski *et al*., 2015). This principle means that there is no best way to organise. Whilst there is no single solution, not all ways of organising are equally effective. This is where evidence-informed practice and professional judgement are pertinent. Usually, professionals would take into consideration a number of factors when planning (e.g. an intervention or a strategy), including for example, evidence, resources, time, experience and potential drawbacks. That said, we cannot always know ahead of time what the most effective way is. Future

predictions are necessarily fallible. This inability to accurately predict the future, does sometimes mean that issues or harm can arise; a systems approach accepts that there will always be uncertainties in the environment. Such instances provide pivotal opportunities for learning, in order to refine approaches, and thus the system adapts in response (Senge and Sterman, 1992). This adaptive property of systems is highly relevant to joint working; it indicates how blame cultures develop through a lack of acceptance of inherent uncertainties and how a more positive framework can evolve (Munro, 2011).

Holism is another part of a systems approach (Jackson, 2003). This means that systems should be viewed as a whole; not as a collection of separate pieces (e.g. a person is not a collection of cells but viewed as a whole being). Within the whole, systems are comprised of populations of interacting entities. Entropy (a scientific term for lack of order) is central to the way systems work (Emery, 1981). Systems tend to run down in a state of disorganisation, and deteriorate if left on their own (Wang, 2002). For example, if we do not clean the office, then within a few weeks (or even days) the office would end up in a state of disarray and eventually would cease to be an office. In order to maintain balance, energy or resources need to be invested to help reach homeostasis or equilibrium (von Bertalanffy, 1967). This requires time, work and effort to maintain a balance. Thus, general systems theory is built on some key premises: elements, encapsulation, openness, environments, interconnectedness, feedback, equifinality, holism, entropy and equilibrium.

Over recent years, a 'whole systems' approach has increasingly been referred to in reform proposals and public sector resources. In her review of child protection, Munro (2011, p.106) critiqued how '*too many previous reforms*' have not addressed the '*operational system as a whole*'. The report advocated the need for a 'child-centred' system, acknowledging that the '*system has a number of different but inter-related components that each need attention for a whole systems change*' (p.106). More

recently, a 'whole systems' approach, is gradually being drawn upon in wider fields, such as offending (MoJ, 2018). Meanwhile, an increasing public health approach to violence prevention, has underscored the relevance of systems theory in the public sector. Public Health England (2019a, p.106) for example, points to a need to adopt a collaborative, whole systems approach, where there is '*no single solution*' to reducing offending and re-offending in children and young people. Meanwhile, consultancy companies, such as 'Perfect Flow [6]', have been established to support service organisations (e.g. housing and police) to adopt a systems approach and place 'service users' at the centre of service design.

3.3 Complex adaptive systems theory

At the same time, complexity theory has gradually gained prominence as a means of informing analysis of social problems in several fields, including child protection (Stevens and Cox, 2007); mental health (Ellis *et al*., 2017); youth justice (Case and Haines, 2014); and probation (Pycroft, 2014). However, complexity theory has been less applied in policing (Dietz and Mink, 2005). To date, complex adaptive systems (CAS) theory has rarely shaped theoretical, empirical research or practice regarding police partnerships (Pearce and Fortune, 1995[7]).

According to Dodder and Dare (2000, p.8) a CAS is a multi-agent system, which occurs where '*complex and patterned output arises from simple, fundamental principles, but requires many actors and multiple interactions over time to produce emergent complexity*'. Walby (2007, p.449) describes complexity theory as '*a loose*

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[6] Further information about Perfect Flow can be accessed through their webpage: https://www.perfect-flow.com/about-us#Introduction

[7] See Section 1.3 for further details.

collection of work' that develops understanding of the nature of systems and their changes. Some theorists suggest that CAS thinking is a subset of complexity theory or vice versa (Casti, 1979). Others use the terms 'complexity' and 'complex adaptive systems' interchangeably because the principles are thought to be similar, synonymous or because there is a lack of understanding about any differences between the two (Gell-Mann, 1992). The term complex adaptive systems is used in this thesis for consistency but it is acknowledged that some authors use systems or complexity theory instead to describe the same or similar principles.

Whilst there is no simple or most commonly used definition of a CAS, this model of thinking tends to be guided by a number of key principles (Thrift, 1999). CAS theory draws on many of the same notions as systems theory: elements, encapsulation, openness, environments, interconnectedness, feedback, equifinality, holism, entropy and equilibrium (Axelrod and Cohen, 2000). There are, however, notable differences in the *complexity* of the interrelations, the *adaptive* nature of systems and the consequential self-organisation, co-evolution and emergence (Edgren, 2008).

General systems theory, as a multi-agent system (MAS), is a system composed of multiple interacting agents. A key difference between a CAS and other multi-element systems is the relationship between the system and its agents (Holland, 2006). Although both linear and non-linear systems are composed of multiple interacting agents, in general (linear and ordered) systems, the behaviour of the agents is limited to the rules of the system (Turner and Baker, 2019). Change is instigated from the outside of the system. Similar to linear systems, in a CAS a variety of rules (e.g. legislations, policies, procedures and performance measures) exist to govern and reinforce behaviours and strategies. These reinforcement mechanisms can play an important role in guiding the behaviour of elements of a system. However, unlike traditional evolutionary or linear models that describe forces in terms of their impact upon a population (van de Ven and Poole, 1995), CAS theory is equally concerned with the *intentionality* of individual

actors. In other words, the agents within a system have agency; the capacity of individuals to act independently and to make choices. That said, this agency can be constrained by external structures (e.g. rules, legislation, statutory guidance, policies, economy and politics). The agency and structure debate was developed by Giddens (1984) in the theory of structuration, an analysis of agency and structure, in which order can both produce and be produced at the level of practice, and not through society inflicting order upon actors. Giddens proposed the duality of structure and agency, in that structures and agency cannot be conceived apart from one another. Furthermore, he argued that structures are neither independent of actors nor determining of their behaviour, but rather sets of rules and competencies on which actors draw, and which, in aggregate, they reproduce.

Adopting this notion, the overall behaviour of a CAS is not cumulative but rather emerges through the *co-evolving* interactions of its entities. A CAS co-evolves, as different internal and external components simultaneously affect and shape the internals and externals of the system, through direct or indirect connections (Callon and Law, 1982; Holland, 2006; Ellis and Herbert, 2011), giving rise to complex and unpredictable behaviours (Allen, 1988). In systems thinking, a vision for the future is set in advance, and the gap between the future vision and current 'reality' generates a tension, which inspires action (Senge, 1990). On the other hand, from a CAS perspective, a vision for the future does not work, unless you use it lightly, to provide a sense of direction, rather than setting clear targets. Berger and Johnston (2015) argue that planning milestones can be counterproductive when the system's elements and environment are rapidly changing and uncertain. Focus on targets can blind workers to the fast-changing landscape, and result in missed opportunities for emergence. A CAS is therefore characterised by a high degree of *evolution* and *adaptation*. In this light, complexity science emphasises the power of the system to self-develop, innovate and progress (Edgren, 2008). This is particularly important, as organisations, including the

police, adapt to the external environment. As new information arises, a clearer or new path might take shape and the route might need to change.

The notion that changes within a CAS lead to changes in the environment, which in turn lead to new changes within the complex system is known as 'circular causality'. Such 360-degree feedback is a key distinguishing characteristic of complex and adaptive systems (Jervis, 1997; Maxfield, 1997; Rinaldi, 1997; Rosenau, 1997). In a CAS, agents constantly react to what the other agents are doing, which in turn influences behaviour and the network as a whole (Holland, 1992). Thus, control is de-centralised, (i.e. not 'top-down') as the overall behaviour of the system is influenced by many decisions made constantly by individual agents (Waldrop, 1992; Merali, 2006). Individual people, teams, departments and whole services typically self-organise conducting their own work and developing their own local practices, through formal and informal strategies (e.g. training and internalised principles), from a grass roots approach.

A further difference between systems and complex adaptive systems, is the perceived ability to see the 'full picture' or 'whole system'. A CAS perspective postulates that there is no agent who has access to the entire picture; a concept known as cognitive incompleteness (Hayek, 1967). This has important implications for the current research study: systems theory aims to get the 'full picture', whilst, on the other hand CAS highlights the relevance of distributed cognition (Snowden, 1999). From the perspective of CAS, sense-making within an organisation can be captured by harnessing partial perceptions through stories at a granular level through ethnographic approaches (Koro-Ljungberg, 2008).

To summarise thus far, complex adaptive systems arose from the foundations of general systems theory (Walby, 2007). In linear systems theory, agents interact but are limited to the rules of the system. Change is therefore instigated from external

driving forces of the system. In contrast, in a CAS (and other non-linear systems) agents within the system have their own agency, albeit constrained by external structures. Thus, the complexity, within a CAS, describes how the interactions and relationships of different internal and external components are simultaneously affected and shaped by the internals and externals of the system. In a CAS, control is both 'top-down' and 'bottom-up'. In response to internal and external changes, the system adapts, leading to further internal and external adaptations in an ongoing process known as circular causality (Edgren, 2008). The dense interconnectivity of interactions and constant adaptation means that the system is continually self-organising and evolving (Pycroft, 2014). Emergence raises key questions about the relationships between the parts within its system and the whole (Flood, 2010; Ulrich and Probst, 2012). Elements can function together and give rise to self-organisation (also known as 'spontaneity'), a process where some form of overall order arises from local interactions, often triggered by the previously mentioned positive feedback (von Bertalanffy, 1952).

3.4 Chaos theory

Many concepts of complexity science originate from chaos theory, quantum mechanics and non-linear mathematics. In general systems, due to the interrelated nature of internal (e.g. relationships, referral systems and staff) and external components (e.g. economic, technological and media), a simple change in one part of the system can impact throughout (Dubinskas, 1994). However, in chaos theory these 'knock-on' effects are described as reverberating, as they can send seemingly random, tremor-like pulses through an organisation.

Chaos theory is concerned with the behaviour of systems that are highly sensitive to their initial conditions. This high sensitivity means that minor differences in initial conditions can give rise to large differences in later events (structures or outputs) (Jervis, 1997; Mann, 1997; Rosenau, 1997; Schmitt, 1997). This phenomenon

has been called the 'butterfly effect', in which small changes can lead to unexpectedly large impacts or events, such as a butterfly flapping its wings in one part of the world eventually resulting in a hurricane in another (Lorenz, 1972). Thus, chaos theory also contributes disproportionality to our understandings of social systems (Dubinskas, 1994).

Both complexity and chaos theories challenge linear cause and effect, but for different reasons. Complex systems are unpredictable due to the adaptation of both internal agents and external environments (self-organisation, interdependence and co-evolution). In comparison, chaotic systems are unpredictable due to small differences giving rise to large differences in later events. This disproportionality refers to how in systems, periods of stability might change suddenly into seemingly erratic behaviour due the response of a small stimulus. Alongside, self-organisation, interdependence and co-evolution (CAS thinking), the concept of disproportionately may have particular relevance for police joint working where concerns are often shaped by extreme events, such as high-profile incidents and serious case reviews that are perceived to be avoidable.

In particular, chaos theory contributes the notion that the change of the output is not proportional to the change of the input (Warren *et al.,* 1998). This disproportionality makes the longer-term outcomes (or system state) unpredictable (Gleick, 1987). The inability to often overtly link chains of events, together with the notion of non-linearity (input does not equal output) are fundamental reasons why precise predictions of social life are often impossible. In accordance, chaos theory provides a discursive resource for articulating understandings of apparent disorder in society. According to chaos theory, whilst behaviours in a system appear random, they are a result of the initial conditions. Such understandings called for people to learn to *'thrive in an environment of chaos'* (Lawson, 2011, p.566).

The phrase 'edge of chaos' is used to describe a space between order and disorder, which is proposed to exist within a wide variety of systems (Dubinskas, 1994). Waldrop (1992, p.12) describes the term as occurring right between two extremes – order and chaos – in an abstract transition phase, called the edge of chaos, where order and chaos are brought '*into a special kind of balance*'. A place where '*the components of a system never quite lock into place, and yet never quite dissolve into turbulence, either*' (p.12). The phrase was originally coined by mathematician Doyne Farmer in the mid-1980s (Waldrop, 1992), and arose from computer experiments with cellular automata, carried out by computer scientised Christopher Langton (1990). In social sciences, the phrase refers to a region between order and disorder in social systems. This area is argued to be the position where a system is most '*adaptive, creative, flexible and energised*' (Schmitt, 1997, p.108). In other words, the effectiveness of a policing CAS may lie in embracing its ability to thrive in chaos

Whilst sharing many similarities with chaos theory, the difference between complex adaptive systems, and chaotic systems is (again) the relationship between the system and the agents. To recapitulate, in ordered systems the behaviour of the agents' actions are limited to the rules of the system. In a chaotic system, the agents are unconstrained (no rules); systemic change can be rapid, radical and self-generating (May, 1976; Gleick, 1987). By contrast, in a CAS (and a policing CAS), the system and the agents co-evolve; the system does have some constraint over agents' behaviour, but the agents can also modify the system by their interaction with it (i.e. a new sergeant has a different management style).

As with systems and complex adaptive systems, chaos theory advocates that there is no 'one best path' to evolutionary development (Dubinskas, 1994). Rather than a single path to success, there may be multiple concurrent trajectories for progress (and failure). Moreover, the pathway is volatile and constantly changing (van Valen, 1973). In chaotic systems, the constant adaptation means that the system is repeatedly self-

organising and emerging, leading to the inevitability of disorder (sometimes referred to as volatility) (Capra, 1997). Thus, chaotic systems are in a state of flux, 'far from equilibrium', making them inherently unpredictable (Jervis, 1997; Maxfield, 1997; Schmitt, 1997). In complex adaptive systems, the adaptive nature of the system means that equilibrium is not static. In chaotic systems, the main lesson is the radical idea that the aim of the system is not to achieve control but to retain its position '*surfing the edge of chaos*' (Pascale *et al.,* 1999, p.235).

3.5 Actor-network theory

Systems theory, complexity theory, complex adaptive systems and chaos theory do not specifically emphasise the importance of objects or other inanimate features of the system. Focus is on human relationships and interactions that drive a CAS (Hood, 2014). Accounting for this oversight, attention turns to actor-network theory (ANT) to bridge the gap between materiality and immateriality.

ANT is an increasingly influential, yet undoubtedly contested, approach to understanding humans and their interaction with inanimate objects (e.g. Callon, 1999; Latour, 2005; Law, 2009; Sayes, 2014). Developed by science and technology studies (STS) scholars Bruno Latour and Michael Callon, and the sociologist John Law, ANT is an approach to social theory where, as in CAS, everything exists in constantly changing networks of relationships. Of relevance to CAS, ANT attempts to describe how networks connect and interact to contribute to the whole.

However, in actor networks, objects, ideas and processes are equally relevant in creating social situations as humans. It differs from other STS theories in arguing that actions, capacities and agency of both humans and non-humans contribute to the formation of the social (Latour, 1993, 1996). For instance, the interactions in Lancashire Constabulary involve people, their ideas and technologies. Together these form a network. Although not a theory itself, ANT provides an approach to assist in paying

attention to often underexplored human and non-human features and the links between them. Therefore, whilst CAS provides a useful lens to understand the process of co-evolution, understanding of co-emerging dynamics is strengthened by incorporating actor-network theory to tease out the relevance of non-human actants (Kim and Kaplan, 2006, 2011).

Latour (1988) suggests that existing conceptual and theoretical models, require a description to fit into a framework. This risks not capturing the polymorphous nature of society. He thus takes a networked approach. ANT maintains that in order to study any phenomenon, all pre-existing theories must be abandoned.

> '*The observer cannot and must not have a priori list of theories in which they try and fit the actor's behaviour – the actors must be allowed to make their own way and decide for themselves what their world is made of.*' (Dudhwala, 2009, p.3).

In other words, the researcher should follow the actors and actants themselves. This differs significantly from classical sociology, which advocates that observations can only be made possible if a theory is present to direct the observation. For example, Durkheim (1897) analysed the behaviour of those who committed suicide in terms of his preconceived theory of integration and regulation. From an ANT perspective, the theory has been applied in these cases, before the actors have chance to act. This omits room for innovation or novel thought, since elements of the actor's behaviour are moulded to fit the theory. Whilst social theorists such as Marx and Durkheim explain small, micro, individual actions by the macro structures in society, through a deductive explanation, ANT explains the large by focusing on the detail. This comprises of an inductive method of explanation, accumulating information of the micro details to draw a picture of the world that follows the actors or actants to build explanations. ANT seeks to place entities on an equal footing, moving from a hierarchical ontology proposed by

Durkheim, to a completely 'flat ontology' where a macro actor is seen as no bigger than a micro actor and a human is seen as having no more agency than an object (Latour, 1996).

Critics maintain that there are distinctions between humans and non-humans in their characteristics (Bloomfield and Vurdubakis, 1999; MacLean and Hassard, 2004). In particular, the ability to have intention is said to be exercised by humans but not objects. Although actants do not have agency, in the same sense as human agents, they still contribute to systems unintentionally (e.g. computers crash and cars break down). Other opponents argue that ANT remains entirely descriptive and fails to provide explanation for social processes (Winner, 1993; Cordella and Shaikh, 2006). As Latour (1996) advocates, ANT is not a theory in the explanatory sense. ANT is probably best conceived as a method and as such it has utility as a tool that enables the seeking out of complex adaptive systems routed in connections between both human actors and inanimate actants. In this thesis, it is proposed that despite some limitations, an ANT informed approach is useful in appreciating the complexity of joint working. ANT provides a lens through which the agency of animate and inanimate actants (e.g. materials, objects, technology, texts), in shaping social processes, can be made explicit. '*Attention to this shaping role can contribute a more holistic appreciation of the complexity*' of organisations (Cresswell *et al.*, 2010, p.67), providing a valuable lens to study co-evolution and emergence in practice (Kim and Kaplan, 2011); in this case the emergence of joint working.

Whilst raising the importance of inanimate objects, ANT shares a number of features with CAS. As stated earlier, Merali (2006) notes that the existence and persistence of a CAS is predicated upon the relationship of the system's actors to each other and the environment in continuous time. The emergent behaviour of a complex system, as well as a networked approach is therefore, in both cases a *relational phenomenon* (Law, 1992; Harkema, 2003). The objects under investigation in a

complex system are a de-centred phenomena, that are at the same time composed of individuals but also relational, emergent behaviour. This is congruent with the ontological position of ANT's focus on the centred/de-centred actor-network. Actor-networks are at once comprised of characteristics that are spatial, structural, and above all relational. It is therefore pivotal to the co-use of ANT and CAS. Further, if we are to understand how emergent properties are produced it is important to '*access descriptions of the system at multiple scales from the micro to the macro **at the same time**[8]*' (Merali, 2006, p. 220), enabled through the micro approach advocated by ANT and the holistic, contextualised approach advocated by CAS. Thus, this research project takes a multi-focal perspective, beginning with the micro, whilst making links to the macro.

CAS and ANT are also aligned when considering claims to truth that emerge from their accounts where the goal is to represent a shared reality, whilst recognising that it is possible to have multiple non-contradictory valid descriptions of the same phenomenon. The application of multiple theoretical perspectives is useful as a means of drawing out different facets of joint working and acknowledging the distinctive strengths and weaknesses of each theory (Mähring *et al.,* 2004). The representation derived from CAS and ANT is always from a point of view, which makes some features of the phenomena relevant and others irrelevant. For these reasons, it is possible to draw upon ANT and CAS to explore the unpredictability and relations of both material and immaterial elements of police joint working.

3.6 Limitations

There are a number of limitations of a policing CAS as a theoretical construct. Firstly, there has been a lack of empirical testing to evidence the impact of complex adaptive

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[8] Emphasis in original.

systems in understanding policing and joint working. As discussed by the Health Foundation (2010, p.12) most available material on complex adaptive systems is descriptive rather than research based. Accordingly, this thesis draws on an ethnographic approach to enable research insights to advance understanding of policing as a complex adaptive system. Ethnography enables a window into a policing CAS, in order to study police joint working as oil within the system.

Secondly, theories are highly contested. It is arguably always possible to think of examples that do not fit. This is because people and social life are complex. Different disciplines can have different understandings of the same concepts, which are subject to debate, development and change. The claim is not therefore that this is the only theoretical or conceptual approach that one might take to explore joint working. It does however provide a framework through which the findings and key themes identified in the empirically based chapters can be usefully conceptualised.

Thirdly, this theoretical framework lacks predictive value. More specifically, the future behaviours of complex adaptive systems are defacto difficult or impossible to predict (Cebrowski, 2000). Instead, I conclude that joint working practitioners must be encouraged to develop an ability to adapt. Initiatives should not be seen as solutions, rather strategies should be transformative. Such an environment can lead to anxiety and uncertainty (Lawson, 2011). The ways in which such anxieties and uncertainties can be managed, will be returned to in the implications section of the discussion chapter (Chapter Seven).

3.7 Concluding remarks

In this chapter, the foundations of what has been termed a policing CAS have been developed, a theoretical construct within which joint working can be conceptualised as a fluid process; an oil within and between systems. It is not a system in itself but may be an actor-network that connects systems. The development of this theoretical

construct has been outlined, by drawing on the orientation of a number of different but complementary perspectives, notably: systems theory, complexity theory, complex adaptive systems theory, chaos theory and actor-network theory. These academic underpinnings enable sense-making in terms of the approach taken and the findings which have emerged. The empirical chapters (Chapter Five and Six) provide research evidence to support the development of a policing CAS. Despite the previous limited application of CAS, this study provides evidence of the potential for its further development as a construct through which to approach and study joint working and policing more generally. A number of key principles have been drawn on to contribute to advancing the theoretical construct of a policing CAS as defined in Section 3.1.

This chapter has set out to begin to answer the following questions (See Section 3.8 for full list): *How can the advancement of complex adaptive systems as a theoretical construct develop our understandings of what it is to experience joint working? What might this approach afford that is not provided within existing joint working literature and theory?* First, the identification of policing as a CAS provides a hermeneutics in which joint working is not viewed separately from its environment but situated within a changing context. The interrelated nature of barriers and facilitators has previously been unexplained, as the majority of literature is atheoretical. Although CoP theory focuses on shared culture and networks, it overlooks wider contextual factors. Conceptualising policing as a CAS holds value in providing a holistic theoretical understanding, one which has sight of the 'bigger picture' of joint working, as embedded within policing and other smaller and larger systems (e.g. politics and economy, health and welfare). The theoretical construct thus, exposes the importance of wider contextual factors. This raises further research questions, as follows (see Section 3.8 for full list): *To what degree are joint working experiences influenced by various contexts, including personal, organisational and societal, in which joint*

working is practised? And how can the co-produced learning from this research project transfer to other forms of planning for change?

Secondly, a policing CAS draws attention to the interrelation and embedded nature of internal components (e.g. staff, teams and training), rather than focusing on single initiatives (e.g. co-location). At the same time, a policing CAS emphasises the importance and connectivity with neighbouring systems (e.g. criminal justice, children and adult's safeguarding), overlapping with the joint working system.

Thirdly, a policing CAS, in adopting the 'butterfly effect', accounts for how small changes can lead to disproportionately large impact, as chains of events reverberate through the system. In doing so, it explains how improvements to individual components of joint working do not always lead to better or expected outcomes for a policing CAS. Such a theoretical perspective is one that offers explanation for the lack of progress and disruptions in working together, overlooked in existing joint working theory.

Fourthly, drawing on an actor-network approach, a policing CAS emphasises joint working as not solely based on relationships and human elements, but inherently comprised of inanimate actants (e.g. technology, buildings and space). Meanwhile, CoP theory, focuses on shared cultures built on, for example, relationships, trust and shared experiences, but overlooks the importance of inanimate elements of the system. Only taking into account the human elements of language, relationships and values, fails to appreciate the inherent influence that non-human actants, including technology, space and geography potentially have on impeding or facilitating joint working.

Fifthly, this theoretical framework holds methodological implications. It becomes necessary to study joint working contextualised within, rather than isolated from, other aspects of policing and social life. Bringing together existing theoretical contributions, a policing CAS emphasises beliefs that analysing human behaviour can

provide a means of discovery of experience through research methods, which are less restrictive. It emphasises notions that understanding social processes must occur by exploring their relationship with inanimate and animate elements, and wider systems and structures that impact on the things humans do, think, perceive and feel. Furthermore, it becomes fundamental to 'flatten' the network, and explore the joint working system as it is experienced without establishing certain actions, procedures or technologies as important *a priori*. More specifically, it provides a method of finding a 'window into the system' (Munro, 2011) of joint working.

The subsequent chapters in this thesis will continue to contribute to joint working literature by demonstrating the empirical and analytical value of advancing CAS to enhance the study and understandings of police joint working. The implications of such an approach in terms of research design and methods will be developed within the following methodology chapter.

3.8 Research questions

To summarise, Chapters Two and Three have raised the following research questions[9]:

1) *What is it to experience the process of joint working for police employees? (p.44)*

2) *To what extent do joint working experiences correspond with understandings of police joint working in existing literature? (p.44)*

3) *What can be learnt from the ethnographic insights of informants to help better understand how joint working might work better for policing? (p.47-48)*

4) *How do the ethnographic insights gathered within the research differ to how joint working is depicted within police joint working theory? (p.50)*

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[9] Page numbers in brackets correspond to the pages where the research questions emerged.

5) *How can the advancement of complex adaptive systems as a theoretical construct develop our understandings of what it is to experience joint working? (p.56)*

6) *What might a complex adaptive systems approach afford that is not provided within existing joint working literature and theory? (p.56)*

7) *To what degree are joint working experiences influenced by various contexts, including personal, organisational and societal, in which joint working is practised? (p.78)*

8) *How can the co-produced learning from this research project transfer to other forms of planning for change? (p.78)*

While these questions serve as a fundamental guide to all stages of the research, including the methodological design, the research process was inherently iterative in nature (Mills *et al.*, 2010). Therefore, these questions were refined during the course of the research as the study developed, issues arose, and new insights were gained. In agreement with Okley (2008, p.55): *'The most rewarding fieldwork is when the anthropologist is open to what comes and what the people often consider significant. Thus, the anthropologist may find herself changing emphasis and topic'*. This openness and adaptability meant that the research process was not formulaic or rigidly predetermined by the research questions. Rather the research questions in the case of this study were exploratory, flexible and open to revision during the fieldwork (Schwartzman, 1993). The following chapter will outline the methodological approach adopted in addressing these questions.

4 Research methodology

4.1 Introduction

The aim of the research was to explore police joint working through experiences on the ground *to develop a deeper and richer understanding of joint working*. In order to capture the intricacies, diversity, spoken, unspoken, messy, animate and inanimate experiences of working together and address the research questions outlined at the end of the previous chapter, ethnographic methods were adopted.

As will be outlined in greater depth in this chapter, an ethnographic approach enables insights into the diversity of front- and back-stage behaviours and attitudes of police employees involved in joint working. During informal conversations, informants were able to voice their opinions, share their experiences and highlight what they considered to be relevant and meaningful. Conversations were supplemented with observations of meetings, shadowing officers and following police operations, which facilitated insights into the unspoken and unwritten nuances of working together. Alongside observations and informal conversations, document analysis was completed, to explore formal and informal written documentation, enabling the triangulation of data. Key themes emerged from the stories and observations, which formed the basis of the findings (Chapters Five to Seven).

This chapter is divided into six parts. The first section addresses the research methodology. The philosophical underpinnings and ethnographic background are outlined, as well as detailing how ethnography enables access to a policing CAS. Part two focuses on the field settings, particularly the research organisation and fieldwork sites. The third section explains the research design, including: access, gatekeepers, development of field relations, self-management, project management, preparation, pilot observations, leaving the field, positionality and ethics. Part four explores the ethical considerations relating to consent, confidentiality, power, risks to the ethnographer and data storage for example. The fifth section focuses on data analysis. More specifically, it provides a summary of the data collection, use of computer aided qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS), data coding and analysis. The sixth and final part of the chapter provides reflections on the research process. A flowchart summary of the ethnographic approach is depicted in Figure 7.
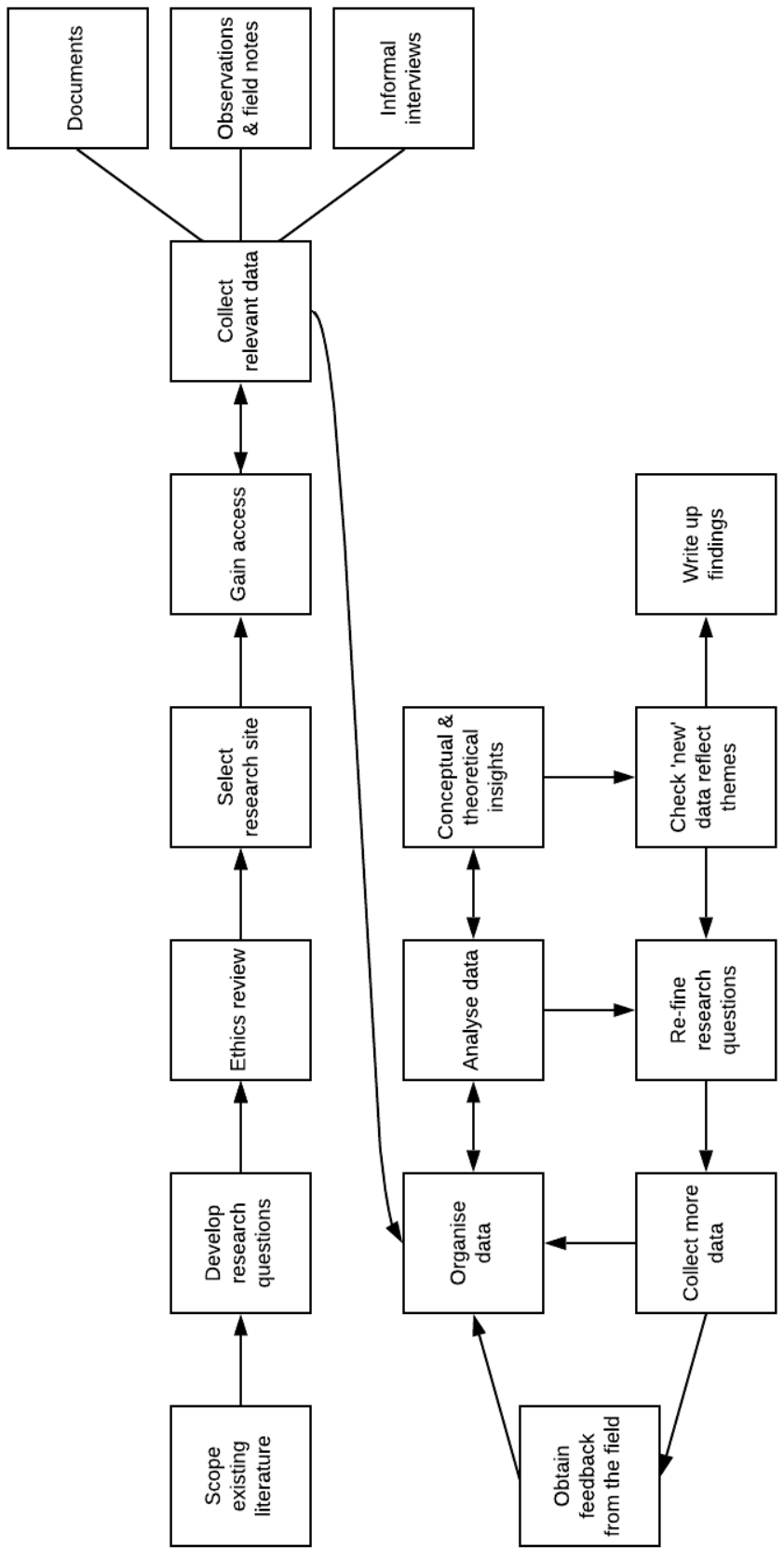
Figure 7: Flowchart summary of the ethnographic process

4.2 Part One – Why qualitative research? Why ethnography?

In order to make a judgement about which method is appropriate for any study, it is essential to consider the theoretical framework within which the research method is positioned (Given, 2008). This enables the researcher to choose an appropriate tool for the job (Kothari, 2004). Qualitative research is described as that which seeks to answer the *how*, *what* and *why*, as opposed to the *how many* or *how much* which is associated with quantitative research (Green and Thorogood, 2004).

The aim of this study was to gain a deeper and richer *understanding* of joint working practices. Moreover, the research questions were concerned with *interpreting* the experiences, observations and context in which multiagency working occurs. In particular, the aim was to gain a *rich* and *in-depth insight into the meanings* that police practitioners attach to actions, decisions, beliefs and values within their joint working practices. The study was about *understanding* intentions and motivations through observation and enquiry.

Rooted in a qualitative approach, ethnography has an interpretive-inductive methodology that allows complex *social processes* to be understood (Crotty, 1998; Coffey, 1999; Mason, 2002; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007; O'Reilly, 2009). It is about *meaning*, *understanding* and *interpretation* of social interactions, behaviours, perceptions, situations, organisations and communities (Reeves *et al.*, 2008). This is a form of qualitative inquiry that can produce *rich* descriptions (van Maanen, 1988; Reeves *et al.*, 2008; Fetterman, 2010) and *in-depth* accounts about the ways of life of those whom the study is about (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). Rich, detailed and in-depth descriptions derive from what philosopher Ryle (1949), and later anthropologist Geertz (1973) termed *thick* description. Thick description describes not just human behaviour, but its context as well, so that the behaviour can be better understood.

The questions consider *what* it means to experience the processes of joint working for police employees. *How* those processes may play out in non-linear ways. To *what* degree joint working experiences are influenced by various contexts, including personal, organisational and societal. *How* ethnographic insights gathered within the research differ to how joint working is depicted within police joint working theory. *What* can be learnt from the ethnographic insights of informants to help better understand *how* joint working might work better for policing? Ethnography is a method that is able to capture the *lived experiences,* of where and how the work is carried out. It is a method that can *'encapsulate the emotional texture that quantitative approaches neglect'* (Leigh, 2013, p.86) and the ethnographer's position can also be used to draw upon the *cultural* perspectives of the field. For these reasons, ethnography is considered to be the most appropriate methodology for this research.

4.2.1 Naturalism

With its origins in naturalism, it is proposed that, as far as possible, the social world should be studied in its 'natural' state, rather than in environments that are controlled (such as in laboratories or settings created specifically for the purposes of research) (LeCompte and Schutsul, 1999; van Donge, 2006). From a naturalist perspective, one way to learn about human behaviour, in varied cultures, in different societies, is through the method of ethnography (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). Naturalists propose that, in order to understand human behaviour, there is a need to accept that it is not performed in the precise and predictable way that positivists argue. Ethnography aims to study social phenomena in context in order to produce close, detailed examinations of aspects of social life as they occur in 'real-life' settings. There are no intentional changes made to the research environment; ethnographers attempt to have minimal impact on the setting and attempt to avoid interfering with naturally occurring conditions (Brewer, 2000; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007; O'Reilly, 2012). The ethnographic method is

suited to understanding existing situations, such as the pre-existing work of the police, as opposed to 'testing' or hypothesising how certain changes will impact.

4.2.2 Ethnography as a key to unlock a policing CAS

The method should be tailored to the overall theoretical stance of the research (Given, 2008). Crucially, ethnography is an ideal method to trace the workings of a CAS. Ethnography assumes that social life is complex, multi-layered and at times contradictory (e.g. van Maanen, 1988; Ybema *et al*., 2009; Bloomeart, 2013; De Jong *et al*., 2013). It makes no attempt to single out individual factors or search for causality (Brewer, 2000). Ethnographers strive for an appreciation of the complexities present in everyday life and aim to include anything in their research that is observed in the settings in which they are immersed (e.g. people's experiences, language and objects) (Koot, 1995; Heyl, 2007). Ethnography takes the position that social behaviour and the ways people construct and make meaning of their worlds is highly variable and contextually specific (LeCompte and Schensul, 1999). Aligned with complexity theory, the ontological foundations of ethnography accept that social life is not straightforward, precise or predictable.

Law (2004, p.1) argues that '*simple clear descriptions don't work if what they are describing is not itself very coherent. The very attempt to be clear simply increases the mess'*. While '*some things in the world can indeed be made clear and definite'* such as '*CO_2 emissions'* and '*boundaries of nation states'*, other phenomena are textured in quite different ways, including hope and unpredictabilities, for example (p.2). Ethnography is a method which appreciates the intricacies, complexities, contradictions and messiness of life (Whyte, 1993; Law, 2004; Chapkis, 2010; Fetterman, 2010). Law (2004) contends that even in ethnography, alike to other disciplines and branches of knowledge (e.g. history or statistics) parts of the world are either missed or distorted into clarity. He questions that if some of the world is vague, diffuse, unspecific,

emotional, indistinct, changes like a kaleidoscope, or does not have much pattern at all, then how might we catch some of the realities we are currently missing? Whilst he provides no conclusion, this is part of the argument; if much of reality is elusive then single answers cannot be expected. If the world is complex, then the chaos of life must be methodologically embraced. As an attempt to begin to find an answer, Law (2004, p.3) proposes that perhaps we '*need to rethink our ideas about clarity and rigour'*.

The methodological approach of the present study reflects this perspective by acknowledging that the complexity of joint working cannot be understood simplistically. The complexities of a policing CAS and joint working are multiple and involve various professionals, parents, children, families, ecologies, cultures, values, experiences, knowledge, beliefs, understandings, emotions, materials, languages, communications and technologies, for example. The actors and influences on the system are potentially infinite. Adopting this perspective, it is acknowledged that although observations of police members create a valuable 'window' into the system, the ethnographer's viewpoint is perspectival (Haraway, 1988; Greene and Bloome, 2004) and presents only one of many realities and ways of viewing joint working.

4.2.3 Background and differences to classical ethnography

'*Ethnography derives from traditional anthropology, where time in the field is needed to discern both the depth and complexity of social structure and relations'* with the aim of getting close to the '*lived experience of participants in social settings'* (Jeffrey and Troman, 2004, p.535). The aim of ethnography is clear from its naming: *ethnos*, Greek for 'culture'; and *graphein*, Greek for 'write'. Hence, ethnographic research is primarily concerned with writing about cultures (Spradley, 1980; van Maanen, 1988, 2011; Mitchell, 2007).

From the 1920s up until the 1970s ethnography was carried out 'elsewhere' (e.g. non-Western settings) (Boas, 1920; Malinowski, 1922; Whyte, 1943) until it

became realised that the methodology could be useful 'at home' (e.g. in local communities) (Amit, 2000; Madden, 2010; Järventie-Thesleff *et al*., 2016). In ethnographic research today it is not deemed essential for the researcher to travel hundreds of miles or 'live' with participants in order to gain an insight into their culture. Madden (2010, p.80) terms this 'step-in-step-out' ethnography. As an ethnographer, I spent time 'stepping-in' to the field when shadowing officers in their daily practices, having informal conversations and accessing documents. I also spent time 'stepping-out' of the field into the academic setting away from the research context. Spending time away from the police sites, by retreating to my office or the comfort of my home, facilitated distance from the field, a critical reflective position, time to write up fieldnotes, and opportunity to undertake supervision.

4.2.4 Multi-methods

The study involved the triangulation of data by drawing on three methods: non-participant observation, informal conversations and document analysis. I included both primary and secondary sources within the research in order to *generate* and *engage* with data. Ethnography is flexible in involving the use of a set of methods, which collectively allow for '*people's behaviour to be studied in their everyday contexts*' and for data to be gathered from a range of sources (Hammersley, 1998, p.2). The approach towards data collection was sensitive, adaptive and responsive to the context in which the research took place (Hammersley, 1998). The use of complementary methods facilitated access to organisational cultures, behaviours, attitudes and values from different perspectives.

Fieldwork is the main method associated with ethnographic research (Whitehead, 2005). In the case of this study, 'the field' was the settings in which the police carry out their work (the headquarters, police stations, integrated hubs, offices, meeting rooms, neighbourhoods, vehicles, people's homes and so forth).

Ethnographic research is micro-social in focus, it considers everyday interactions of human beings. This research aimed to include, but go beyond, the micro-focal to consider wider macro-structural factors which impact on the processes of working together. A multi-focal perspective is associated with participant observation and explores how a set of processes relate to broader socio-cultural and macro-social dynamics and processes. The disciplinary paradigm draws on anthropological and sociological underpinnings by exploring both culture and society (van Maanen, 1988; Preissle and Grant, 2004).

I drew on observations in order to create understanding and knowledge by watching how police members work. The site for my fieldwork was Lancashire Constabulary. The fieldwork involved shadowing warranted police officers, police community support officers (PCSOs) and non-warranted, civilian police staff in their daily practices (see Section 4.6.1 for more detail regarding informants). In particular, I collected fieldnotes relating to the area of interest: joint working. The aim was that by not only studying the police, but through learning from and with them, I would gain insight into the organisational context and tacit knowledge relevant to the processes of joint working occur 'on the ground' (Holy, 1984). This involved – for example – being perceptive to rules, routines, values, behaviours, experiences and language (Spradley, 1979).

In the first few weeks it took time to adjust to a 'new role'. I spent time making people aware of what the study would entail and what my position would involve. Especially in the early days in the field, I found observing in an unfamiliar setting draining, attempting to be constantly alert to avoid missing important information. Within the 'pilot' observational stage, I quickly began to recognise the issue of subject-

specific police terminology[10]. At the same time as trying to overcome the dilemma of language (Spradley, 1979), I was constantly trying to observe body language, inanimate features (e.g. objects) and decipher how joint working was playing out from the perspective of a policing CAS.

Whilst shadowing and talking to officers, civilian staff, other professionals and the public, I used a notebook, smartphone or encrypted laptop to record observations dependent on the context. This helped to record information that I did not want to forget without being intrusive. However, the opportunity to write notes varied significantly. Sometimes I found myself in situations where it would have been inappropriate to start recording my observations. At other times, the pace or environment did not lend itself well to opportunities to write fieldnotes. Moreover, I suffer very quickly from travel sickness if I am not looking ahead on the road, so the chance of documenting conversations on car journeys was scarce. I was left to depend on my bodily experience and memory on many occasions. This led to the use of what Ottenberg (1990) calls 'headnotes' - memories of the field. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) propose that headnotes are essential for filling in and recontextualising events. According to Ottenberg (1990, p.147) '*headnotes are always more important than written notes. Only after the author is dead do written notes become primary, for then headnotes are gone*'. He does however; acknowledge that most people, like myself, use both.

At the end of the day I returned home to write up my observations. My daily reflections became a combination of head (from memory when I had fallen short of opportunities to write), hand written (from shadowing) and typed notes (from

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[10] Language used within the police, including abbreviations for events, departments and crimes for example (i.e. 'refs', short for refreshments, is used to describe any breaktime; TacOps refers to tactical operations; and 'five-finger discount', means shoplifting).

meetings). These electronic word-processed documents described observations of settings, phone calls, conversations, incidents and operations. I created a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet with headings of dates, which together facilitated the process of early analysis and an indexing system used to write the findings chapters of this thesis (Emerson *et al.*, 2011). These processes were initiated at the start of the fieldwork so that I was able to systematically map my steps, thoughts and progress during the research journey. Meanwhile, other headnotes, which I did not have the time to document systematically, remained in my '*mental notebook which is never closed*' (Cohen, 1992, p.339).

Although observations are usually seen as the key method which characterises ethnography, most ethnographers use other methods such as interviews, audio-recordings or document analysis (Atkinson and Coffey, 2004; Reeves *et al.*, 2008). The decision was made not to audio-record for a number of reasons. Firstly, whilst the speech of informants was a fundamental part of the data collected, the aim was to pay equal attention to non-verbal elements, which cannot be captured through audio-recording. Furthermore, Hammersley and Atkinson (2007, p.148) caution that, '*audio-recordings can distort one's sense of the field, by focusing data collection on places where social processes can be recorded and concentrating attention on the analysis of spoken action*'. It was also decided that the use of either an audio- or video-recorder could unwantedly formalise conversations and impact on the 'natural' setting. Instead, direct conversation was, if possible (dependent on the setting), inputted directly onto a laptop. Direct quotations were clearly distinguished from summaries of my own words and are clearly indicated (italicised and referenced to the informant) in the empirical data chapters. When speaker's original words could not be reconstructed accurately, indirect speech is used to avoid ambiguity concerning the voices represented.

During the fieldwork I also engaged with secondary data by analysing documents. The analysis of formal documented data consisted of informal electronic

discussion boards and culturally created documents (i.e. the 'Cake (Offences) Act 2017')[11] , in addition to formal policy documents and case files. As I shadowed officers, I became familiar with certain cases, this led me to identify which case notes would be relevant to my research. Document access was helpful to gain a basic understanding of cases, which police employees spoke of and provided examples about.

One might ask why a different method was not selected to collect the data. For example, I could have relied on structured or semi-structured interviews with police officers. An ethnographic method approach was chosen, rather than generating specific responses to formulaic questions developed by the researcher as is the tendency in traditional interview methods. Moreover, interviews alone would not account for the gap between attitudes (what people say) and behaviours (what people do) in the same way as ethnography (Forsey, 2010). The informal style of conversations aimed to facilitate a more open conversation than that of formal interviews (Forsey, 2010). Similarly, no questionnaire or survey, however well-designed could yield the same in-depth insights (Kelley *et al*., 2003). The content of ethnography goes further in its ability to address detailed aspects including emotions, non-verbal communication, networks, tools, technology, materials and use of time and space (LeCompte and Schensul, 1999; Hochschild, 2003).

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[11] 'The Cake (Offences) Act 2017' – is an informal written document created by police employees in the constabulary under study, which contains a list of so-called 'offences', including for example '*Section 34 – Fainting at a post mortem'*. Any person who commits an 'offence' under the 'Act' is required to pay a level one, two or three fine (unbranded confectionary; branded confectionary; or hot takeaway food respectively).

4.3 Part Two – Field setting

Founded in 1839, Lancashire Constabulary is located in the North West of England. The police force covers approximately 2000 square miles and has a resident population of almost 1.5 million. It is divided into three geographical areas, known as basic command units (BCUs): south, east and west (Figure 8). The police headquarters is located in Hutton, Preston. The constabulary employs almost 5,000 members of staff (approximately 3000 police officers and 2000 police staff). Lancashire services a diverse range of communities, urban, to rural and affluent to highly deprived. The control room handles approximately 1.2 million calls for service annually, of which 250,000 are 999 emergencies. These translate into 120,000 crimes. On a typical day in Lancashire, it is estimated that over 81 per cent of calls for service are for non-crime related incidents involving concerns for safety (e.g. mental health and children's safeguarding) (Lancashire Constabulary, 2019).

**Figure 8: Lancashire Constabulary divisional map[12]**

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[12] Divisional map obtained from 'mySociety', a registered charity in England and Wales, via the following weblink: https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/17th_may_2017_serious_road_traff

4.3.1 Research sites

Observations, conversations and themes described in the empirical chapters take place within three geographically and socially distinct police divisional contexts. It is therefore important to briefly outline these differing policing environments. West division covers Blackpool, Fylde, Lancaster and Morecambe areas. East division covers the areas of Blackburn with Darwen, Hyndburn, Ribble Valley, Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale areas. South division covers Preston, South Ribble, Chorley and West Lancashire. The socio-demographic profiles of these areas vary from primarily white British, to a mixture of different ethnicities (Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi) clarified by ethnic group level statistics at postcode level (ONS, 2017). Each division is run by a chief superintendent, known as the divisional commander. Each divisional commander is in charge of a neighbourhood and response policing team. The local policing team is supported by other specialist departments, including the force control unit, dog unit, mounted branch, air support, serious and organised crime unit, force major investigation team, scientific support and unmanned aerial vehicles (drones).

Deprivation, fierce rivalries and sleepy hollows

The majority of the fieldwork in the west of the constabulary took place in Blackpool and surrounding areas (e.g. Fleetwood and Kirkham). Blackpool is a coastal resort and the smallest unitary authority in the region. It is the top most deprived neighbourhood in England on the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019, based on both 'rank[13]' and

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[13] Based on 'rank'. 'Rank' refers to rank of average rank – this measure summarises the average level of deprivation across an area, based on the population weighted ranks of all the neighbourhoods within it. See Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019) for further information.

'score' [14]. Neighbourhoods in Blackpool account for 8 of the 10 most deprived neighbourhoods nationally[15]. Blackpool is ranked sixth most deprived area out of 326 districts and unitary authorities in England, based on the proportion of lower super layer output areas (LSOAs[16]) in the most deprived 10 per cent nationally. This is the worst ranking of all the 14 authorities in the broader Lancashire area. In total, 39 (41.5 per cent) of the LSOAs in the authority are among the 10 per cent most deprived neighbourhoods in the country, and 22 (23 per cent) are in the top 1 per cent most deprived neighbourhoods in England. It is ranked first and third out of all local authority districts in England, in terms of the highest level of unemployment and income deprivation respectively, with over 30 per cent of children living in income deprived households (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2019). Blackpool also has the highest concentration of the most deprived LSOAs for health deprivation, with 81.4 per cent of LSOAs in the most deprived 20 per cent (ONS, 2016). The number of people per kilometre squared is more than 10 times the England and Wales average (Lancashire County Council, 2019). Transience has been an identified issue in Blackpool for a long time (Blackpool Council, 2019).

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[14] 'Score' refers to rank of average score – this measure summarises the average level of deprivation across an area, based on scores of all the neighbourhoods contained within. See Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019) for further information.

[15] Based on rank (see Footnote 10).

[16] Output areas are designed for statistical purposes. They are based on data from the 2001 Census, built from postcodes and initially to facilitate the calculation of the Indices of Deprivation 2004 and subsequently for a range of additional neighbourhood statistics. A lower layer super output area (LSOA) are small areas designed to be of a similar population size, with an average of approximately 1,500 residents or 650 households.

Blackpool was recognised by police officers as being highly deprived but also for its night time economy. Numerous research participants alluded to the local casino and amusement arcade being home to a congregation of sex offenders. Due to Blackpool being a tourist destination, police reported dealing with a large number of visitors to the area. The influx of tourists created additional demand during holiday seasons but was also influenced by football match schedules. Blackpool continues to be associated with a number of high-profile police investigations, including the disappearance of Charlene Downes and Sasha Marsden.

Meanwhile, other parts in the west were known as '*sleepy hollows*', which police officers explained referred to areas with reduced police activity. This was particularly the case in more rural areas. Over recent years, Operation Manilla has changed the 'sleepy' nature of one community in the west. It has brought police officers from all divisions across Lancashire into the area of Kirkham to police the fracking. At times, this has included mutual aid from other police forces nationally.

The majority of the fieldwork in the east of the constabulary took place in Blackburn with Darwen and Burnley. Burnley is listed as top of all towns and cities in England and Wales for the lowest median house price, whilst Blackburn also features in the top 10 (ONS, 2016). Burnley and Blackburn with Darwen are amongst the 10 most highly deprived neighbourhoods in England[17] with the largest proportion of their neighbourhoods in the most deprived 10 per cent of neighbourhoods nationally on the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019. Both Blackburn and Burnley are known for being industrial, old mill towns, with some heavily deprived areas. Police officers reported Blackburn to be the busiest policing town in Lancashire "*by a mile*" (Paul, early action

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[17] Based on the proportion of LSOAs in the most deprived 10 per cent nationally.

sergeant, day 11). It has a busy, shopping centre, and a high number of approved premises and houses in multiple occupation [18] (HMOs). Informants reported a significant proportion of 'over the border' crime in the east, including travelling criminals, with Blackburn situated within easy access to a number of motorway routes, including the M65, M6 and M61. Burnley and Blackburn residents are known to have a "*fierce rivalry*" (Alan, response constable, day 130), mainly relating to football.

In south division, Preston has a busy night time economy. According to police officers, "*the world revolves around Preston*" (Barry, early action officer, day 219). Preston was part of the former 'central' division and is home to the police headquarters site, which is situated in the south of Preston. This left other police employees, who were not based in the 'central' area, feeling somewhat "*forgotten*" about (Val, youth involvement worker, day 150). Similar to Blackburn, police officers reported a high percentage of 'over the border' crime in the areas of Skelmersdale, which borders Merseyside Constabulary.

4.4 Part Three – Navigating the field

4.4.1 Access

As requested by the police partner organisation, Lancashire Constabulary, I spent time across all three BCUs to gain a holistic overview of joint working across the police force as a whole. I was provided with initial access to the police force under study by a

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[18] A house in multiple occupation (HMO) is a property with at least three tenants, forming more than one household. The tenants share a toilet, bathroom or kitchen facilities. A household is either a single person or members of the same family who live together. A family includes people who are married or living together, including same-sex relationships; relatives or half-relatives and step-parents or step-children.

detective chief superintendent (DCS). Whilst the DCS provided the initial 'nod', access was a process of continual renegotiation as the research progressed.

Gaining access is a key part of navigating the field and can present a major problem for ethnographers (Boddy and McCalman, 1988). Despite being an 'outsider', gaining initial access to the police setting was a very smooth process. I was fortunate that a connection between Lancaster University and Lancashire Constabulary had been pre-established through the N8 PRP (see Section 1.10). The process is likely to have been much more difficult without this existing partnership; doing ethnographies in workplaces, organisations and institutional settings can be extremely difficult, as access can be a major hurdle (Pithouse, 1998; Scourfield, 1999). Nevertheless, I still had to complete all the internal police vetting procedures and the study required additional ethical approval by Lancashire Constabulary's evidence-based policing research hub (Section 4.5).

4.4.2 Developing field relations

Three meetings were held with a dozen academics and senior police officers, prior to the fieldwork commencing, to share ideas and have conversations about the potential focus of the research. The remit of the project – police joint working – was negotiated during these initial collaborative discussions. These meetings also enabled me to introduce my role to key actors within the constabulary, who then acted as gatekeepers during the research. I was able to make some 'quick wins' by offering to provide the police with briefings consisting of research updates, which would be relevant to policing practice. These early meetings proved beneficial as, not only were they able to 'check me out', but we were able to negotiate a starting point for the research. The lead for one of the 'place-based' teams suggested that, as a new initiative, the early action department would be a good place to begin observations. Another doctoral student was already researching the multiagency safeguarding hub (MASH), whilst a multiagency

risk assessment conference (MARAC) review was due to commence. Academics and police employees present agreed that early action was a logical starting point and that the research could commence as soon as the internal vetting procedures had been completed.

4.4.3 Gatekeepers

Despite access having been granted strategically by the former head of crime, it was certainly not a one-off activity. As the research progressed, I had to ensure that I approached the relevant gatekeepers for further access to specific departments and teams (Burgess, 1991). In the beginning the superintendent, head of corporate development and police lead for the evidence-based policing (EBP) research hub (who the head of crime had invited to an initial research collaboration meeting) was able to put me in touch with the evidence-based policing (EBP) coordinator who arranged for my vetting, identification card, parking, access to relevant buildings and a desk within the 'futures' office at the headquarters site.

As I spent time at headquarters and began speaking to various informants in the office, I started to understand how the hierarchical ranking structure functioned and who to request permission from. A chief inspector was able to put me in touch with a sergeant over in the east where I first spent time 'on the ground' in an integrated community hub[19]. Permission to access the south division was granted by another organisational development (OD) inspector who put me in contact with a sergeant in

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[19] An integrated community hub is a neighbourhood community building, where multiagency practitioners are co-located. The professionals who work from these hubs vary depending on the geographical area but include police, council, probation, mental health and early help (children's services).

charge of an early action integrated team (EAIT)[20]. The same inspector from OD also arranged through colleagues he had worked with in the west - where he was formerly based himself - to begin my time with an integrated offender management unit[21]. Whilst out in each division, one person was able to put me in touch with another, and I managed to navigate my way across the various teams and departments relatively easily through building up a network of contacts.

Perhaps the positive welcome which I received from other police members, in part, stems from the fact that the head of crime had given authority for my presence. This raises issues regarding power dynamics; a topic which is discussed further under ethics (Section 4.5.5). In addition, the people I observed and shadowed were also already likely to have been aware of the drive to embed evidence-informed practice in policing. This perhaps made them more welcoming, accepting and open minded to my work.

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[20] The early action integrated teams in Lancashire consist of a multiagency team of professionals, from both statutory and non-statutory services, detailed later in the thesis (see Figure 13). The early action teams were initially funded through Police Innovation Funding and aim to deliver early interventions to 'vulnerable' children, adults and families across Lancashire. The programme of work centres on reducing vulnerability and crime at the earliest possible point in people's lives, through understanding root causes rather than symptoms of behaviour.

[21] Integrated offender management aims to bring a cross-agency response to crime and reoffending by working with the most '*persistent and problematic offenders identified jointly by partner agencies*' (MoJ, 2015, p.2). The integrated offender management units in Lancashire consist of teams of police officers and civilian police staff responsible for coordinating multiagency work with individuals who are considered to be the most dangerous and prolific offenders in order to reduce the negative impact of crime and reoffending.

4.4.4 Project management

Navigating the field appropriately involved (amongst other aspects, see for example Section 4.4.8 on positionality and self-management) overseeing the research project by being organised and keeping up-to-date with deadlines. I found it useful to prepare in advance, for example Mack *et al*. (2005, p.10) provided a check list of categories which are of key importance during observations. These include documenting: appearance; verbal behaviour and interactions; physical behaviours and gestures; personal space; human traffic; and people who stand out. Whilst this is not an exhaustive list for managing observations, it provides a useful guide for the researcher, which I kept in mind.

When recording notes it was equally important to be organised. I began each record with the date, time, place, and type of data collection event. Space was left to expand notes, notes were taken strategically (key notes or phrases), shorthand was employed (abbreviations, acronyms to increase speed of notetaking), and I tried to cover a range of observations (setting, objects, body language, attitudes, environment, ambiance, as well as conversation) (Mack *et al*., 2005, p. 24). Time was allocated to process fieldnotes. When possible, I did so either straight away or on an evening, with the aim of maximising what I could recall from memory (Emerson *et al*., 2011).

4.4.5 Preparation

Mason (2002) advised that preparation should lead the researcher to develop the appropriate skills, including partaking in relevant training. Taking on board this advice meant that I needed to expand my knowledge of ethnography. During the first year of my doctoral studies I attended an ethnography session delivered as part of a qualitative research training module at Lancaster University. I undertook the full module in order to expand my knowledge of the meta-theoretical questions, the design and the implementation of qualitative research. I also undertook a distance learning

ethnography module that was made available to postgraduate students. This perspective proved to be most beneficial, if not only to learn more about the method itself but to discuss the plans of my own project with other students and the lecturer. The research training programmes were complemented by my own analytical review which consisted of reading relevant literature in relation to ethnography. The whole process of preparation enabled me to approach data collection as a more aware researcher, comfortable with the challenge that lay ahead and sensitive to some of the theoretical aspects of the study.

Post-fieldwork, I submitted an application and was delighted to secure a place on the 'Writing Across Boundaries' workshop at Durham University. The intensive two-day, residential programme for third year PhD students, enabled exploration of analytical and practical approaches to ethnographic writing. The weeks prior to the programme, I had begun to feel anxious about the analysis. The facilitators covered (in an approachable and engaging manner) some key questions that had been puzzling me for months: *how do you achieve 'thick' description? How do you get closer to your data?* And, *how do you link data to theory*? The workshop gave me motivation to get back 'on the road' and re-write the findings chapters of my thesis.

4.4.6 Pilot observations

Although Mason (2002) does not advise against pilot studies when using qualitative methods, she does recommend that one's research design should not be entirely guided by them. Instead she believes the researcher should plan carefully what can be achieved and take into consideration resources, time, transport, and so on. Whilst there is discrepancy about the terminology and literature around 'pilot observations', I refer to such instances as those which occurred prior to being presented with my police staff identification badge. This was the phase of fieldwork during which I was still escorted.

Once 'badged', I could navigate the field (with approved access) without my every move being monitored and had transitioned from 'visitor' to 'police associate' status.

In the early stages following the granting of ethical approval, it was agreed that I would attend EAIT meetings as pilot observations with the informed permission of members present. Within the first briefing I was able to test out the application of CAS during observations and reflect on how the theory presented in practice. I also considered the potential inanimate actants that were contributing to joint working. I realised these features (e.g. paper, pens, diaries, tablets) were critical to practices of working together. It led to me confirm that the theoretical construct of a policing CAS and ANT were indeed relevant to the research. From an early point, I was able to capture human elements (e.g. relationships), and inanimate features (e.g. paperwork), and use them to form understanding of how the joint working plays out. The pilot phase also enabled me to practice collecting fieldnotes and documenting as much useful information as possible. It helped me to realise that I could focus more on non-conversational elements (e.g. gestures, objects, tone) within my observations (Mack *et al.*, 2005). The pilot observations provided further insight into the '*complexities of description*' (Emerson *et al.*, 2011, p.7), reaffirming that whilst an ethnographer might create descriptive fieldnotes, the observations and notes are interpretive and perspectival (Brewer, 1994), they represent one particular depiction of a situation, yet there are infinite possibilities of describing the same situation which can be equally correct and valuable (Holy, 1984; Haraway, 1988).

4.4.7 Front- and back-stages

During pilot observations, I was also able to reflect on the difference between what informants might say to me on an individual basis, in the presence of police colleagues, in formal settings, and amongst other external agency professionals (Charmaz and Mitchell, 2001). These observations led to exploration of the sociological perspective

of 'dramaturgy' developed by Goffman (1959), who was influenced by notions of dramatism (Burke, 1945), which in turn derives from Shakespeare. 'Dramaturgy' is a concept commonly adopted in micro-sociological perspectives of everyday social interactions. In dramaturgical sociology it is argued that elements of human behaviours are dependent on time, place and audience. Using theatre as a metaphor, Goffman suggested that the way in which a human presents him or herself to an audience (e.g. another person or group of people) is based on cultural values, norms and beliefs. The goal of the presentation of self is acceptance from the audience through a carefully conducted performance. Success occurs when the audience views the actor as he or she aims to be perceived.

Through a metaphorical theatre, Goffman (1959) developed the notion of different stages. 'Back-stage' is defined as the area where '*the performer can relax; he can drop his front, forgo speaking in his lines, and step out of character*' (p.488). He argued that when individuals return to the back-stage, they feel a sense of relief, that they can freely express actions that would not be condoned in the front-stage arena. It is the area where socially or culturally 'unaccepted' behaviours, suppressed in the 'front-stage', may appear. Back-stage is where other performers are present, but the audience is not. Thus, the performers can 'let down their guard' and 'step out' of character. In being a relative term, back-stage exists in relation to specific audiences.

In the case of this research, I became intrigued by the multiple 'performances' and 'audiences' which created a different picture of joint working and policing events. Prolonged immersion in the field setting, exposed differences between observations in 'front-stage' settings (e.g. visits, meetings, briefings) and those which occurred 'back-stage' (e.g. car journeys, canteens and rest rooms). During 'back-stage' observations there was a striking difference, where informants spoke much more freely (and often more negatively about joint working) than would have perhaps been condoned 'front-stage'.

Adopting a dramaturgical perspective, in the case of this research, 'front-stage' refers to where an audience was present. In contrast, 'back-stage' refers to areas where police officers were (relatively more) relaxed (such as break times), where other performers (e.g. police colleagues, usually of the same ranking) were present. Reflecting on the idea of different audiences, it became clear that there were multiple audiences for whom police officers, in particular, performed. These audiences consisted of different publics, other agencies, line managers and senior leaders in policing. Whilst there were also differences between the front- and back-stage behaviours for police civilian staff, the performances were less strikingly different.

It could be argued, that as an 'outsider', informants were also putting on a performance for myself. During early conversations and observations, it would not be unsurprising if that had been the case. However, through self-management, building rapport and establishing trust - alongside being involved in banter, cultural rituals (e.g. cake fines) - and my long-term presence in informal arenas, I became gradually exposed to 'naturally occurring', 'back-stage' attitudes and behaviours.

Returning to the work of Shakespeare (Jaques, Act II, Scene VII, lines 139-142), he conceived that, '*All the world's a stage… And one man in his time plays many parts*'. From this perspective, it is suggested that humans are always performing. 'Back-stage' behaviours are therefore also 'performances'; not public performances, nor professional performances; but performances for peers. Thus, it is argued that in the 'back-stage' arena police employees were still performing, only the performance was a different one. In the empirical findings, both front- and back-stage performances of joint working are drawn upon. These different performances are reflected upon further in the empirical discussion (Chapter Seven).

4.4.8 Positionality

Ethnography '*rests on the peculiar practice of representing the social reality of others through the analysis of one's own experience of the world of these others*' (van Maanen, 1988, ix). Bearing this in mind, positionality involves appreciating that as ethnographers we take a whole host of dynamics (such as, age, gender, class, race, linguistics, socio-cultural characteristics and experiences) into the field. These characteristics impact in various ways within different fields. A setting will in itself have a whole range of contextual features (e.g. linguistics, culture, power and gendering). It was essential to recognise and navigate these differences and my position within the context of study. This relied on an ability to constantly think strategically, to recognise the impact of these dynamics and to appreciate that at different times in my fieldwork I will have been seen in different ways by different people. There is no right formula for doing so but intersectionality provides a framework to reflect about where we are; managing positionality and strategising our roles (Dawson, 2010). It also supports researchers to consider their position, in terms of the perspective they bring to the research during analysis. In terms of being a female researcher, for example, Stanley and Wise (1994, p.403) argue that:

> *'Of absolute importance was "feminist consciousness" in that women's experiences constitute a very different view of reality, a way of making sense of the world, and an entirely different ontology. It also makes available a previously untapped store of knowledge about what it is to be a woman, what the social world looks like to a woman, and how it is constructed and negotiated by women.'*

Whilst in the case of this thesis, a gender analysis of joint working was not the focus, it is recognised that my identity as a woman, brings a different perspective to the research.

4.4.8.1 Self-management

The development and maintenance of trusting relationships played a pivotal role. This relied upon an immense deal of reflecting before, during and after any observations and interactions (Schön, 1983). I found myself thinking about how I physically positioned myself, deciding who to talk to and how much to give away about my own personal or professional background. I wanted informants to see me as someone that they felt comfortable confiding in and who they could be assured would not share their personal thoughts and feelings with others. I certainly did not want informants to think I was '*a spy*' (White, 1997, p.331). Although I had read literature about the general aspects of an ethnographer's self-presentation in fieldwork, I agree with Leigh (2013, p.111) that I am not sure it is ever possible to be fully prepared for just how much I had to '*constantly monitor my own demeanour in the workplace in order to create and manage the intellectual research poise'*. Trying to strike a balance between being approachable and not becoming over involved was difficult. Even in the first observation, when I did not pass comment during the early action department discussion, I wondered if anyone thought I was being rude, shy or judgemental by not contributing.

My own identity and the influence it had on the research was not discussed regularly with informants, however it was something that I remained constantly aware of and attempted to manage. The importance of my own biography became relevant early on in the fieldwork as a relatively young woman, studying for a PhD, having grown up in a different area of the country for example. It had not previously crossed my mind that the majority of police employees would live in the area, in which they worked, or at least the geographical area covered by the constabulary. Thus, local 'taken for granted' knowledge, which informants had gained through a combination of personal and work-related experience, was unfamiliar to me (e.g. where services were located). Meanwhile, early in the fieldwork, a banterous police officer (who it transpired had been put forward as the 'spokesman' by his team mates) questioned whether I was

undercover from '*PSD*', which I soon learnt was the professional standards department[22]. It emerged in later conversations that people thought I had been recruited, by senior management, to report on any misconduct. However, over time as I built relationships and trust, I slowly began to feel more accepted. This was demonstrated through inclusion in work-related social functions (e.g. invites to retirement meal and Christmas drinks) and getting told "*you're actually alright for a poindexter[23]*" (Dave, response officer, day 89).

Managing my intellectual research position also involved showing an appreciation of the practical-symbolic repertoire. This involved understanding the norms, customs, rituals, practices, optionals, 'must dos', implicit and explicit knowledge involved in police cultures and settings (Schirato and Webb, 2003). Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992, p.40) draw attention to the 'thought' and the 'unthought'. When you enter a community, there is a clear sense of what you should or should not do; that is the thinkable. However, there are also things that do not appear on the radar, things which are not even considered an option – the unthinkable. These are all essential aspects of the field which were fundamental when developing relationships, trying to 'fit in' and aiming to cause as little disruption as possible, which I learnt through exposure and engagement.

> *'Because it arises from the relative interactions of, among other things, variegated insider responses, fluid social-cultural dynamics, established power flows, applied methodological strategies, and researcher-specific*

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[22] Professional standards department (PSD) in Lancashire is located at the police headquarters site and is led by a detective superintendent. The department is responsible for dealing with complaints from members of the police and internal misconduct investigations.

[23] A 'studious person'.

characteristics, the participant observer's status as outsider-within is constantly under construction and thereby in need of ongoing management and positional negotiation.' (Dawson, 2010, p.180).

With this in mind, I found myself strategically and tactically reviewing my researcher role and position (almost constantly), leading to developments and changes during the course of the fieldwork by constantly responding to the environment (e.g. people and setting). This was required in order to continue to self-manage and retain a bond and rapport with informants (Laine, 2000).

4.4.8.2 The insider-outsider debate

As a qualified social worker, with experience in child protection, mental health and domestic violence settings, it is also important to recognise that it is my own positioning and biography which inevitably drew me to the research in the first place (Roseneil, 1993). This part of the methodology explores certain aspects of my own biography that were relevant to particular dimensions of the research, namely my position as an insider and outsider, and the potential advantages and disadvantages it entailed (Pugh *et al*., 2000; Bonner and Tolhurst, 2002). As summarised by Leigh (2014, p.430):

> '*Social researchers have long since discussed the concept of being an 'insider' and whether this status can truly be described as one static position or, rather, relates more appropriately to that of a simultaneous process, oscillating between the two most extreme points on the ethnographic research continuum: insider and outsider'*.

Considering my position led me to realise that I possess both insider and outsider qualities within my role. As an insider, I have experience of working in children's safeguarding (social care); joint working with the police (as an IDVA); knowledge of 'early action' work (theory and practice); interest in forensic services (employment in forensic settings) and an interest in the research area (academic background in

psychology, criminology and sociology). I acknowledge that I might have also been influenced by my experience of working with professionals from a range of other disciplines including, health, education and third sector organisations from a health and education perspective (in the NHS and in residential schools).

My own background, knowledge, experiences and beliefs will have undoubtedly impacted on my role as a researcher. I have experienced effective, efficient and open joint working through a domestic abuse team which was comprised of police officers and social workers based in the same office. Relationships were characterised by openness and trust. At times, other than the uniformed officers, it was unclear even from being in the room for a period of time, who was a social worker and who was an officer. In contrast, when I was working within a children's safeguarding court team, I became acutely aware of the distinct difference in the ethos of joint working practice. Unless individual social workers had 'a contact' within the police, it was much more difficult to obtain information in a timely fashion. I wondered what 'ingredients' were needed to work effectively together, despite knowing there were no clear answers to this complex issue.

My position as somewhat 'on the side' of safeguarding practitioners is one that I can justify, even as a researcher, it gave me a standpoint from which I looked at some of the policies and guidelines the police are expected to adhere to. My previous professional experience, as Laberee (2002, p.102) described was key to delving into the crevices of the culture and using my position to understand '*hidden truths'* that the public would be unaware of. It allows you to see things that others do not see. This is not necessarily a superior perspective but a unique one (Hammersley, 2017).

Whilst possessing some 'insider' qualities, I was not an '*intimate'* insider as described by Taylor (2011, p.7): '*researchers whose pre-existing friendships (close, distant causal or otherwise) evolve into informant relationships – friend-informants –*

as opposed to the majority of existing work that deals with informant-friendships'. I had no '*previously established friendships'* (p.5) with the informants who took part in the fieldwork. Further consideration of my 'outsider' characteristics was also vital to acknowledge my positionality (Agar, 1980). These characteristics include: I am a non-native (not a police employee); a researcher (not a practitioner); have experienced different training (psychology and sociology); come from a different professional background (as a qualified social worker); am unfamiliar to the context (terminology, structure, hierarchy, procedures); and am female (the majority of police force members are male). That said, being a female researcher is considered by some to be an asset. According to Weitz (1976) females are generally perceived as warmer and less threatening. Nevertheless, my 'outsider' qualities are likely to have influenced, in terms of understanding subtle differences (e.g. in language) and navigating the 'unthought' qualities of the police setting (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992).

Through my experience of safeguarding both children and adults - whilst lending itself well to the field of child protection - I was not in a position whereby I was working in my own back yard as a police employee. Being an 'intimate insider', that is having regular ongoing contact with friends and colleagues and being deeply embedded as a social actor in a setting where the narrative of the researcher and the researched become entwined, can raise further dilemmas. I do not have to worry about any of my police informants' dilemmas with the same intensity as if I were a native police member within the team (Schütz, 1944).

In policing, police force members work and experience their profession through their own system of significant symbols by, for example, carrying out assessments, building relationships with families, adhering to legislation, policies, procedures and joint working. They depend on their culture to direct their behaviour and organise their practice. It prescribes a certain way of life which for natives becomes natural, obvious, 'the norm' and taken for granted (Spradley, 1979). The aim was that

as a professional stranger, I would be receptive to unfamiliar customs, traditions and idiosyncrasies (see Foucault, 1972; Hollway, 1984; Parker, 1992; Hester, 2011).

4.4.8.3 Overt-covert

Disclosure is a key issue to be considered when thinking about positioning as an ethnographer. Fieldwork has been discussed on a spectrum from covert to overt (O'Reilly, 2012). Traditionally covert research was supported as overt positioning means that the researcher could have more of an impact on the naturalistic setting. The very act of researching in itself changes research. Some suggest that covert research is immoral as it hinders informed consent (Bulmer, 1982; Bryman, 2001). However, when fieldwork turned to subcultures (e.g. gang behaviour, drug cultures, prostitution in the 50s/60s) covert research became popular (e.g. pretending to be one of them) (Humphreys, 1970; Rosenhan, 1973; Fielding, 1981). Covert research is still undertaken but often frowned upon from an academic standpoint (Calvey, 2008; Giollabhuí *et al.*, 2016). It is for the researcher to judge the appropriate mode of declaration. Declaration should occur where possible but there are contexts where you cannot always say what your role is. Disclosure should be timely and appropriate. In terms of the nature of this research, my role as the ethnographer was mostly overt. This was of course a big advantage for meeting ethical standards. However, there is not necessarily a clear divide between overt and covert research (Lugosi, 2006); at times my role shifted. When someone walked into the office or into an event then I did introduce myself if the timing and context was appropriate (Punch, 1986). On other occasions, I did not interrupt a meeting to introduce and explain my role in great detail. Therefore, for a temporary period my role would be unknown to that person until I was able to explain my work at a suitable time.

4.4.8.4 Observer as participant

In ethnography, observer as participant (when emphasis is on observing) and participant as observer roles (when emphasis is on participating) exist along a spectrum (Tedlock, 1991; Cooper *et al.,* 2004). The research strategy was mainly non-participant (observer as participant) as I observed '*from a distance'* (Gobo, 2008, p.5). This is partly predetermined due to the context; I am not a police officer or employed police staff and therefore was not in the position to take on a warranted or civilian police role. For large amounts of the time I was non-participant, silently observing. However, it could be argued that in some ways, I inherently took part in specific events by my mere presence. That said, I was not actively involved in what was happening (e.g. key decisions); the emphasis was always on watching. At other times, whilst shadowing individual police officers I engaged in in-depth informal conversations, to elicit relevant information regarding their experiences and perceptions of joint working practices and processes. This involved interacting and asking questions to complement the non-participant observational fieldwork. However, I do not believe that it is necessary to become too focused on these distinctions, as they are two ends of a spectrum. At times during the fieldwork I observed and participated to differing degrees depending on the situation (e.g. my participation was greater when engaging in informal conversations with individual officers in comparison to observing silently at meetings).

4.4.8.5 Involvement and detachment

Considering the benefits and drawbacks offered by the positions of 'insider' or 'outsider', it was important to try and strike a balance between proximity and distance; to get close but maintain analytical distance in order to be able to analyse and understand what was going on (Pugh *et al.,* 2000). Whilst it was important to develop a trusting relationship with participants (Alder and Alder, 1987), it was equally important not to get '*caught up in the moment'* (McCurdy and Uldam, 2014, p.47). I was aware of some of the advantages that involvement offers: trust, building relationships, access,

opportunities, understanding and less disruption (Platzer and James, 1997; Pugh *et al.*, 2000; Bonner and Tolhurst, 2002); yet, I was also aware of the advantages of distance: a critical eye, analytical distance and opportunity to reflect (Lindsey *et al.,* 1999; Pugh *et al.,* 2000; Bonner and Tolhurst, 2002; Simmons, 2007).

Foucault (1972) argued that it is difficult for an insider to be aware of the discourse they use. Their insider position means they take for granted much of that which goes on around them (Pugh *et al.*, 2000). The position of closeness allowed me to really 'experience' - intellectually, emotionally, texturally - what the police officers do. The distance was then the vantage point from which to reflect on experiences and on what I could learn from within a policing CAS. The non-native perspective exploits the cognitive privilege of the immigrant, being able to see the intersubjective nature of behaviours and beliefs which for natives are natural, obvious, normal and taken for granted (Schütz, 1944).

In my case, I did not see an immediate danger of becoming too close – I am, because of who I am (e.g. female, mixed origin, a qualified social worker) rather different from the majority of police officers. It has been suggested that by approaching ethnography from a distance, as an outsider, the researcher can obtain knowledge of an external world that exists independently of the researcher and the research process thereby reducing distortion and bias to a minimum (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007; Silverman, 2013). The 'step-in-step-out' ethnographic approach discussed earlier in Section 4.2.3, was adopted to enable this critical reflexive positioning during the fieldwork (Madden, 2010).

4.4.9 Leaving the field

The timescale of the fieldwork was limited by the prerequisites of doctoral research and thus, inevitably from the outset would have to be wrapped up (Delamont *et al.*, 2000; O'Reilly, 2009). This differs somewhat from classical ethnography where the

researcher could remain in the field for years (Heyl, 2007). A new series of questions would then be established, or the ethnographer would leave the field. Whilst data saturation is the aim, often the ending of fieldwork is determined by the approach of deadlines. Initially, I had envisaged that ending the research would mean leaving the police setting at a given point in time, allowing sufficient time to write up this thesis. However, in this case, 'leaving the field' meant that I stopped collecting data but continued to contribute to briefings, meetings, presentations and organisational developments to embed the findings in practice. In fact, I have still not 'cut ties' with 'the field' (Lancashire Constabulary) – quite the opposite. I have developed a collaborative research relationship, which I hope to sustain and build on in the future. With changing emphasis on evidence-informed practice in policing; and the importance of research 'impact' in higher education, the relationship between the researcher and the field setting is often sustained. Leaving the 'field' does not necessarily occur at a fixed point in time. Consequently, the boundaries between the 'field' and 'home' (i.e. the academic setting or the place where the researcher lives) are becoming increasingly blurred.

Nevertheless, I still had to consider when I would stop collecting data in order to provide enough time to write up my findings within the doctoral timescale (Taylor, 1991). On the one hand, I do not claim data saturation, given that policing is constantly evolving and thus, new information is constantly available (however long I were to spend in the field). According to van Maanen (1988, p.119) '*knowing a culture, even our own, is a never-ending story*'. On the other hand, I found that during the 18-months of fieldwork I had reached a point at which new information in the data analysis confirmed the theoretical perspective and themes, which had already emerged (Faulkner and Trotter, 2017). I was reasonably assured that further data collection would serve to confirm these already emerging themes and conclusions. Thus, I was satisfied that data collection could cease.

4.5 Part Four - Ethics

At every stage from the planning and design to the writing up of ethnographic research, there is an ethical background which ethnographers need to consider (Punch, 1986; O'Reilly, 2012). Ethical decisions were necessary at all stages of the research journey (Madden, 2010). An ethics approval form was submitted and approved by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Lancaster University Management School (FASS-LUMS) research ethics committee during the Lent term of my first year of study. Although there was no formal panel, ethical approval was also granted by Lancashire Constabulary's evidence-based policing research hub.

4.5.1 Consent

Informed consent was integral to the project (Punch, 1986). Consent to access the police headquarters had already been granted by Lancashire Constabulary as part of the N8 PRP partnership. There was no coercion in the granting of access to departments. As active members of the N8 PRP, both Lancashire Constabulary and Lancaster University had a mutual interest to participate in order to improve multiagency understandings and practices.

Most guidelines advocate that full, informed consent should be gained from *all* participants (Norris, 1993; O'Reilly, 2012). In situations where access permission is granted by managers the individuals subject to observation may not be informed. This was not the case in this research; my role was explained to members of the police force prior to the fieldwork commencing. All participants' dignity was respected. Written consent was obtained from participants who were individually shadowed. All such police members were provided with a participant information sheet (Appendix B) and consent form (Appendix C) which were signed and returned. When the situation arose whereby a police employee was undertaking a home visit or pre-arranged meeting, then the member of the public was consulted and also asked for written consent to partake in

the study. I also observed meetings where a variety of different professionals from various disciplines (e.g. social work, health and education) were present. In these cases, I verbally explained the research prior to the meeting commencing. No professionals objected to my presence, in the context of the research, however, should they have done then I would have left the meeting.

Access to documents was agreed during a meeting with police members after passing the police vetting procedures. Access to such documents could not have been gained without formal consent as I required 'log-in' details (a username and password) to access electronic information systems. I sought out verbal consent prior to using any hard copies of documents.

4.5.2 Reminding participants of my role

In the case of ethnography, as researchers become integrated into the setting, members of the organisation may overlook the research purpose, disclosing information that they do not recognise as relevant to the research, but which the researcher considers to be so (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2011). This raises questions about the extent to which the organisation's and individuals' prior consent justifies the use of information as data. In attempt to mitigate this ethical dilemma, information regarding the progress of the research was provided to police members through regular research dissemination and briefing events. Regular note taking also served as a reminder of my research role.

4.5.3 Physical and psychological discomfort

The participants and researcher were not placed under any physical discomfort as part of the research. For observations members of the police force were observed and shadowed in their usual daily work routine. It was the intent that observations and shadowing were non-disruptive, however participants had the right to withdraw. Police practice can be a demanding and distressing field to work in (Barlow and Hall, 2007;

Dickson-Swift *et al.,* 2009). I did not expect informants to discuss any topics that they did not already encounter in their daily work. In order to address my own exposure to this, I used supervision to discuss any emotional distress. As a practitioner, I had developed a sense of resilience through experience of working in emotive settings, including child protection, mental health and domestic violence. The 'step-in-step-out' approach facilitated time to reflect upon my own emotional wellbeing when 'stepping-out' of the field (Madden, 2010).

4.5.4 Confidentiality

Most guidelines insist that researchers offer confidentiality and anonymity to respect the privacy of the research population (e.g. Wiles, *et al.,* 2008; O'Reilly, 2012; Bell, 2014). An anonymous study is that in which nobody, including the researcher, can identify who provided the data, which is not always simple. Pseudonyms have been employed to anonymise the participants for data analysis. As an effort to keep information anonymous, I only refer to participants by their pseudonym to hide their identity. I have chosen to label all interview extracts as 'day 1', 'day 2' and so on to prevent people being identified by the date they were on shift or at a meeting. On the odd occasion, the gender of participants has also been altered to reduce the likelihood of participant identification (e.g. where the informant might have been the only person responsible for a particular role at a specific point in time). Similarly, names of police operations, which might expose participants identity have also been re-named.

Confidentiality means ensuring what is disclosed goes no further (Wiles *et al.,* 2007; O'Reilly, 2012). Whilst the aim is to ensure confidentiality, if any participant had given cause for concern (e.g. that they or another person was at risk of harm and was not being appropriately safeguarded) then I would have had to explain that I would have been obliged to share the relevant information with others (Norris, 1993). When eliciting consent, the limits to confidentiality were verbally explained, although as

professionals informants should have already been aware of these limitations as part of the job roles. This is of particular importance when working with professionals who are responsible for safeguarding vulnerable individuals.

4.5.5 Power

Power is ever present in society (Smart, 2002; Daldal, 2014). There are individual, cultural and structural aspects of power which operate in all organisations (e.g. the hierarchy of different rankings of police members) (Foucault, 1991). As a social worker, I was accustomed to recognising, understanding and considering how we can respond appropriately to power as a fundamental aspect of my training and practice (Fook, 2002; Tew, 2006; Smith, 2010). Ethnography presents a context of unequal power relationships (Rios, 2016). As the ethnographer, setting out as a 'stranger' I was limited by the organisation's willingness to participate in the research by allowing access to the setting. Opportunities for observing, shadowing and accessing documents were dependent upon on further consent being granted, placing the organisation and individuals in a position of power. The subject-specific language employed in policing also had the potential to create issues around power and my ability to understand the everyday work of the police. Through building up trusting relationships and becoming immersed in the setting (Simmons, 2007), potential power dynamics were reduced (Punch, 1976).

On the other hand, although I have strived to listen and represent accurately police practices and policies, I am aware of my own position of power in shaping the ethnographic encounter, making sense of particular experiences according to my own consciousness and background (culture, profession, experiences, beliefs, knowledge) (van Maanen, 1988; Rock, 2001). This raises some pertinent questions: Whose reality is being considered in research? Whose reality will be privileged in the study? Whose interest is being served by the research? As the researcher I was in a driving position to

guide the answers to those important questions (Rock, 2001; O'Reilly, 2012). By reflecting on my position as ethnographer and in representing the setting as accurately as possible (yet remaining aware that objectivity in research is arguably unattainable) I have aimed to reduce this power imbalance.

4.5.6 Risks for the ethnographer

We face risks in everyday life, when we cross the road or travel by car for example (Taylor, 2013). Awareness of risk is a characteristic of social life in late modernity (Beck, 1992; Giddens, 1999). For the police, physical and emotional risk is arguably, to a greater degree, integral to work life. Therefore, claiming that I would eliminate all possibilities of potential risk in the research was not realistic. However, I did remain alert to risks and continually thought about balancing those risks with the benefits of the research in order to make ethical decisions that did not jeopardise my own or other people's safety.

4.5.7 Data storage

All data has been kept confidentially and encrypted following Information Systems Services (ISS) guidelines at Lancaster University for secure information transfer, locked away in a filing cabinet and was only accessible to the researcher. As the data collector and analyser, I have guardianship over the stored data. I am aware of the importance of complying with the Data Protection Act 1998 and European Union General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), enforced in 2018. I always ensured that any data was transported in a secure manner. Handwritten notes were kept safe 'in the field' by using non-tearable textured envelopes. I kept the notes with me at all times, in my personal handbag until they were safely transferred onto the encrypted laptop or locked away in a filing cabinet. Electronic data was stored on Lancaster University's secure electronic storage system (Lancaster University Box).

4.6 Part Five - Data collection and analysis

This section of the methodology outlines the data collection and analysis process. It provides: a summary of the data collected; details of the preliminary analysis; use of Atlas.ti, a CAQDAS programme; the emergence of analytical themes; and the development of theoretical and conceptual insights. Analysis was cyclical in nature. The details discussed in each stage contribute understanding of how themes, concepts and theories were subsequently used to form the content of the empirical chapters. Figure 9 provides an overview of the iterative process between data collection and analysis.
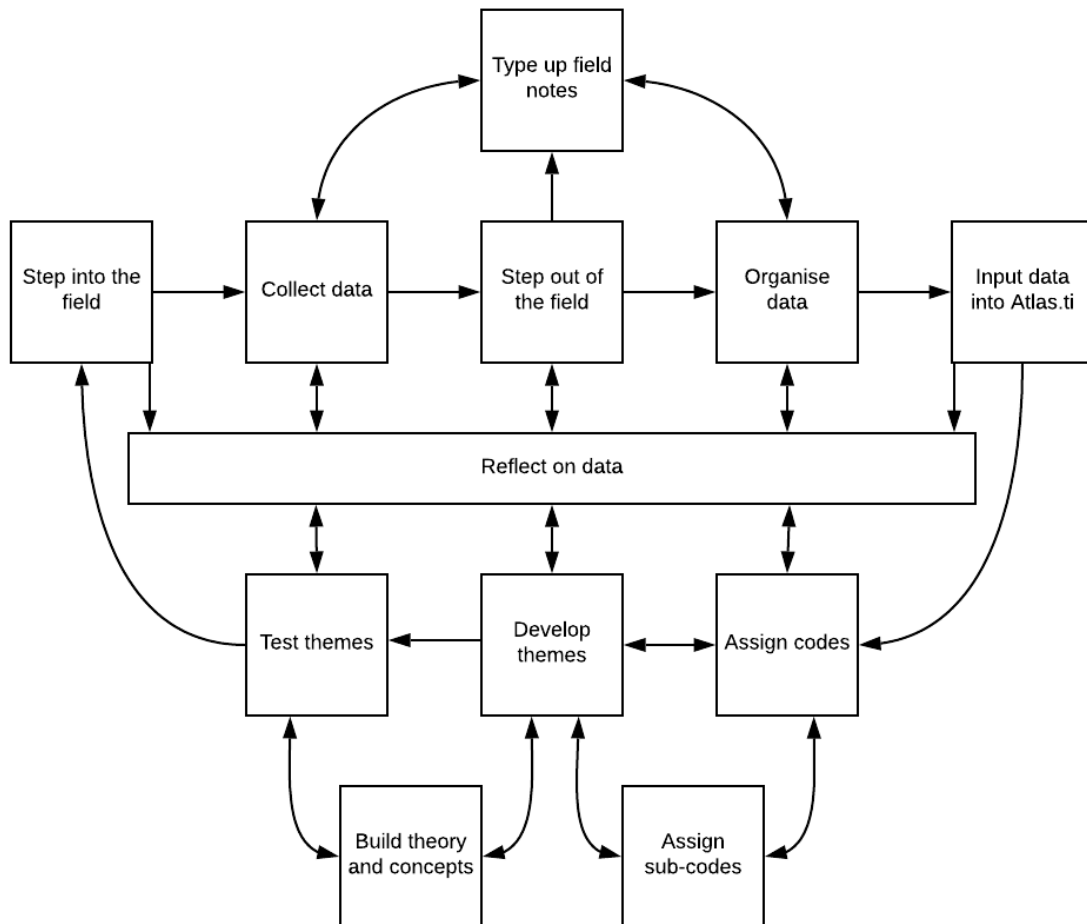

Figure 9: Data collection and analysis process

4.6.1 Data collected

Data were collected as I shadowed police staff and officers whilst exploring the research questions outlined in Section 3.8. Fieldwork was conducted over 18-months, from 25th April 2017 until 30th October 2018, with a pilot phase of five days in March 2017. Some days were spent observing a full shift, which in the police force under study can vary, from over-time shifts of a few hours to longer 10-hour days (and more, depending on whether an officer finishes on schedule). When shadowing civilian police staff, days usually began between 08.00-09.00am and finished between 4.00-5.00pm. Observations consisted mostly of day and some evening shifts, mainly on the basis that the majority of joint working took place between the hours of 9.00am and 5.00pm, when most other professionals were working. That said, I did carry out some early and late shifts (i.e. beginning at 07.00am and finishing at 02.00am), mainly to secure respect from a number of officers, one for example had asked "*What time will you be in? 10.00? Isn't that what time they start at Disneyland[24] [LAUGHS]*" (Alan, response constable, day 130). A number of police officers had joked that 'the bosses' only work between the hours of 10.00am and 3.00pm. Sometimes observations took place five days per week and other times, two or three days per week, depending on police employee availability, time to catch up with fieldnotes, and other doctoral commitments (e.g. training days, supervision and conferences).

A broad spectrum of policing areas were observed, as follows: early action; 'vulnerable' callers; immediate response; custody; neighbourhood; traffic; offender management; support unit; and child protection. Other organisations involved in the research were: education; probation; housing; adult's social care; children's social care;

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[24] 'Disneyland' was a nickname adopted by police employees working in the three 'divisions' for the police headquarters.

fire and rescue; mental health trusts; primary hospitals; ambulance service; and a whole host of third sector agencies (e.g. domestic abuse, wellbeing and drugs and alcohol). In total 78 warranted police officers (ranked from police constables to chief superintendents), 21 police community support officers (PCSOs), 34 civilian police staff, 47 professionals from other statutory organisations; and 26 employees of the third sector were also observed or spoken to. The majority of warranted police officers observed were male (approximately 70 per cent). No great differences were noted in the gender compositions of civilian police staff. This figure is representative of the overall proportion of the constabulary's workforce gender, at the time that the majority of the fieldwork was conducted, according to the 2018 mid-year population estimates (Home Office, 2018). The majority of professionals from other statutory and non-statutory organisations were female, including social workers, mental health nurses, teachers, probation officers, independent domestic violence advisors, alcohol and drugs workers, and wellbeing practitioners. Twenty-six members of the public were also involved in the research. This transpired as I often spent time – with informed consent from individuals – attending multiagency meetings and home visits. During such occasions, I found that members of the public were intrigued by my role. When I explained that the research topic was about how the police work with other agencies, different members of the public were frequently forthcoming about their experiences. In particular, individuals were enthusiastic about sharing their stories of how, for example, a particular police employee (officer or civilian staff), had managed to coordinate their support (involving public, private and third sector agencies). For members of the public, joint work was about getting the help they wanted and feeling that their lives had improved as a result.

A total number of 292 days of notes were gathered from the fieldwork varying in length from 1212 to 3,606 words, with an average of 2796 words of observations and

informal conversations. In total, 1752 hours of observations and informal conversations were all typed up in Microsoft Word documents.

4.6.2 Preliminary analysis

Hammersley and Atkinson (2007, p.158) suggest that there is '*no distinct stage'* when it comes to data analysis in ethnography, nor is there a particular '*formula or recipe'* that will guarantee the final product will be a success. Preliminary analysis began as I reflected on observations in my head. Secondly, hand writing and typing notes contributed to the ongoing analysis process. One of the challenges was the time it took to type up fieldnotes. Although it was a very lengthy process, the process allowed me to become familiar with the content, as I read, reflected and connected with the data. This was a valuable starting point for exploring narratives and spotting early themes (Bazeley, 2013).

4.6.3 Computer aided qualitative data analysis software

Fieldwork provides rich description of observations, events and scenes, but how these insights are connected is often left unexplained. Software helps to ensure a more rigorous analysis as it enables retrieval of all of the data related to a key word, concept or theme (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013). Computer Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) is typically used to aid organisation and support multi-source and large quantities of qualitative data analysis. That said, it is recognised that the ability to do this is dependent on the accuracy of the data entered. Thus, the next stage of analysis consisted of organising my fieldnotes and documents, by uploading them to a CAQDAS programme.

In seeking to learn about which CAQDAS system would be most useful in the case of this research, an introductory training programme for two packages (Atlas.ti and Nvivo) was attended at Lancaster University. Whilst both software packages provided

the desired functionality, Atlas.ti was chosen following advice from a certified CAQDAS trainer and due to its previous advocated use with actor-network inspired studies (Wright, 2015). Following this decision, I undertook further training sessions. However, the use of Atlas.ti, and alternative packages to aid the analysis of qualitative data, is not without contention (Coffey *et al*., 1996; Kelly, 1997). Sociologists associated with qualitative research have traditionally held that aggregate data analysis using statistical procedures either misses important sociological cause of social action or emphasises explanation, at the expense of understanding (Dohan and Sánchez-Jankowski, 1998). Furthermore, Easterby-Smith *et al*. (2012) caution against forming conclusions from quantitative tools within the software, for example counting categories, at the expense of overlooking the quality of ideas and experiences. Similarly, Bringer *et al*. (2006) comment on the tendency for some researchers to undertake a quantitative content analysis rather than developing an exploratory model.

Despite some criticism, there is increasing recognition of the useful nature of CAQDAS software. In particular, moving from coding to linking data via, computer software, helped to draw out different meanings and dimensions within and across codes in the data (Sinkovics and Alfoldi, 2012). The search function enabled quick identification of themes, codes, and concepts, which would have been much more difficult to identify in individual Microsoft Word documents, and hand-written notes. I was able to inspect the ethnographic data without it becoming altered. Previously ethnographers were more heavily reliant upon their memories. This might lead researchers to focus upon events, or observations, which were the most dramatic, or draw upon data collected from the latter stages of fieldwork, rather than the beginning or middle due to clarity. CADQAS helped to circumvent these issues. Whilst mindful of the critiques of CAQDAS, Atlas.ti provided a support mechanism for the organisation, connecting and structuring of research findings, discussed in the subsequent empirical chapters (Chapters Five and Six).

4.6.4 Analytical themes

Uploading of documents to CADQAS was not a discrete stage of the research but occurred, at regular intervals (most weeks), throughout the duration of the fieldwork. The ongoing uploading of data into Atlas.ti. was supported by the 'step-in step-out' approach (Madden, 2010), which provided time and space to organise data and experiment with different themes, before stepping back into different areas of the field to test the consistency of themes, as coding structures were trialled. The data uploaded included fieldnotes and documents. Atlas.ti offered benefits of getting close to the original data, afforded flexibility in developing and following the flow of new ideas through the use of linked coding schemes and facilitated an iterative process of moving from data to themes, back to data. As the coding system developed, and relationships between codes emerged, these were reflected in codes structured together in potential groups.

Initial grouping of codes indicated a number of themes relating to observations and experiences of joint working: disorganisation; separations (or boundaries); and police cultures. These key themes were sub-coded to identify specific elements of each. During the initial stage of thematic analysis, the literature reviewed in Chapters Two and Three were drawn upon as a sensitising device (Blumer, 1954). This supported the consideration and recognition of starting points '*along which to look*' (Blumer, 1954, p.7) - such as elements of non-linearity and context within the fieldnotes - without assuming a deterministic role. They provided the '*germ of analysis*' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007, p.164) and focus for further data collection. Consequently, the identification and classification of themes was empirically driven; directed by their emergence from the stories and observations of informants, rather than determined by pre-existing literature or theory. This approach yielded novel insights into experiences of joint working. The use of Atlas.ti was particularly valuable at this point of analysis due to the flexibility it provided in modifying and merging codes. The process of coding

was a recurrent one, as new categories emerged, previously coded data was re-visited to check whether the data contained any examples of new codes. In contrast to a linear sequence, the continual development and refinement of codes was a complex and dynamic process.

The next aspect of coding consisted of identifying key analytical themes, through the identification of groups of codes, resulting in the development of a comprehensive coding structure comprising seven main codes, and approximately 48 sub-codes (Figure 10). A number of further themes were identified and investigated. For example, the chaos of joint working and influence of personal contextual factors. High frequency sub-codes were further sub-coded enabling closer examination of the data. A more detailed level of sub-codes was produced for a number of the themes, (examples provided in Appendices D and E). These second level sub-codes equated to over 200 further sub-codes.

The following phase of analysis involved categorising codes, which were then related to themes (Boeije, 2010). Some researchers develop code names beforehand, however I waited to see the themes that emerged from the data, taking an inductive approach (Braun and Clarke, 2006), which aims to build theory from data (O'Leary, 2010). The themes which arose were mess and 'lack of control'. At the same time, the relevance of personal, cultural and structural contextual factors was identified.
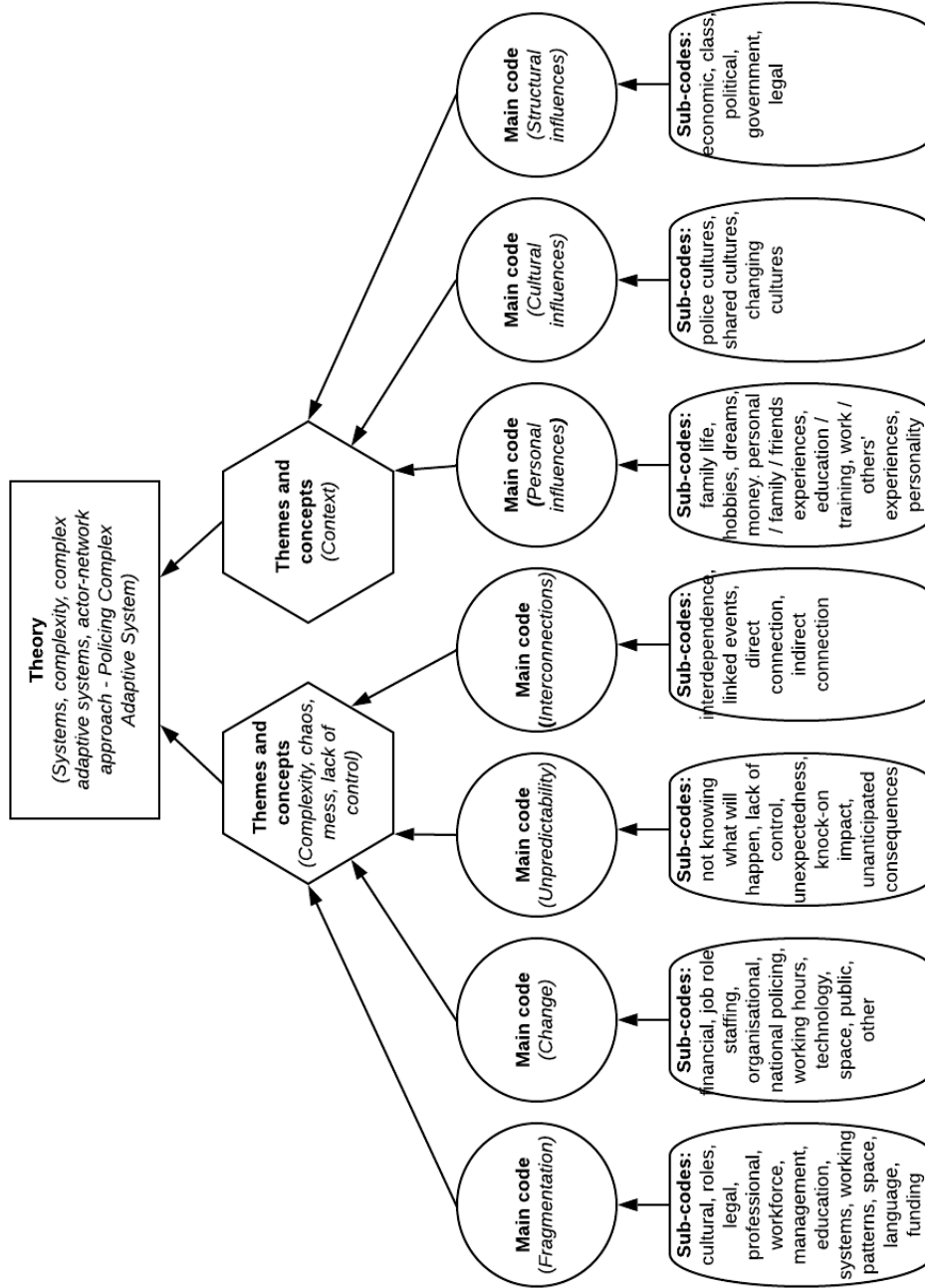
Figure 10: Development of coding, themes and theory

4.6.5 Conceptual and theoretical insights

The final stage of analysis established connections between themes identified in the above stages, and relevant aspects of academic theories. However, as acknowledged by Hammersley and Atkinson (2007, p.165) '*development of analytical ideas rarely takes the purely inductive form*'. Theoretical ideas also play a role in bringing categories and sub-categories of data together. However, rather than taking an 'off-the-shelf' theory to explain the research findings, it was decided to move away from rigid reliance on pre-existing theory, on the basis that a single theory did not exhaust the potentials of the data. This supports an appreciation of the complexity of social life and of sociological data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Thus, multiple complimentary theoretical perspectives were drawn upon to explain different facets of the data (Mähring *et al.*, 2004), as previously outlined in Chapter Three. Whilst some ethnographers see different theories as incompatible (see for example, Fielding and Fielding, 1986; Silverman, 1993), the approach adopted in this thesis was that '*one should use whatever resources available which help to make sense of the data*' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007, p.166). The aim was to capture the situation, '*in all its social complexity*' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007, p.168).

4.6.6 Preserving 'richness'

In capturing the 'social complexity' of joint working, the value of the context of observations and stories became increasingly apparent during the analysis. Consequently, in the empirical chapters, the setting is frequently described in order to preserve some of the complexity and richness of the fieldwork, from which theory was built through daily experiences of joint working. At the same time, introducing different contexts in which issues unfolded aims to bring the research topic to life, as the author takes the reader to where they have been (Back, 2018). Whilst Back (2018, n.p.) argues that there is no right way to write social life, he does however point out that:

'A common mistake that qualitative researchers make is they feel it is necessary to include every piece of relevant research data in their writing. This can lead to a kind of "ice cream cone" version of research writing, where quotations and descriptions are heaped upon each other. A point, or argument, is not made stronger by merely duplicating the empirical evidence. Often less data can be more.'

The above quotation is one which resonates with my initial experiences of writing draft empirical chapters. I found myself trying to 'cram' in as much data as possible to demonstrate the numerous examples to support my arguments, eager to represent the abundance of data I had collected. Following feedback from my supervisors, engagement in ethnography courses and further reading, I realised that my efforts in demonstrating the quantity of data that I had gathered, had counterproductively resulted in neglecting the *richness* of the data or the *context* in which it arose. As Back (2018) suggests, I found myself facing choices about what to include, what to leave out, what to focus on and how to analyse it. Thus, I decided to concentrate my efforts more narrowly – focusing with considered thought on *'a relatively small number of cases'* (Hammersley, 1998, p.2) – allowing preservation of the context and richness of data, rather than 'heaping' together an extra-large 'ice-cream'. Accordingly, the following empirical chapters draw on 'exemplar' research sites, which are, at times, returned to as the data and discussion chapters progress. As Back argues, the use of repetition is not necessarily the same as duplication; it has been used as a writing tool to return the reader to an earlier point to help thread important themes within the overall argument.

4.6.7 Wider analysis and ethnographic theory building

As with all methods, there are limitations regarding the use of ethnography. Ethnography has often been critiqued for being over-interpretive, for describing only one specific situation and for failing to step back and comment on the use of the

research. This dilemma relates to how analysis goes beyond specific situations and events that have been observed to develop broader insights and theory. It is important to ask further questions. What sorts of insights can be developed beyond the specific case that has been studied? How can the research contribute to practice? How can the findings benefit the police? These are a challenging questions with no straightforward answers. This project aimed to consider the importance of the research in a wider context, by asking: *What can be learnt from the ethnographic insights of informants to help better understand how joint working might work better for policing? And how can the co-produced learning from this research project transfer to other forms of planning for change?* One strategy for generating wider insights is by engaging empirical data with existing theories, generating analytical insights that are relevant beyond the case in question and feeding back to participants (Chapter Seven, Section 7.5).

4.7 Part Six - Reflections on the research process

4.7.1 Validity, reliability and generalisability

The nature of qualitative research has been critiqued for not being generalisable, representative or objective; values which are strived for in quantitative research (LeCompte and Goetz, 1992; Sarantakos, 2005). Qualitative research is inter-subjective; all people have their own values, beliefs and histories which they carry with them (Hammersley, 1992; Madden, 2010; O'Leary, 2010). A competent researcher has to understand some of the 'taken for granted' understandings of their participants. Haraway (1991) asked what it would be to be objective. According to Law (2004) the answer is usually detachment and disentanglement from location. Law's response is the kind of response offered by some quantitative researchers. However, Haraway (1991) argued that detachment is never possible. As we produce knowledge, we are all located somewhere in our practices. Therefore, the meaning and context of what has been said or observed is necessarily a partial representation (Braun and Clarke, 2013).

Due to the noted subjectivity of the nature of ethnographic research, it is important to consider how the quality of qualitative research can be maintained. Validity and generalisability stem from inter-subjectivity, that based on the evidence presented others will be able to understand it and either agree or disagree. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007, p. 182) have suggested that '*the value of respondent validation*' rests on the fact that the participants involved in the events may have access to knowledge of the same context. When I had processed all the fieldnotes I conducted a post-fieldwork consultation with police members. This consisted of collaboration, involving content checking (Heyl, 2007). Yet there are limitations to respondent validation (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). As pointed out by Leigh (2013), it cannot be assumed that participants are fully aware of that which goes on around them; or why particular decisions which affect them are made by others whom they work with. Whilst remaining aware of these important considerations, the analysis involved taking a meta-view of experiences by pursuing validation of the data through cross-referencing with 25 participants. Five individuals who were not directly involved in the research were also sought out to read through parts of the analysis (Spradley, 1979). Additional feedback was gained through more formal briefings where police members were able to ask questions based on the analysis. These events confirmed that police employees did identify with the themes that had emerged.

4.7.2 Reflecting on the research paradigm

A research paradigm is a set of beliefs that is shared by a community of researchers which influences how research should be done and how the results could be deciphered (Weaver and Olson, 2006; Bryman, 2008). This research leans towards an interpretivist approach (Brewer, 1974), which advocates that there is no singular absolute truth (Agar, 1986; Hayes, 1992) but multiple versions of reality (Bunniss and Kelly, 2010; Rios, 2016). The awareness and knowledge of each police member with regards to joint working was different, as individuals' viewpoints of reality differ. Interpretivists,

constructivists and phenomenologists all base their approach on a cognitive view of reality as socially constructed (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). Unlike, positivists, interpretivists believe that what people know about the world is co-produced, as people interact over time in a specific setting (LeCompte and Schutsul, 1999). Ethnography embraces the idea that knowledge is co-produced, for example by (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996):

- The researcher: their beliefs, assumptions, background, discipline, profession, knowledge, perspectives, reasons for undertaking research;

- Society: broader societal context, power, status, access, vulnerability, justice, fairness and equality;

- Academia: the academic context in which we work;

- The researched: participants' beliefs, opinions, experiences, background and knowledge.

Over the past thirty years there has been intense debate about how researchers should write themselves into the story they are telling. Despite knowledge being construed, van Maanen (1988, p.46) noted that the most striking characteristic of ethnographic writing was '*the almost complete absence of the author from most segments of the finished text'*. In relation, Hicks (1998, p.149) argued that *'to absent [one]self through notions of objectivity'* is the '*biggest lie'* that can be told. The method of ethnography is not just about the lives of those who have participated in the study but also about the life and identity of the writer.

However, in many ethnographic accounts, there remains very little trace of the author. Bourdieu (2000, p.2) called this a '*view from nowhere'*. The process of reflexivity has been referred to by anthropologist Geertz (1988, p.79) as '*I-witnessing'* or '*Me-search'*. In particular, Geertz also expressed a dislike for what he calls '*author-saturated'* texts. Back (2018, n.p.) argues that '*it is very difficult to write the 'I' of the*

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researcher without distracting the reader's attention from the people we are listening to in the first place'. He therefore proposes that the author should write as a situated observer while remembering that he or she is the least important person there. Focus should be on the issues the researcher is attempting to understand, rather than the researcher themselves. Considering these perspectives, I appreciate that it is important not to ignore myself, but to accept my own interpretive positioning as part of that data (Holy, 1984; Brewer, 1994). The reflexive nature of the methodology chapter has aimed to recognise various aspects of my background, identity, positionality and ethnographer role, and how those features may have influenced the research. At the same time, the aim was to keep the data chapters anchored in the worlds of the participants and therefore it is, their lived experiences and the observations of their practices, as captured by me, that are the focus of the subsequent empirically-based chapters.

4.8 Concluding remarks

The aim of this chapter was to explain the rationale behind the research design, to consider the methodological choices made and to provide a reflexive account of the research process. Qualitative research is suited to answering the *how* and *what,* which the proposed research questions (outlined at the end of the previous chapter) aimed to explore (Green and Thorogood, 2004). Rooted in a qualitative approach, ethnography is designed to explore *meaning*, *understanding* and *interpretation* of social interactions, behaviours, perceptions, situations, organisations and communities (Reeves *et al.*, 2008). The triangulation of data occurred by employing a range of methods: non-participant observation, informal conversations and document analysis.

Consistent with the overall theoretical stance of the thesis, the relevance of the mess of social research has been highlighted to further substantiate the research design. Ethnographers strive for an appreciation of the contradictions, chaos and messiness present in everyday life (Heyl, 2007). The practicalities and politics of the research have

been explored, including gaining access, approaching relevant gatekeepers, pilot observations, project management, leaving the field and ethical issues (Punch, 1986; Burgess, 1991; Leigh, 2013). As part of the process, the importance of my position as the researcher has been emphasised (van Maanen, 1988). In this case the research was overt, as I took on an observer-as-participant perspective. This insider-outsider viewpoint relates to the notion of proximity and distance and the advantages and disadvantages of each position have been considered within the chapter (Platzer and James, 1997; Pugh *et al.,* 2000; Bonner and Tolhurst, 2002; Simmons, 2007).

An outline had been given to elucidate the process of data collection, storage and analysis, including the development of analytical themes and use of CAQDAS. Thought has also been given to the validity, reliability and generalisability of the data. In line with the theoretical underpinnings of the project, generalisability and validity emerge from the inter-subjective nature of ethnographic enquiry supported by participant feedback and 'fact checking'. This research is designed, not to develop predictions, but to help provide understandings of the social world. Ethnography is a method in which the researcher documents a particular perspective of the field under study. The existence of an objective researcher has been argued to be non-existent (Haraway, 1991). That said, it is fundamental that ethnographers maintain a critical perspective, by considering their own impact on the research (Punch, 1986). For these reasons, reflexivity was essential throughout the research journey.

Whilst ethnography can be critiqued for being perspectival, the concept of inter-subjectivity is in keeping with the research paradigm (Schütz, 1962). Leaning towards an interpretive approach, it is argued that knowledge is co-produced, that there are no absolute truths (Hayes, 1992) but multiple versions of reality (Bunniss and Kelly, 2010; Rios, 2016). Ethnography as a methodology has also been criticised for being micro-focal. The research aims to go beyond this, to draw on ethnographic theory building, by considering the importance of the analytical insights in relation to existing

theories, wider contexts and implications for policing beyond the specific case in question.

5 Joint working: Out of control?

5.1 Introduction

The previous four chapters have outlined the background, literature, theory and methodology, which contributed to the design of the research. The following four chapters detail the ethnographic findings, discussion, implications and conclusions. The arguments for the theoretical advancement of a policing CAS have already been introduced (Chapter Three) but are tested further through the empirical data. In particular, the fieldwork captured a range of observations and stories, providing access to a variety of joint working experiences. These insights emphasised the inevitably complex, chaotic and messy nature of working together. Four key themes emerged from the findings in accounting for these seemingly 'out of control' experiences: fragmentation; change; unpredictability and interdependence (Figure 11). These four themes form the structure of the first empirical chapter.
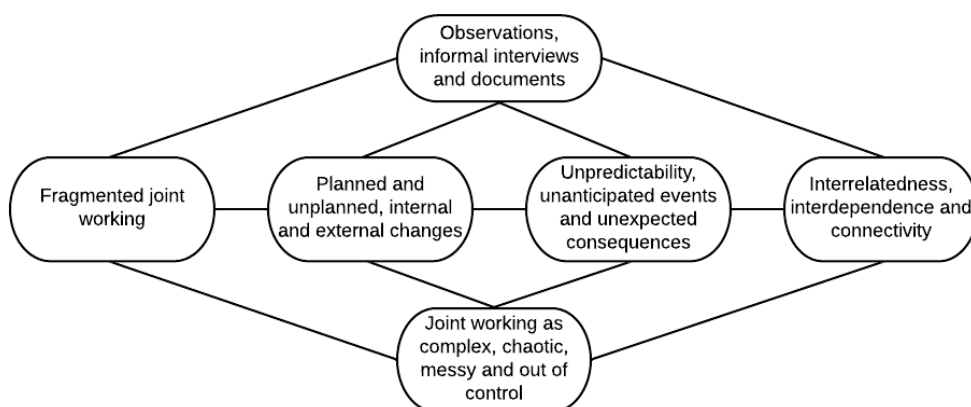
Figure 11: Accounting for complexity, chaos, mess and lack of control

Through exploring the four themes outlined, this chapter will begin to address the following research question (see Section 3.8 for full list): *What is it to experience the process of joint working for police employees?*

5.2 Fragmented joint working

Many of the stories of informants described experiences of joint working as fragmented. Fragmentation comprised of separations, boundaries, inconsistent arrangements and intermittent progress. More specifically, separate roles, cultures, systems, paperwork, policies, procedures, language, funding, buildings, computer systems, meetings, assessments and management structures all contributed to the "*disjointed nature of services*" (Lee, early action inspector, day 43). These elements reflect themes identified in the literature reviewed in Chapter Two (see Appendix A).

5.2.1 Punctuated progress

Lee came across as passionate about multiagency working in formal team briefings. Yet, 'behind the scenes', on a one-to-one basis - getting up and shutting the office door (signalling that the conversation was private) - he openly voiced his concerns about the scattered and sporadic nature of services. Lee summarised that joint working was

"*patchy and spasmodic*". Observations across the other two divisions corroborated Lee's account. Whilst statutory arrangements existed constabulary-wide, other multiagency arrangements were non-uniform. The fluctuating nature of services was related to a range of different factors, including: 'one-off' arrangements established by particular professionals; services commissioned in the area; and local needs of different publics.

Sat behind his computer desk, spinning his pen in his right hand, Lee described the "*punctuated progress*" in joint working over the past five years. He spoke of being involved in the development of 'Transforming Lives', a multiagency panel held once per month in each district in the east division to work with 'vulnerable' adults with the aim of improving wellbeing. At the same time, there were separate, integrated health and children's social care meetings, which took place in the health centre. Meanwhile, joint mental health and adult social work learning disability team meetings took place at the 'resource centre'. On the back of his comments, Lee began to verbally list a whole host of multiagency arrangements and organisations involved in joint working, which I wrote down. When I analysed the data, this list fell into two types because Lee spoke about forums, arrangements and meetings, followed by organisations, services and charities. As other informants in the field referred to other forums and organisations, I added these to the respective lists. The services were often verbally distinguished, by informants, in light of whether they were public, private or not-for-profit organisations. I therefore sub-divided the organisations in light of these three categories, with the names of agencies, services or charities presented in alphabetical order under each section (see Appendices F and G). These organisations and multiagency meetings were described as *individual* agencies and *separate* arrangements, rather than connected nodes within in a network. The inconsistent nature of joint working arrangements across geographical regions also provides empirical data to support existing literature, which discusses the uneven nature of services (e.g. Davies and Biddle, 2017). Meanwhile,

empirical research has highlighted the importance of boundary crossing, in order to establish working relationships across occupational divides (Crawford and L'Hoiry, 2017). In the case of this project, fragmentation went beyond separations and boundaries between organisations and occupations, to shed light on the non-linear and intermittent nature of developments.

In the same division, but a different town, a police-employed 'youth involvement worker' (Carl, day 47) was driving from one local integrated hub to another local integrated hub. On route Carl received a missed call from Sharon, a police community support officer (PCSO) at the hub he was travelling to. On arrival, Sharon was ready and waiting at a side entrance to a building, dressed in PCSO uniform: black cargo pants, a dark blue t-shirt and luminous yellow 'high-vis' vest. Sharon unlocked a creaky, grey, iron gate with a large key, before leading the way through a dark passage, shaded by the tall building. Carl joked about the red carpet for our arrival, which was in fact a black, faded, rubber, non-slip mat, laying out the pathway to another door. The alleyway had by now opened up. At this point, we were walking on what appeared to be the roof of a building overlooking the town centre, whilst Sharon provided a brief historic account of the grade II listed building. There were two plastic chairs to the left, which she pointed at and joked were used for their rooftop terrace. It was a hot summer's day and the sun was beaming down onto the 'terrace'. On eventually arriving at a fire door, we stepped down two stone steps into an office. Two male police officers, identifiable by their uniforms were sitting down at neighbouring desks, deep in conversation. Not stopping, Sharon continued to lead the way to a second tall-ceilinged room.

On entering the second office Carl formally introduced me to Sharon and her colleague Jane; a 'supporting families worker' employed as part of the national Government-funded 'troubled families programme'. We shook hands before Sharon pulled out a chair, indicating for me to sit down. I checked it was okay to make notes,

before reaching into my handbag to grab my laptop. The integrated hub consisted of PCSOs and supporting families workers, however today there were only three people in the office; Sharon, Jane and Jason, who was sat at a desk in the corner, tapping away on his mobile phone. Although, not in today, Sharon informed me that probation also worked from the same office, whilst 'Inspire', the local drugs and alcohol service for adults regularly frequented the hub. Similar to Lee (inspector), Jane and Sharon shared concerns regarding the disjointed nature of services.

> *"The point we would like to get to is one assessment form. Doesn't matter who you are, police, mental health etc. it would be one assessment. We can go out and see a family and they've already had a children's social care assessment, then CAF, mental health... How many times can you assess this family? Must be horrible having to keep going over it"* (Sharon, PCSO, day 47).

The conversation captured a lack of coordination and duplication between professionals as families had to repeat their stories. That said, both Jane and Sharon acknowledged benefits of being situated in the integrated hub and how being "*face to face*" generated conversation: "*you could have a chat about a person over there then so and so says I know such and such, then Inspire might say we had them when they came through our service*" (Jane). Jason (PCSO) who was still sitting in the corner at his desk, although clearly following the conversation suddenly, looked up and chipped in that, "*previously and historically everyone has been working in isolation, I think we have started to work together*".

5.2.2 Logistics of knocking down a wall

However, progress was felt to be interrupted for a number of reasons. Carl, the youth involvement worker, had explained during the car journey that there were physical restrictions owing to the listed nature of the building. Hence the community beat managers (CBMs) – who had been engrossed in conversation as we passed them – were

in a separate office: *"It's the logistics of knocking a wall down"* (Sharon, day 47). This remark resonated with an earlier comment made by Lee (day 43) who had also talked about the potential for external agencies to work from, *"the small, town centre police station but there would be difficulties in accommodating 28 people in an office space"*.

Another factor frequently referred to as hindering progress in joint working was funding. Agreeing with Jason, Sharon responded, *"yes, we are working together more, we will have a conversation with each other and pick up the phone"*. Although at the same time she noted that competition for funding created divides between agencies, due to the *"precious"* nature of resources. This was thought to be particularly the case for *"the third sector [who] are chasing the same funding"*. Jane expanded, *"if we can only get £20,000 we're not going to share that money because we've got our own targets to meet"*.

Cuts to funding were repeatedly reported to have forced organisations into restructures, disrupting partnerships. Travelling in an unmarked police car across town, on route to a home visit (to see an 'offender' on license for a domestic abuse incident), Lucy, a sex offender manager (SOM, day 123) explained how:

> *"NHP[25] has already been hacked. One ward's gone from nine to one CBM. How much time does that leave the one remaining CBM with? Basically, he's left doing eight people's jobs as well as his own. There's no way he can keep up the partnership working to the same extent as before"*.

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[25] NHP is an abbreviation for neighbourhood policing. NHP teams comprise of warranted police officers, police community support officers, civilian police staff and volunteers, responsible and accountable for to communities. Their role involves problem-solving and community engagement to build understanding of community needs, supported by joint work with private, public and voluntary sectors.

Funding competition and cuts were reported to have hit joint working hard. However, funding and issues with space were not the only elements which impacted on working together. A lack of connectivity in computer systems also contributed to the fragmented nature of joint working. Back in the grade II listed integrated hub, Jason (PCSO, day 47), who had now moved over to perch on the end of Sharon's desk, expressed how none of the systems link in with each other. Even police employees with access to the council's I.T. system struggled to gain access *"due to issues with encryption"*. During the fieldwork most informants, at some point, expressed frustrations regarding the lack of joint I.T. infrastructure with "*the only real link [being] e-mails*" (Carl, day 47). These findings provide empirical support of commentary-based literature, which draws attention to the impact of isolated electronic recording systems on joint working (e.g. Hudson, 2005).

Due to frustrations with the fractured nature of current arrangements, numerous police employees and multiagency professionals reiterated Carl's desire for, a single technology system. Logging on to Sharon's desktop, Carl demonstrated via a computer tour (alongside a verbal explanation), how the local police system (HARMan[26]), was originally designed for ASB incidents rather than casework with specific individuals. Not only did the systems work in isolation, but the obtainable information was also incompatible between systems. For example, the police search function, built around addresses, did not complement other agency's systems, centred around individuals or families. If a 'vulnerable' person was involved in an incident at a different address to their own home, the police system could not search for the person. As a result, HARMan was not aligned with the case management systems employed by

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[26] HARMan was the police computer system at the time but subsequently changed to a system called 'Connect'.

other agencies, such as health or social care. Despite having been on what the integrated team called 'One Workforce' training - designed to encourage multiagency working - in practice working together was summarised by Jane as "*a bit bitty and fractured*" (day 47).

Thus, various different meetings, assessments, buildings, funding and computer systems, amongst many other forms of separation were observed or expressed in the narratives of informants to contribute to the "*disjointed nature of services*" (Lee, early action inspector, 43) (summarised in Figure 12). Despite some improvements to working together arrangements (e.g. Charman, 2014; McCarthy and O'Neill, 2014), progress was felt to be "*punctuated*" (Lee). The fragmentation of services formed one element of the complexity of working together.
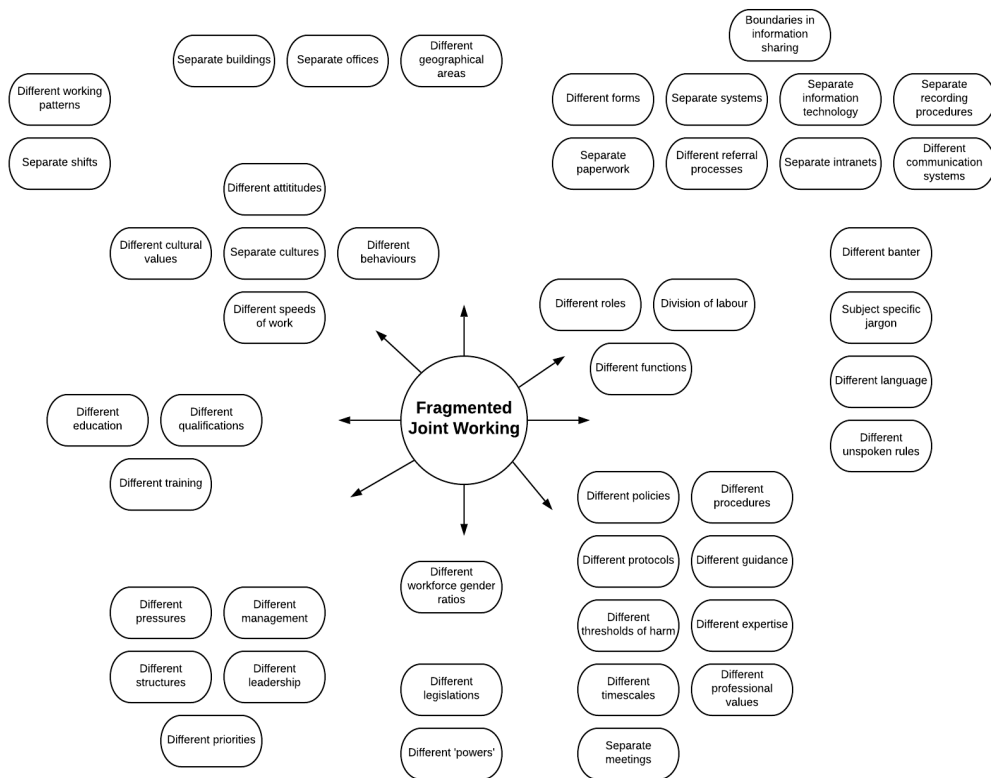

Figure 12: Examples of fragmented joint working from the data

5.3 Joint working in a 'sea' of change

"Change upon more change. It's hard to keep up with. It's only a promotion project anyway. We'll be able to go back to the old way of doing things when he [the temporary sergeant] moves on" (Tracey, integrated offender manager (IOM), day 171).

Observations and informal conservations captured the pervasive and relentless nature of various forms of change (Appendix E). Most frequently spoken about were organisational changes, relating to restructures, funding (ending, grants and cuts), staffing (for example, new recruits, departmental moves, promotions and retirements) and working hours (such as, alterations to shift patterns, cancelled rest days and overtime). Consequently, whilst fragmentation played a key role in the complexity of joint working, the pervasive nature of change was also found to impact on the *"punctuated progress"* (Lee, early action inspector, day 43). In what follows, insights into various examples of change events are provided, which – directly or indirectly – influenced joint working.

5.3.1 Pushing partnerships aside

This particular integrated hub was a red-bricked two-storey community building, situated next to a primary school, just outside the town centre. A large sign on the side of the 'neighbourhood learning centre' building read 'reception', indicating that the entrance was just around the corner. On entering the hub, through automatic double doors, there was an open plan reception area. To the left were two computers, on this particular day occupied by two members of the public. To the right of the computers were two doors leading to a couple of small side rooms used for meetings. On the opposite side of the reception area was a door leading to a multiagency office, occupied by probation, 'troubled families workers' (named 'supporting families workers' in the grade II integrated hub), a police staff youth involvement worker and two early action

police officers. Past the reception was a door leading to a rectangular office, in which the police sergeant, council employees and a handful of CBMs were based. This office was rectangular in shape. The office appeared cluttered, with noticeboards, posters and whiteboards plastering the walls. There were numerous filing cabinets alongside the wall (on the right) and three book shelves against the adjacent wall. To the left side of the room was a long window, although the blinds were drawn at an angle limiting the daylight coming in. On the opposite side to the door was a kitchen and a couple of worktops, brew making facilities and a fridge underneath a desk. In the middle of the room were eight desks arranged in two straight lines, facing each other. Council workers were seated on the nearest side, police officers and PCSOs took up desks on the opposite side. All of the desks were continuously occupied, to the extent that several police officers were standing. Others were sharing computers, whilst perched on chairs, squeezed in between neighbouring colleagues. The early action sergeant (Paul, day 11) was seated at a desk in the middle of the row, in line with the kitchen unit. He began shaking his head, whilst on the phone, ranting in frustration:

> *"We're down on staff. Just recruited for neighbourhood staff [PAUSES] 60 per cent down. Constantly deviated to fracking… another 10 per cent. So basically 50 per cent down on staffing. Like yesterday I was out searching a murder scene because there was nobody else search trained to go. The early action partnership just gets pushed aside".*

I had been informed by a chief inspector at the police headquarters that Paul was one of nine constabulary sergeants appointed to the early action integrated teams (EAIT), which aimed to carry out preventative work in collaboration with 'core' and 'aligned'

services (Figure 13)[2728]. The strategic intent of the EAIT was documented clearly in the 'Terms of Reference' paperwork. Amongst other expectations, EAIT members were required to bring access to information systems to meetings to allow the discussion of cases and sharing of information. Bringing Toughbooks[29], smartphones, laptops or tablets to meetings was a strategic attempt to mitigate the fragmented nature of computer systems.
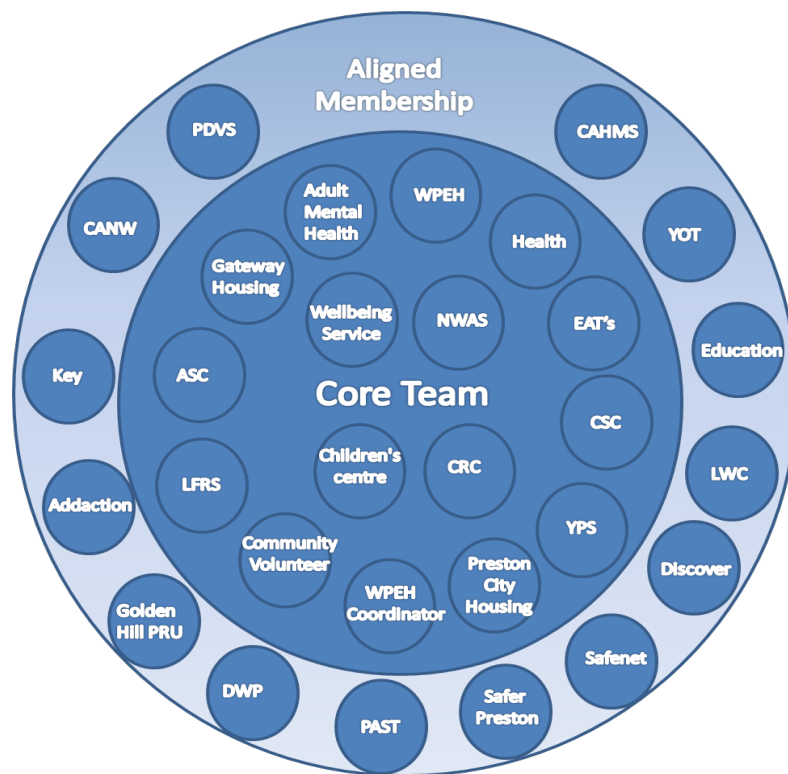

Figure 13: Early Action Integrated Team – Core team and aligned membership

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[27] CAHMS should be CAMHS. Spelling mistake not altered due to the document being an original.

[28] Diagram provided by Lancashire Constabulary, 10 April 2017.

[29] A trademarked brand name owned by Panasonic. The 'Toughbook' is a portable computer used by the police, designed to be extremely durable and withstand drops, spills, vibration and extreme temperatures.

However, even when EAIT members brought electronic devices to access and share information during joint meetings, issues with systems (i.e. access and functioning), meant that updates and referrals to other agencies were delayed. Temperamental internet connections prevented retrieval of information: *"sorry I'll have to get back to you when I get back to the office"* (Barry, early action officer, day 219). Thus, observations revealed how joint working was sustained, interrupted and changed, not only in relation to animate features (e.g. staffing, relationships and trust), but a whole host of inanimate objects were observed to form elements of the policing CAS, and thus contribute to or influence joint working (e.g. pens, papers, technology, computers, radios, desks, chairs, buildings and rooms).

The EAIT meetings in this particular division were held twice weekly, each Wednesday and Friday at a neighbourhood learning centre. Meanwhile, other divisions had set up diverse arrangements. In the south, the EAIT had changed their name to the Integrated Action Team (IAT, for short) but a few months later decided to change the name (again) to PIVOT (prevention, intervention, vulnerability, outcome, transformation). Rather than taking place at an integrated hub, on Wednesdays and Fridays, the PIVOT team meetings occurred on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the local fire station due to availability of professionals and meeting rooms. One of the EAIT sergeants in the south had also set up an additional monthly meeting, named PIVOTAL, with the 'AL' standing for 'awareness learning'. He informed me that these monthly multiagency gatherings were for 'core' members to meet with guest speakers (e.g. third sector agencies) to learn more about the specific work that their organisation could offer. In this particular town in the south, the EAIT police officers, and youth involvement workers, were not situated within a co-located building but based in the local police station. That said, in another area (still in the south), there were imminent plans to

launch an integrated hub to work from a local community centre building. Joint working arrangements were therefore found to be both changing and diverse.

However, one consistency across the three divisions, was that the implementation of EAIT principles was never a smooth process. Often the reason for the interrupted progress in developing the intended partnership plan was related to changes in the anticipated staff available to support the proposed agreements. Changes in predicted staff, available to facilitate plans, were related to a whole host of further changes, including police officers being "*poached*" for other "*more urgent*" (Rob, early action officer, day 17) duties (e.g. a lack of trained staff available to fulfil other roles), resulting in their absence at planned meetings. Alongside staff changes, leave (sickness holiday, maternity, paternity and compassionate), career breaks (and changes) and retirements also impacted on numbers of police employees available. This contrasted with the strategic 'organisation' of joint working – in plans, protocols and policies – which portrayed a linear trajectory to improve joint working arrangements, in order to capitalise on collaborative advantages. The integrated offender management policy, for example, described that the role of the integrated offender management unit (IOMU) as to:

> *'provide a framework for the public, voluntary and private sector to come together to ensure that those offenders who cause most concern locally are managed in a co-ordinated and seamless way. It brings greater coherence to the delivery of relevant local programmes and approaches to tackle crime, reduce reoffending and protect communities'* (Document extract retrieved, day 171).

Such 'co-ordinated', 'seamless' and 'coherent' intentions were frequently disrupted in relation to numerous changes in staffing in practice.

5.3.2 Two steps forward one back

Fast-forward, 16-months after first learning of the EAIT, over in the 'futures' team (located at the police headquarters) it was an EAIT inspector's second to last day at work. Carol was retiring. Her desk completely bare. She had spent the morning throwing or giving away items and putting the rest of her remaining keepsakes (e.g. her custodian helmet) into a black plastic bin liner to take home. Carol swivelled around in her chair, now face to face with me, as my desk was back to back with hers. Usually Carol's voice could be heard from the far side of the large office. However, today she spoke in a quiet, subdued manner. Similarly, to when Lee had shut the door, to make the conversation private, it appeared that Carol did not want other people to over-hear. Almost whispering, she expressed her disappointment for not having achieved what she set out to in being part of the EAIT development team. Carol's retiring story captured numerous interrelated change events, over a relatively short temporal period: *"I wonder what we've achieved you know. Starting the early action initiative two years ago. I mean what's left of it now? I'll be gone from tomorrow and I'm not being replaced" (day 280)*. Richard (early action chief inspector) was now working on the organisational re-structure and *"out in division they think early action doesn't exist anymore"*. Carol felt that changing the name of the EAIT officers had not helped. Moreover, the posts had been *"completely stripped back"* through funding ending, re-structures and shortage of officers on response. She expressed how *"awful"* it was that the early action officers had to reapply for their own jobs, *"never mind the impact it's had on the partnerships we'd established"*.

Less than 18-months prior, there had been a buzzing atmosphere in the same futures office, when a superintendent announced that funding had been secured to set up an early action department, which aimed to build partnerships, in order to prevent crime and safeguarding issues. This innovative arrangement had seemingly folded within my observational window, as a result of a combination of many changes. Whilst

sat typing up fieldnotes one late afternoon, the early action chief inspector was overheard confirming to another chief inspector in the corporate development team that the early action officers had been retitled 'police community safety officers', as part of the community safety partnership arrangements following the end of early action funding, although there were a few officers remaining in post.

Following the changes, joint working reverted back to the "*old way*" (Tracey, IOM, day 171) prior to early action. The responsibility for members of the public previously referred to the EAIT fell back to response and neighbourhood police officers, reducing their already stretched capacity. Changes to finances, staffing, shifts, departments, policies, procedures and buildings left those on the ground in a state of disarray, struggling to keep adrift of the constant change 'churn'. Colin (IOM, day 142) described this feeling as "*two steps forward, one back*". Meanwhile, Chris (youth offending worker, day 144) referred to "*going around in circles*". Consistently the motion of joint working was not a linear trajectory, but an iterative process, characterised by interrupted progressions.

5.3.3 Change 'churn'

Back over in east division, Alan (a response constable, day 130) was driving back to the divisional police headquarters, completely drenched, water dripping down the side of his head. The rain was still lashing down hard on the van window, whilst the windscreen wipers whooshed backwards and forwards, on full speed; visibility was significantly limited. A few minutes earlier, Alan had received a radio call to attend a grade one[30] incident resulting in the arrest of a 'wanted' man. The man, also soaking

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[30] A grade one refers to the highest grade of police incidents, which are separated into four categories: emergency, priority, scheduled and resolution without deployment.

wet, had failed to turn up for court and was now locked up in the back of the police van. Still slightly out of breath, Alan expressed:

> *"We're constantly battling through very muddy waters. Constantly fire-fighting from one job to another. It's horrendously stressful. Don't refer people to other services half the time because it's too time consuming. Cuts to staffing don't help at all. Multiagency work comes last when you're going from job to job to job. When you do get a minute to make a call to a social worker, you find out they've left. You get your head round one referral system, then they change the bloody form. We just have to accept it's the nature of the beast!"*

The fast-paced environment contributed additional difficulties to the relentless nature of change. Alike to Alan, other informants consistently referred to *"fire-fighting"*, *"battling"* and struggling to *"keep adrift"* of fragmented, changing and messy joint working experiences, alongside wider changes in policing more generally. A reoccurring feeling expressed was a lack of control and passivity, as both police officers and warranted police staff, repeatedly described *"never knowing what was going to happen next"* (Luke, IOM, day 257). Together, feelings of a lack of control and continual change left police employees experiencing stress and burn out.

> *"There's nothing I can do about it, would much rather be supporting vulnerable people and working with other agencies but looks like I might have to 'bite the bullet' and accept there's a chance I'll be going back to I.T. It's losing me sleep at night not knowing where I'll be in a few weeks"* (Will, vulnerable caller keyworker, day 16).

At one point in the fieldwork, the 'vulnerable caller's team' was established to take referrals for the top one hundred most frequent callers per month. Key workers were assigned to develop multiagency plans, which resulted in a significant reduction in police (and other agency) response call outs. Twelve months later, the funding ended,

and these members of the public's calls were thrown back in the "*bottomless pit*" (Will, day 15) of 101 and 999 calls. At the same time, funding ending equated to loss of jobs, as civilian police staff, who undertook the vulnerable caller keyworker roles faced redeployment. Anne (police staff project manager, day 14) summarised how, "*temporary [was] the new permanent*".

Despite the efforts and progress that employees felt that they had made, in terms of developing positive relationships with other professionals, funding came before multiagency working: "*It's out of our hands. No funding means no jobs*" (Sandra, early action administrator, day 49). Informants described a sense of loss in relation to the partnerships, which had taken a great deal of time, investment and trust to establish. At the same time, a number of warranted and civilian police, felt disheartened and undervalued following the hard work and commitment that had gone into establishing joint initiatives. Feelings of a lack of control and being passive to the sea of change were likened by Jo (early action officer, day 183) to being "*just pawns on a chessboard"*.

5.3.4 But where will the cars be?

Over in the west of the constabulary, there were changes occurring in relation to the co-located arrangements. During my first day in west division, I was shown around the police station. The tour led to a large room, high up on what must have been the fifth floor, with a view right across town. The room had an airy feel, with large windows in two corners. It was a clear day with blue skies and only a few clouds in sight. The room was surprisingly sparse, with nothing on the walls (except old blue-tac marks), and only a few, very empty desks, with a couple of computers. This was the integrated families in need (FIN) hub. At least it used to be. Located here, a few weeks ago, were a dozen FIN officers (police employed) and FIN workers (local authority employed). However, a new police station was being built on the outskirts of the town, close to the motorway. Many of the departments (e.g. response, custody and burglary teams) were due to move

to the newly built divisional head police office. The tour guide, an early action inspector informed me of the intention to relocate FIN officers and workers in multiagency community centres, dotted across town.

The stories told by FIN police officers themselves were somewhat different. There was reluctance to move to the children's centre due to a number of compounding concerns. These concerns were substantiated by observational evidence gained whilst shadowing a family in need police officer, Sophie. The entrance to this particular community building (a children's centre) was through two sets of double automatic doors, followed by a children's gate. There were toilets to the left of the entrance. At the other side of the child gate was a small canteen style seating area with round tables and chairs, and a hatch through to the kitchen on the left. From glancing at the blackboard menu, the small canteen served hot and cold refreshments, snacks and lunches. In the right-hand corner was a reception desk. A partially glass door, opposite the reception desk, led to a lift and staircase. At the top of the stairs was a second door, which provided access to a long straight landing area. Turning right to the end of the corridor, led the way to a medium sized office. In stark contrast to the large, spacious office at the 'old' police station, here almost all the desks were occupied. The office was one of the new homes of the local authority employed FIN workers, soon to be joined full-time by FIN police officers.

Stood up near the office door, a FIN police officer was having difficulties logging on to a Toughbook to access the police system to research a family. There were no spare desktop computers. The allocated office was already full of local authority workers. The police Toughbooks struggled to connect to the internet at the children's centre. Moreover, there were only two Toughbooks available, which resulted in Sophie and another officer queuing to access the devices. Neither were there safely designed spaces

at present to store police equipment (e.g. PAVA[31] and Taser). Such specialist storage facilities were not without cost. Other inanimate factors also impacted on a reluctance to work from the integrated hubs. Sophie (day 208) commented that *"desks and cars are the main issues"*. Her feelings were shared with other police employees in different areas in the west. During a lunchtime conversation, sat at their desks, Carol and Cath (high intensity caller workers, day 216) were heard discussing the value they placed in the physical setting of work. In particular, Carol (a police officer) expressed her dislike for *"hot desking"*, to which Cath (a PCSO) responded, *"Yeah, I prefer having a stable desk. Causes less conflict"*. Cath referred to her experience of working from the children's centre, where they were *"so precious about their desks"*. Reaching underneath her desk, Carol pulled out what looked like a cereal bar, as she added that having her own drawers was also important *"for nice health snacks"* and to *"save carrying stuff around with you all the time"*.

Still eating lunch, they went on to note how parking was another issue with the change in buildings. Cath had attempted to raise her concerns with an inspector by asking, *"But where will the cars be when we change buildings? I've tried to ask the question but I didn't get a positive response"*. Carol and Cath were particularly concerned about where they would park their own personal vehicles, but also where the unmarked police vehicles would be located. These cars were frequently used to attend multiagency meetings, visit partner agencies and carry out home visits. In a separate conversation, the place-based inspector, Andy (day 236) was of the view that when the building shut and police staff and officers moved to the community integrated buildings, they could park outside town and *"hop-on-and-hop-off"* the tram for free. However, to

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[31] PAVA is an incapacitant spray used in conflict management, approved for use by the Police in the United Kingdom.

officers and staff on the ground this was viewed as *"a pain"* (Cath, day 216), *"a faff"* (Carol, day 216) and "*more time consuming*" (Sophie, day 209).

Similar, parking-related problems (e.g. lack of parking, pay and display zones and time restrictions in certain areas) were observed to present issues in other areas across east and south divisions. Police employees working from a red-bricked community building used to park on the adjacent school car park. However, one weekend, the school had a barrier fitted, which resulted in tensions in the multiagency relationship between the school and police officers in the local area. Returning to the office one early afternoon, Phil (CBM, day 81) had seemingly forgotten about the change in parking arrangements. He drove right up to the barrier, before performing a three-point turn, as he expressed in frustration, "*for fucks sake, well next time they call us to go and see a kid in trouble they can stick it up their arse"*. Nevertheless, within the week Phil had been into the school within minutes of the safeguarding lead phoning, in order to speak to a female pupil who had been sending indecent images to a number of other boys. These insights indicate a discrepancy between talk and action, as well as front- and back-stage presentations, in relation to multiagency work. A topic which will be returned to in the discussion chapter.

To summarise, joint working was experienced as a non-linear, changing, messy and punctuated process; one which at times appeared to be 'out of the control' of informants. Progress and disruptions, were influenced by various (direct and indirect) change events, including staffing, funding, buildings and technology (see Appendix E for further examples). In accessing a policing CAS, the empirical focus was on the perspective of police informants in relation to how changes to organisational structures, funding and staffing (for example) impacted on joint working. Supplementary observational attention - to technology and space - highlighted how inanimate features also played a pivotal role in joint working. These numerous changes created difficulties in the 'smooth' running of working together, contributing to experiences of joint

working as disjointed and unstable.

5.4 Unpredictability and joint working

So far, this chapter has focused on the fragmented nature of joint working, in relation to separations, inconsistencies, interruptions and change. A central argument of this chapter is that, whether planned or unplanned, the collateral consequences of changes can be unpredictable. Unpredictability represented: not knowing what would happen next (e.g. Luke, IOM, day 257); unexpected change (e.g. Warren, sergeant, day 289); unanticipated indirect consequences (e.g. Kevin, response officer, day 269); and feelings of a lack of control (e.g. Will, vulnerable caller keyworker, day 15). In particular, it was found that changes made with good intentions could have indirect, adverse impacts elsewhere in the policing CAS and consequentially on joint working. In elucidating these arguments, this section of the chapter focuses on two frequently mentioned examples: technology and staffing.

5.4.1 'Connect[32]' - the antithesis of user-friendly

> *"We can't predict what exactly, but it's guaranteed to bring a whole new set of issues"* (Paula, PCSO, day 30).

Several months after Paula's prediction of the unpredicted, the implementation of a new constabulary I.T. system sparked an explosion of comments, complaints and issues on Lancashire Constabulary's intranet. 'Buzz' provides an on-line space for employees to post comments, make enquiries and suggest ways of improving the policing service. During days in the field, when time permitted – in between shadowing police officers

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[32] 'Connect' – the name of the constabulary's information technology system, which replaced the previous systems (HARMan and Sleuth).

or staff and typing up fieldnotes – I would scroll through the constabulary intranet searching for any announcements relevant to joint working.

What became clear, from the volume of posts relating to the topic, was that the newly established computer system, although designed to improve policing, had widespread unexpected consequences. In terms of joint working, there were delays in, for example, documenting information and completing the necessary forms for other agencies (e.g. CPS, mental health, CSC). In one Buzz post, titled '*Connect risks lives*', a sergeant (John, document extract retrieved, day 168) summarised his viewpoint that the new computer system, although developed to improve practice, counterproductively placed people at risk of harm. The sergeant documented how the implementation of Connect was having an indirect impact on joint working by preventing police from providing a timely response, within a wider multiagency strategy to tackle violent crime. Following a series of armed robberies, attacks had been escalating in aggression including a '*genuine*' handgun, '*CID INTL[33]*' and uniformed officers were reported to have spent '*blood, sweat and tears to successfully identify suspects*'. Following five hours of filling out the warrant forms, the out of hours court clerk pointed out a critical legal form that was missing for CPS – and did not exist on Connect – resulting in the clerk refusing the application. '*By the skin of [their] teeth… [an] old hard copy*' was accepted by the Court. John's frustrations were shared by many other police constables and sergeants, who were exposed to the "*painful*" (Ben, response officer, day 273) new system on a daily basis.

The internal police computer system did not only impact inadvertently on multiagency working in the arena of organised crime, but other areas of safeguarding were also affected. In relation to people missing from home, the police have a joint

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[33] CID INTL – Criminal investigations department intelligence

responsibility to safeguard a missing person. Comparable to many other aspects of working collaboratively with other agencies, the police responsibility requires documentation, access and sharing of information (e.g. regarding the missing person). This process was hindered (i.e. less punctual, not always documented, at times inaccessible) using the new Connect system.

> *'For several years now we have been used to the Sleuth[34] way of recording and managing MFH. A simple list of names, already grouped by BCU, colour coded according to risk level, with the name, date of birth and sub-division there in front of you in the list. Within the log was a link into the storm[35] log, a photograph and simply laid out details of initial informant, time and place last seen etc. The running log was easy to follow in terms of reading actions and looking through results or part results. Even with longer running enquiries the process was easy to understand when it came to reviewing progress as a supervisor. What has this relatively user-friendly system been replaced with?? We now have a meaningless list of investigation numbers. The field isn't big enough to fit the name in if it is longer than 5 or 6 characters. The information is recorded in various locations, in differing orders and takes considerably more concentration to understand where the investigation has got to. There is no way that this system is a step forward, quite the reverse. This might be acceptable to work with if it weren't for the high levels of risk involved when things get missed. The decision needs to be made urgently to return MFH enquiries to Sleuth until such a time as Connect can make a better job of it. The role of a police officer*

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[34] Sleuth – a previous Lancashire Constabulary computer system prior to the development of the new information technology system 'Connect'.

[35] Storm – another police electronic recording system for logging information.

is difficult and complicated enough without making it so much more so with IT.
If the Oxford English dictionary provided a word to describe the antithesis of
'logical and user-friendly' that word would be CONNECT' (Warren, sergeant,
document extract retrieved, day 289).

New technology exacerbated work pressures. Delays and lack of information sharing
due to computer system issues, impacted on the efficiency of a coordinated response.
The examples highlight how an internal technology change can impact in unexpected
ways on the internal police system, and wider joint working networks. In response to
the technological troubles, informants felt frustrated, stressed and sinking with an
overload of additional work. Consequently, frontline police officers talked of avoiding
picking up jobs, *"having a stern word but letting them off [in reference to pulling a man*
over for speeding]" (Ted, traffic officer, day 138) rather than pursing a criminal offence
to avoid documenting activity. Complaints regarding the Connect system echoed
insights regarding how new systems can be perceived as a burden, resulting in
employees adapting, by avoiding difficult tasks to make their workloads more
manageable. There were certainly complaints regarding '*user friendliness*' and a '*lack*
of buy in' (Baines *et al*., 2010, p.26). Ironically, 'Connect' did not connect in terms of
joint work.

At the same time, and partly in response to issues with technology, informants
rarely employed systems as stipulated in procedural guidance. Instead, the use of unfiled
paper records was a common alternative to formal electronic recording procedures. This
dawned on me when during one late afternoon Emma (early action officer, day 56) was
sat at her computer desk. The computer screen was in lock mode. She glanced quickly
at her watch before letting out a loud sigh. It was 17.05pm. Emma was franticly
scribbling down notes on a piece of paper. She was supposed to finish her shift at
17.00pm and should have set off five minutes ago to pick her two children up; one from
after school club, and one from the childminder's. The piece of paper she was writing

on contained a table, some of which was filled in and some of which remained blank. The left column contained a list of dates, to the right was a summary update of the case. Emma was on family friendly hours, job sharing with a colleague (Claire). Emma and Claire had devised their own paper trail system that they passed to each other, which was thought to be "*easier than spending time waiting for the slow computer to log on, load, go into the case notes and update the electronic system*" (Emma, day 56). It was their attempt to speed up and smooth out the process of working together, without duplication. Yet, it meant that other colleagues and agencies were unable to access the information. This proved problematic when eight fieldwork days later a mental health co-ordinator phoned to ask for an update when Emma and Claire were both out of the office. The sergeant taking the call logged on to the computer but was unable to locate any information regarding the person in question. He was left simply apologising and informed the mental health worker that it would be best to call back tomorrow when Claire was back in work.

Claire and Emma were certainly not alone in reverting to paper records. Will (vulnerable caller keyworker, day 16) over at the police headquarters site, also reported keeping his own "*paper trail*" on an ad-hoc basis, "*if it was significant*". The significance of the information was down to Will's subjective judgement. He gave examples of someone being confused or a joint visit. Other police officers were observed making notes in their pocket notebooks. A couple of early action administrators (Gill, day 8 and Helen, day 67), each working in different parts of the constabulary, noted that other officers kept notes in separate word processing documents. This made their administrative roles difficult, when collating information for multiagency meetings.

5.4.2 Embedding partnerships... and punishment!

Strategic EAIT meetings took place weekly, on Mondays (10.00am) at the police headquarters site. Integrated by name but not by practice, the weekly strategic meeting consisted only of police employees. Attendance included strategic police officer leads (a superintendent, chief inspector and inspector) and police support staff (a project manager and an administrator). The meeting took place in a dark room with no windows (it was in the middle of a building). The room was rectangular in shape, counting 10 tables arranged in an oval shape, with individuals present facing each other. At the far side of the room was a whiteboard and projector, although it was not in use during this particular meeting. Opening the discussion, an early action lead (Sandra, superintendent, pilot observations, day 1) announced plans to apply for £9.5 million pounds of funding to support the development and continuation of the EAIT. As the meeting continued, the conversation moved on to focus on staff recruitment and perceptions of early action, preventative, partnership policing. The conversation batted backwards and forwards as the team debated whether to: request expressions of interest from existing police officers for early action posts; recruit new entrants directly to early action; or ask response sergeants in the three divisions to select individuals and inform them they would be seconded to the EAIT. In relation to the latter suggestion, Sandra stated her intentions: *"The bottom line is that I want frontline staff who think early action is a load of crap, to experience the work and realise where we are coming from"*. The early action deputy (Richard) agreed that these rotational work opportunities would influence officers to *"go back and spread the word"* on returning to their substantive teams. He commented that *"exposure leads to acceptance. Those exposed to early action get it"*.

From observations over the 18-months of fieldwork, a combination of all three approaches were adopted in the end: self-selection, new entrants and selected secondees. In relation to secondees who were chosen to spend three months in their

local EAIT team, according to discussions at the strategic EAIT meetings, the intention was to embed partnerships and preventative policing in their day-to-day work, to realise the benefits of working with other agencies and intervening 'early', as opposed to more traditional, isolative and reactive methods of 'locking people up'. The intended outcome would be that secondees would return to their response roles, where they could apply and share their newly acquired multiagency skills with fellow colleagues.

However, on the ground the interpretation of secondment opportunities did not transpire as anticipated. Ryan, an early action officer who had put himself forward and successfully secured a 'permanent' position in the team explained how numerous (ex-) colleagues (from response) had questioned why he wanted to work in the EAIT. For him, it was his passion to get to the "*root*" of problem (day 24). From a demand perspective, Ryan identified the "*drain*" on policing and other agencies, when the same people ring up "*all the time*". Having worked as a frontline, response officer for four years, he became "*sick of locking the same people up*". Ryan had been influenced to apply for the opportunity to hold his own early action caseload, where he hoped to have more opportunity to work together with other agencies to provide coordinated support to members of the public. However, Ryan felt he was in the minority.

> Ryan*: "For some, it must work to change their mindset but I'd say for the majority of those who have done the rotational role it's seen as punishment."*
>
> Lindsay*: "What do you mean…punishment?"*
>
> Ryan*: "It's interpreted negatively. Those who don't want to come into early action are seen to be selected because they've done something wrong and the boss wants to upset them."*

Thus, whilst the secondee scheme intended to enable officers to gain skills, develop partnerships and learn about preventative policing, through being embedded in a

multiagency team, in contrast police officers developed unexpected interpretations that early action integrated roles were a form of punishment. Conversations with numerous other officers about their perceptions of the preventative, partnership approach - advocated by the early action ethos – confirmed the unpredicted negative interpretations. Carl (youth involvement worker, day 48) described how, although he himself believed in the value of the EAIT, this appreciation was not widespread: "*Old school bobbies think we're pink and fluffy, they deal with 'real' crime*". Another CBM (Justin, day 94) reported: "*It's not for me that sort of policing. I prefer the exciting blue light incidents*". In contrast to "*exposure leading to acceptance*" (Richard, detective chief inspector, pilot observations, day 1), even when spending time in the EAIT itself, it was not uncommon to overhear negative opinions regarding the nature of the work: "*Half the time it's not my job to deal with it. I feel like a glorified social worker, picking up on the work of lazy social workers who don't do their jobs!*" (Jayne, early action officer, day 18).

Thus, experiences and observations highlighted the fragmented, changing and unpredictable nature of events, which directly or indirectly impacted on joint working. Unpredictability within the policing CAS added to the complexity and chaos of working together. Even though the planned selection process intended to improve joint working – with the intention that those "*exposed to early action [would] get it*" *(Richard, chief inspector, pilot observations, day 1)* – numerous comments reinforced that initiatives, designed with good intentions, do not always improve individual's perceptions of joint working in practice. The most prevalent criticism by officers selected into the early action department was that the work was "*not for [them]*" (i.e. their preference or perceived to be 'traditional' police work). These observations support the underlying thinking of non-linear science that, due to the complexity of social life, future predictions of how initiatives and decisions play out are necessarily fallible. However, these chains of events were seldom caused by single events but often involved a whole

host of interrelated factors (discussed further in the following section of the chapter).

5.5 Interrelated joint working

In the final part of this chapter, connections between empirical data already presented, are drawn out - further to some additional ethnographic insights - to demonstrate that joint working is an interrelated phenomenon; a key feature of CAS (Churchman and Churchman, 1968). Viewing the 'world' of policing as systemic (Flood, 2010) enables pathways to be traced to connect events over time. The final section is divided into two. Both sections begin with a different element, as a 'starting point' to enter the policing system, namely: co-location and technology. It becomes apparent that the previous unpredictability observed in the policing CAS, has a domino effect on joint working (Reniers and Faes, 2013; Wamsler and Brink, 2016). At the same time, the interdependent nature of constellations of events, and animate and inanimate elements, evidences that unpredictability arises, not only as a consequence of incessant change, but due to the interdependent nature of components. Thus, ironically, observations and narratives of informants exposed joint working as both fragmented and connected. Paradoxically, boundaries and separations were found to arise, as an attempt to improve one part of a policing CAS, could have unanticipated consequences for working together. Whilst some connections might appear to be worlds apart, ethnographically tracing the workings of the animate and inanimate features through the policing CAS renders visible networks of relations and unintended consequences within the "*muddy waters*" (Alan, response officer, day 130) of joint working.

5.5.1 All alone in an integrated hub: disrupting linear trajectories

Observations gained during the fieldwork highlighted the interdependent nature of co-location. Firstly, co-locating multiagency professionals depended on space. Complications with physical space, such as "*the logistics of knocking a wall down*" (Sharon, PCSO, day 47) and "*difficulties in accommodating 28 people in an office*"

(Lee, inspector, day 43) impacted on co-location and joint working arrangements. Where buildings had been identified to create integrated offices, hubs or community centres, shared spaces did not play out in practice as planned due to a whole host of other connected factors.

"No room at [name of town centre integrated hub], no room at [name of other integrated hub]. No I.T. at [name of street]. All the other professionals say the same. It's the building that's the issue. Lack of people. Lack of working technology. Most of the time I'm all alone in a supposedly integrated hub. Horrible working on my own. Not good for wellbeing. We have a response team that's there at the weekends. No logic behind the shift pattern. All the other agencies work 9 'til 5, Monday to Friday. I'm there on my own a lot of the time. Would much rather be with other police colleagues at the town centre" (Kate, early action officer, day 16).

The perceived benefits of 'co-located' facilities were related to the size of the space, working technology and aligned shift patterns. However, besides progress and disruptions in technology, staffing changes also impacted on the use of space, with knock-on impacts of alterations for joint working. In the EAIT's infancy, there was observational evidence of multiagency professionals situated in shared offices. However, over a space of twelve months, the situation had changed significantly. A recently promoted place-based[36] inspector decided to alter the pre-existing use of space. Rather than having police officers spread across the BCU, in attempt to make financial savings, he implemented a new neighbourhood policing structure. He decided that it would be cheaper to centralise NHP teams. For that reason, the 'satellite stations'[37]

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[36] In charge of local policing (neighbourhood and early action teams) in one basic command unit.

[37] Community centre buildings.

closed and local teams had come together in one centralised building in the centre of town. One CBM George (day 7) commented on how co-located arrangements which "*work well*", due to other agencies being present and enabling processes to be speeded up (e.g. funding for a fence), were impacted as a result of these changes.

Within co-located or separate spaces the process of working together was found to depend on a whole host of other inanimate features (e.g. desks, chairs, phones, smartpads, pens, paper and computers). Moving away from co-located settings in some areas, left employees reliant upon communicating with other agencies via e-mails, as "*the only real link*" (Carl, youth involvement worker, day 47). Even when all those inanimate objects and elements were present and working, staff needed to be available to write the e-mails, have the multiagency conversations, build relationships and engage in joint working. When new policing duties arose (e.g. fracking) there were widespread impacts on staffing, the organisation and joint working. More specifically, policing fracking, resulted in 'borrowing' police officers from numerous departments, including, for example, the EAIT. In turn, those staff changes were found to disrupt aspects of joint working, as has been highlighted in previous research (Pinkey *et al*., 2008). Thus, progress was frequently interrupted due to the interrelated and evolving nature of components with the policing CAS (Figure 14).
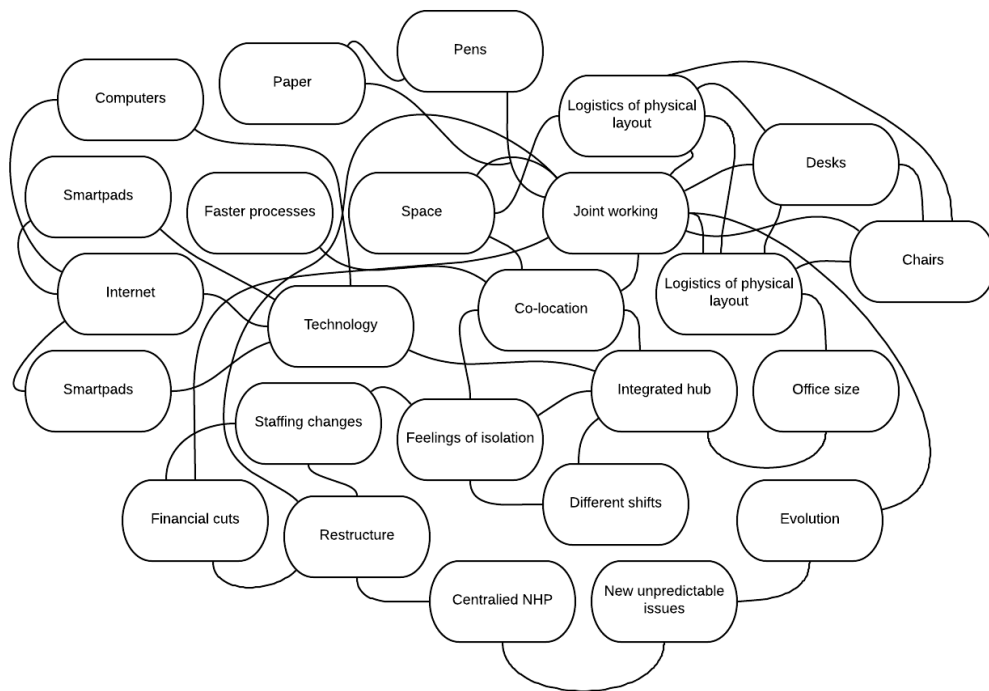
Figure 14: Disrupting linear trajectories

5.5.2 Chains of events and a whole new set of issues

Whilst co-location is one starting point for tracing the interrelated nature of elements of joint working, equally it is possible to begin elsewhere with, for example, technology; which arose repeatedly in observations and conversations as having a pivotal impact on joint working. Technology was frequently experienced as both a hindrance and a help, separating and connecting professionals and organisations. With the benefit of a longitudinal period spent in the field, it was possible to follow the implementation of the new system. True to Paula's prophecy - that 'Connect' would *bring a whole new set of issues*" (day 30) - the staged implementation of the new internal police computer system triggered inadvertent impacts on policing and multiagency working.

Whilst designed to improve current arrangements, the use of the new system, was far from straightforward. As it was rolled out across the constabulary, as outlined in Section 5.4.1, an accumulation of issues and concerns were observed, through

informal office chatter, in written documentation on-line on the police discussion feed (Buzz), when watching officers trying to get their heads around how to use the new system and on observing multiagency interactions (e.g. phone calls and meetings) when information was missing. One lunchtime, whilst sat in a communal kitchen area, two frustrated CBMs and a PCSO, were overheard discussing a number of issues with the system. The concerns voiced were that the system was *"too slow", "difficult to navigate"*, *"it freezes"* and *"work doesn't save properly"* (Max, PCSO, day 270). Due to the system *"not [being] fit for purpose"*, Bruce (CBM, day 274) admitted to a serious decline in recording intel.

> Bruce: *"I used to regularly put one [intel] onto the old system per week, took five minutes. Now it's 15 to 20 for a single entry."*

> Max: *"In all honesty I don't bother now half the time."*

Bruce and Max were amongst the majority, when other officers were asked about documenting activity. Some officers even admitted to avoiding picking up jobs, by using their discretion to *"let off a drunk and disorderly"* (Pete, response officer, day 287) due to difficulties in using the system. Overall, there was a huge reduction in intelligence. This resulted in a knock-on impact on other agencies. Kevin (response officer, day 272) summarised how *"the system puts you off documenting it, therefore there's not as much info to pass on to probation, housing etc."*. Karen (early action officer, day 271) shared this viewpoint from the perspective of attending local multiagency meetings where information was simply not available, much more difficult to view or awkward to retrieve and share. Meanwhile, sergeants coped by completing expected *"tick box exercises"* (Malcomb, sergeant, day 275), as fast as possible, without due attention. Difficulties with electronic computer systems led to officers and civilian staff resorting to increased use of paper records, which in turn impacted on accessibility of information, as these paper files were not maintained systematically but on an 'ad-

hoc' basis. This meant that again sharing information with other agencies occurred unsystematically. Whilst senior leaders were aware of the negative consequences, constrained by finances they felt there was little they could do to solve the situation in the near future. Thus, the delays and lack of information sharing due to computer system issues, impacted on the efficiency of a coordinated response through a constellation of connections captured in Figure 15.
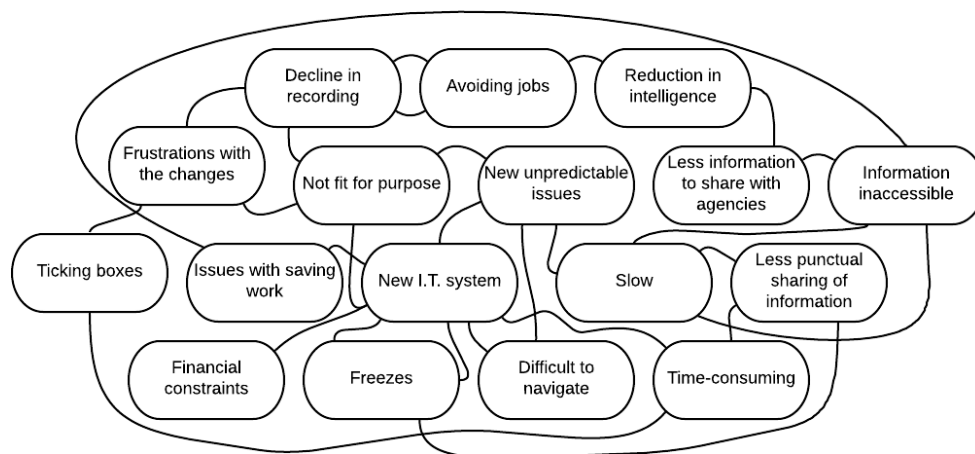

Figure 15: [Dis]Connect[ing] via a new computer system

Whilst in the opening of this fourth and final section of the chapter, I referred to co-location and technology as 'starting points', these are not in fact the 'beginnings' of a pathway to impacting on joint working. Rather, these elements can be used as 'entry points' into the policing CAS to follow how events can transpire to impact on joint working. Through the two examples, it became clear that many other elements (e.g. desks, pens, paper, radios and telephones) also played a part in the system. Thus, interruptions (e.g. changes, issues or improvements), at any point, had the potential to trigger reverberations through policing, other organisations and thus joint working.

5.6 Joint working out of control? Concluding remarks

This chapter has begun to provide data to support the central argument of this thesis that joint working is more complex than currently accounted for by highlighting the complexity, chaos and messiness of working together. Sub-themes of fragmentation, change, unpredictability and interdependence contributed more detailed insights in explaining the dynamic and non-linear nature of joint working processes and experiences. As such, this chapter has begun to address the following research question: *What is it to experience the process of joint working for police employees?*

Observations and stories of informants revealed a variety of examples of fragmentation often creating separations or boundaries in joint working (Appendix D). Particular emphasis was placed on the disjointed nature of arrangements (e.g. separate I.T. systems, building, meetings and assessments). Furthermore, ethnographic insights revealed numerous forms of change (Appendix E), most frequently in terms of staffing (e.g. cuts, departmental moves, promotions and retirements). However, many further inanimate features of joint working were also observed to change during the fieldwork, particularly technological and spatial elements. Singular (albeit connected) events in one part of the system were found to have collateral consequences. Meanwhile, the interconnected nature of changes, led to what were summarised as unanticipated consequences, which often impacted inadvertently on joint working. For instance, technological issues with the internet connection, in one integrated hub, prevented police employees and other professionals working from the building, which in turn impacted on the daily sharing of information. Tracing the impact of events through the policing CAS, showed the potential for seemingly unrelated decisions and events to have widespread impacts on joint working.

This messy, complex and chaotic picture contrasts with linear understandings of joint working and the 'organisation' of joint working documented in national guidance,

police policies and strategic plans. Together feelings of 'change churn' for warranted police officers and civilian police staff, revealed the seemingly out of control nature of joint working. The often seemingly out of control nature of change, contributed to police employees feeling submerged in a sea of chaos. However, an oversight of this chapter is the role of individual agency in joint working. In acknowledging this gap, the second empirical chapter will turn attention to wider personal, cultural and structural contexts, to emphasise how informants do exhibit agency in relation to joint working, albeit constrained by structural influences.

6 Joint working in context

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, focus was predominantly on the often fragmented, unanticipated and interconnected nature of organisational changes (e.g. the development of the EAIT; the creation of a new computer system; changes to work spaces; staff promotions, new roles and retirements) on joint working. Existing theoretical insights provided by CoP acknowledge that communities exhibit network-like qualities, in the form of 'connectivity' (Wenger, 2010, p.191). However, focus remains on culture, particularly the importance of developing a shared culture between practitioners to cross organisational boundaries. Meanwhile, wider contextual factors (e.g. economy and politics) are absent from such explanations. Devlin (1996) argues that in order to understand social beings, the context in which a person makes decisions and acts must also be considered. Consequently, focus in this second empirical chapter shifts to take a 'step back', in exploring the 'bigger picture', by drawing upon further evidence of the interconnected nature of wider influences on joint working. The evidence provided supports the argument that the policing CAS is an 'open' system; influenced by its environment (von Bertalanffy, 1950). The approach of exploring

people, cultures and structures – known as 'nesting' or 'encapsulation' – helps to analyse the policing CAS on various levels.

Divided into three sections, the chapter explores personal, cultural and structural contexts, within which police joint working takes place. The chapter's focus on contextualisation exposes micro-, meso- and macro-systems, which contribute to the functioning and breakdown of a policing CAS and disruptions to the smooth flow of joint working. Whilst the chapter is divided into three sections for the purpose of analysis, it should be noted that these are not exclusive but interrelated systems. That is, structural factors can influence personal choice, and personal choice can impact on the wider organisational system. Consequently, working together is argued to be a situated phenomenon, influenced by time and place, whilst simultaneously shaped by contextual factors. In exploring these themes, the chapter begins to answer the following research question (see Section 3.8 for full list): *To what degree are joint working experiences influenced by various contexts, including personal, organisational and structural, in which joint working is practised?*

6.2 Personal context

The first part of the chapter is sub-divided in two. The first half focuses on the personal lives of employees (and their relations with family and friends) by highlighting the indirect impact of individual elements on joint working. The latter half of the chapter explores the personal lives of members of the public who came into contact with the police service. Again, focus is on how their lives influenced joint working practices.

6.2.1 Situating the individual in joint working

Informal conversations provided access to police narratives, detailing how consistencies and changes in joint working were interrelated with 'outside' of work factors. More specifically, the individual lives of employees, and relationships with their families and friends were described to inadvertently disrupt and progress partnership working through various means (e.g. inspiration or interest in joint working; aligning with a partner's career; and childcare needs). Many (but not all) of these influencing factors related to personal values. An overview of personal factors relating to police employees, which were found to indirectly impact on joint working, are depicted in Figure 16 and discussed further in what follows.
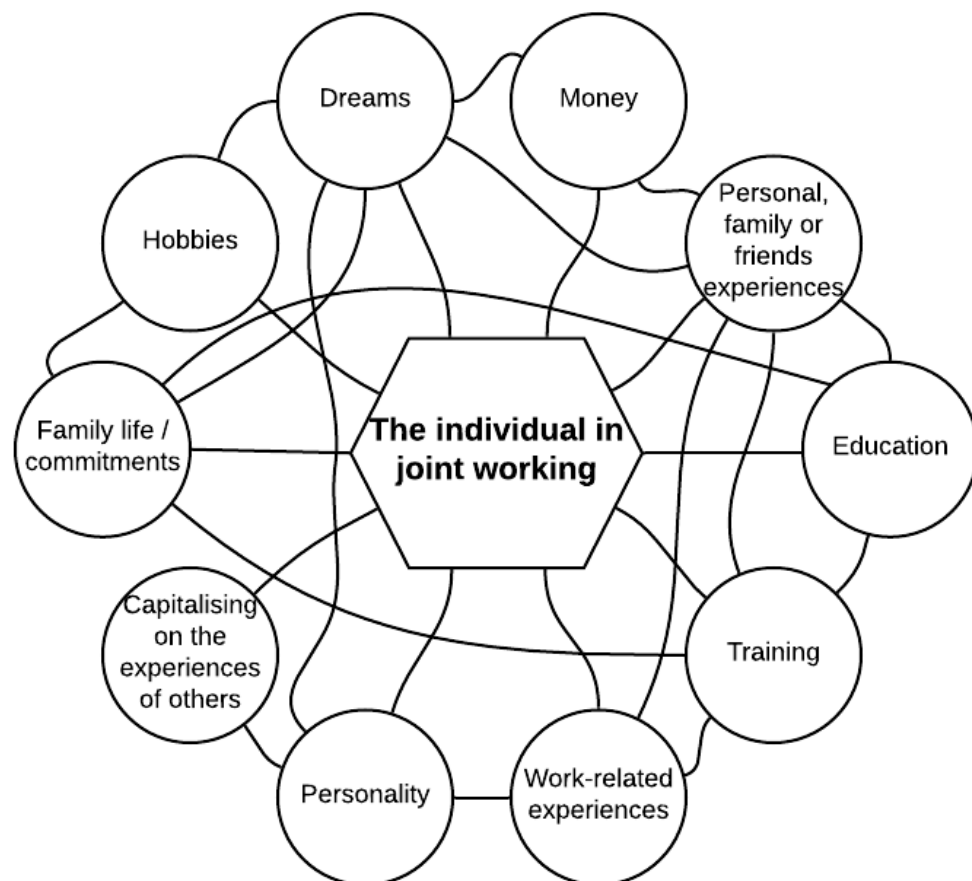

Figure 16: Key elements within the personal context

6.2.1.1 "I'll be honest with you it was about a work-life balance"

Caregiving roles repeatedly impacted on decisions to apply for 'family friendly' hours. On the one hand, the granting of such hours positively influenced employees' availability in similar working hours to other professionals (i.e. Monday to Friday, 9.00am until 5.00pm). At the same time, separations in joint working arose as a result. Flash back to the aforementioned scene on 29 April 2017. Emma (early action officer) was franticly scribbling down notes on a piece of paper. She did not have the time to wait for the slow computer system to log on, load, and type up her handover notes. Emma had resorted to her own paper recording trail, which she shared with her colleague Claire. Yet not knowing where the paper trail was kept when Emma and Claire were off-duty, information was subsequently unavailable to other agencies when Emma and Claire were not in the office. Claire reported applying for a preventative, partnership, early action role primarily because she wanted a job, which consisted of part-time hours, "*finishing no later than 5pm*" (Claire, day 56). Similarly, Emma (day 56) reported, "*I'll be honest with you it was about a work life balance. Better shifts, better pace of working. Mainly personal reasons*". Claire spoke favourably of the benefits for partner agencies, in that either herself or Emma were around Monday to Friday during daytime hours. On the other hand, Becky (third sector worker, day 12), a member of the aforementioned 'Transforming Lives' initiative - reported how part-time positions made it difficult to know who was around when.

Home life played a key influencing role for numerous officers working in other teams driving multiagency working (e.g. offender management, vulnerable callers, public protection). For Dawn (IOM, day 203) an intersection between gender and family commitments influenced her joint working practice and experiences:

"*Sometimes I've been constrained by the fact my husband is also in the police. As the woman, I had to sort the kids and work around [my husband's] shifts. He was*

response then custody [also in the police]. He still does shifts, with a lot less flexibility as he's in a higher role".

Dawn decided to take *"the hit"* on her career because either herself or her husband needed to be at home for their children. Given that her husband was earning money and had *"jumped up the ranks"* whilst Dawn had been on two sets of maternity leave *"it made sense"*. On returning from leave, Dawn decided to apply for an IOM role, attracted by the *"stable hours"*, which suited her family life. As a result, *"[it] means I've got to know the role and the partner agencies"*. In Dawn's case, a desire to have stability for family life, influenced a choice to remain in a stable work role, and consequently resulted in greater stability for partner agencies. Thus, as argued by Brookes (2014, p.204) individual employees' values - *'things that are important to us'* – such as prioritising family life over work, were found to influence people's motivations (i.e. to reduce or change their working hours), and in the case of this research, were found to have an indirect impact on joint working.

Beyond balancing family commitments, half a dozen other police officers reported how they had ended up in particular roles, responsible for steering partnership arrangements and initiatives, due to events beyond their immediate control, rather than personal value-based motivations. Having experienced personal health issues, Suzie (police constable, day 73) had been assigned a desk job, leading neighbourhood 'network' operations; a multiagency initiative, otherwise known as Nsafe[38]. The aim of the operation had initially been to reduce ASB, particularly young people drinking on the streets. Over three years, the initiative had evolved to focus on all types of youth substance 'abuse' and CSE.

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[38] The name of the operation has been changed to reduce the likelihood of identifying informants involved.

Nsafe had initially run on a regular basis, every couple of months. However, when Suzie went off sick, the multiagency safeguarding initiative ceased with nobody else appointed to take over. Several months later, having arrived back from sickness leave, still on restricted duties, Suzie was given her old job back. In her re-instated position, she re-established the multiagency Nsafe operation. Thus, the running of the multiagency initiative was influenced indirectly by Suzie's physical health, as well as other factors (e.g. staff shortages and funding cuts).

Whilst sickness leave was not usually a preference for employees, other intentional lifestyle choices impacted on joint working. For example, a member of police civilian staff[39] (day 15) often began work at 07.00am, leaving at 15.00pm to enable him to access the gym at quieter times during the day. Whilst very few partner agencies were around at 07.00am, the choice was not made with multiagency work at the forefront of his agenda. In addition to regular hobbies, life ambitions were also found to disrupt joint work. Another vulnerable caller keyworker, Sam (day 17) talked about leaving his previous PCSO position, *"to go travelling. I'd always dreamt of travelling the world since I was a kid"*. However, decisions were often not made based on single factors, such as ambitions, but related to a combination of influences. Sam explained that the timing felt right; he had been a PCSO for three years, *"liked the role but there was nowhere to progress"*. He decided to take a year out, not only to fulfil his travel dreams, but also in order to think through what he wanted to do next. As a consequence of wanting to travel, think through his future plans and ultimately progress his career, Sam left his position. In doing so, he also, *"left behind the relationships [he'd] formed with other agencies"*.

Nevertheless, narratives were far from uniform. A minority of police officers disclosed how direct or indirect (i.e. through family or friends) personal experience had

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[39] Specific role omitted to avoid identification.

influenced their perceptions of joint working. Walking down the long, windowless, headquarters corridor towards the canteen for lunch, Keith (inspector, day 45) stated: *"I think I'm different because I have personal experience of mental health in my family…"* He went on to explain how a family member had experienced long-term struggles with anxiety, which in turn had influenced his passion to drive joint working within his policing role.

Keith's story was not dissimilar to a number of other officers, both those on the frontline, and those in strategic positions, who shared their personal stories. Experiences included how supporting a grandparent with dementia or a friend with depression had inspired an incentive to prioritise multiagency working. Stories consisted of two diverse accounts: experience had made some employees all the more respectful of the work other professionals carried out; or frustrated about the lack of a joined-up approach. Either way, through *"first-hand experience"* (Suzie, PCSO, day 107), some employees had a sense of being *"dedicated to"* (Graham, youth offending officer, day 114) supporting or improving partnerships for individuals experiencing a range of different issues (e.g. mental health issues, substance 'abuse' or domestic abuse).

On the flipside, a minority of other police civilian staff and officers, expressed concern that personal experience can create conflicts in working together. In relation to joint working in the field of domestic abuse, Michelle (IOM, day 180) relayed her perspective that *"IDVAs are difficult"*. She went on to express her view that, *"a lot of them are past victims of DV. This can create issues"*. Michelle recalled a case example, whereby she had been involved in putting a tag on Daniel because his ex-girlfriend, Lydia made false rape allegations against him. Access to the case notes provided insights into how Lydia had tied herself up in a bush and pressed her rape alarm. Michelle verbally explained how she had found herself in a confrontation with the IDVA who, *"completely believed this woman"*. It turned out that Daniel had been nowhere in the vicinity of where Lydia had accused him of raping her. Whilst, Michelle said she could see both sides of the story, she was concerned about how personal

experience of domestic violence had influenced the IDVAs ability to be impartial. Indirectly, Michelle felt that the IDVAs personal experience had resulted in "*a waste of police resources*", as well as difficulties seeing "*eye to eye*". But what had concerned Michelle the most, was that, "*the IDVA, blinded by Lydia's false victim status, convinced children's social care and deflected concerns onto Daniel's rather than Lydia's parenting*". In the meantime, Lydia had poisoned their two children with insulin. This experience had caused Michelle to question the benefits of personal experience, which had resultantly contributed to a conflict of perspectives between professionals. Thus, personal experiences were found to contribute to a passion to work collaboratively, as well as creating divides in working together across professional and personal boundaries.

6.2.1.2 Getting into the multiagency mindset

The following section of the chapter focuses on how individual experiences of education, training or work-related experiences were interconnected with perceptions, attitudes and actions in relation to joint working. When asked, Noel (CBM, day 68) struggled to articulate experiences of working with other agencies. The only agency that he could think of working in partnership with (for a good couple of minutes) was the RSPCA. Having been "*undercover for 10 years*" he expressed "*I'm not used to this multiagency stuff*". Another police sergeant (Mel, day 21) had recently been promoted from a police constable to sergeant for mental health, multiagency working. Mel spoke of how her previous lack of joint working experience (in training school) had left her feeling: "*worried and stressed, mainly because I didn't feel like I knew what I was doing or how to advise people*". She felt embarrassed at the thought that "*a lot of professionals used to probably ring up and think that woman doesn't have a clue what she's talking about*". Mel emphasised how "*it's little things like knowing who to contact*", as well as knowing how to advise people. Although she was provided with a sheet of paper with names, job roles and telephone numbers - which she had cellotaped

to the wall beside her desk – she explained how it "*still doesn't tell you what that person actually does*". Nor did it help Mel to know who to contact for what advice, "*some things you only learn through experience*".

The benefits of experience were felt unanimously across all divisions. It was not just a case of experience making other professionals more trustworthy (Hallett, 1995) but professional experience also led police officers to possess more confidence and become more invested in multiagency approaches. Ignited "*many years ago as a result of [his] involvement in a local multiagency, Tower Project*", Nigel (early action officer, day 251) had subsequently "*developed a passion*" for working with other agencies. Nigel's previous role, almost two decades prior, had been within a multiagency team, who were responsible for identifying the "*top twenty*"[40] offenders for burglaries, robberies and vehicle crimes. He recollected how the majority of the offenders were "*committing crime through substance misuse, which was mainly heroin at the time*". Nigel and other professionals (from probation, health, housing and benefits) "*went round knocking on doors*" to offer drug treatment, give people support with housing and benefits. He was proud of the success of the service, keen to inform that the detective inspector who had set up the project was awarded an OBE, whilst "*reoffending rates nose-dived*". Nigel summarised how it was this experience that "*got me into the multiagency mindset*".

Other frontline officers and strategic leads spoke of how experiences had created frustrations in locking up the same people, thus prompting a different, multiagency approach. Back at the office it was lunchtime. Sat eating his sandwich, Martin (early action officer, day 252) confided how, "*when you join it's fashionable to lock up baddies, kick doors down and chuck 'em in jail*". That "*novelty*" wore off for him when he realised he was dealing with the same people over and over again. Influenced by the

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[40] Based on numbers of crimes.

"frustration of previous experience", Martin put himself forward for an early action role, realising it would give him more time *"to work with people and put a partnership plan in place"*. This realisation was echoed by a number of other police officers in early action roles. For example, Ashley (early action officer, day 277) expressed how over the years he had come to realise that a lot of offenders would be released from prison, having served minor sentences, and *"just repeat"* the same crime. It got to a point where he recognised that if someone's addicted to heroin *"they don't care"* about being arrested for shop lifting *"it's just an inconvenience"*. He realised that the system did not deter them from *"doing it again"*. As a result, Ashley developed the opinion that tackling social issues requires, *"a partnership approach, a different way"*. He realised that *"locking people up"* was not changing their behaviour and that *"A lot of chaotic people who are shop lifting have nowhere proper to live, no drug advice. They need support from housing, support from alcohol and drugs services… Only a multiagency approach will help address the root issues"*.

These frontline experiences and perceptions were aligned with the remarks made during an early meeting arranged to discuss the scope of the research. Corresponding to Martin's and Ashley's accounts, a chief superintendent voiced how it became frustrating having repeat offenders, dealing with the same people *"over and over again, the same families"* (pilot observations, day 3). For him it became *"more satisfying"* to see a reduction in criminal behaviour. Another superintendent, present at the same meeting, shared how for him his experience of working with the same people led him to *"develop empathy"* for the people he worked with, *"the difficulties of their lives, the hardships, the problems they face, their lifestyles"* (pilot observations, day 3). It was this experience and empathy, which led him to want to help people through a coordinated, multiagency approach.

For others, working collaboratively was something they found to be intrinsic to their nature. One chief superintendent spoke of how joint working was *"in [her] DNA"* (day 157). Having an empathic personality was a two-way process; facilitating and

facilitated by joint working. For example, PCSO Fran talked of how she had always been of the mindset that *"children are not born criminals. A lot of police don't see these people as victims. They see them as a pain in the arse"* (day 178). This perception coupled with her *"innate empathy made [her] want to help them"*. A desire to want to help young people, *"forced me to work with children's services, schools, drugs and alcohol services, health…"*. At the same time, working with other services enabled her to see beyond presenting behaviours and facilitated further, *"understanding of the underlying issues. We learn that there are things going on at home. They're children at the end of the day"*. Yet, Martin (early action officer, day 252) acknowledged that experience does not impact all police officers in the same way: *"if you go down to IR[41] there's still long-serving bobbies who are opposed to early action, prevention and partnership working"*.

Several informants referred to a lack of *"specific multiagency training"* (Chris, IOM sergeant, day 225) but how experience is built up through *"just doing it"*. Similarly, others reported having learnt how to navigate partnerships through developing professional expertise (Munro, 2011), particularly *"trial and error"* (Tracey, IOM, day 172) in terms of *"what they will do, what they won't do"* (Suzie, day 107). Chris (IOM sergeant, day 225), who was newly appointed in his position, spoke of how he might as well spend a month *"figuring it out because ultimately it can be different in different areas. We have one NHS but in every place the service works differently"*. He explained how this made it difficult for professionals and members of the public to know where to go, who to contact and how to get help: *"Where is the*

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[41] IR is an abbreviation of immediate response, also referred to as 'first response' in policing in England and Wales.

CMHT[42] based? The GP[43] surgery? Which third sectors have been commissioned? What charities exist in the area? You have to figure all these things out through the job". Thus, experiential learning was highly valued and a necessity for joint working (Wenger, 1998).

A handful of individual employees who had received specific training, involving a focus on joint working, spoke positively about their learning. Back in the grade II integrated hub, Sharon (PCSO, day 47) talked about participating in the first group who undertook a NVQ level four in working with families with multiple complex needs. Sharon described the course as, *"invaluable and extremely beneficial"*. She felt that the training had opened up her mind to question, *"what's led to this?"* The course had taught her how to approach families in a different way to *"how we were trained through the police. Gave me opportunity to learn how these families have ended up in the situation they're in"*. Through this different way of thinking she changed her approach to plan with families to help support them to change the course of their lives. As a consequence, it has "*opened up avenues to lots of different agencies. The multiagency approach then helps to build a whole picture. What's happened? Don't just pull the weed from the top, you've got to get to the root"*.

Equally, other educational and professional experiences, further to policing, also contributed to joint working. For example, one sergeant had a background in psychology, whilst another early action officer had self-funded a person-centred counselling course. These educational experiences had contributed to, *"realis[ing] presenting symptoms such as aggression are often a sign of underlying frustration and trauma"* (Tim, early action sergeant, day 105). As such, a combination of experiential

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[42] CMHT - abbreviation for community mental health team.

[43] GP – abbreviation for general practitioner.

learning, training and education contributed to practice and value placed in joint working.

When individual police officers lacked multiagency experience, a typical tendency was to capitalise on the knowledge of others. This further supports Wenger's (1998) proposal that learning is often based on experiential knowledge, which arises during daily routines, not formal or prescribed procedures. One day in the red-bricked integrated hub, a PCSO (Mike, day 46) was attempting to fill out a referral for children's services. Mike who had been working in isolation for approximately fifteen minutes beckoned a 'troubled families worker' (Janet) over. Janet, who had only just walked into the integrated office, made her way over to sit on (for once) an empty chair next to Mike. Sitting alongside him she guided him through the process of completing the form. Whilst Janet asked questions out loud, Mike tapped away on the keyboard to make his way through the form supported by Janet's previous experience of completing referrals.

6.2.1.3 "The chiselled engrained approach"

"The thing is with joint working, it relies on someone with a persistent personality. To slowly chisel away. The chiselled engrained approach. Can't take a sledge hammer to it. You need to keep carving the path" (Sue, custody sergeant, day 130).

The following section details how informants expressed that joint working was influenced by a person's character. More specifically, certain personality traits were thought to lend themselves to a joint working approach. It was the day that Alan had attended the grade one, as the rain was lashing down, he had arrested a 'wanted' man for having failed to turn up to court. Having driven to the divisional custody suite, Alan escorted the arrested man to the 'prisoner' entrance and pressed the buzzer to alert the custody sergeant that a detainee was about to enter. Waiting for around a minute, there was a loud click sound, signalling that the door had been unlocked. Alan pushed the door open, whilst keeping hold of the handcuffed, but compliant, prisoner by both his

arms. Walking into the 'airlock[44]', there were 'holding cells' to the left and right; visible through the glass sides. Straight ahead was a turquoise blue, large iron door. Alan pressed a green release button on the left, before pulling the door open by the metal handle, which was embedded into the door. A sergeant instructed Alan to bring the detained person to the front of the semi-circular custody desk. At that point, he unlocked the handcuffs, 'freeing' the arrestee. A private custody detention officer approached the detained male and began to search him. Meanwhile, Alan liaised with the sergeant providing details (e.g. reason and circumstances of the arrest) regarding the man's arrest, before waiting for the prisoner to be 'booked' into custody. After the handover and the authorisation of the detention, Alan led the man into a cell. He then made his way up a couple of steps into a hexagon shaped custody office to complete a statement, whilst talking to the custody sergeant, Sue.

From waist height the custody office was made of what looked like toughened glass enabling the custody staff to see out at all times, except the far wall. On the back wall was a large whiteboard, with details of the suspects currently in custody. Underneath the whiteboard was a printer. On the opposite side of the office were two double desks with four computers. To the left of the desks, above head height, were individual screens showing live video footage of each cell. There were twelve cameras in total, indicating that there were twelve cells. On this particular day, the whiteboard and cameras indicated that five cells were occupied. It was a Tuesday, which Sue informed us was one of the quieter days of the week. Two detainees were lying on beds, one sat on a bed and the other two stood up walking around separate rooms.

Having worked as a custody sergeant for over a decade, Sue shared her experience of changes in joint working. Pointing to a small side room, she explained

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[44] A secure space between one door and another door, before entering custody.

that one of the improvements was that there were now mental health nurses based in custody. One in particular:

> *"has been excellent. It was her character. She just put herself out there [turning her head to look back out of the office door into the main custody area]. She came every day and persisted until we got to know each other".*

Alan agreed with the value of having a persistent personality, adding that it was important to have *"the right sort of person to gradually infiltrate partner agencies. You just got to keep at them"*. Being persistent, proactive, patient, curious, reaching out, being good at talking to people, keeping in touch with people and empathy were repeatedly mentioned and observed as lending themselves towards a joint working approach: *"I'm an inquisitive sort of person. I find myself asking why are they committing crime? What can we do to help them? We need to work in partnership to build a picture and find out the answers"* (Suzie, PCSO, day 107).

Over in a police station in the south, a police staff youth involvement worker (Val, day 150) spoke of having developed good contacts with other professionals in the MASH. When asked how the relationships had been developed, she responded:

> *"We're just proactive, keep ringing up. Write their direct number down if someone has been helpful. We never leave anything. The key is not to be afraid. To be patient but to ring agencies again if something doesn't sit right".*

Julie (response officer, day 137) commented how her experience of social services had *"been really good"*, although added *"I guess it maybe depends how you come across. I always try to be polite and sound grateful even if I'm in a rush"*. The difference between feeling rushed inside, yet outwardly sounding polite reflected further observations of a difference between felt and expressed emotions (discussed further in Chapter Seven).

Other police officers and staff talked of empathy, enabling you not to "*blame other professionals, but understand their perspectives*" (Hannah, response officer, day 137). What was consistently voiced was that working with other agencies, depends less on the organisation but more on "*the individual person. Like social services, it's a very different response depending on who you get*" (Carolyn, youth involvement worker, day 107). Adam (CBM, day 282) summarised the notion that an individual's character and disposition played a role in joint working as "*personality driven partnerships*".

6.2.1.4 "I prefer seeing instant results"

Linked to individual personalities, other informants described how their policing identity influenced a personal preference for certain 'types' of policing roles, which also impacted on the value officers placed in multiagency working. For example, Rob (early action office, day 18) explained how he had, "*always been interested in this type of position. It's not in my nature to fight. For me, I've always gone towards this style of policing rather than aggressive short-term policing, drag off street, throw them in the cells, next…*". Similar comments were made by a multitude of other police officers. In particular, one inspector (Sean, day 229) reported how he "*didn't join the police to lock people up. I joined to support communities. To do so requires working in partnership*". However, often these informants recognised that their preferences were not shared by the majority of police officers. Sean laughed whilst expressing, "*I'm definitely in the minority*". Meanwhile, Mel (mental health sergeant, day 21) expressed how she thought, "*this type of job would only appeal to a select few*". A couple of weeks later, whilst observing employees at an integrated hub, an early action sergeant (Gavin, day 34) voiced loudly, so the whole office could overhear, "*I need to lock someone up. I've not locked someone up for a while*". Other officers confirmed their preferences for jobs that they did not associate with multiagency work. For example, Stuart (support unit sergeant, day 126) was of the belief that being on the support unit was, "*one of the best jobs in policing*". He expanded that:

"With the support unit you see immediate results in a day. You go in complete the raid and you're done. It's rewarding and quick work. Unlike partnership work, early action, public protection… it can take months or even years to see a difference. Sometimes you read the case studies and they do well for a while but then relapse. You can be constantly chasing other agencies. I prefer seeing instant results".

That said, the preference for certain 'types' of roles were noted to change over the duration of an individual's policing service. A handful of other informants, who were nearing the end of their policing career, spoke of how their preference for a certain 'types' of policing had, not only changed, but led them to a role which involved working more heavily with partner agencies. For Tony (YOT police officer, day 265) he expressed how he, *"wouldn't have wanted to do this role 10 years ago",* but now that he was getting older and nearing the end of his career, he didn't *"want to be fighting with people".* For him, it was a *"good option at this stage"* in his working life. Having *"done all sorts"* of different roles, including response, neighbourhood and detective roles, Tony *"became more interested in multiagency working through [his] career".* However, unlike Tony, Barry's (early action officer, day 219) experience of working in an integrated team had not convinced him of the importance of early action, integrated policing. Instead, he commented: *"I don't think it's a police officer's job. Other services can take the piss because we're involved. It suits my life though. Much easier option that rolling on the floor at my age. I don't think anyone over 50 should be out in uniform".*

6.2.1.5 Through trial and error and your own judgement

So far, this chapter has evidenced how joint working was impacted by personal and family influences, education, training, work-related experiences, personality, individual

preferences and length of service. At the same time, joint working was influenced by personal discretion. It was day 76; the night of the multiagency Nsafe operation. The base for the operation was a children's centre, a community-based building in one of the localities in the east of the constabulary. Police constables, social workers, health, Addaction[45], wellbeing prevention and early help (WPEH) and council employees began to gather in a large room upstairs in the building. It was 20.00pm and already going dark outside. The police briefing was underway:

> *"No specific tasking. No silver bullet, no one type of vulnerability. It's about what you think's risky at the time. Think about what significant harm means to you. You will have an idea of where to go out looking yourselves. Places where children can get drugs and drink. If you think something isn't right bring 'em in and the team here can make a joint decision about what happens to the kid. If you think they're vulnerable you decide whether to bring 'em in"* (Jim, sergeant).

In this example, the repeated use of the words *"you"* and *"think"* highlighted the discretion given to police officers in identifying children - who they personally felt to be at risk of significant harm. Other agencies who were waiting at the children's centre relied upon the discretion of these officers, in identifying 'vulnerable' children and bringing them to the community building, where a joint assessment was then made. Further fieldwork observations highlighted the prevalence of both police officer and staff discretion. On receiving an e-mail with the monthly list of referrals one Monday

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[45] Addaction is a charity supporting people to make positive behavioural changes, most notably in relation to alcohol, drugs and mental health.

morning, a vulnerable caller keyworker (Will, day 19) was scrolling through the list of names. Clicking backwards and forwards between different documents and computer recording systems, Will explained that when the list of the most frequent callers arrived in his inbox on a monthly basis, he would go through the names and search for the individual on the various fragmented I.T. systems to identify information regarding the content of the person's calls and any history. After doing so Will "*would decide who is more vulnerable*". On seeking further detail on how this decision was made, Will responded, "*based on my personal opinion, my experience*". Whilst Will's decision might not have been the same as a different member of the team, his discretion influenced whether a person was to receive an additional multiagency coordinated service or not.

Over in an offender manager unit in the west, a recently appointed IOM explained that the way he worked with offenders, and which agencies he pulled in to try and prevent the individual from reoffending, was based on "*[his] opinion. I don't know if it's right or wrong. You make it up as you go along. No prescriptive guidance. That's nice because it means we've got freedom. But it means you're learning through your own judgement*". Overhearing the discussion, a colleague sat on the row of desks behind agreed, "*a lot of work is open to interpretation [PAUSES]. How you best feel you can manage your offenders. Sometimes there's discussions in the office that you shouldn't do certain things but ultimately it's very subjective so you do it as you will*".

Individual discretion was often influenced by intuition. Back at the Nsafe briefing, the sergeant spoke of how police officers were not to be out looking for offences but looking for 'vulnerability'. According to the sergeant, "*I can spot it without asking questions because I'm old but sometimes it's not that obvious*'. Munro (2011) identified this same phenomenon in child protection: practice is highly influenced by intuitive expertise, which should also be recognised, promoted and developed. This perspective underscores that there are multiple ways to accomplish joint working, rather than one right way.

6.2.2 Situating the public in joint working

Alongside, the lives of employees, the personal lives of the public also impacted on joint working through: demands on multiple services; the changing nature of public needs; and the tailoring of partnerships to local needs. Various people required support from different agencies for specific but interrelated needs (Figure 17). Consequently, whilst supporting an individual, certain multiagency professionals had frequent, daily or weekly contact. This could continue for weeks, months or even years, depending on the individual's needs (and whether the professionals remained in post). Rob (early action officer, day 17) explained, "*when public life improves agencies step-out. This leaves us less in touch with each other. We can end up losing relationships as a result…*". As such, joint working was dependent on the needs of individual members of the public.
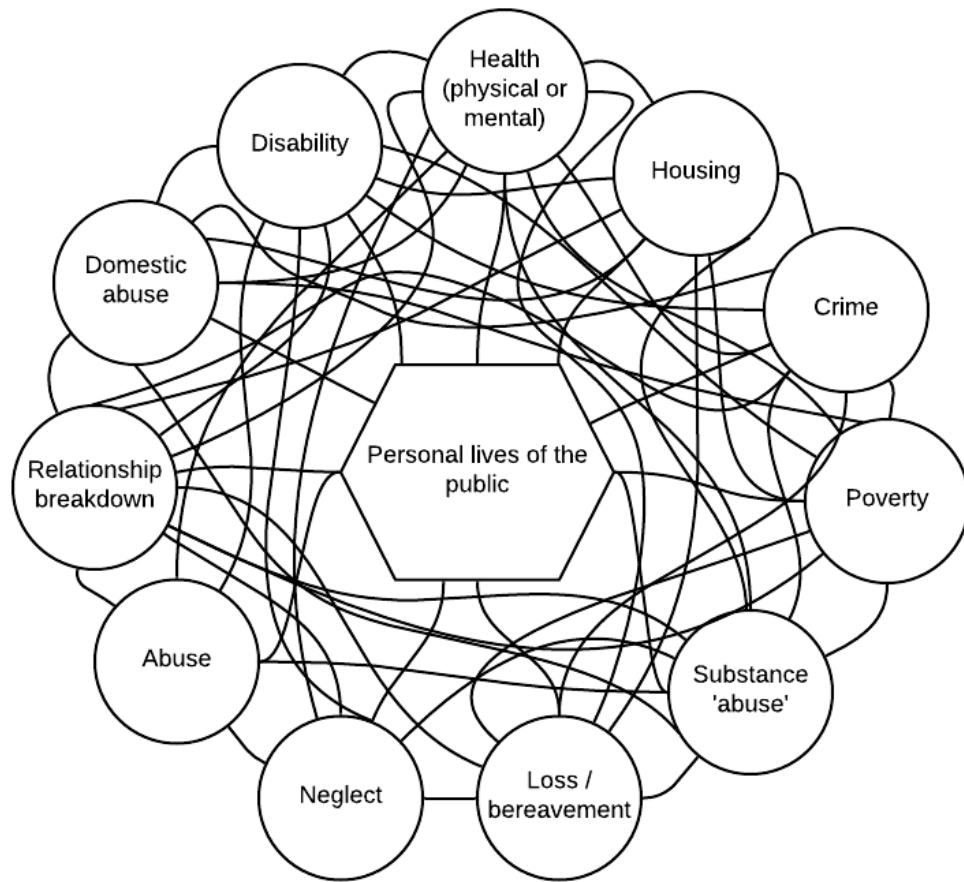
Figure 17: Key elements within the personal lives of the public

6.2.2.1 Opening a can of worms

Parallel with internal changes within the police organisation and joint working (Chapter Five, Section 5.3.3), the publics' lives were also found to be changing. In turn, the fluctuating lives of different publics, their needs and demands on services impacted on working together arrangements. These changes necessitated an adaptive joint working response. Summarising this argument, Mary (youth involvement worker, day 259) commented: *"joint working aims to address the needs of the public, as those needs change our response changes, which sometimes means certain agencies stepping back and other agencies stepping in"*.

However, not only were the needs of different publics changing, but they were also interconnected. Back at the grade II listed building Sharon (PCSO, day 47) explained how when she first started, she was working predominantly with youths. However, as she got to know the families, she realised *"it's a whole family issue. Drugs, alcohol, crime, ASB, mental health…I now deal with everything. It's like opening a can of worms. When you open that can you've got to reach out to other services who have expertise in all those different areas"*. Describing this same phenomenon, Will, the vulnerable caller keyworker based at headquarters talked of, *"cases within cases"* (day 19). For example, Will had been allocated to work with a young male (Ben) but then ended up supporting his partner, mother and three sisters. All three of his sisters had experienced their children being removed so Will made contact with children's social care. 'Community Restart', a non-statutory health and wellbeing team, were originally working with Ben so Will contacted them for some history. Ben was smoking cannabis heavily so, with his permission, Will made a referral to Addaction explaining, *"you see the agencies we work with are different for each case or family"* (day 19). He added how working with individuals required a tailored multiagency response depending on needs of the individual or whole family: *"if we didn't work with the right agencies we wouldn't solve the individual problems within the family. It would turn into a cycle generation after generation"*.

Besides the interrelated nature of the lives of different publics, their lives were also frequently described as *"up and down"* (Luke, IOM, day 257), whilst other people were *"on and off the board"* (Chris, IOM sergeant, day 225). Improvements to people's lives were non-linear. Thus, the requirements for joint working were also non-linear, reflecting the non-linearity of social life. At the same time as individual and family lives being 'up and down', there were also new emerging issues. Carol (early action inspector, day 32) noted that, *"GP surgeries are inundated by elderly adults who are socially isolated, not got a physical health issue"*. The evolution of social issues, with an ageing population and new crimes (e.g. cyber-bullying) reflected the development

of healthcare, science and technology. In turn, the expansion of safeguarding and crime evidently placed increased pressures on the policing service, in addition a need to work jointly with other agencies to address the evolving demands of different publics.

Not only were public lives changing, creating a need for change in partnership arrangements, but the needs of local people necessitated different local partnerships. To provide some further geographical context to the three divisions. Each division was sub-divided into a 'place-based' model. There were three 'places' in each of the three divisions. Each 'place' had its own place-based chief inspector. The duty of the inspector was to explore and identify the make-up of their individual locality and provide a bespoke service, setting up multiagency arrangements to suit the needs of the local area. As the chief superintendent in the early research meeting described, the logic behind the place-based model was that "*one size doesn't fit all. Each area needs local partnerships for local people*". In division a place-based inspector for one area described his experience of:

> "*policing two halves of the extreme because you've got Skem[46] with organised drug crime but nobody complaining. Then you've got the affluent from Ormskirk frequently complaining about speeding, parking and dog fouling. What's pertinent to members of the public in Burnley is different to Haslingden and Rossendale or somewhere like that. We develop partnerships to respond to the needs in specific areas*" (Steve, day 163).

The diversity of policing demand was not only influenced by place, but also by time. Over in Blackpool, the transient holiday population was identified to create 'spikes' in workloads during particular times in the year. One response officer referred to this trend

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[46] Short for the area of 'Skelmersdale'.

as, *"seasonal joint working"* (Kevin, day 272). Thus, the changing, interrelated, non-linear and diverse nature of needs of local communities impacted on joint working arrangements in different areas of the constabulary at different points in time.

The first part of the chapter has focused on the interrelated nature of individual factors on joint working. More specifically, observations and narratives captured how partnerships were influenced by individual police employees, particularly personal and family considerations; education; training; work-related experiences; personalities; personal preferences; and individual discretion. At the same time, partnerships were influenced by the changing personal lives of individuals and their families; with differing public needs arising in different areas of the constabulary. These insights provide empirical evidence – to substantiate the theoretical argument developed in Chapter Three – through exposing the necessity of studying joint working contextualised within, rather than isolated from, other aspects of policing and social life.

Whilst in Chapter Five, informants experienced joint working as out of their direct control, evidence presented in Chapter Six has provided further insights demonstrating that police employees do exhibit individual agency, or at least have the potential to. Certain characteristics (e.g. persistence, proactivity, patience and emotional management) appeared to infiltrate the boundaries and separations between agencies. The importance of particular qualities for joint policing roles is an important consideration when training and selecting individuals (e.g. for the early action roles). In this light, and in presenting a different argument to the importance of resources (e.g. monetary and staffing numbers) (Naylor; 1989; Fielding and Conroy, 1992; Horwath and Morrison, 2007), joint working was found to be dependent on the porosity of boundaries. More specifically, empathy for members of the public (i.e. through similar personal experience) or trust (i.e. developed through building relationships with other professionals) led to police employees going *'out of the[ir] way to help'* (Gemma, 'vulnerable' caller keyworker, day 13) other agencies and coordinate support for

members of the public. Thus, boundaries in joint working were found to be both 'hard' (e.g. police do not carry out surgery) and 'soft' (e.g. sharing information first to provide timely communication, then filling out the designated form retrospectively). In contrast, lack of (personal or professional) experience, hindered the value placed on joint working. Evidence of individual discretion supports the argument that police employees have control over deciding how they practice, police and joint work. Meanwhile, further evidence indicates that individuals have capacity to act and make decisions around family life and personal interests (e.g. hobbies and dreams) that indirectly impacted on joint working. That said, the following two sections of the chapter will present evidence to further contextualise joint working and explicate how individual agency is, to an extent, constrained by wider systems, as a situated phenomenon.

6.3 Cultural context

6.3.1 When someone throws a punch

Police 'culture' has been varyingly defined. Reiner (1990, p.9) refers to '*the values, norms, perspectives and craft rules which inform police conduct*'. Whilst Chan (1996, p.110) describes the '*informal occupational norms and values operating under the apparently rigid hierarchical structure of police organisations*'. Some years earlier, Manning (1989, p.360) described police culture as '*accepted practices, rules, and principles of conduct that are situationally applied, and generalised rationales and beliefs*'. Summarising these understandings, Loftus (2009, p.3-4) proposed that central to these descriptions, '*is the idea that the police hold a distinctive set of norms, beliefs, and values which determines their behaviour*'. She also argues that due to the '*timeless*' nature of the features of police culture, '*they have assumed the status of something approaching sociological orthodoxy*' (p.8). Bringing together existing literature, Loftus refers to the following characteristics: pursuit of crime; intolerance and prejudice; suspicion and a cynical disposition; and isolation, solidarity and conservatism. At the

same time, other scholars have argued that it is better to refer to police culture in the plural, as police cultures (Foster, 2003; Cockcroft, 2007), given variations in individual departments (Wilson, 1968) and styles (Reiner, 1978).

In the case of this fieldwork, daily observations highlighted features of the 'traditional' account of police culture (Skolnick, 1966; Westley, 1970; van Maanen, 1974; Reiner, 2010). There were reports of preferring *"Gucci jobs. The exciting ones like the murders"* (Darren, response officer, day 122). Sarah, an integrated offender manager informed me that some of the people on her caseload were *"too far gone"* (day 173) so the only place they would be going is *"back to prison"*. Another neighbourhood officer referred to people who were homeless as *"scum"* (Noel, CBM, day 68). This same officer insisted that *"they've got places to live but choose to be out on the street"* and described the way they live as *"filthy"*. Over in immediate response an officer recalled that *"policing the football match the other week"* was the *"best day [he'd] had at work in years"* as there were *"literally people fighting as far as [he] could see"* (Harvey, response officer, day 153). A male who attended the same incident voiced that policing still needs *"the big burly guys like [Dave, tactical operations officer; also martial arts trained] who can handle themselves, although [Julie's] built like a brick shit house. She's bigger than me and not scared to get stuck in"* (Jordan, tactical operations officer, day 153). And, in relation to professionals with degrees, including the new recruits, *"the theory isn't going to help when someone throws a punch at them"* (Mark, CBM, day 70).

These short extracts are all too familiar in reflecting some of the core characteristics of police culture discussed by Loftus (2009) and previously summarised by Reiner (1990), including mission, action, cynicism, pessimism and machismo. The dominant macho culture of policing observed highlighted the belief that policing is about fighting crime and corroborates insights into the role that physical strength and the body plays in cop culture (Westmarland, 2017). Traditional beliefs were observed

regarding the gendered nature of roles in policing (Rabe-Hemp, 2009; Prenzler and Sinclair, 2013; Silvestri, 2017), despite efforts to employ a more diverse population. Officers perceived that women were suited to softer types of policing such as early action, unless their bodies prevent or qualify them for alternative macho functions. This finding supports existing ethnographic fieldwork, from which Westmarland (2017, p.301) found that police officers' *'beliefs about colleagues' abilities was based on size, strength and gender'*.

Whilst contemporary literature has speculated that new recruits might contribute to a new police culture (Charman, 2017), the observations captured in this study indicate that the journey to reaching this point will not be straightforward. The preservation of cultural conformity in turn was reported to impact on police partnership working. Whilst sat in the canteen eating lunch, an inspector (Keith, day 45) shared his perceptions that new entrants are, "*influenced by old-school mentality*" due to having a desire "*to fit in*". As a consequence, "*it's like do I do it the right way or do I want to conform? Conforming supersedes performing. It's pervasive. Standards start slipping*". Keith was of the opinion that new recruits, "*follow orders given by an authority figure*". He believed that this often happened "*passively and unthinkingly*". Keith suggested that the combined desire to fit in, coupled with accepting orders, resulted in, "*new cops copy[ing] older cops by dealing with the crime in front of them instead of dealing with the underlying reasons for the criminal behaviour by working with other agencies*".

The dominant police values and beliefs observed were often in direct conflict with the cultural traits of other professions (e.g. social care and health). The clash in cultures and resultant impact on partnership arrangements was noted first-hand by various officers in differing roles. Officers reported how joint training aimed to help professions form alliances but on the contrary, such occasions brought out hostility between the police and social services due to differences in opinions. To several police trainees many of the children they dealt with were "*attention seeking*" (Sylvia, early

action officer, day 38) and "*copy-cat cases*" (Clare, youth involvement worker, day 38). In contradistinction, local authority family support workers and social workers stated they were "*awful*" for making such comments because they saw them as kids crying out for help. These insights support early critical commentaries, which contended that training could accentuate professional differences and engender bitterness (Thomas, 1994). Professionals from other agencies also reported conflicting approaches when working with the police.

> *"They [the police] turn up and think why aren't you [mental health professionals] dealing with this? You should be able to deal with these violent people. It seems to be a case of force first then ask questions later. If someone doesn't do what they [the police] want them to do, then spray them with PAVA. No de-escalation type approach. Rightly or wrongly that's very different to the violence reduction techniques we employ in mental health services. If we came in aggressive and restraining people all the time it would be completely counterproductive to care. We'd never form relationships with patients"* (Sebastian, mental health nurse, day 63).

6.3.2 Warriors and guardians

However, fieldwork identified *both* different *and* shared professional cultures. In terms of differences, Anita (an advanced practitioner in social work), described a cultural difference in the approaches of police: *"police officers are warriors, we are guardians"* (day 173). Whilst both professions provided protective roles, Anita reflected on what she perceived to be the difference in "*soft*" approaches and "*combative*" responses between social workers and police officers respectively. In spite of differences, relationships were repeatedly observed and narrated to play a key role in mitigating tensions. In particular, relationships were key to forming and sustaining partnerships, despite difficult financial times. Many officers talked of developing trust and loyalty

towards particular agencies where a strong rapport existed. This provides evidence to suggest a move away from the core characteristics of isolation and suspicion in working with other organisations. Where charities had lost funding during austerity, this feeling of allegiance prevailed, and referrals were still made to their diminished service. Meanwhile, solidarity was found to be present but rather than creating a barrier to joint working, this camaraderie extended to professionals from other statutory and non-statutory organisations. Officers were observed hugging partner professionals, giving out invitations to joint out of work functions and sharing banter with non-police staff in integrated offices. This unanimity and close relationships proved essential to getting work done.

> *"It's who you know not what you know. Officially we should go through the right processes. We've got a couple of good contacts in MASH. If we put it in and nothing's been done then we ring them. First name terms. Would I have helped the people across the table for a non-police issue? Initially probably not but when you build relationships then people are more likely to go out of the way to help you"* (Gemma, 'vulnerable' caller keyworker, day 13).

Other cultural traits, including the police's pragmatic attitude and thirst for action impressed other professionals and the public who commented on how good the police were at "*getting on with the job*" (Sally, probation officer, day 26) and "*getting things done*" (Mark, 'frequent' caller, day 32). Whether tasked with attending an emergency response incident or putting a support network in place to prevent a repeat caller's demand on the police service, officers were adaptable to setting about their mission. This pragmatism and sense of mission benefitted other professionals and members of the public.

> *"I didn't know that the police did stuff like that. I thought they helped people in trouble. I know they've helped me in trouble but I mean fighting, crime and that*

sort of trouble. Ryan's ['vulnerable' caller keyworker] helped me a lot. Getting my head together. Because sometimes small things can mount up. He's helped me get my head straight. Spoke to the doctor about my health, got me involved with groups in the community and organised for a lady to phone me every week. In the beginning I was ringing up a lot because [Joan thought] they'd stolen my wedding ring but now I'm much better. I still ring Ryan when I get mixed up but I'm much better now and I don't ring the police [meaning 999] anymore" (Joan, police 'frequent' caller, day 32).

A summary diagram of the fragmented, changing and interconnected nature of cultures is depicted in Figure 18.
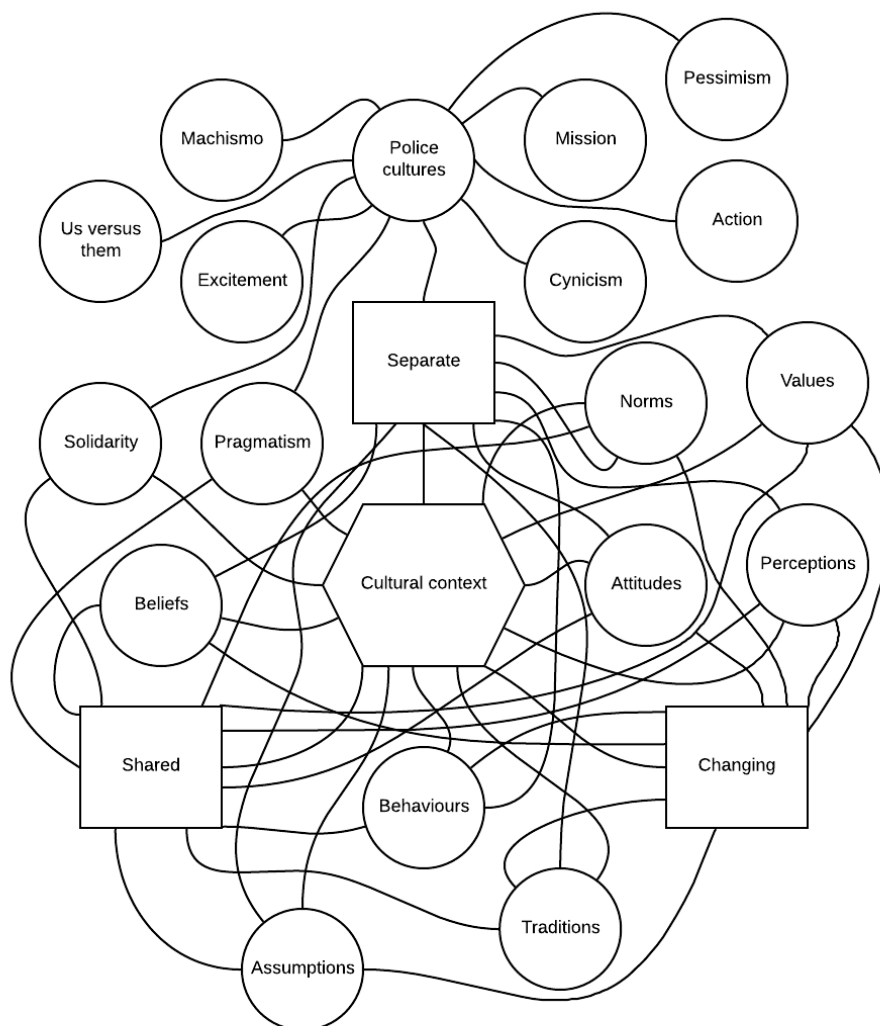
Figure 18: Cultural context as separate, shared and changing

6.4 Structural context

The structural context refers to the relation between agency and structure. The structure versus agency debate is concerned with whether an individual acts as a free agent or in a way influenced or constrained by social structures. Giddens (1984) emphasised the duality of structure and agency, arguing that structures and agency cannot be conceived apart from one another. He developed the theory of structuration, an analysis of agency and structure, in which order can both produce and be produced at the level of practice, and not through society inflicting order upon actors. For police officers, it felt that their agency was restricted due to the constancy of organisational and structural changes that they were 'subjected to' (Chapter Five). However, further observational analysis, identified evidence of agency (e.g. choices and discretion) (Chapter Six), which were often under-recognised in their own accounts.

From a CAS perspective, both the individuals in the system, and the structural influences, influence each other in a multi-directional and networked approach. Alike to linear systems, in a CAS a variety of rules (e.g. legislations, policies, procedures and performance measures) exist to govern and reinforce behaviours and strategies. These features can play an important role in guiding the behaviour of elements within the system. However, unlike linear models that describe forces in terms of their impact upon a population (Van de Ven and Poole, 1995), CAS is also concerned with the intentionality of individual actors. In other words, the agents within the system have agency; the capacity of individuals to act independently and to make choices. That said, this agency is constrained by environmental structures. Thus, it is advocated that in being an open system, the policing CAS, is impacted by both internal components (actors and actants), as well as the external environments (von Bertalanffy, 1972).

Thus, a CAS approach allows for an analysis of the co-evolution of social structure and human agency, where socialised agents with a degree of autonomy take action in social systems. In the third and final section of this empirical chapter, two examples of structural systems are draw upon to highlight the interrelated nature of wider societal systems, which influence joint working. In so doing, it is argued that joint working is constituted by both agency and structure. Autonomy and structural (class, economic, political, government and legal) systems are thus intertwined and co-evolving (Figure 19). The two examples that came across strongly in the analysis were the economic and legal systems, which form the focus of this third, and final section of the chapter.
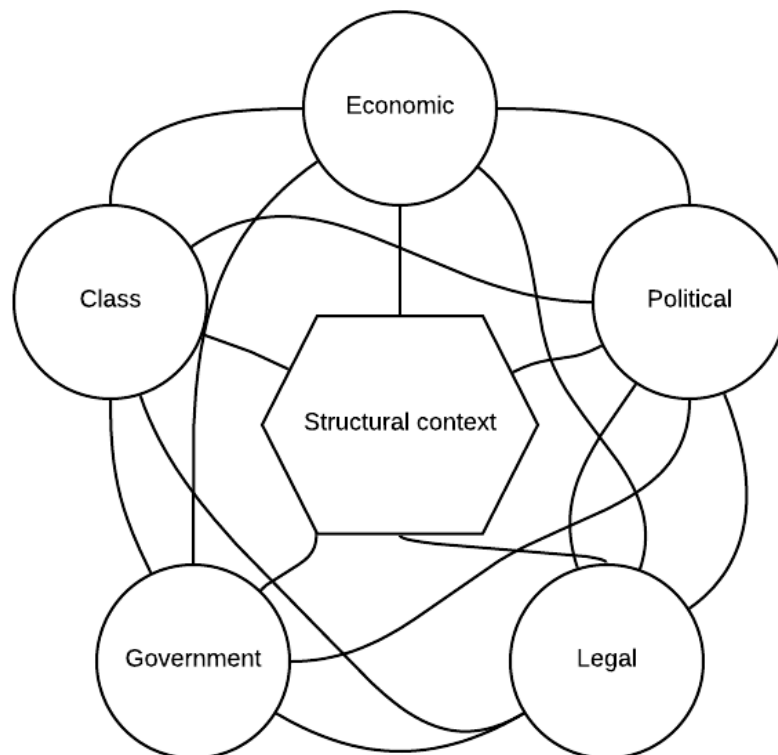
Figure 19: Key elements within a structural context

6.4.1 The economic system: Fire-fighting through austerity

An important contribution of CAS, is that the environments in which organisations function are very unpredictable (Tetenbaum, 1998; Laszlo and Laszlo, 2002; Skaržauskienė, 2010). Nationally, collaboration is depicted as a way of responding to drastic funding cuts (HMIC, 2014b). Many strategic leads recognised the pressing urgency to create partnership arrangements with other statutory agencies by pooling resources in a time of financial constraint. 'Higher-level' joint working, namely integration (Horwath and Morrison, 2007), was seen as essential in order to make longstanding cost-savings over time and to move away from short-term results to longer-term solutions. This required police officers to deviate from traditional responses of 'detect and arrest' to identifying underlying causes of criminal behaviour at the earliest opportunity.

> *"Resources are much smaller so we need to get smarter, don't just pull the weed from the top, get to the root of the problem by working with other agencies rather than lock ups which drain resources"* (Mathew, detective superintendent, day 157).

Mathew spoke of how he expected, in light of austerity, that there would be a withdrawal of services, that organisations would retreat into their silos, protect their own budgets and resources but on the whole partners continued to engage in multiagency plans. He was of the belief that a "*strong*", local focus on prevention provided incentive to work together. Mathew explained how previously the aim had been collaboration however, "*austerity has driven us to articulate a vision of integrated and sustainable services"*.

A recognition of the increasing risks and pressures facing the force and the changing service demanded by the public enhanced this austerity driven collaboration. This need, in line with a growing emphasis on evidence-informed practice, motivated

the constabulary to pilot innovative arrangements often in collaboration with other organisations. These joint initiatives included the introduction of new departments (e.g. early action), teams (e.g. vulnerable callers) and roles (e.g. family in need officers), many of which were based in integrated hub locations in the community.

> *'The consequence of austerity is a reduction in police officer and police staff resources across all areas of the constabulary. Against a backdrop of fewer resources there are new and emerging threats facing the force alongside an increase in the complexity of demand. These factors are creating the need for transformational change across not only policing, but local service delivery across all partner agencies as they also continue to feel the bite of austerity into their statutory services'* (Organisational Development Strategy: Mission Statement, document extract retrieved, day 192).

However, at the same time as attempting to promote partnership working and integrated services, the force had to make drastic cuts. This culminated in the erosion of neighbourhood policing and other departments traditionally responsible for driving local collaborative arrangements (HMIC, 2014a; Makin and Marenin, 2017; Pepin *et al.,* 2017). There was less funding and fewer employees, within the force - and externally within other services - to facilitate pre-existing partnership arrangements, where previously there had been time, staff and resources to work with other statutory and non-statutory organisations (e.g. children's social care, adult's social care, youth offending, education, housing and alcohol and drugs services). Some of the newly formed partnership arrangements (e.g. 'vulnerable' caller's team and mental health triage service) were only short-lived as evaluations equated to no immediate cost-effectiveness for the force. Other initiatives (e.g. EAIT and FIN officers) continued but were significantly retrenched. Whilst police officers, partner professionals and the public spoke highly about the initiation of these services, their early endings were deemed necessary due to financial unviability. Richard (chief inspector, day 185)

explained how the engagement work had *"fallen on its side now"*. Appointed to work on the restructuring programme, he explained how other than *"some natural wastage"* (retirements and promotions) everyone that was left after the cuts would be going to response. Richard swivelled round in his chair, sat at Carol's old desk (who had retired), he continued, *"with everything else going on they want to divert money to the core functions"*. The force were no longer recruiting into neighbourhood or early action anymore, *"certainly not at the moment"*. He explained how the original plan to recruit new entrants directly to EAIT roles had not lasted long, due to demand on the 'frontline'; *"even now if there's not enough bobbies then they get pulled over [from neighbourhood or early action] to 'normal' [response] policing."*

Countless police constables expressed frustrations that partnership working had disintegrated because of cuts to other statutory agencies. Officers recounted a reduction in joint working as they felt that gaps left by other services - hit harder by the financial crisis - resulted in them operating in isolation. There were repeated reports of feeling less like police officers and more like mental health practitioners or social workers, whereby their daily tasks did not consist of 'proper' policing. Some officers realised that policing budgets had been protected more than those in respect of some other public sector organisations (HMICFRS, 2017) and therefore the cuts to services meant that other professionals were inundated and unable to contribute to partnership working as they had done prior to austerity. Other police officers perceived this to be the fault of work-shy professionals. The latter perspective became a common source of frustration (Lumsden and Black, 2018); unconducive to building up relationships and trust to facilitate joint working.

"I do a lot of work which isn't proper police work… It's horrendous. We're turning more into social workers" (Neil, CBM, day 129).

"Mental health, I called them on two occasions both times they didn't come out for one reason or another. They told me to ring for an ambulance, another time they were out of area. There just isn't enough of them so we end up dealing with it" (Kay, early action officer, day 263).

In rising to the challenge of austerity and making millions of pounds of cost savings, the constabulary was left to self-organise and the system adapted to preserve frontline crime fighting capacity as best as possible. This was the result of significant re-structuring and organisational change, which aimed to provide more efficient and effective services to the public. Whilst change can occur despite financial hardship, many of the reported austerity induced cost-saving re-organisations saw inadvertent consequences on partnership arrangements.

"Before all the cuts we used to have a handover period but there was nobody to handover to when I left my last post otherwise I'd have taken them round and introduced them to my contacts that I'd built up over the past few years. All those relationships are lost now. Even then it takes time to build up trust and loyalty. If it's a new recruit they might not have had experience of multiagency working. It's not something that you get an instruction manual for, the sergeant doesn't tell you how to build up relationships with other agencies" (Stephen, tactical operations officer, day 102).

In the context of austerity, there were increasing pressures and attempts to maximise collaboration with the intent of both cost-saving and improving services to the public. Yet at the same time, the consequences of austerity called for financial cuts, which in turn led to the erosion of collaborations, particularly in the context of neighbourhood policing, which saw slashed numbers to staffing in the force under study. The constant re-organisation of the force, movement of staffing from departments (e.g. back to the front line) also impacted negatively on relationships, loyalty and trust. A lack of time

or available staff to facilitate handovers of informal knowledge and key contacts, resulted in an inadvertent consequence for maintaining partnership working. Beyond individual factors, austerity played a key influencing role on police employees' ability to be proactive and persistent in a period of stretched capacity.

6.4.2 The legal system: 4 hours until the 24-hour mark AGAIN!

Besides the constraints of austerity, the legal system also played a key role in working together. Statute compelled agencies to work together through various stipulated arrangements (Appendix F). However, many of the observations of joint working were non-statutory in nature. These non-legislative arrangements had been initiated by individuals within organisations leading to a patchwork of working together initiatives (e.g. Transforming Lives, PIVOT, FIN, Nsafe). Joint working was therefore influenced by both structural factors and the agency of individuals.

Despite individual officer discretion, there was a duty to follow the law. Back at the Nsafe operation at the children's centre, the sergeant (Gavin, day 34) continued his briefing:

> *"You have to keep asking yourself, is this child at risk of significant harm? If they are then it's legally justified and you can bring them back here where the other agencies will be waiting to set up a plan with the families".*

The sergeant referred to Section 46 of the Children Act 1989, '*removal and accommodation of children by police in cases of emergency'* otherwise '*referred to as having been taken into police protection'*. The law provides power to a constable where he or she '*has reasonable cause to believe that a child would otherwise by likely to suffer significant harm'*. Under the Act, police may '*remove the child to suitable accommodation and keep him there',* whilst compelling the constable to '*inform the local authority'* as soon as is '*reasonably practicable'*.

Besides, long-standing legal stipulations to work in partnership with other statutory agencies, the changing nature of law was also found to have unpredicted consequences on the policing CAS, joint working and the service provided to the public. Most notably during the period of fieldwork were the amendments to Section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983 under the Policing and Crime Act 2017, which came into force in December 2017 and triggered a flood of written and verbal comments of outrage. Following the change in legislation, whereby a person can only be detained in a place of safety for 24-hours, unless a doctor authorises an extension for up to 36-hours, police officers were left frustrated with other agencies.

It had been an extremely long day. Not only was it particularly hot for the time of year, but Joe and Patrick (response constables) had been 'stuck' in a stifling 'A&E' side room for the past eight hours. Relieved that two other constables had arrived moments prior to take over, they made a quick exit. Both starving and drained, neither of them could wait to see the back of those four small walls. At long last they were driving back to the police station to 'de-kit'. Finally finding themselves on their own for the first time in hours, Joe began to rant about having been *"shafted[47] for the second day in a row"* (day 241). He was all the more frustrated given that he had been stuck in a similar situation the day prior with a different colleague. Joe had exercised police powers under Section 136 of the Mental Act two consecutive days to protect the same young male. Yesterday, following threats to kill himself, Joe had escorted the male by ambulance to the designated Section 136 suite. After completing police national

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[47] Shafted – slang for having been treated most unfairly (i.e. 'screwed over').

computer (PNC)[48] checks, sharing information with NHS staff, and over eight hours of waiting, a joint decision was made that the male was now at 'low' risk and thus, the police could leave.

The next morning it transpired that, whilst waiting for a bed to be found, the patient decided to leave after his 24-hour section expired (and had not been extended). Less than two hours later, the young male was back on the phone to the police. This time he informed the call handler that he had taken an overdose, would not inform her where he was, only that nobody would ever see him again. The information provided over the phone notified the police, for the first time, that the male had been discharged from hospital. An alert was raised for a high-risk missing person. The call taker stated the circumstances over the radio, as Joe was out on patrol. In response to the radio alert, the search for the young male began. The search took Joe to the male's home address but there was no sign of him. Attempted calls to his mobile were made with no avail. Straight to voicemail. At the same time Patrick was searching the area by the hospital, where the male had last been seen. Within the hour, Joe found the male in an alleyway at the back of his address. Due to a suspected overdose and continued threats to kill himself, a decision was made to detain the male, for the second time. This time he was taken to A&E, due to 'red flags' (overdose). The incident had resulted in Joe and Patrick finding themselves on 'bed watch' for almost the entire shift that day. The drive back to the police station at the end of the day felt double the length it usually did. Patrick

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[48] The Police National Computer system is used to facilitate investigations and sharing information of both local and national importance in England and Wales. Also links in with the European-wide I.T. system called Schengen Information System that enables participating member states to share information on persons of interest via 'alerts'.

responded to Joe, *"we have done our jobs twice because mental health aren't doing theirs. Still no bed available. They have under 4 hours 'til they hit the 24-hours AGAIN"*.

The annoyance for Joe, Patrick and other colleagues who were observed in similar situations was that the change in legislation, coupled with funding cuts, meant that they were finding themselves more frequently, 'picking up the pieces' of an overstretched NHS service. As with the explosion of Buzz posts, regarding the new computer system, the change in mental health legislation, witnessed an outpour of comments.

> *'After being sat at our second work place, in [name of] hospital, on a long, and rather tedious 9 hour night shift... it has become apparent that the police seem to be the best emergency service in actually acting with any urgency with jobs relating to the topic of MH [mental health]..... Policy states that within 1 hour of recommendation, details must be passed to the bed hub describing the AMHP's plan of action and recommendations. It was later discovered.. only almost 9 hours later.. at 0200 hours, the bed hub still did not have any recommendations for our patient. Yet again... (highlighting the point of the police only acting with any urgency), the AMHP and NHS fail to fulfil their role leaving A&E clogged up even more and proving in fact there is no streamlined process for jobs like this. It appears very much like a vicious circle as it has previously happened before and woah, no shock... it seems like we're the ones left to pick up the pieces or doing the chasing where in fact it's a medical issue...'*
> (Jack, response constable, document extract retrieved, day 254).

Jack went on to describe the situation in A&E as *"a circus behind the scenes"* due to a lack of urgency from the NHS. Another frustrated response officer (Ian), working in a different division, contributed how joint working was better when custody was used as a place of safety. In addition, Ian expressed concerns for the service provided to

members of the public. From Ian's experience, it turned out that Joe and Patrick had been very lucky to be positioned in the small, stifling side room.

> *'Having spent my fair share of shifts up at hospital on a 136 I remain absolutely convinced that the policy of A&E as a place of safety is completely wrong. [Name of] hospital is one of the most chaotic places I have had the misfortune of visiting. The waiting room is always heaving and there is no chance of getting a private bay. Unless you are lucky enough to grab the relative's room (and usually another bobby has beaten you to it) you are stuck milling around the packed reception area for hours on end. The patient has no access to food or a hot drink as they are not on a ward or in an assessment bay. They can't even lie down and get some sleep. They are usually one or all of the following characteristics - nervous, anxious, kicking off, swearing, paranoid, violent etc etc. Being left in A&E, with no radio signal, with 136 patients is a complete injustice to the patient, the officer and the other members of the public present. When the AMHP and doctors finally turn up there is always a mad scramble to find a room to complete the assessment and this is usually in an assessment bay whereby other medical staff are continually interrupting to see when the room is available. It's just a farce! If they were in custody - we could still monitor them 1:1 if required. They would have their own space, somewhere to sleep, access to food and hot drinks, access to a telephone, access to a custody nurse and mental health professionals. Everyone would be a lot safer and the whole process would be a lot calmer. They can be assessed by the AMHP and doctors in a quiet and safe place"* (Ian, response constable, document extract retrieved, day 290).

Following legislative changes, Ian and other police officers had become frustrated with the lack of urgency and approach of other agencies. Thus, changes in law had a knock-

on impact on tensions between police and 'external' professionals, as well as a negative impact on members of the public. At the same time, joint working arrangements in custody were felt to be preferable and underutilised following the amendments to statute. The example of the legislative changes portrays how inadvertent consequences arose through structural changes. Secondly, it evidences how individual agency is constrained by structure.

6.5 Joint working in context: Concluding remarks

Chapter Five exposed the fragmented, changing, unpredictable and interdependent nature of joint working, mainly in relation to organisational elements (e.g. the development of new teams and computer systems, and changes to buildings and staffing). Findings summarised that joint working was complex, chaotic, messy and often felt 'out of control' to informants. These insights contributed to the argument that joint working is more complex than is currently accounted for. However, the previous chapter failed to acknowledge the impact of wider contextual factors, as well as the role of agency and structure.

In fulfilling these oversights – whilst continuing to build on evidence regarding the non-linear and dynamic nature of working together – this chapter has shifted attention to the influence of personal lives of police employees and members of the public (interrelated with the lives of family and friends). Whilst in Chapter Five, informants narrated joint working as out of their direct control, evidence presented in this chapter has provided more in-depth understandings, to demonstrate that police employees do exhibit agency, or at least have the potential to. Individuals, teams, departments and whole services typically self-organise, developing their own local practices. At the same time, numerous observations and conversations highlighted the role of police discretion and professional expertise in joint working.

The second part of the chapter evidenced the continued presence of police cultural features. Whilst some of these traits (e.g. pessimism and machismo) contrasted with other agency approaches, other traits (e.g. pragmatism and action-orientation) were of value to joint working. Further evidence revealed the presence of both different and shared cultures. Where shared cultures had developed relationships played a key role in fostering solidarity, allegiance and camaraderie.

The third part of the chapter exposed the impact of structural factors on joint work-related attitudes and practices. In the context of an economic crisis, there were increasing pressures and attempts to maximise collaboration for the purpose of cost-saving and improving services to the public. Yet the simultaneous consequences of austerity called for financial cuts, which in turn led to the erosion of collaborations. Drastic re-structuring, including movement of staff 'back to the frontline', also impacted negatively on sustaining relationships. Meanwhile, a lack of time or available staff to facilitate handovers of informal knowledge and key contacts, resulted in a negative impacts for preserving partnerships. Secondly, the legislative examples (child protection and mental health) emphasised how adversarial consequences arise through structural changes.

Thus, as an open system, the policing CAS, and joint working, were impacted by both internal and external systems; a notion known as 'nesting' or 'encapsulation' (von Bertalanffy, 1972). Overall, joint working was found to co-evolve, through a degree of autonomy, yet at the same time constrained by structural systems. Thus, control was de-centralised, (i.e. not 'top-down') as the overall behaviour of the system was influenced by many decisions made constantly by individual agents, as well as environmental influences (Waldrop, 1992; Merali, 2006), a feature known as 'circular causality', which is key distinguishing characteristic of complex adaptive systems (Jervis, 1997; Maxfield, 1997; Rinaldi, 1997; Rosenau, 1997).

7 Joint working to the 'edge of chaos': Discussion

'Riding the coaster is an appropriate metaphor for living in a world of complex, continuous change… We feel we don't have choice… We are surrounded by "churn" – everything is coming at us at once from every direction… More is happening than we could possibly have seen in advance. We want to believe we have things under control, but in a very real sense we are just along for the ride.' (Pasmore, 2015, p.2).

7.1 Introduction

The preceding two chapters have demonstrated that – despite critique of individual practitioners, organisational failings and recommendations relating to particular issues – joint working is an unpredictable and interdependent phenomenon; one which co-evolves over time. Chapter Six evidenced the encapsulation of policing, within wider environments; the composition of smaller nested systems; and how those internal and external drivers create complexity in working together. Despite attempts to reform joint working, working together has presented consistent issues for over three decades (Chapter Two). As Munro (2011, p.106) argued – in children's safeguarding – *'too*

many previous reforms have not addressed the operational system as a whole'. Through applying a systemic perspective, evidence presented in the empirical chapters of this thesis indicates that prevailing difficulties are inherent to the non-linearity of social life.

This chapter is divided into three. It begins by bringing together the empirical findings presented within Chapters Five and Six through a summary of key elements, which account for the non-linearity identified in the fieldwork. The discussion then returns to the literature and theory to explain why joint working was observed and narrated in such a way. The second part of the chapter draws together learning from the theoretical insights, namely, the 'policing CAS', as well as learning from the ethnographic lens. In the third section, it is argued that the 'effectiveness' of a CAS lies in its ability to 'thrive in chaos' (Lawson, 2011).

Implications from the current study are discussed before being summarised in bullet points within parts two and three of the chapter. Traditionally, literature tends to focus on co-location (e.g. Berry *et al*., 2011), joint training (e.g. Crawford and Cunningham, 2015) or developing a shared culture (e.g. Charman, 2014) as proposed solutions to joint working issues. Whilst these factors have been found to play a role in joint work (see literature review, Chapter Two), the same problems continue to surface. Diverse implications have arisen from the present study. Firstly, as highlighted in Chapter Six there is currently no *'instruction manual'* (Stephen, tactical operations officer, day 102) for joint working. One implication therefore could be to jointly develop a joint working 'manual' for professionals, which documents practice wisdom, gained through experiential learning, *"trial and error"* (Tracey, IOM, day 172) and *"figuring it out"* (Chris, IOM sergeant, day 225). In the context of funding reductions – when opportunities to have one officer shadowing another are limited – an instruction manual may prove fruitful in saving staff resources. Consultation with police and other agencies would be necessary to ascertain what practitioners would like to see in it, and

where it would be most accessible (e.g. on intranet sites, via a mobile 'app' or in a hard paper version), so that the manual is useful to those who would use it.

Secondly, observations and conversations highlighted difficulties in joint working due to the changing and diverse nature of services in different geographical areas. This was found to create issues for both professionals and members of the public, who were left confused regarding how services were run, which organisations were commissioned, who to contact and how to get help in different areas. These difficulties could be alleviated through the design and application of community mapping, which would provide information and guidance about the availability of services and how to access support in a particular area. Similarly, to the aforementioned 'manual', the community mapping system would benefit from co-design with professionals and members of the public, in addition to regular updating.

Thirdly, a 'Think Joint Working' initiative could be developed, by adopting a 'Think Child' (SCIE, 2007) approach, which considers how top-down policies and reform will impact on children. Findings from the present study support existing research that highlights how organisational leaders tend to be *'strong on "vision"; less focused on evidencing how this translates in practice'* (Brookes, 2014, p.212). The aim of a 'Think Joint Working' initiative would be to consider how policies and reform would impact on joint working practices. Such an approach would be beneficial in preventing or pre-empting some of the unintentional consequences, such as those found in Chapter Five. Fourthly, the findings point to the potential benefit of technical improvements, with systems designed around joint working and the needs of people on the ground.

However, I have chosen to focus on one example – namely supervision – in more depth in this chapter, in order to see how the proposals will develop and move forwards. Whilst supervision will not 'solve' issues associated with joint working, it has

the potential to invoke change within a policing CAS. More specifically, it has the potential to provide a more consistent and formalised mechanism for support, and a source of stability for employees to learn to navigate the evident change 'churn' and associated difficulties of joint working and the wider policing CAS. The establishment of routine, 'effective' supervision within policing, would provide a 'stepping stone' to developing joint supervision across agencies. These implications have been formed through teasing out further features of the data, supported by existing theory and evidence deriving from complexity science, and contextualised by wider sociological, neurological and psychological literature.

7.2 Summary: Joint working as complex, chaotic and messy

The findings presented within this thesis expose the non-linearity of joint working, contributing to the overall argument that working together is more complex than conveyed in previous research or policies. In accounting for non-linearity, eight key elements were identified from the fieldwork. Firstly, joint working is *fragmented*. Fragmentation describes the separations and boundaries between professionals and organisations. It identifies the "*patchy*" and "*spasmodic*" nature of arrangements, in addition to the "*punctuated progress*" characteristic of joint working (Lee, early action inspector, day 43).

Secondly, joint working is continually *changing*. Existing literature proposes a need for 'boundary crossing' in order to develop working relationships across occupational divides, through shared characteristics, including humour and storytelling (Charman, 2015; Crawford and L'Hoiry, 2017). Mutual activity, shared experiences, and reciprocal behaviours are argued to be key to developing communities of practice (Wenger *et al.*, 2002). However, as acknowledged by Wenger and Wenger-Trayner (2015) shared practices require sustained interaction over time. An arguably idealistic

condition, in light of joint working observations and narratives, which have demonstrated that elements within the policing CAS are continually changing, and thus a stable setting is lacking for prolonged interactions over time. Incessant change contributed to the fragmented and discontinuous nature of joint working arrangements, as professionals moved positions, retired, funding ended and multiagency initiatives folded.

Third, changes were found to be related to both internal and external drivers. In this light, individuals and organisations co-evolve within environments (Holbrook, 2003). The process of co-emergence gives rise to complex behaviours within a policing CAS. The impact on joint working can often be *unpredictable*. Unpredictability consisted of unexpected changes and collateral consequences; which arose through chains of events (alike to a 'domino' effect). Change was not always a positive aspect of joint working as often anticipated 'on paper' or 'in theory' (e.g. IOMU Policy, document retrieved, day 171; Organisational Development Strategy, document retrieved, day 192). This illustrates how changes made with good intentions can have adverse impacts elsewhere in the policing CAS and consequentially on joint working.

Fourth, joint working is *interdependent*. The unpredictability and unexpected knock-on impact of changes and events was accounted for by the interconnected nature of the system (Churchman and Churchman, 1968). Unanticipated knock-on effects demonstrated that change could bring about unforeseeable consequences. In accordance with chaos theory, whilst events or changes in the system initially appeared random, they were a result of chains of events (Lawson, 2011). Viewing the 'world' of policing as systemic (Flood, 2010) enabled pathways to be traced to connect events over time. The interdependent nature of constellations of events, and animate and inanimate elements, evidenced that unpredictability arises, not only as a consequence of incessant change, but due to the interrelated nature of a multitude of components. Thus,

counterintuitively, observations and narratives of informants exposed joint working as both fragmented and connected.

Fifth, the combination of fragmentation, change, unpredictability and interdependence, contributed to experiences of a *lack of control*. Many informants felt that as individuals they had limited or no choice, or control, regarding change and unpredicted impacts, but left with "*no idea what I'll be doing this time next year*" (Graham, support unit officer, day 245), having to accept a lack of control and that change was "*the nature of the beast!*" (Sean, response officer, 19 December 2017). These feelings were linked to stress and burnout by informants.

Sixth, on 'dig[ging] deeper' into the messy realities of joint working implementation (Wilson *et al.,* 2016, p.5), individual police employees exercised varying degrees of personal choice and control, augmenting the importance of the *personal context* of joint working. This occurred through '*persistence*' (Sue, custody sergeant, day 130), '*proactivity*' (Val, youth involvement worker, day 150) and '*reaching out*' (Sharon, PCSO, day 47) to other agencies. Evidence of individual discretion further supports the argument that police employees have control over deciding how they practice, police and joint work. Meanwhile, there was also evidence to suggest that individuals do have capacity to act and make decisions around family life and personal interests (e.g. hobbies and dreams) that indirectly impact on joint working.

Seventh, joint working was also shaped by the organisational context (e.g. *cultural* elements) (Edgren, 2008). Consistent with CAS theory, the intentionality of individuals actors (the capacity of individuals to act independently and make choices) was constrained by wider influences. The relation between cultures and joint working was found to be a complex and messy area of enquiry. On the one hand, traditional police cultural traits (e.g. a sense of mission, action, cynicism, pessimism and

machismo) favoured more 'traditional' reactive responses of "*locking people up*" (Ashley, early action officer, day 277), which conflicted with the cultural traits of other professions, including "*softie social work shit*" (Blake, inspector, day 59). This supports existing literature that suggests that policing is dominated by law enforcement, catching villains and punishment, while social work culture is more therapeutically orientated and focused around social needs (Hallett and Birchall, 1992; Frost, 2005). Similarly to social work, nursing, for example, is a profession founded upon rehabilitation, care and health needs (Rayman *et al*., 1999). That said, the police's pragmatic attitude and thirst for action impressed other professionals, and the public alike, who commented on how good the police were at "*taking action*" (Teresa, headteacher, day 137) and "*moving things forward*" (Adrian, 'frequent' caller, day 66). Culture and joint working were therefore interrelated, influencing each other through non-linear means.

The eighth feature was the influence of both agency and *structure*. Testing out a policing CAS, as a theoretical construct revealed how both the individuals in the system, and structural factors, influenced each other in a multi-directional and networked approach. Highlighting the duality of structure and agency, Giddens (1984) emphasised how order can both produce and be produced at the level of practice, as well as being influenced by social structures. Reflecting Gidden's theory of structuration, simultaneous internal and external drivers, alongside agency and structure contributed to the co-evolution of joint working as a situated and dynamic phenomenon. In summary, joint working was summarised as complex, chaotic and messy (Figure 20).
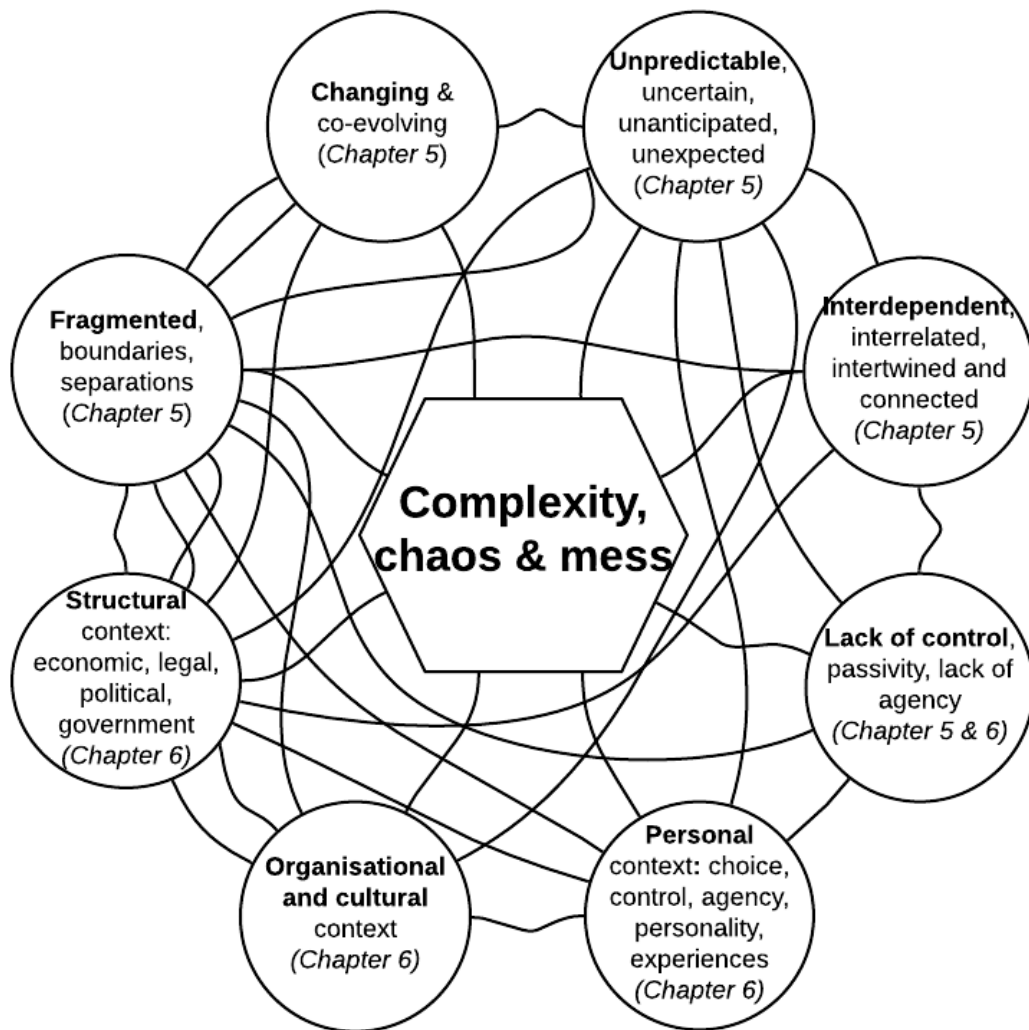
Figure 20: Main themes and sub-themes by chapter

7.3 Learning, understandings and implications

Since joint working has presented continual issues, with a coordinated response seeming '*as stubbornly elusive as ever*' (Crawford and Cunningham, 2015, p.71), at this point, it is perhaps useful to trial a 'fresh' approach, a new way of looking at the whole thing, a new set of ideas to bring to the situation. If it is accepted, as Law (2004) contends - and evidence in this thesis supports - that social life is messy, unpredictable and changes like a kaleidoscope then ordering reality is elusive. Thus, it is impossible to expect single answers or solutions. If the world is complex, then it requires giving up some simplicities and '*riding the coaster*' of life (Pasmore, 2015, p.2). It is at such times that conceptualising policing as a CAS can provide valuable insights. The systems approach to complex situations can also help in less extreme situations; if consistently used it would enable organisations to avoid getting into more extreme positions, because maintaining a flexible view of a situation allows one to anticipate unpredictability and adapt in response, rather than holding a fixed view or approach (Munro, 2011).

Consequently, implications from this thesis highlight a need to rethink linear understandings of joint working, not as a problem to be solved, but a fluid process demanding continual awareness and adaptation. As postulated in Chapter Three, such understandings call for people to learn to '*thrive in an environment of chaos*' (Lawson, 2011, p.566). Meanwhile, due to the co-evolving nature of a CAS (in light of internal and external drivers), the aim is not to achieve control but to retain a position at the '*edge of chaos*' (Pascale *et al*., 1999, p.235). The 'effectiveness' of a policing CAS is therefore argued to lie in its ability to accomplish this. Accordingly, the following part of the chapter summarises what has been discovered through the theoretical construct of a policing CAS, as well as the ethnographic lens, before identifying implications – in terms of learning, understandings and future directions – regarding how policing might be supported to thrive in chaotic environments.

7.3.1 What can be learnt from a policing CAS?

CAS theory helps to reflect on current processes and understandings of joint working. Police, social workers, nurses, fire fighters, paramedics, doctors and other professionals are employed to prevent abuse, crime, social issues, harm, injury and death. As the degree of uncertainty or risk rises, multiagency meetings (e.g. MARACs, MAPPAs) are held with the aim of amalgamating professional skills, knowledge and expertise. These multiagency sites are concerned, or recommended, as a means to share information to prevent tragedies occurring in the future (such as child deaths). However, regardless of the number, experience, knowledge or skills of professionals, CAS thinking emphasises the impossibility of always making accurate predictions about social life.

In relation to the above, Hood (2014) juxtaposes the 'ideal' expert system, which seeks stability, predictability, rationale and control, against the 'reality' of complex and adaptive systems: volatile, self-organising and unstable. At present there is a tendency to 'tighten' legislation, policies and procedures – or look for 'better' evidence to more 'accurately' predict risk – with less emphasis placed on professional expertise. However, Ayre and Preston-Shoot (2010) contend that the current approach, which embraces risk assessment has struggled to improve the standard of joint working, safeguarding or predictions of complex systems. The nature of policing as a hierarchical, command and control driven discipline (College of Policing, 2018), might contribute to explaining why greater emphasis is placed on 'top-down' approaches to govern joint working. Meanwhile, not denying the value of evidence-informed practice, Munro (2011) asserts that practice is highly influenced by intuitive expertise, which should be recognised, promoted and developed. As a consequence of current approaches, defensive practice and blame cultures can arise, leading to people avoiding responsibility through fear of repercussions or getting it 'wrong' (i.e. failing to accurately predict). Acknowledgement of the non-linearity and uncertainty of social life

supports a move away from a language of 'blame' and 'failure', towards reflection, learning and adaptation.

Entropy (a scientific term for lack of order) is central to the way a CAS works (Emery, 1981). 'Lack of order' emphasises why joint working requires constant investment of energy and resources to help it reach homeostatus or equilibrium (von Bertalanffy, 1967). Without these investments, joint working can disintegrate, in a state of disorganisation (Wang, 2002). It requires time, work and effort to maintain a balance. Due to the co-evolving nature of a policing CAS (in light of internal and external drivers), joint working is never finally accomplished. It is not a process to be completed, it must be continually worked out, re-defined and re-negotiated (Wenger, 1998). Thus, the system's goals are contingent, negotiated, require constant adaptation and are described using the term 'equifinality' (Kruglanski *et al.*, 2015). The aim of a CAS is not to achieve control, eradicate or solve issues but to retain a buoyant position '*surfing the edge of chaos*' (Pascale *et al.*, 1999, p.235). Reframing the aim of the system – to maintaining a balance and thriving in chaos – can contribute to changing perceptions around 'success' and 'failure' in joint working.

The perspective offered through conceptualising policing as a CAS reveals how joint working issues are multi-causal and interconnected. The interdependent nature of systems means that changes to improve one aspect of policing can have inadvertent consequences on joint working. Equally, attempts to improve joint working can have unintended impacts on policing. Chapter Five illustrated this argument through the example of co-location. Whilst co-locating multiagency professionals improved communication, at the same time professionals felt isolated from their police colleagues. A policing CAS therefore helps us to understand joint working as a situated issue, connected to other problems. As one issue is 'solved', another can arise. Changes reverberate throughout the system; playing out in unforeseeable ways. Whilst the implementation of a new I.T. system aimed to improve the policing service, it

unintentionally disconnected professionals, as difficulties navigating the new system prevented police employees recording information. In a domino-effect, this hindered information sharing with other agencies. The constant state of flux means that there is no clear definition of the issues, since the issues are constantly changing (Law, 2004).

Despite, command and control approaches dominating policing and most other management methods in the western world, the contextualised perspective enabled by the policing CAS, illustrates how enacting agency can de-centralise control. Rather than a 'top-down' approach, where attempts to govern behaviours are proceduralised, the overall behaviour of the system in which joint working takes place, was found to be influenced by many decisions made constantly by individual agents. Individuals, teams, departments and whole services, typically self-organised, developing their own local practices, dependent on individual experience, skills and local needs (e.g. training and internalised principles), from a grass roots approach.

Whilst traditionally, agency refers to the capacity of human individuals, from an actor-network perspective, inanimate features within the system also have the capacity to influence structural systems. That is not necessarily to say that technology has the capacity to make choices. However, the study of sociotechnical systems emphasises the interdependence between people and technologies. Together these form a network. Although not a theory itself, ANT provides an approach to assist in paying attention to often underexplored non-human features. Therefore, whilst CAS provides a useful lens to understand the process of co-evolution, understanding of co-evolutionary dynamics is strengthened by incorporating ANT to consider the relevance of non-human actants (Kim and Kaplan, 2006, 2011). Thus, in being an open system, a policing CAS, is impacted by both internal components (actors and actants), as well as the external environments (von Bertalanffy, 1972). 'Flattening' the network and experiencing joint working from within the policing CAS, exposed an array of elements, which together contributed to how working together was sustained, interrupted and changed through a

constellation of interconnected features. In summary, a CAS lens has placed emphasis on a more holistic and contextualised approach to understanding the world of policing, and joint working, which is fitting with the aim of this thesis: *to provide a deeper and richer understanding of police joint working*.

7.3.2 Summary of implications and recommendations from CAS

- Joint working requires constant energy and resources even to maintain a balance;
- A change in one part of the system will affect all other sub-systems;
- No individual professional or joint initiative can eliminate all uncertainty;
- Joint working, policing and wider structural systems are co-evolving and therefore unpredictable;
- Changes to legislation, policies, procedures and bureaucratic processes will not necessarily result in 'better' joint working;
- Joint working is never completed solved, nor a process to be achieved, but must be continually worked out, re-defined and re-negotiated;
- Recognition of the interdependence between people and technology helps to pay attention to often underexplored features of joint working and policing;
- Issues are constantly changing and therefore approaches to joint working and policing must also evolve in response;
- A move away from linear understandings that improvements to specific parts of the system will lead to an overall improvement;
- A reframing of 'success' to include riding the chaos, such as the 'ups and downs' of joint working and policing;
- Acceptance that improving one issue can result in another issue arising;

- A call for reflexivity: a process of critically reflecting before, during and after events, decisions and actions, to continue to adapt practice in an ethical manner and learn from experience;

- A need for greater emphasis on appreciating the value of professional intuition and expertise, alongside evidence-informed practice.

7.4 What can be learnt through an ethnographic lens?

An ethnographic lens provides a more detailed picture of joint working and policing. Through following the connections within a policing CAS, the interdependent nature of elements of joint working were exposed as a relational phenomenon. Whilst interviews can provide insights into informants' narratives, observational data captures the polymorphous nature of joint working created and broken down by animate and inanimate elements (e.g. personalities and technologies), often hidden within interview settings. The benefits of being embedded in the field and establishing trust with informants is immensely valuable. The multi-site exposure captured the diversity of joint working arrangements within different areas across the constabulary. Meanwhile, the longitudinal nature of the study provided evidence of the interrupted and changing nature of joint working over time. Moving iteratively from the in-depth micro focus, to 'stepping-out' (Madden, 2010) and viewing the overall picture, provides opportunity to develop a more holistic perspective of joint working, through making links between data, concepts and theories.

The value of ethnography also lies in its ability to access both front- and back-stages of policing. Ethnography captures observed similarities and differences dependent on contextual factors, including time, place and audience (Denzin, 1997). The method facilitates insights into back-stage spaces (e.g. car journeys, canteens and rest rooms); areas where informants may be more relaxed, can step 'out of character', and socially or culturally 'improper' attitudes and behaviours, suppressed in the front-

stage – which, in the case of this study, was the 'professional' or 'public' (e.g. visits, meetings, conferences) arena – may appear (Goffman, 1959, p.488). During 'back-stage' observations there was a noticeable difference, where informants spoke more freely (and often more negatively about joint working) than would have perhaps been condoned in the 'front-stage' arena.

Existing research often fails to acknowledge 'natural' talk 'behind closed doors', which is essential to understanding the challenges in policing, and joint working more specifically. The absence of longitudinal, 'natural', back-stage observations in existing joint working literature (e.g. McCarthy and O'Neill, 2014; Charman, 2015) might therefore provide one explanation for the differences in findings. In the case of this research, prolonged time spent backstage - amid the canteen culture, car journeys and police social events – exposed the continuation of stereotypical anecdotes of perceptions that schools can "*stick it up their arse*" (CBM, day 81); preferences for "*Gucci jobs*" (Darren, response officer, day 122); and the "*sexy*" nature of "*locking people up*" (Ashley, early action officer, day 277). These findings support observations made almost half a century ago, by Black (1971), who highlighted the contextual nature of police culture, as racism was expressed privately in the canteen and during car journeys, yet was not discussed in the same way when the same officers dealt with incidents. Likewise, Loftus (2008) found a banishment of certain language (e.g. overt racist language in diversity messages printed on force mugs and mouse mats), yet a continued prevalence of negative cultural traits backstage in what she termed 'white space', where officers continued to vent their thoughts. Cockcroft (2015) therefore argued, that which is often seen by organisations to be evidence of cultural change is actually only change at the 'front stage'. However, the question is whether that change has moved to the deeper level of underlying assumptions and attitudes. This current study has attempted to grapple with this dilemma.

7.4.1 Ethnography as 'surrogate supervision'

"I didn't realise research was like this. It's been quite therapeutic this whole process, you know, off-loading to someone external, who you trust, someone who doesn't judge what you say. A chance to speak our minds without fear of repercussions" (Daniel, response officer, day 87).

What became strikingly apparent was the value informants placed on participating in the ethnographic process. More specifically, police officers repeatedly expressed being grateful for the opportunity to voice their opinions anonymously to an 'outsider' who they trusted. During a conversation with a response officer, in the latter stages of my fieldwork, he expressed: *"I'm glad someone's listening to us and seeing what it's like on the ground. I hope you're going to take these findings back and share them with the bosses"* (Dave, day 89). Informants described the research process as being "*like the supervision we don't have*" (Cameron, day 185). The unexpected outcome of qualitative research providing a form of 'surrogate supervision' has previously been recognised by Morriss (2017, p.1345). In her study exploring mental health social work, an interviewee identified how the independent, impartial, objective and confidential nature of the research process was beneficial for the wellbeing of participants.

In this study, both during and post-fieldwork, there were also repeated comments regarding how the research helped build bridges between frontline and senior officers. Previous research has identified the organisational value of storytelling. Boje (1991) described stories as central sense-making devices in organisations. More specifically, in policing, the canteen has been described as the 'repair shop' where stories are told to mend wounded egos (Waddington, 1999). Others have argued that stories provide genuine learning about police work (van Maanen, 1973; Shearing and Ericson, 1991). Loftus (2009, p.196) highlighted ethnography as an opportunity to influence *'the daily discourses of the police'*. And, more recently, in relation to police,

van Hulst (2017, p.358) suggested that '*the role of the frontline managers during breaks would be implementing a shared vision*'. Furthermore, he argued that stories '*could be used to intentionally forge certain collective understandings that align with a certain vision*' (p.365). However, it is questionable whether frontline officers and staff talk and behave in the same way when managers are present. Insights from the present study would suggest not: "*I'm hardly going to slag off their new pet project*" (Diane, early action, day 244).

At the same time, suggestions that breaks are an opportunity for managers to influence and embed the organisational vision are also built on the premise that managers' voices should be privileged. Knotter (1996) suggested that a new approach was needed to keep up with the pace and complexity of change. One proposed idea is to get everyone involved in making change happen rather than leading from the top.

> '*Rather than assuming that there is one reality as expressed by the singular and privileged authorial or managerial voice, stories taken from a variety of sources can provide an opportunity to see the inherent differences in how organisational members make sense of their organisational experience*' (Rhodes, 1996, p.2).

In light of this assertion, this thesis argues that – rather than privileging the influence of managers – the process should be bi-directional, where both managers and police officers learn from one another. In consideration of Goffman's (1959) theory of 'dramaturgy', corroborated by empirical data from this study, conversations and behaviours are likely to differ in the presence of management, depending in part on wider factors, such as the relationship between employees, gender, age and experience. Furthermore, a bi-directional learning process supports a move towards collective leadership, '*rather than setting a diktat from "above" and then putting in place control measures to ensure that [managers] objectives are met*' (Brookes, 2016, xvi).

In de-centralising the approach, in line with CAS theory, van Hulst's (2017)

proposition can be turned on its head to ask: what can managers learn from police constables and staff stories during shared breaks? In addition, what can senior leaders learn from officer and staff stories (more generally)? Considering theoretical and empirical evidence to suggest 'back-stage' accounts are crucial, ethnography plays a fundamental role in gaining access to underlying assumptions and attitudes, through the in-depth, longitudinal and embedded nature of the research; a method founded upon building trust with informants. Whilst positioning managers amongst constables and staff (during breaks) might change the nature of stories, ethnography offers a mechanism to 'dig deeper' into otherwise hidden attitudes and behaviours through a 'naturalistic' approach.

However, at present there remains a gap between frontline and strategy, an observation described by Reuss-Ianni (1983) in the title of her book as '*Two cultures of policing: Street cops and management cops'*. Frontline officers in particular, reported feeling not listened to, a lack of supervision and having unrealistic expectations imposed upon them. A finding, which supports previously published literature, by Ménard and Arter (2014, p.308) who describe how police officers '*do not always receive support from their superiors'*. Simultaneously, in the case of this research, strategic leaders told tales of frustrations with officers who were rigid to change and failed to follow force training or guidance. Ethnographic storytelling as a research instrument, has the potential to narrow the hierarchical ranking gap (reduce hierarchical conflict), by using the rich accounts gained to raise awareness of the perspectives, experiences and difficulties 'on the ground'. A recognition of these hidden stories is, I suggest, fundamental in 'unfreezing' boundaries by appreciating the complexities of policing from both frontline and strategic positions.

That said, there are good reasons to keep things 'back-stage', for example if an officer feels there may be risk of unwanted consequences from speaking his or her mind (e.g. being adversely judged or hindering chance of promotion). Hence, for underlying

perceptions and attitudes to surface, the context must feel safe. During the fieldwork, it was not uncommon to hear reports that when officers were consulted: *"they go back to Disneyland and you never hear from them again"* (Darren, response officer, day 122). Thus, in addition to a need for it to feel safe to share stories, it must also feel worthwhile to do so; that their perceptions will be valued, taken on board or at least genuinely considered. Recognising the importance of 'feedback' in complex adaptive systems, ethnography provides a process of circular feedback between the frontline and managers. As a method, it enables entry to the system, from different perspectives - in order to understand the system from a diverse angle - alike to moving seats in Goffman's metaphorical theatre. The combined qualities outlined, reveal the potential to augment ethnographic narratives as a research device to enable pluralistic and diverse approaches to the organisational analysis and development of policing beyond joint working.

7.4.2 Summary of implications and recommendations from ethnography

- Ethnography as a research tool can:
    - 'dig deeper' into the unspoken, hidden and 'messy realities' of implementation;
    - provide a mechanism for circular feedback;
    - has the potential to contribute to 'unfreezing' strategic boundaries;
- Tracing connections with a policing CAS through the process of ethnography can expose the importance of relational aspects of policing practice;
- Understanding of contextual influences (i.e. time, place and audience) is crucial to enabling underlying attitudes and assumptions to surface;
- A need to pay closer attention to the differences between front- and back-stage policing arenas, accessible through ethnographic methods;
- A requirement for more consistent, formalised supervision in policing.

7.5 'Surfing the chaos'

To summarise, CAS theory emphasises the importance of adaptation, reflexivity, professional expertise, intuition and circular feedback. Meanwhile, the opportunity to talk about (joint working) experiences, emotions and attitudes was highly valued by police employees. Thus, in the absence of consistent, regular or formalised supervision, ethnography was found to present a form of 'surrogate supervision'. Together the theoretical and methodological insights point to a need to raise the profile and improve the quality of supervision in policing.

Building on the need to invest in supervision, the following section explores further themes raised in this study, alongside existing theoretical and empirical literature from diverse disciplines (e.g. sociology, psychology and neuroscience), to argue that supervision provides a fundamental support mechanism to mitigate change 'churn', transitions, liminality, emotional labour, dissonance, stress and burnout.

Supervision is argued to provide a foundation for good practice. It provides a support mechanism through which police officers and staff can be supported to adapt at the 'edge of chaos' in relation to joint working and policing more generally. In generating analytical insights beyond the case in question (i.e. joint working) the following section of the chapter focuses on the following research question: *How can the co-produced learning from this research project transfer to other forms of planning for change?*

7.5.1 Emotional labour

As previously outlined (Sections 4.4.7, 5.3.4 and 7.4), ethnography provides access to both front- and back-stages of policing. Empirical findings in this study exposed differences in the socially and culturally accepted and unaccepted expressions, attitudes and behaviours within different arenas. For example, despite swearing in annoyance,

and verbally expressing irritation on driving up to the school car park, Phil (CBM, day 81) continued to act professionally when attending a call out regarding a pupil a few days later. The recognition that professionals are expected to adapt and regulate their feelings, emotions and expressions as part of their work role has been referred to as 'emotion work' (otherwise known as 'emotional labour' or 'emotion management'). First coined by sociologist, Hochschild (1983) the concept describes how employees express certain emotions (e.g. calmness), whilst suppressing others (e.g. fear), in return for a wage.

In policing, there is a strong culture around emotional suppression. In part, this has been attributed to the dominant machismo culture (Loftus, 2009; Reiner, 2010). Lennie (2019) argues that if a police officer displays emotion, they risk being perceived as weak. Emotional management has therefore become an unofficial performance measure. From her own personal perspective as a police officer, in addition to her doctoral research, Lennie (2019) discusses how seeking help can have career limiting consequences. Emotional expression can be interpreted as an inability to cope, exposing the employee as unreliable. It raises questions as to whether the individual is 'up to the job'. Lennie further argues that adherence to these unwritten rules leads to emotional suppression.

Lennie's (2019) suggestions corroborate earlier research by Lardner (1992) who found, through in-depth interviews (with six operational police staff, one police manager, five operational social work staff and one social work manager), that police coping strategies for child protection work included: '*joking with police colleagues*', '*getting on with the job*', '*absorbing the stress*', '*dealing with it yourself*' and occasionally '*having a social drink with colleagues*' (p.222). Police described stressors as practical problems: time constraints, paperwork, workload and long hours. Only occasionally had police officers interviewed felt affected by the emotional content of investigations and referred to being able to '*switch off*' or '*remain emotionally detached*

from the investigation' (p.222). Meanwhile, social workers focused on the emotional nature of some cases, which they found to be distressing. Concerns arose that social workers did not feel able to talk to police colleagues as they claimed not to experience investigations of child sexual abuse as stressful. This led to feelings of isolation and lack of support. Lardner (1992, p.222) found that the dominant social work perspective was that police officers did experience similar emotional stress to social work colleagues but '*blocked off*' or '*denied*' feelings.

In light of evidence from the current study, Lardner's (1992) findings and Lennie's (2019) experience, there is evidence to suggest that police may suppress, block or deny emotions through a process of emotional labour. In the case of Lardner's (1992, p.222) research, social workers suggested emotional involvement in cases was important in informing assessments '*we as social workers use the feelings that we have in our assessmen*t'. A different social worker also linked emotions as important in developing empathy for families '*I think if you deny that what you are doing is painful, what happens is that you distance yourself and I think that way you don't get to feel what the families are feeling*' (p.222). The implication being that firstly, through emotions the social worker is able to 'get' what the families are going through. Secondly, social workers were '*accustomed to discussing cases, worries, problems, experiences of stress with colleagues*' (p.220) and became dissatisfied with police reluctance to take part in discussions. This is perhaps, not all that surprising, given insights into police emotional suppression. As discussed further in Section 7.5.5, supervision offers an opportunity to support the expression of emotion, which once established internally, would provide a stepping stone to develop joint supervision across professions. Relevant to the findings from this research project, around uncertainty and emotions, Fox (2017) proposes that through reflective supervision, the hope is that, supervisees will become less afraid of uncertainty and less worried about

bringing their emotions into practice, but recognise that part of doing a relational job involves having feelings and not knowing all the answers.

Withholding emotions is particularly concerning given the traumatic nature of police work: a road traffic collision, a death or exercising police powers to remove a child. An officer witnesses in one month more than most humans witness in their entire lifetime (Violanti, 1996). Yet police culture promotes a sense of '*emotional and survival strength*' (p.92). This leads to officers developing what Janoff-Bulman (1985, p.19) termed an '*illusion of invulnerability*'. Besides internal cultural expectations, in a wider professional capacity, police employees are also expected to be in control: their functions involve supporting the public and other professionals; looking after witnesses; and calming down confrontational and aggressive situations. Fulfilling their duties requires showing that they are calm and collected. Arriving at a scene of fatality, an officer is required to respond rationally, take control, provide order and a sense of safety, which requires pushing emotions aside. Emotional control is therefore expected, not only by peers and the organisation, but also by other agencies, the public and media. Returning to an integrated hub, the presence of other 'outside' agencies extends the need to maintain a 'professional' performance. Alluding to Shakespeare's (Jaques, Act II, Scene VII, lines 139-142), quotation - '*all the world's a stage*' - police officers find themselves continually performing. Although differences were identified in the performances 'front' and 'back-stage', a consistency was that in both arenas, police officers are expected to maintain a calm, controlled and composed demeanour. Consequently, in combination, cultural, organisational, interagency and wider societal expectations contribute to police officers suppressing emotion through a professional 'performance' (Goffman, 1959).

7.5.2 Cognitive dissonance, stress and burnout

Fieldwork insights in this study suggest that, due to organisational, cultural and public expectations, police employees suppress certain emotions, which requires developing an emotional 'armour'. In law enforcement, Violanti (1996) compares the process of learning to 'protect' oneself from emotional responses to learning how to protect oneself from physical harm. Whilst in the short-term an emotional shield might enable an employee to guard themselves from emotional exposure – through suppression – this form of 'protection' can have long-term unintended psychological consequences. To provide some context, two emotional labour strategies have been identified: 'surface' and 'deep' acting. Deep acting refers to how employees try to create emotions that must be expressed (e.g. empathy); whilst surface acting describes those emotions that should remain hidden (e.g. anger).

The discrepancy between felt and displayed emotions can lead to employees experiencing emotional dissonance. For instance, Jayne (early action officer, day 18) felt that, *"half the time"* she was carrying out work that was, *"not [her] job"*, but that she was, *"picking up on the work of lazy social workers"*. However, these perceptions were withheld during joint EAIT meetings, phone calls, e-mails and visits, when she continued to act in a professional and friendly manner in her interactions with social workers. Julie (response officer, day 137) adjusts her outwardly demeanour, with the aim of being perceived as *"polite"*, in order to build and maintain relationships, by *"sound[ing] grateful"*, in spite of feeling mentally pressured by a lack of time. First described by Festinger (1957) cognitive dissonance is a psychological state in which one holds two conflicting emotions. For police officers, cognitive dissonance was a prevalent state. This psychological split arises through a conflict between front- and back-stage expressions; surface and deep acting; felt and expressed emotions; talk and action. Inconsistent thoughts or actions are known to cause 'psychological discomfort'. In the field of organisational mental health, research has repeatedly identified that

emotional dissonance is associated with employee stress, burnout and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms (Pugh *et al.*, 2011; Arshadi and Piryaei, 2016; Jeung *et al.*, 2018; Park *et al.,* 2019). In the context of the current study, it is unsurprising that a recent survey sample of 16,857 UK police officers and staff provides evidence to suggest that PTSD rates in law enforcement are almost five times higher than the general UK population levels, with almost one in give police employees suffering from a form of PTSD (Miller and Burchell, 2019).

To contextualise the present findings, growing neuroimaging evidence suggests that the amygdala, hippocampus and prefrontal cortex play critical roles in individuals with trauma-related 'disorders'. In particular, individuals experiencing PTSD symptoms exhibit increased amygdala activity, and reduced prefrontal cortex (Shin *et al.*, 2006) and hippocampal functioning (Bremner, 2006). People who experience severe, chronic PTSD have also been found to have hippocampus cell damage (due to high levels of cortisol) and overall smaller hippocampi. The amygdala is a brain region responsible for detecting fear and preparing for emergency events (activating a 'fight or flight' response). 'Amygdala hijack', a term coined by psychologist Goleman (1995) describes how hyper-arousal of the amygdala leads to feeling constantly on edge. A cascade of events in the amygdala triggers the release of adrenaline, leading to symptoms associated with stress and anxiety; increased heart rate, blood pressure and changes in breathing. Thus, cognitive dissonance can lead to an overactive fear and anxiety circuit in the brain resulting in experiences of chronic stress. The prefrontal cortex regulates emotions, attention and awareness; determines the emotional significance of events; and inhibits socially 'dysfunctional' reactions (Akirav and Maroun, 2007; Bishop, 2007). Meanwhile, the hippocampus is responsible for storing memories, recalling information and plays a crucial role in a person's ability to overcome fear responses. In combination, ethnographic insights, alongside existing

evidence, suggest that through emotional labour and professional 'performances' police employees experience cognitive dissonance.

In contrast to a neuroscientific perspective, the present study provides a different angle to exploring and understanding stress and burnout, brought to light through - observations and narratives of the lived experiences of police employees and – the messy 'realities' on the ground. Neuroscience is helpful in identifying brain processes and providing a context to the current findings. However, issues in brain processes often lead to medication as the 'first port of call' to *alleviate* symptoms. Whilst medication might help some individuals, the implications from this study aim to *prevent* feelings of stress and burnout, by putting support mechanisms in place on a day-to-day basis, before distress reaches a level that might require medication. The importance of supervision in mitigating such negative experiences will be explored further in Section 7.5.5.

7.5.3 Change 'churn', transitions and liminality

In addition to cultural and social influences, the fast-paced nature of work contributes a lack of valuable opportunity to express emotions and feelings. Observations in this study revealed how frontline police officers, can find themselves moving relentlessly from *"job to job to job"* (Alan, day 130). There was little time to discuss, to reflect or to process. Drawing on 40 years of leadership practice, research and training – including 30 years as a serving police officer – Brookes (2016, p.197) comments how *'it is rare that time is taken to* [reflect]'. Ethnographic insights from the current study revealed how on getting a break, police officers arrived back at the police station and carried on as normal; what they dealt with was 'part and parcel' of the job. The speed of work was compounded by changes occurring internally within the police force, in joint approaches with other agencies, and in the environment (e.g. in the legal, political and economic systems). Whilst there were differences in the lives and experiences of police

employees - as well as their perceptions and behaviours of working together - many informants struggled to keep adrift of change 'churn' and chaos (e.g. Will was *"losing sleep…not knowing where [he'd] be [working] in a few weeks";* Luke felt like he *"never kn[ew] what was going to happen next"*; and Anne described *"temporary [as] the new permanent"*). Similarly, in his research of beleaguered managers, Vaill (1989) identified difficulties in keeping up with the changes occurring around them. Just as one change was introduced, another was needed, and often that change required undoing something the previous change had accomplished. Under these circumstances orderly steps and sequential changes went out the window. Vaill termed this finding '*permanent white-water'*. This reflects observations and experiences of police employees who found themselves experiencing relentless change and uncertainty. Adopting Vaill's concept of '*permanent white-water'*, Pasmore (2015, p.8) defined this experience as: '*complex, continuous change… a series of overlapping, never-ending, planned and unplanned changes that are interdependent, difficult to execute, and cannot or should not be ignored'*. Permanent white-water has been suggested to leave employees at the point of change saturation and burnout (Pasmore, 2015).

At the same time, constant change meant that police employees found themselves facing continual transitions and experiencing (mental and physical) liminality. Introduced by van Gennep (1909), in his book Les Rites de Passage, the concept of liminality refers to a transition from one state to another. In the 1960s, British anthropologist Turner began elaborating further on the notion and implications of liminality. He suggested that the liminal phase can be viewed as social 'limbo'; a 'between state'. It describes a transition over time that is ambiguous and inherently uncertain for the liminal subject (Gennep, 1909). Liminality was observed in the fieldwork, as police were between one job and another; between an old role and a new role; between work and retirement; between one building and another; part social

worker, part police officer; moving from 'crime-fighting' to 'safeguarding'; and from an 'isolative' culture, to an 'integrated' approach.

Some scholars report liminality as having positive effects (e.g. creativity, reflection and learning). The gap between the known and unknown, provides opportunity for creative change (Myerhoff, 1982). However, liminality has increasingly become recognised to present challenges in organisational contexts (e.g. psychological impacts and paradoxical identities) (Söderlund and Burg, 2018). The concept of liminality has encouraged scholars to explore the inherent uncertainty, ambiguity and stress associated with change. Weick (1996) recognised a need for support, suggesting that liminal experiences incite a need for sense-making. In the context of 'trauma[49]' work, Pack (2009, p.71) discusses the role of supervision as a support mechanism. She argues that supervision provides a space *'in which dilemmas and puzzles can be deliberated on and experimentation with new strategies and ways of being can be evolved and tested for relevance and meaning in cycles of action and reflection'*.

Whilst the focus of liminality in organisational contexts has increasingly been recognised for its psychological impact, findings in this study point to the relevance of liminality for joint working. More specifically, the importance of liminality in terms of multiagency working was often related to the efforts and time employees invested in developing and maintaining partnerships. To explicate further, during the fieldwork, in light of frequent staffing changes, around a dozen officers became involved in the research when they were waiting to change roles. Changing roles constituted a 'liminal' period of uncertainty. This uncertainty arose as officers were: told that they would be changing roles, due to an organisational re-structure, but waiting to hear when; looking

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[49] Pack's (2009) practitioner guide is aimed at trauma therapists. She *'use[s] the term "therapists" widely to include all those professionals involved in providing services to survivors of trauma'* (preface).

to apply for a different position, but unsure whether a position would become available that they would want to apply for; had already applied, but were waiting to hear the outcome (i.e. from an interview); or had successfully obtained a new job, but were awaiting a start date.

During the 'liminal' transition phase, officers often began to disengage with partner agencies. There were different approaches and forms of disengagement observed and spoken about. These included, physically going to see other professionals to inform them that they would be moving on, and no longer the point of contact, in the neighbourhood policing team, for instance. In some cases, another police officer had already been assigned to the role, so the leaving officer was able to provide the name of the person taking over. There was not a single case observed, where there was an overlap, during which the previous employee was able to introduce the new employee to the partner agencies, although a number of informants said that this would be highly valuable from both a police and partner agency perspective. In the majority of situations, a police officer left his or her role, not knowing who would be taking over.

Similarly, to other aspects of joint working, the individual employees approach to liminality and disengagement was influenced by multiple factors, such as relationships, personality and empathy. Where relationships between professionals had been established, officers were often "*sad*" (Gary, CBM, day 101) about moving on. This sadness arose as they were *"sorry not to be working with certain individuals anymore"* (Oliver, early action officer, day 133). In these instances, police officers and police staff took the opportunity, during the transition phase, to meet in person, with other agency professionals to handover and say 'goodbye'. Some of these employees even offered to continue to support partners (either for a certain time period until the new officer took over or indefinitely), despite it not being seen as a formal requirement in their new role. Contrastingly, other employees stopped engaging with partners during the liminal phase (e.g. did not return their calls or passed the request on to a colleague).

Many of these individuals had not informed partners that they would be moving on. This transpired when professionals rang the office, only to be told by another police officer or civilian staff that the individual they had called for was no longer working in the department. Thus, liminality was found to be a recurring feature in experiences of police employees. The ways employees engaged with partner agencies in transition phases differed, however such 'between states' were consistently found to present times of uncertainty for both police and partners.

7.5.4 'Affect labeling'

In terms of mitigating liminality, change 'churn', stress and burnout, 'affect labeling' – expressing feelings and emotions in words – has long been recognised to support processing of negative emotional experiences and psychological distress (Lieberman *et al*., 2007). Again, neurological research can be drawn upon to contextualise the process of 'affect labeling'. More specifically, neuroimaging has provides insights into the brain processes, which account for the positive impact of putting feelings into words. In other words, talking about traumatic experiences can help the brain to 'work better'. A number of studies have demonstrated that affect labeling produces less amygdala activity (Lieberman *et al*., 2007), mitigating the hyperalert state associated with threat and 'fight or flight' responses. Once the amygdala has calmed down, the process of communication allows the hippocampus to process emotions. Additionally, these studies have shown increased activity in the right ventrolateral prefrontal cortex, improving the brain's ability to process emotional information. Thus existing research has found that talking about traumatic experiences, emotions and feeling can help to reduce the response of the amygdala, regulate emotions and alleviate psychological distress associated with dissociation, change 'churn', transitions and liminality. Police officers, in particular, valued this opportunity, as has been expressed through the concept of 'surrogate supervision'. Supervision provides a space to talk about emotions, to acknowledge what police officers deal with and enable processing to develop

'healthier' and more resilient practitioners. Thus, those who have good quality supervision are more likely to cope. The development of evidence-informed, quality and consistent supervision is particularly timely, in light of Oscar Kilo[50], the National Police Wellbeing Service, launched earlier this year, as well as the ongoing work of the Blue Light Wellbeing Framework[51], developed in 2017. At the same time, the professionalisation of policing – including, the founding of the College of Policing, in 2013, and significant changes to recruitment (i.e. Direct Entry[52] and the 'Police NOW[53]' scheme) and education, with policing becoming a degree level profession from 2020 – provides a timely context to support the development of a new approach to supervision; a move away from bureaucratic, managerialist approaches; and to augment the role of professional decision-making, influenced by a balance of evidence and professional expertise. The final sub-section summarises the case for supervision, whilst exploring its role and specific evidence-base in greater detail.

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[50] Oscar Kilo is the home of the evidence-base and best practice for emergency services wellbeing in England and Wales. It provides resources that can be used to shape wellbeing provision and provoke debate and encourage collaboration and innovation. Oscar Kilo was created and designed to host the Blue Light Wellbeing Framework.

[51] The Blue Light Wellbeing Framework is a document used by emergency services personnel in England and Wales to self-assess their health and wellbeing.

[52] Direct Entry Inspector and Superintendent training and development programmes are offered in England and Wales as a means to bring diverse leaders from different professional backgrounds, with new perspectives, skills and experience into the police service.

[53] PoliceNOW offers two training programmes (the National Graduate Leadership Programme and the National Detective Programme) for graduate students to enter policing in England and Wales. Entrants do not require any previous policing knowledge or experience. Both programmes involve a residential training academy, followed by two years in-force training and continuous professional and personal development.

7.5.5 Supervision: The 'cornerstone' of good practice

The combined implications – from complex adaptive systems theory, ethnography, emotional labour, cognitive dissonance, stress, burnout, change 'churn', transitions and liminality – all converge around a need for improving the quality of supervision to support employees to 'surf the chaos' of joint working, policing and societal issues (Figure 21). More specifically, implications from CAS and further sources (Lardner, 1992; Violanti, 1996; Lennie, 2019) propose a need for emotional expression, adaptation, reflexivity, professional expertise, intuition and circular feedback; aspects which are all supported through consistent and formalised supervision.
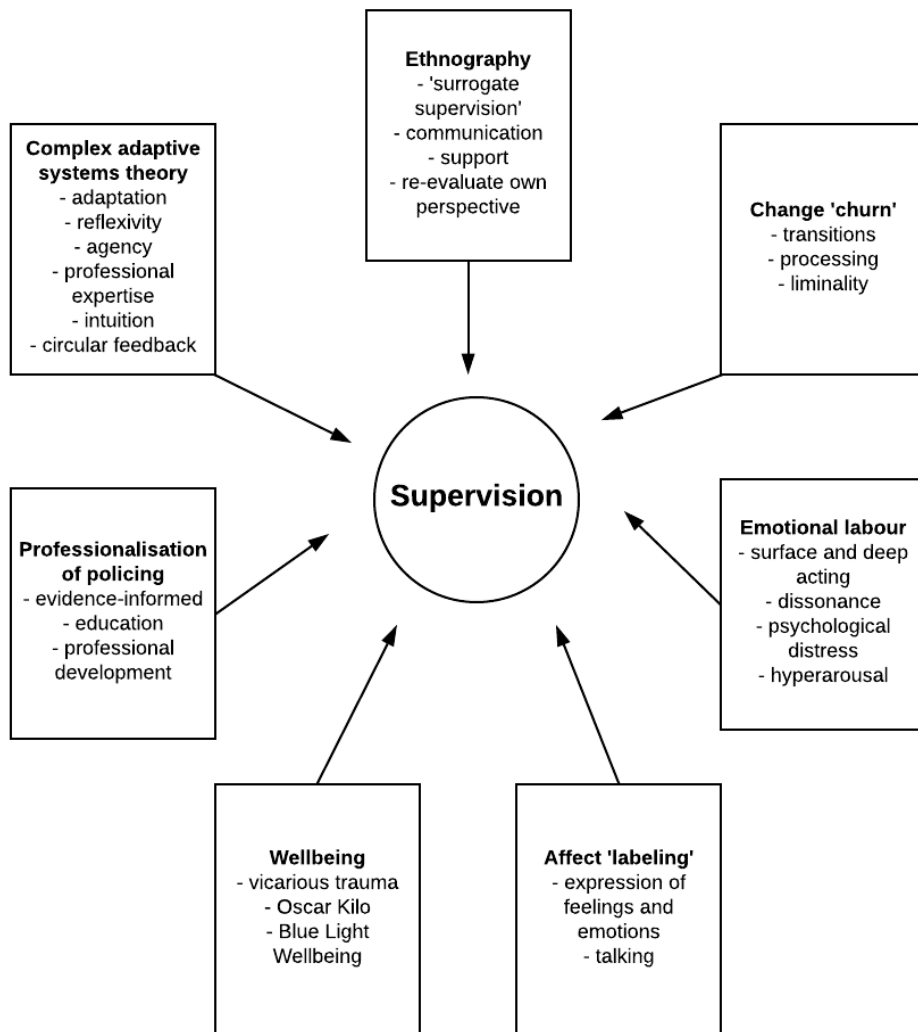
Figure 21: A case for better quality supervision

Ethnographic insights from this thesis have revealed that police employees value the opportunity to talk about their work and reflect on their role, if conversations are deemed safe, and relationships and trust have been established. Existing interview research by Lardner (1992, p.220) found that social work colleagues perceived police to be '*defensive*' to '*constructive*' criticism, which social workers offered in attempt to improve practices. Social work practitioners described how this led to further joint working issues. More specifically, there were difficulties reported in communicating

their viewpoints, resulting in a lack of honesty and openness. Whilst the latter findings were based on only a small cohort of a total number of 13 officers and child protection social workers, supervision offers opportunity to gradually embed critical reflection into professional work. However, present police supervisory practice was found to be procedurally driven, influenced by a managerial focus on performance - including checking assessments of risk, overseeing cases and adherence to completion of written records - rather than situating supervision as a fundamental opportunity to provide emotional support, embed reflexivity or develop professional expertise. A further finding was that supervision currently occurs on an ad-hoc basis with no standardised framework. There exists no national or local formalised model for supervision in policing, although there are 'effective supervision' guidelines currently in development, including a 'call for practice examples' by the College of Policing to be submitted by September 2019 (College of Policing, 2019). In light of important differences between 'front- and back-stage' presentations, underscored by evidence in the present study, it is important to consider how frontline constables are consulted to ascertain their underlying assumptions and attitudes about what constitutes 'effective' supervision, as well as the views of individuals responsible for delivering supervision. Whilst the majority of fieldwork was spent 'on the ground', supervision plays an equally important role at all levels of an organisation, including individuals undertaking leadership roles. Drawing on the principles of adaptive leadership, Heifetz (1994, p.252) uses the analogy of '*getting on the balcony*' to emphasise the importance of maintaining perspective. Although Heifetz (1994) uses the language of 'partners' in supporting leaders, equally supervision offers an opportunity to open leaders eyes to '*blind spots that require the vision of others*' (p.268). These partners – or supervisors – are fundamental in providing a '*holding environment for somebody who is busy holding everybody else*' (p.269) and lifting leaders back onto the balcony to maintain perspective by asking questions such as 'what's going on?' and 'what can be learned?'

As part of the police role, unwritten cultural rules and public expectations, employees suppress certain feelings, whilst expressing others (known as surface and deep acting). This process of emotional labour can result in employees experiencing cognitive dissonance (conflicting emotions and actions). Psychological and neurological research has identified that a split in emotions and expressions, can lead to psychological discomfort, including PTSD symptoms (e.g. feeling 'on edge', chest pains, increased heart rate, irritability, angry outbursts, sleep issues, difficulties concentrating and other mental health related problems, including stress, burnout, depression, anxiety and phobias). These experiences can be problematic for the individual as they impact on their own feelings, as well as relationships with family, friends, peers and multiagency colleagues. Together, existing literature and findings from the current study indicate that it is crucial to identify a means to mitigate such negative experiences and develop 'healthy' brain processes.

At the same time, the fast-paced nature of work, coupled with relentless internal and external changes, in relation to joint working, policing and wider systems (e.g. political, economic and legal) result in a lack of time to pause, reflect and process, as employees find themselves struggling to keep afloat in permanent white-water. Meanwhile, change 'churn' contributes to a continual state of transition, resulting in police officers and staff experiencing liminality, a between state; passionate about 'crime-fighting' but finding themselves spending increasing time 'safeguarding'; signing up to be a police officer but feeling part social worker.

'Affect labeling' has long been recognised to support the management of emotional experiences and psychological distress (Lieberman *et al.,* 2007). Putting feelings into words, by discussing the content of work, as well as personal development and pastoral issues, forms the core of 'effective' supervision practices. Consequently, practice and policy in other public sectors informs us that organisations should consider supervision as part of their 'duty of care' (Carpenter *et al.,* 2012). In support of these

assertions, Pack (2009, p.72) proposes that supervision provides a space in which learning, growth and adaptability can occur, as it supports, *'the safe exploration of existential themes, uncertainty and complexity'*. A safe space to use discourse as a means of adapting to change.

Formalised supervision would provide a constant source of support to police employees as they live through the tensions involved in transition processes, whilst making sense of liminality. Supervision can provide an 'anchor' in the turbulent sea and an opportunity to support employees to become active agents, as opposed to passive employees. Police officers felt that their agency was restricted, due to the constancy of organisational and structural changes that they were 'subject' to. However, further analysis of their stories, identified evidence of agency and choice, which were often overlooked in their own accounts. This signals opportunity to not only raise awareness for police employees to recognise their own agency, but also support them to capitalise on identifying positive means of enacting agency to facilitate joint working and other aspects of police practice.

The value of supervision has long been emphasised in safeguarding practices. In social work, for example, students learn how to manage a caseload, apply theory and research evidence to practice, perform key tasks and reflect on casework and their own professional development. Supervision also presents opportunity to seek out and receive emotional support for carrying out often demanding and stressful duties (Carpenter *et al.*, 2012). In Lord Laming's (2003) inquiry report into the death of Victoria Climbié, he asserts that supervision it is the 'cornerstone' of good practice, an opinion reiterated by the Munro Review of Child Protection. Moving away from managerialist practices, whereby supervision is used for monitoring performance, Munro (2011) proposed that supervision presents an opportunity to pay closer attention to the views and experiences of those professionals working with the public. Munro's (2011) proposal is in keeping with the concept of distributed leadership. In a book chapter titled 'Wicked Problems

and Clumsy Solutions', Grint (2010, p.184) argues that when working with '*wicked problems the role of leaders [is] to acknowledge that they [do] not have all the answers'*. From a distributed leadership perspective, supervision offers an opportunity to harness the perspectives and expertise of employees, across the whole of an organisation (as well as cross-organisations), and use the collective knowledge gained to contribute to organisational developments.

In the context of increasing emphasis on developing trauma-informed public services, there is also recognition of a need for trauma-informed supervision for professionals, including police employees (O'Connor and Grove, 2019). Similarly, to findings in the case of the present research, regarding change 'churn' and permanent 'white-water', and in light of the case for 'trauma-informed' supervision, O'Connor and Grove (2019) have recently questioned what happens when employees do not have space and time to slow down their thinking. They make the case that as safeguarding partnerships in the U.K. move towards a more trauma-informed workforce, workers must be supported:

> '*not only to understand trauma and it's impacts, but to process how gaining this new information leaves them feeling – if you give someone information without allowing them space to make sense of it, you could cause more harm than good'* (p.2).

There are a whole host of other recognised benefits from the process of 'effective' supervision in other professions (Carpenter *et al.,* 2012). Outcomes for workers, include improvements in job satisfaction (Kavanagh *et al.,* 2003; Bogo *et al.,* 2011); critical thinking (Lietz, 2008); task assistance, interpersonal interaction, social and emotional support, wellbeing, stress, burnout (Mor Borak *et al.,* 2009); resilience (Munro, 2011); and self-efficacy and empowerment (Cole *et al.,* 2004). Outcomes for organisations, include improved: job performance (Kavanagh *et al.,* 2003); workload management

(Juby and Scannapieco, 2007); case analysis and planning (Lietz, 2008); and staff retention (Gonzalez, 2009). Research exploring outcomes for service users have identified: empowerment, participation, fewer complaints, positive feedback (Collins-Camargo and Millar, 2010); and safety and family functioning (Yoo, 2002).

Furthermore, supervision offers the opportunity for workers within a CAS to reflect on differences between how they themselves, other agencies, and – arguably most importantly from the perspective of systems theory – how the 'users' of services (i.e. different publics) view joint working. Strengthening supervision in policing, also presents potential to establish joint supervision between police and other agencies, as occurs within other multiagency settings in healthcare (e.g. between doctors, nurses, social workers and occupational therapists). Whilst an existing focus on co-location emphasises the importance of physical proximity for joint working, joint supervision would provide a process to develop 'mental' proximity through supporting each other to work through dilemmas and emotions. In the field of children's safeguarding, Munro (2011, p.108) proposed that there should be different forms of supervision, including arrangements for frequent supervision '*to reflect on service effectiveness and case decision-making',* which is '*separate from arrangements for individual pastoral care and continuing professional development'.* The precise supervision approach would need to be designed in consultation with police employees receiving and delivering supervision, and reviewed and adapted over time, in light of a complex adaptive systems approach[54]. Establishing 'effective' supervision internally (College of Policing, 2019)

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[54] An Economic Social Research Council, Impact Acceleration Account grant has been awarded to the researcher, supervisor (Professor Corinne May-Chahal) and case partner (Detective Chief Superintendent Susannah Clarke), to develop a supervision model in collaboration with Lancashire Constabulary, including the potential for wider dissemination should the evidence-base prove fruitful.

will provide a foundation to expand the nature of supervision to include joint supervision across agencies.

7.5.6 'Surfing the chaos': Implications and recommendations

- o The traditional approach of an 'ad-hoc', modest amount of supervision needs to be modified;
- o A need to shift focus from performance management to reframing supervision as an opportunity for developing professional expertise and intuition;
- o Improving the quality of supervision to promote:
    - o pausing;
    - o reflexivity;
    - o processing;
    - o sense-making;
    - o adaptation
    - o discussion;
    - o emotional expression;
    - o circular feedback;
    - o agency;
    - o healthy brain processes;
    - o wellbeing.
- Promoting supervision to build resilience and mitigate:
    - o change 'churn';
    - o cognitive dissonance;
    - o hyperarousal;
    - o stress;
    - o burnout.

7.6 Joint working to 'the edge of chaos': Concluding remarks

This chapter has brought together findings from the previous two empirical chapters to argue that joint working is more complex than currently accounted for. The first part of the chapter outlined key elements which contributed to the complex, chaotic and messy nature of working together. Part two turned attention to learning from the theoretical and methodological insights. In doing so, implications were proposed to outline how joint working might work better for policing. Recommendations identified a need to: recognise uncertainty as inevitable (due to the volatile, self-organising, evolving nature of joint working, policing and wider structural systems); move away from linear understandings; and develop reflexivity, adaption, professional expertise and intuition.

Ethnographic learning pointed towards a need to pay greater attention to front- and back-stages of policing; to ensure circular feedback and provide consistent, formalised supervision. Following on from the recommendation for the role of supervision in policing – and moving beyond the specific case of joint working – concepts such as emotional labour, cognitive dissonance, stress, burnout, change 'churn', transitions and liminality were drawn upon to contextualise the implications. These insights reinforce the need to improve the quality of supervision. It was argued that supervision is the 'cornerstone' of good practice. The development of a formalised supervision model has been proposed, as a source of stability within the 'permanent white-water', to support police officers and staff to ride the chaos and develop 'healthy' brain processes. The value of supervision lies not only in its benefits to individual employees, but provides widespread advantages in equipping employees to be able to respond aptly to internal and external colleagues, and the needs of the public. It offers a resource to process change, and mitigate psychological distress and vicarious trauma. As argued by Ferguson (2011, p.205): '*a worker's state of mind and the quality of*

attention they can give is directly related to the quality of support, care and attention

they themselves receive from supervision'.

8 Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

The aims and objectives outlined in Chapter One were used as a guide to direct the fieldwork and data collection more generally. However, as with most ethnographies, other themes and ideas emerged. This allowed for a broader scope in the thesis to develop wider learning beyond joint working. The conclusion chapter begins by revisiting the research questions (initially outlined in Section 3.8) to summarise how they are each addressed by the research findings (Chapters Five and Six) and discussion (Chapter Seven). In bringing the thesis to a conclusion, the original contributions to knowledge, limitations and potential future avenues for empirical enquiries are outlined.

8.2 Research questions

8.2.1 Complexity, chaos, mess and lack of control

To what extent do joint working experiences correspond with understandings of police joint working in existing literature? How do the ethnographic insights gathered within the research differ to how joint working is depicted within police joint working theory?

The introduction (Chapter One) provided a brief context and history of joint working between the police and other organisations. In particular, there was discussion of the longstanding tendency for blame to be placed on individuals or organisations where multiagency 'error' is found to occur (see Section 1.6). Discussions of risk and blame were touched upon in the narratives of some informants. For example, Patrick (response constable, day 241) felt that he and his colleague had *"done [their] jobs twice because mental health [weren't] doing theirs"*. Similarly, Jayne (early action officer, day 18) blamed "lazy social workers" for her having to "*pick up*" on their workload. However, on the whole, risk and blame were not – described or observed as – primary concerns by informants. Counter to the negative narratives, other informants referred to the importance of empathy in enabling professionals to move beyond blame to *"understand[ing] their perspectives"* (Hannah, response officer, day 137). For example, Kay (early action officer, day 263), talked of how social care budgets had suffered even greater cuts than those of policing, and thus she felt sorry for those social workers left to *"deal with it"* when *"there just isn't enough of them"*. Perhaps, the lack of reference to blame, risk and accountability, which have previously been identified as important themes for joint working (e.g. Frost, 2005; Berry *et al.*, 2011), was due to the fact that the majority of the fieldwork was spent at the 'lower' level of policing, on the ground. More time spent with strategic leads may have yielded different insights into these themes. Furthermore, many of the observations were carried out within early action and neighbourhood policing departments. Although involved in safeguarding practices, professionals within early action and neighbourhood policing are often working at a preventative, 'early help' stage, rather than at a statutory level. Again, more time spent with different departments may have yielded different insights into blame, risk and accountability.

The literature review presented in Chapter Two demonstrated that a plethora of publications focus on the barriers, facilitators and the effectiveness of police joint working. Studies report on specific components of joint working (e.g. training) or arrangements (e.g. co-location). Yet, there are few theoretical insights, to understand the continuing difficulties or ways to move forwards beyond perceptions or hypothetical proposals. In reviewing the 'communities of practice' theory of social learning, which has been applied within contemporary studies of police joint working (e.g. Frost, 2005; Charman, 2015; Crawford and L'Hoiry, 2017), the literature review identified the importance of developing a shared culture through mutual activities, interactions, and reciprocal behaviour.

Notwithstanding the value of a shared culture, the overall summary of the literature provides a more holistic picture of current understandings. This overview hinted at the interconnected nature of elements of joint working, including and beyond cultural practices. For example, a shared culture involves relationships, which require time and trust to be developed. Once relationships are established, commitment increases. However, staff changes mean that these relationships are not always reciprocated or sustained over time, leading to professionals having to continually invest more time and effort in re-establishing relationships. Whilst there have been significant changes to the bureaucracy of joint working, and emphasis on promoting partnership arrangements through adapting approaches (e.g. co-location and e-governance), the review of the literature exposed that many of the issues have remained consistent over time and across fields of study (e.g. child protection and crime prevention).

What is it to experience the process of joint working for police employees?

The perspective of joint working - as an interdependent and interrupted process - was supported by the empirical findings (Chapters Five and Six). However, in studying lived experiences of joint working, this thesis has demonstrated that the punctuated and interdependent process is - often also experienced by individuals as – fragmented, unpredictable and 'out of control'. These insights challenge organisational and individual-centred blame, bureaucracy and linear models of joint working. Such understandings overstate the extent to which individual practitioners exercise choice and agency in navigating the messy, changing and unpredictable terrain of social issues.

Through adopting an ethnographic lens, it is clear that informants contrast their experiences against a dominant, and arguably over-simplified perspective of joint working. If it is recognised that it is possible to have multiple non-contradictory valid descriptions of the same phenomenon, then the observations and each of the stories of informants, and the experiences described, represent joint working. Therefore, this thesis has demonstrated that existing joint working literature is negligent in its conceptualisation of the in-depth, lived reality of joint working and overlooks its potentially interdependent, unanticipated, changing and 'out of control' nature.

Meanwhile, existing accounts point to the need for certain facilitators for 'effective' joint working. From this perspective, organisations and individuals are held to account, to pursue opportunities, to improve joint working. Conversely, by studying change as a punctuated process - with connections between elements and systems - this thesis offers valuable insights into the messiness and unpredictability of joint working, and associated divergence between expectations and lived 'realities'. This is because a CAS perspective shines light on the myriad of animate and inanimate factors at play in

responding to social complexities, in place of an over-emphasis on individual proactivity.

In broadening understandings of joint working, this research addresses the plea from the Institute for Government (Wilson *et al*., 2016, p.5) to 'dig deeper' into the messy realities of joint working implementation. Adopting an ethnographic lens, enabled the narration of a broad range of change events, within and beyond joint working which - informants' stories, alongside observations and document analysis indicated - were influential to the process of working together. Accordingly, this thesis adopts a more holistic perspective of joint working - moving away from linear models - towards a complex adaptive systems approach, which more closely reflects the lived experiences of how joint working is practised and experienced.

8.2.2 Agency and context

To what degree are joint working experiences influenced by various contexts, including personal, organisational and societal, in which joint working is practised?

In addressing the above research question, the focus moves beyond capturing experiences, to explore *how* and *why* such chaotic, complex and messy experiences occur. To do so necessitates recognition of both agency and context, and the complex interplay between the two. Aspects of individual and contextual features, which influenced joint working were outlined within Chapter Seven, 'Joint working in context'. Analysis of these factors illustrated that agency and context cannot be considered in isolation but are intrinsically related. This infers that agency and context are closely entwined elements of joint working, and to comprehend one requires a corresponding understanding of the other.

The findings and analysis demonstrated that whilst proactivity is evidenced within observations and stories of joint working, this is often constrained by wider

factors overlooked by the dominant narrative, which places responsibility on individual people and organisations to enact improvements to joint working. In contrast, an ethnographic lens exposes varying personal choice and control, within a context, where both individual and structural changes are frequently revealed as having unanticipated consequences and thus result in experiences of joint working being out of the control of individual practitioners. These understandings also challenge existing theory that accentuates cultural factors, with joint working presented as interdependent, constrained and enabled by individual, organisational and structural influences.

Accordingly, this thesis has demonstrated that contextual factors contribute significantly to the complexity, unpredictability, chaos and messiness of joint working, and the extent to which unexpected consequences can be controlled. Whilst individual, cultural and organisational features had a key influence on joint working, the research findings demonstrate that influences arose from wider scale change, reform and unexpected events. The wider contextual changes and associated consequences for individuals practising joint working are frequently difficult, if not impossible, to foresee or manage, from the position of individuals, teams, departments or even police forces. Being embedded within Lancashire Constabulary over an 18-month period, provided an in-depth insight into rich examples of such changes, as the reverberation of events was made traceable over time.

The lives of the public and professionals, the organisational and the professional context, were clearly impacted by, and in some cases as a direct result of changes to macro structures, including policing in England and Wales, governmental structures including those of public services and the wider economy. As a public service, the police force itself was situated within, and shaped by, wider social-economic factors. The implications of austerity on the public sector, were widely evidenced within many joint working stories. Such over-arching changes provided a catalyst to change how the police work in collaboration with other agencies, yet at the same time made the

practicalities of maintaining joint approaches more complex. Individual practitioners, teams and departments responded to the financial challenge in different ways, in part tailored to the perceived needs of local publics. The research demonstrated the significance of the individual, and socio-economic and legal contexts, on joint working in instigating and responding to change, whilst attempting to sustain joint working in a sea of chaos. The longitudinal insights enabled a journey of joint working to be studied over time (Wilson *et al.*, 2016). This, combined with the stories of informants, encouraged a deeper and richer insight into the importance of contextual features.

8.2.3 The policing complex adaptive system

How can the advancement of complex adaptive systems as a theoretical construct develop our understandings of what it is to experience joint working? What might this approach afford that is not provided within existing joint working literature and theory?

Chapter Three considered the potential for a policing CAS as a theoretical construct through which to study and understand police joint working. The application of systems theory, complexity theory, chaos theory and actor-network theory to the study of policing is notably underdeveloped. In bringing together these related theories, this thesis advances policing as a complex and adaptive system. The policing CAS, in being an open system, accounts for the impact of wider political, economic and cultural factors (Dooley, 1996). Because opens systems exchange information with their environments, they are said to co-evolve with their environments (Holbrook, 2003). The policing CAS adopts the 'butterfly effect' (from chaos theory) to account for how small changes can lead to disproportionately large impact, as chains of often untraceable events reverberate through the system. In doing so, it explains how improvements to individual components of the joint working system, do not always lead to better or expected outcomes for joint working as a whole. Unpredictability of the policing CAS arises due

to the unstable environment, self-emergence and co-evolution. Such a theoretical perspective is one that provides explanation for the punctuated progress and disruptions in working together, overlooked in existing joint working theory. Meanwhile, an actor-network approach, emphasises joint working as not solely based on relationships and human elements, but inherently comprised of inanimate actants. Only taking into account the human elements of language, relationships and values, fails to appreciate the inherent influence that non-human actants, including technology, space and geography have on impeding or facilitating partnership working.

In response to the research questions under this section, the identification of policing as a CAS provides a hermeneutics in which joint working is not viewed separately from society but situated within a changing context. The interrelated nature of barriers and facilitators has previously been unexplained, as the majority of literature is atheoretical. A policing CAS holds value in providing a holistic theoretical understanding, one which has sight of the 'bigger picture' of joint working, as embedded within policing and other smaller and larger systems (e.g. politics and economy, health and welfare).

The combined understandings gained through this approach offers deeper and richer insights. Bringing together different theoretical and conceptual resources establishes a more dynamic approach to understanding police partnerships, one which emphasises the complexity, constant evolution and influences of human and non-human factors. Application of CAS theory in the findings portrayed that joint working is experienced as a changing, interdependent, fluid, intricate, non-linear, unpredictable, self-organising, evolving and volatile process. These seemingly chaotic experiences reflect the key argument of this thesis: joint working is more complex than currently accounted for. Thus, this thesis has drawn on a number of different but complementary theoretical and conceptual resources to explain how the elements of a complex and adaptive system relate to each other and other things and potentially how a policing

CAS can build resilience in the context of joint working. In doing so it portrays an alternative sense of movement than expressed in linear models of joint working. In Chapter Three, I proposed a working definition of a policing CAS as:

a complex, adaptive and dynamic system; interdependent and encapsulated within the wider environment; connected to neighbouring systems; and composed of smaller 'nested' systems: a system which through surfing on the 'edge of chaos' constantly adapts and emerges in response to non-linear and often unpredictable internal and external drivers, through a process of circular feedback.

In positioning joint working as the oil within the system – which is both necessary for the functioning of the system, yet influenced by changes within the system, and wider contextual influences – neither the individual nor the context is prioritised in determining joint working practices and change. In a CAS, the potential relevance of both animate and inanimate (e.g. people and technology) features is recognised without being assumed. Furthermore, flexibility is provided to understand how the role of agency, context, animate and inanimate influences might change over time and place, and indeed in response to other events within and beyond the policing CAS. The crucial message is that the practices of joint working go beyond the individual and the organisation, but are a consequence of many interrelated factors.

8.2.4 Joint working to the edge of chaos: Implications

What can be learnt from the ethnographic insights of informants to help better understand how joint working might work better for policing? And how can the co-produced learning from this research project transfer to other forms of planning for change?

The ethnographic insights of informants, understood through a complex adaptive systems approach, elucidate that risk cannot always be accurately predicted. Police and partner agencies co-work on so-called messy, 'intractable' issues (e.g. child abuse, domestic violence and mental health), which cannot be resolved in the short-term, if at all; these have become known as 'wicked problems' (Rittel and Webber, 1973). Yet, the current system would appear to be driven by linear approaches to risk prediction and reduction (Chapters One and Three). If safeguarding of children and adults is to be improved through collaboration between statutory and non-statutory support services, the complexity of the system and many networks through which partnerships attempt to function need to be realised. CAS theory advocates exploration of multiple pathways to accomplish various goals, rather than the one best or right way. In response, as internal and external environmental factors (e.g. staff leaving, organisational re-structures, the economy and Government), influence the policing CAS - and thus joint working - then responses to accomplish various goals necessarily require an ability to adapt in order to provide a service, which is able to function 'at the edge of chaos'.

This thesis proposes that it is important for the wider aims of policing to embed cultural acceptance of: constant change (as inevitable); an appreciation for continual learning and reflection; as well as taking advantage of up-to-date evidence, not only to *change* but also to *understand* the problems of contemporary policing and safeguarding (Policing Insight, 2017). These proposals depend upon constant reconsiderations of employee behaviours, values and attitudes to enable a continual review of the systems. A particular focus on reflection as a form of learning, and in line with the professionalisation of policing, is likely to enhance, not just partnership working with other professionals, but internal joint working between departments, wellbeing and other areas of policing in the future.

Given that the 'effectiveness' of a CAS lies in its ability to 'thrive in chaos' (Lawson, 2011), implications outlined in Chapter Seven proposed that consistent,

formalised, good quality supervision can provide a mechanism of stability when experiencing change 'churn' and working in traumatic environments. Further insights raised concerns regarding emotional labour, cognitive dissonance, stress, burnout, transitions and liminality. In particular, these issues can impact, not only on employees, but also on interactions with peers, other professionals and the service provided to the public. These concerns reinforce the need to improve the quality of supervision in order to support employees to 'surf the chaos' of joint working, policing and societal issues (Figure 21). Ethnographic insights from this thesis have revealed that police employees value the opportunity to talk about their work and reflect on their role and effectiveness. At present, workers suppress certain emotions, whilst expressing others, as part of the police role, unwritten cultural rules, and other agencies' and public expectations. These experiences can be problematic for the individual as they impact on their own feelings and wellbeing. Together, these findings heighten the importance of supervision - to facilitate 'affect labeling' in a safe and supportive environment - to mitigate such negative psychological experiences and develop 'healthy' brain processes. Supervision is considered to be a duty of care to equip police employees to be 'fit' to respond to the, often traumatic and immensely challenging, needs of different publics.

8.3 Research objectives

The objectives of this project were to:

Identify the utility of police joint working as a solution to social problems;

Investigate how joint work is accomplished using an ethnographic approach;

Contribute to understanding how joint working challenges might be approached differently.

In term of the first research objective, existing academic literature (Chapter Two) identified repeated barriers, long-standing issues and inconsistent understandings of what 'effective' joint working is or looks like in practice.

These literary findings questioned the utility of joint working. Yet, at the same time, joint working was considered to be beneficial. In accounting for this discrepancy, this thesis has ascertained that whilst joint working can be extremely valuable (i.e. Sections 1.4 and 2.4), it is not a 'solution'. Rather, joint working has been positioned as the oil within and between systems, which contributes to the functioning and alignment of those systems. However, working together is not a means to an end. Social life is non-linear and messy, and thus, joint working - as a social process - requires constant adaptation in response to contextual changes, as well as continual investment of time, resources and re-evaluation. In attempting to solve one joint working issue, another dilemma can appear (Rittel and Webber, 1973). Consequently, working together will never 'solve' social problems; nonetheless it is fundamental to approaching complex issues. This is particularly important from a crime prevention perspective; joint working on 'soft', 'lower' level problems, at an 'early' help stage, prevents the development of 'hard', 'higher' level or more 'serious' crimes.

The second research objective was achieved through the application of ethnography, as well as the methodological learning and implications outlined in Section 7.4 (Chapter Seven). Further discussion of objective two is covered in methodological contribution (Section 8.5) of this chapter. Meanwhile, the third research question was addressed through the implications in Section 7.5.5. In particular, it was argued that the approach of a policing CAS, should seek not to achieve control but lies in its ability to adapt towards the edge of chaos. Building on this notion, it is proposed that joint working challenges can be approached differently, though the recommended role of supervision; a source of stability, when working within uncertain environments.

8.4 Theoretical contribution

The principle contribution of this thesis is the development of the theoretical application of complex adaptive systems to study policing partnerships. There has been a lack of empirical testing to evidence the impact of CAS in understanding policing and joint working. As advocated by the Health Foundation (2010, p.12) most available material on CAS is descriptive rather than research based. This thesis has applied a CAS approach to understanding empirical data, particularly data concerning policing and joint working. In doing so, it has shown how drawing on systems, complexity, chaos and actor-network theories can make otherwise hidden processes and relations visible. Advancing policing as a CAS contributes to an understanding of how and why joint working is experienced as a dynamic and punctuated process; one which continuously evolves over time. The theoretical perspective has challenged over-emphasis on individual agency and specific issues, shifting attention to the significance of multiple areas of context within which joint working is experienced; exposing joint working as a situated phenomenon. One of the main lessons is the radical idea that the aim of the system is not to achieve control but to retain its position between order and disorder. As Schmitt (1997, p.108) argues, this is the position where the system is most '*adaptive, creative, flexible and energised*'. In order words, the effectiveness of a policing CAS is in its ability to thrive in chaos and disorder. These theoretical insights have contributed to implications, which shine light on how police employees might be better supported to navigate change 'churn' and adapt in the chaos of joint working and policing through the stability and benefits of supervision.

8.5 Methodological contribution

This thesis provides the first ethnographic study of a police joint working from a range of different perspectives, from police constables to chief superintendents, involving a whole host of different departments, and external agencies. Capturing the change in

joint working requires longitudinal study over time. At the same time, a policing CAS approach and holistic understanding of joint working necessitates access to both animate and inanimate elements of working together, whilst also allowing for insights into contextual factors. This holds implications for how joint working is to be empirically studied and therefore also presents a methodological contribution.

8.6 Limitations and future research

This study captures only a particular snapshot of police partnership working over a given period in time. The subjective nature of the research presented in this thesis can be viewed as a limitation by both posivitistically-minded or more realist qualitative researchers. There must also be acknowledgment of the part I played. As we produce knowledge we are located somewhere, in our practices. We are caught up, in a dense network, sets of relations, entangled in our versions of what we see. There is always a standpoint, a position, a degree of partiality that we cannot avoid (Heyl, 2007). We are who we are. Researchers take a whole host of dynamics (e.g. gender, race, ethnicity, age, sexuality and class) into the field. I have my own values, motivations and prejudices, influenced by my aspirations, fears, likes and dislikes. It is paramount to reflect on these values, which can lead us down one route rather than another (Hammersley, 2013).

In terms of the applicability of the research, a CAS approach emphasises the importance of change, and therefore the findings hold relevance to policing across different times and places. However, some observations and stories are likely to be related to the particular economic climate (e.g. drastic staffing cuts), during which the research took place. That said, regardless of austerity, there are always changes occurring to the re-structuring of organisations and staffing.

At the same time, there are always further areas of study, which remain unexplored and arguably limit the research. The analysis presented through this

ethnography did not focus upon a comparison of gender, regarding differences or similarities in the way joint working is perceived and practised by male and female employees. Furthermore, a comparison of police staff, PCSOs and police officers is missing from this study. Equally, the study could have focused in greater depth on reviewing the role of 'rank' and leadership on joint working. In relation to the importance of leadership, there is potential for future research to draw upon the work of Grint (2010) to explore whether joint working is influenced by differences in leadership styles, such as 'elegant approaches' (which only address elements of 'wicked problems') and 'clumsy solutions' (that accept the imperfection, make do with what's available as the way forward, assumes nobody has the solution in isolation and thus focuses on collective leadership).

Meanwhile, there were hints in the analysis that class might play a mediating role in terms of those deemed to be 'deserving' and 'underserving' of a joint approach. Previous research indicates that police officers frequently activated a moral vision regarding their duty to protect and even '*go beyond the call of duty to service certain persons*' (Maynard-Moody *et al.*, 2003, p.55). Furthermore, Reiner (2000, p.89) proposed that at times, a 'core' police cultural characteristic – that of mission – stretches beyond 'a job' but a sense of moral impetus, referred to as '*the protection of the weak over the predatory*'. Whether police employees are more inclined to 'reach out' and work with other agencies, in support of 'certain persons', particularly those considered to be 'deserving', 'weak' or 'vulnerable' remains unanswered. If it is indeed the case that class, worth, weakness or vulnerability play a mediating role in joint working, then there are important implications to be heard. In particular, a gradual transition towards integrated public health and a trauma-informed approach, necessitates simultaneous understandings of individuals as *both* criminals *and* victims. Such approaches blur boundaries and therefore require police officers to reconsider perceptions of those who are either deserving or undeserving, whether that status is defined by class, age,

'vulnerability' or other reasons. These are areas of enquiry, which if pursued in further depth could yield important insights, however, were considered to be beyond the scope of this particular thesis.

This research was conducted at a timely point in partnership working, given the imminent ongoing changes to the organisation of joint working, roles and boundaries and recruitment of new officers. The impact of these changes will continue to resonate in terms of how police respond to an ever-increasing necessity to work with partner agencies. The strength of police culture is set to stand the test of time and further change in forthcoming years. I am aptly reminded by Van Maanen (1988, p.119) that '*knowing a culture…is a never-ending story*'. Beyond 2020 police officers will become a degree profession. Meanwhile, the fast track programme and direct entry scheme continue to offer opportunities for promotion and diverse leaders (College of Policing, 2017b; Home Office, 2013). Changes to the recruitment and training of officers will be a fruitful avenue for future research, which would benefit from exploring the impact that the 'professionalisation of policing' has on joint working and policing more generally. Amidst the infinite internal policing and external social, economic and political changes, it is also important to bear in mind the impact of technological developments. These technological advancements not only propose a new and rich source of data about policing (Atherton, 2012; Hesketh and Williams, 2017) but will intrinsically change the nature, maintenance and development of joint working. They would benefit from close scrutiny of the kind advocated in the present study.

8.7 Concluding remarks

Despite ethnography being criticised for being micro-focal, it has been the intention that the implications, which have emerged from the data collected in the present study, have gone beyond the case in question. If taken seriously, the findings and recommendations could present other police forces with opportunities to make realistic and valuable

changes, not only to joint working but the wider policing service. The main proposal is to raise the quality of internal supervision, with further potential of developing multiagency supervision as currently occurs across other professions. For effective supervision to be developed however, careful thought needs to be given to bringing together the evidence-base, with practical considerations (e.g. resources and implementation plans), as well as the voices of police employees, particularly underlying attitudes, perceptions and needs. As detailed in Chapter Seven, supervision would provide a source of stability within the turbulent waters of change 'churn', and wider challenges of joint working, policing and environmental instability. It provides a way of opening up channels of communication between frontline staff and managers, and a mechanism for circular feedback. Supervision affords an opportunity to promote the development of reflexivity, professional expertise and intuition; key elements for co-evolving to the 'edge of chaos', and fundamental to the professionalisation of policing.

In the wake of a wellbeing focus in U.K. emergency services, the establishment of a supervision model offers a valuable mechanism to embed 'affect labeling'; a safe and secure space for talk, reflection, analysis and challenge. Existing evidence from psychology and neuroscience has been outlined to contextualise the proposed benefits. Recognition of the complexity and challenging nature of policing, coupled with understandings of change 'churn', emotional labour and vicarious trauma, intensifies the need for regular, routine supervision. The 'Policing Vision 2025' (APCC and NPCC, 2016, p.3) recognises that the '*link between communities and the police [is] the bedrock of British policing*'. In this light, the quality of service a worker can provide is directly related to a worker's state of mind and the quality of supervision they themselves receive (Ferguson, 2011). Consequently, if we are to meet the needs of communities, then the police service has a duty to improve the quality of supervision

for its workers providing that service, so that they are better supported to function 'at the edge of chaos'.

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10   Appendices

10.1 Appendix A: Literature review - thematic table

Key themes	Breakdown of themes	Sub-themes	Breakdown of sub-themes
Approaches (control versus compassion)	Implementing the law	Catching villains	
		Punishment	
	Therapeutic intervention	Rehabilitation	
		Treatment-focused	
Bureaucracy	Hierarchical structures		
	Rule driven		
Change	Frequent reorganisation of services	Burnout	
	Re-building bridges	Stress	
Communication	Collaborative discourses		
	Criticism	Constructive	
		Defensive	Lack of honesty
			Lack of openness
	Discussing cases		
	Discussing worries and stress		
	Formal agreements		
	Formal written communication		
	Informal communication		
	Information sharing	Confidence	
		Secure storage	
		Alienation from public	
		Confidentiality	
		Misunderstandings	
		Data protection	
		Privacy	
	Less talk more action		
Communities of practice	Boundary crossing		
	Exchange-based behaviour		
	Experiential learning	Daily routines	
		Informal procedures	
	Joint space		
	Mutual activity		
	Overlapping communities		
	Re-defined		
	Re-negotiated		
	Shared characteristics	Humour	

		Storytelling	
	Shared communication		
	Shared experiences		
	Shared interactions		
	Shared interest		
	Shared learning		
	Shared resources		
	Shared tools		
	Situated learning		
Conflict and consensus	Conflict at the expense of service provision		
	Healthy friction		
	Living with diversity		
	Resolution of differences		
Cultures	Police cultures	Action-orientated	
		Catching criminals	
		Crime-fighting	
		Imposing order	
		Quick decisions	
		Secrecy	
		Suspicion	
	Shared culture	Affinity	
		Friendly	
		Fun	
		In tune	
		Like-minded	
		Reciprocal	
		Respect	
	Unique professions	Assumptions	
		Body of knowledge	
		Code of ethics	
		Histories	
		Legislation	
		Perspectives	
		Policies	
		Qualifications	
		Thresholds of harm	
		Values	
Gender	Feminist perspectives	Social work	Advocating for oppressed
		Domestic abuse	Human rights
			Social justice

	Patriarchal organisational structure		
	Predominantly male police		
	Sexual harassment		
Information technology	Fatigue		
	Isolated systems		
	Lack of buy in		
Isolation	Avoiding tasks		
	Burden		
	Lack of peer support		
	Managing workload		
	User-friendliness		
Management and leadership	Black and white		
	Decision-making		
	Differences in joint working	On the ground	Lacking partnerships
		Managerial levels	Lack of consideration of the practicalities
	Evidence		
	Facts		
	Grey areas		
	Looking deeper		
	Theory		
	Underlying reasons		
Personal attributes	Intersectionality	Age	
		Gender	
		Sex	
		Race	
		Class	
	Level of engagement		
	Experience	Respect	
Physical space	Co-location	Unintended consequences	Isolation of other agencies
	Smaller	Closer joint working	
		First name terms	
		Judgements on personalities not skills	
		Reluctance to work on conflicts	
Postcode lottery	Ad-hoc joint working		
	Inconsistencies		
Power	Boundary creating		
	Conspiracy model		

	Cooperation	
	Creative	
	Divisive	
	Dominance	
	Getting things done	
	Police taking over	
	Restraining	
	Social control	
	Total policing	
Purposes	Aims	
	Goals	
	Objectives	
	Priorities	
Relationships	Disruptive	Staff changes
	Goodwill	
	Mediating tensions	
	Networking	
	Trust	Sharing problems
		Time
		Experience
		Mutual respect
Resources	Draining	
	Numbers of officers	
	Secretarial support	
	Staff shortages	
Responsibility	Ad-hoc joint working	
	Blurred accountability	
	Circumventing responsibility	
	Clearer policies	
	Commitment from all	
	Indecision	
	Lack of procedural directives	
	Lack of responsibility	
	Role confusion	
	Shared planning	Shared commissioning
		Shared values
		Shared goals
		Shared procedures
	Uncertainty	
Roles	Differences	
	Insufficient knowledge	

	Lack of clarity		
	Overlap		
Stereotypes	Police	Rigid	
		Punitive	
		Authoritative	
		Forceful	
		Law enforcing	
	Social workers	Social reformers	
		Perpetual students	
		Bleeding hearts	
		Namby-pamby	
		Pussyfooting	
		Distorted pity and sympathy	
		Do-gooders	
		Supervising	
		Assisting	
		Advising	
		Befriending	
Time	For developing relationships		
	For practical collaboration		
	For training		
	Tensions	Conflicting timescales	
		Different shift patterns	
		Immediate solutions	Simplistic solutions
			Respect
		Lack of time	
		Long-term commitment	
		Timing of involvement	
		Urgency of work	
	To do		
	To gain skills		
	To talk		
	To trust		
Training	Brings people together		
	Little more than bringing people together		
	Engenders bitterness		
	Lack of classroom application		

10.2 Appendix B: Participant information sheet

My name is Lindsay Youansamouth and I am a researcher in the Department of Sociology at Lancaster University. I am conducting a research project into joint work between police and other public and third sector agencies.

If you agree to participate, I will be shadowing you in your practice and may ask you informal questions about your views and experience.

Participation is entirely confidential. Data will be encrypted, password protected and kept in a secure location at Lancaster University. The research will form the basis of my doctoral thesis and may also be published and presented at academic conferences, but your identity will not be revealed.

Further Information

What is the purpose of the research?

The project aims to explore current practices in relation to how police 'on the ground' to deliver effective protective responses through multiagency working. The outcome will be to highlight positive processes and advise on areas of development.

What will happen if I agree to be shadowed?

Taking part in the research is entirely voluntary. If you decide to participate, I will only shadow you at a time that is convenient to you. You will be free to take breaks when you wish. I may ask you informal questions about your everyday practices and experiences. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to, and you may withdraw from the research within two weeks after each day that you have been shadowed, any written notes will be destroyed. If you withdraw after that time your data will remain in the study.

Will what I say in this study be kept confidential?

All information collected will be anonymised and any identifying information will be kept confidential. I will present the findings of this project in my doctoral thesis, which may then form the basis of academic articles, conference presentations and reports. In all these formats, participants will be anonymised and any details that might identify an individual will be altered.

Who is organising the research?

I am conducting the research as a doctoral researcher in the Department of Sociology at Lancaster University. Lancaster University is part of the N8 Policing Research Partnership, which has been established to enable knowledge exchange between research, policy and policing practice. The project is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), which does not have any commercial interests.

Who has reviewed the study?

Ethical approval has been granted by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Lancaster University Management School's (FASS-LUMS) Research Ethics Committee. The project has also been approved by the Lancashire Constabulary's Evidence Based Policing Research Group. The study abides by the British Sociological Association's Code of Ethical Practice, the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Research Ethics Framework and the guidelines on good research conduct of Research Councils UK.

If you would like more information about the project, please contact me by email or phone:

Email: l.youansamouth@lancaster.ac.uk

Telephone: 01524594508

Lindsay Youansamouth

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If you have any questions or concerns about the way this study is being conducted that you do not wish to discuss with me, you may contact either of the project supervisors:

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Alternatively, you can contact:

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10.3 Appendix C: Participant consent form

I, the undersigned, confirm that (please tick box as appropriate):

1	I have read and understood the provided information sheet about the purpose of the project.	
2	I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project and my participation in it.	
3	I voluntarily agree to participate in this project.	
4	I understand that I can withdraw for up to two weeks, after each individual observation has taken place, without giving reasons and that I will not be questioned on why I have withdrawn.	
5	The procedures regarding confidentiality have been clearly explained to me (e.g. use of names, pseudonyms, anonymisation etc.).	
6	I consent to be shadowed.	
7	The use of the data in research, publications, sharing and archiving has been explained to me.	

Name of participant: **Name of researcher:**

Signature: **Signature:**

Date: **Date:**

This consent form will be kept by the researcher for at least three years beyond the end of the research project.

10.4 Appendix D: Fragmentation coding

Code	Sub-code	Sub-code
Type of fragmentation, separation or boundries	Cultures	*Values*
		Attitudes
		Behaviours
		Speed of work
	Roles	*Division of labour*
		Functions
	Legal	*'Powers'*
	Professional	*Policies*
		Procedures
		Protocols
		Guidance
		Thresholds of harm
		Expertise
		Timescales
		Values
		Meetings
	Workforce	*Gender*
	Management	*Leadership*
		Structures
		Pressures
		Priorities
	Education	*Qualifications*
		Training
	Systems	*Information technology*
		Intranet
		Referral processes
		Forms
		Paperwork
		Recording procedures
		Communication
		Information sharing
	Working patterns	*Days*
		Hours
	Separate space	*Geographical areas*
		Buildings
		Offices
	Language	*Professional jargon*
		Informal banter
		Unspoken rules
	Funding	

10.5 Appendix E: Change coding

Code	Sub-code	*Sub-code*
Type of change	Financial	*Funding granted*
		Funding reduced
		Funding ending
	Job role	*New positions*
		Promotions
		Ending positions
	Staffing	*Cuts*
		New recruits
		New recruitment pathways
		Direct entry scheme
		Leaving
		Retirements
		Sickness
		Personal life changes
		Relationships
	Organisational	*Re-structures*
	National policing	*Professionalisation*
		New crimes
		New policies
		Demand
		Focus on prevention
		Evidence-informed policing
	Working hours	*Shift patterns*
		Overtime
		'Family friendly' hours
	Technology	*New I.T. systems*
		Internet 'down'
		Referral processes
	Space	*Geographical division of basic command units*
		Building opening / refurbished
		Building closure
		Staff moving division
	Public	*New drugs*
		Ageing population
		Increased reporting
		Personal life
		Services
	Change - other	*Cultural*
		New legislation
		Linguistic

10.6 Appendix F: Multiagency forums, arrangements and meetings

Statutory	Details
Community Safety Partnership (CSP)	*The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a statutory duty on a number of responsible authorities to work in partnership to reduce crime and disorder. Formerly known as Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships in England are made up of police, local authorities, fire and rescue, probation and health.*
Domestic Homicide Review (DHR)	*Set up under the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004, Domestic Homicide Reviews came into force in 2011. A DHR is a locally conducted multiagency review of the death of a person aged 16 or over where it appears the death resulted from violence, abuse or neglect. The Police, local authorities, probation and NHS all have a statutory responsibility to participate in DHRs.*
Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)	*The Children Act 2004 set up LSCBs. A mechanism for agreeing how the relevant organisations in each local area will cooperatre to safeguarding and promote the welfare of children and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do. The Children and Families Act 2017 created new duties for police, health and local authorities to make local arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Changes to arrangements are ongoing.*
Multiagency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)	*Statutory arrangement under the Criminal Justice Act 2003 for managing sexual and violent offenders. Aims to bring agencies together to protect the public in a coordinated way.The agencies involved are: police; local authority (children and adults); health; YOT; registered social landlords; housing authorities; education; Jobcentre Plus; and electronic monitoring provider.*
Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR)	*Under the Care Act 2014, where there is reasonable cause for concern about the SAB, its members or other persons with functions to safeguard an adult, a SAB must initiate a SAR. When an adult has died or whether the adult is still alive and the SAB knows or suspects the adult has experienced serious abuse or neglect, the SAR aims to idenitfy lessons learned and apply them in future cases.*
Safeguarding Adults Boards (SABs)	*Set up under the Care Act 2014. A SAB should oversee and lead adult safeguarding in the locality and ensure that partners act to prevent abuse and neglect. Statutory members*

	are: local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and police.
Serious Case Review (SCR)	*LSCBs are required to undertake SCRs: a locally conducted multiagency review in circumstances where a child has been abused or neglected, resulting in serious harm or death and there is cause for concerns as to the way in which the relevant authority or persons have worked together to safeguard the child. Following the Children and Social Work Act 2017, SCRs will be replaced by Local Learning Inquiries (LLIs) and National Serious Case Inquiries (NSCIs) with the aim of improving the robustness and consistency of these exercises.*
Non-statutory	
Community Restart	*A partnership approach involving service users, carers, mental health specialists, employment provides, housing services, third sector agencies, education and environmental agencies, connecting individuals to improve their health and wellbeing.*
Anti-Social Behaviour Risk Assessment Conference (ASBRAC)	*A process for supporting victims of anti-social behaviour and managing risk.*
Awaken	*A multiagency group launched to tackle sexual exploitation of young people in Blackpool. A multiagency, co-located team made up of partners from the voluntary and statutory sector. Key drivers: prevention, protection and prosecution.*
NSafe	*A joint initiative between Lancashire Constabulary, Lancashire Trading Standards, Hyndburn Community Safety Partnership, Children's Social Care and other local partner agencies to promote the safeguarding of young people on the streets or in public places who may be classed as vulnerable or at risk of significant harm. These young people can be taken into police protection and to a safe place where contact is made with the child's parent/s or carer/s. A decision whether to return the child to their care is then made depending on the risk of harm.*
Deter	*A multiagency group launched to tackle sexual exploitation of young people in Chorley and South Ribble. A multiagency, co-located team made up of partners from the voluntary and statutory sector. Key drivers: prevention, protection and prosecution.*

Early Action Integrated Team (EAIT)	*Lancashire Constabulary successfully secured Police Innovation Funding to develop a multiagency project, which delivers early interventions to vulnerable children, adults and families across Lancashire. The focus of the initiative is on prevention, problem solving and bettering lives.*
Engage	*A multiagency group launched to tackle sexual exploitation of young people in Blackburn with Darwen. A multiagency, co-located team made up of partners from the voluntary and statutory sector. Key drivers: prevention, protection and prosecution.*
Fulfilling Lives	*A Big Lottery funded collaborative programme run by public and voluntary sectors organisations to help people with multiple complex needs in Blackpool. Supports individuals experiencing homelessness, reoffending, problematic substance use and mental illness.*
Integrated Action Team (IAT)	*Part of the Lancashire Constabulary Early Action Team based in Chorley and South Ribble.*
Integrated Hub	*Co-located arrangements for multiagency practitioners to work from the same office or building.*
Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJBs)	*Replicates Criminal Justice Boards in local areas. Aim to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the criminal justice system at a local level by bringing together partners including police, crown prosecution service and courts.*
Multiagency Partnership Teams (MAPs)	*Groups of multiagency professionals who agree to work in collaboration to prevent crime and safeguard children, adults and families.*
Multiagency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)	*A MARAC is a meeting where information is shared on the highest risk domestic abuse cases between representatives, including: police, health, child protection, housing, independent domestic violence advisors, probation and other specialists from statutory and non-statutory sectors. The aim is to safeguard the victim and children and address the perpetrator behaviour.*
Multiagency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	*Seeks to enable the sharing of information so risks to children and adults can be identified at an early stage. A MASH brings together agencies from various services. Core partners are CSC, police, health and probation.*
Multiagency Tasking and	*MATAC aims to ensure agencies work in partnership to engage serial domestic abuse perpetrators to support, take*

Coordination (MATAC)	*enforcement action when required, and protect vulnerable victims.*
Prevention, intervention, vulnerability, outcome, transformation (PIVOT)	*Part of the Early Action Integrated Team. A multiagency approach, which delivers early interventions to vulnerable children, adults and families in Chorley and South Ribble. The focus of the initiative is on prevention, problem solving and bettering lives.*
Prevention, intervention, vulnerability, outcome, transformation, awareness, learning (PIVOTAL)	*Arrangement established by the PIVOT multiagency team in Chorley and South Ribble, where agencies meet once per month to share learning.*
Specialist Domestic Violence Courts (SDVCs)	*SDVCs provide a coordinated approach to prosecuting domestic abuse cases. They involve police, prosecutors, court staff, probation and specialist support for victims.*
Transforming Lives	*Multiagency meetings, which take place in four different areas in Blackburn with Darwen. Partners include police, fire service, council, housing and other statutory and non-statutory providers. The forum aims to provide a coordinated approach to people most frequently coming to the attention of services.*
Troubled Families	*A Government scheme launched in 2011 aimed at helping families turn their lives around. Each family is assigned a key worker who aims to bring services together across organisational boundaries to support families to achieve positive and sustained change through a whole families approach.*

10.7 Appendix G: List of organisations, services and charities

Public Sector	Details
Adult's Social Care (ASC)	*Provides support to adults with physical disabilities, learning difficulties or mental health issues.*
Approved Premises	*Formerly known as probation or bail hostels, Approved Premises (APs) are residential units which house ex-offenders in the community (usually run by the National Probation Service).*
Burnley Leisure Trust	*Run by the NHS, Burnley Leisure Trusts' Healthy Lifestyles team provide opportunities to help people become more active, lose weight and stop smoking.*
Children's Social Care (CSC)	*Children's centres provide a range of services and activities to support children under five, parents, carers and prospective parents.*
	Early help team identifies where children and families might need support in early years of a child's life or in the early stages of a problem at any time in childhood.
	Child in need team provides support for children and families where any additional needs have been identified that are not being met by early help or universal services. Provides targeted support through a multiagency approach.
	Child protection team aims to support children at risk of significant harm by working with families and making multiagency plans and decisions.
	Looked-after children is responsible for cases where a child is looked after elsewhere to the family home temporarily or permanently.
	Emergency duty team provides emergency, out of hours, helpline for children's social care.
Council	*Responsible for providing local services and facilities, including council housing.*
Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)	*Responsible for welfare, pensions and child maintenance policy.*
Education	*Government funded, providing free education to pupils.*
(Golden Hill) Pupil Referral Unit(s)	*Alternative educational provision organized to provide education for children who are unable to attend mainstream school.*

Housing Standards	*The council's environmental health or housing standards team take action against landlords if a home does not meet health and safety standards.*
Horizon	*Blackpool Council's alcohol, drugs and sexual health service. Offers information, health screening, treatment and counselling.*
Job Centre Plus	*An employment agency and social security officer aimed at helping people find employment. Renamed after the Employment Service and Benefits Agency merged in 2002.*
Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS)	*In addition to fighting fires, the fire and rescue service prevent fires and accidents, make people aware of fire hazards (e.g. visiting schools, communities and people in their homes), provide advice for escape routes, response to road traffic accidents and help defend against terrorism.*
Lancashire Volunteer Partnership (LVP)	*The Lancashire Volunteer Partnership consists of a range of public service organisations. Partners (including the councils, NHS, police, neighbourhood watch and Lancashire adult learning) have come together to improve, promote and widen volunteering across the public sector.*
Lancashire Wellbeing Service (LWS)	*Funded by Lancashire County Council, Lancashire Wellbeing Service is delivered in Chorley and South Ribble by a consortium of three established charities: Age Concern, Richmond Fellowship and N-Compass.*
Military Veterans Service	*A mental health service providing priority NHS services for ex-military personnel. Works in partnership with Lancashire Care NHS Trust to provide a service to veterans living in Lancashire.*
National Careers Service	*Provides information, advice and guidance to help people make decisions on learning, training and work.*
New Era	*Funded by Lancashire County Council, provides Children and Family Wellbeing Services. Works with a range of agencies to bring together early help support in a specific area in Lancashire.*
NHS Health Services	*The NHS is the publicly funded healthcare system, providing the majority of healthcare in England (e.g. primary care, inpatient care, long-term care, ophthalmology and dentistry).*
NHS Mental Health Services	*Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are specialist NHS mental health services for children and young people. They offer assessments, diagnoses, treatment and support for young people experiencing difficulties with their emotions, behavior or mental health.*
	The Specialist Triage, Assessment and Referral Team (START) previously known as the Single Point of Access, provides assessments, brief interventions and case management functions for some individuals experiencing mental health difficulties. START comprises of a multiagency team (e.g. Psychiatrists, Mental Practitioners, Nurses, Psychologists, Social Workers and Occupational Therapists).

	The Wellbeing Service offers free and confidential talking therapy and practical support for people experiencing a range of mental health problems, including stress, insomnia, low mood and worry.
	The Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) supports people living in the community who have complex or serious mental health problems.
	The Crisis Team aims to provide urgent help to people experiencing a mental health crisis in the community.
	Inpatient mental health wards aim to provide intensive treatment for people with acute mental health problems.
	Section 136 suite is a facility for people detained by the Police under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act. It aims to provide 'a place of safety' whilst potential mental health assessments are completed and any other arrangements for ongoing care.
	Specialist secure hospital units provide care and treatment for inpatients deemed to require a higher level of security.
North West Ambulance Service (NWAS)	*Responds to medical emergencies and transports patients to treatment facilities.*
Police	*Typically responsible for maintaining public order and safety.*
Probation	*The National Probation Service is a statutory criminal justice service that supervises high-risk offenders released into the community.*
Trading Standards	*Enforces consumer protection legislation and investigates commercial organisations that trade outside the law or in unethical ways.*
Volunteer Transport Service	*Part of Lancashire Volunteer Partnership. Volunteers use their own cars (and reimbursed for expenses) to provide a door-to-door service for people with a wide variety of transport needs.*
Wellbeing Prevention and Early Help (WPEH)	*Lancashire County Council's WPEH is delivered by Child Action North West, Key, N-Compass and YMCA). The consortium provides specialist support to children, young people and their families in the area of Lancaster.*
Young People's Service (YPS)	*Lancashire County Council provides the Young People's Service for all young people in Lancashire.*
Youth Centres	*Places where young people can meet, socialise and participate in a variety of activities. Services provided by Lancashire County Council in the area of Lancashire.*

Youth Offending Team (YOT)	*Work with young people that get in trouble with the law. They explore the background to a young person and attempt to help the young person stay away from crime.*

Private Sector

Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC)	*Private sector supplier of probation and prison-based rehabilitative services for offenders*
Gateway Housing Association	*Provides services including how to claim housing benefit, advice regarding debt, rent and service charge collection, advice on other welfare benefits.*
Lancashire Victim Services (LVS)	*Supporting victims or crime in Lancashire. Delivered by Victim Support (a charity) on behalf of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.*
Private Children's Homes	*Residential care for children who have been assessed as not being able to live with their families.*
Private Mental Health Services	*Cover a range of community and inpatient services. Private healthcare involves going out of the NHS and paying for health services.*
Private Schools	*Private schools, also known as independent schools, non-governmental schools, privately funded or non-state schools, are not administered by local, state or national government. Some of these schools provide education for children with special educational needs or for particular religions.*
Progress Housing	*A company providing property management, development and regeneration (e.g. supported living arrangements, refuges, independent living for over 55s).*

Not-for-profit Organisations

Addaction	*A charity supporting people to make positive behavioural changes, most notably in relation to alcohol, drugs and mental health.*
Age Concern	*A registered charity supporting older people, launched in 2009, combining two separate charities (Age Concern and Help the Aged).*
Age UK	*Provides advice and information services to anyone aged over 50 and their carers with issues, including benefits, pensions, debt, care, health, support, consumer issues, form filling and other services.*

Alcoholics Anonymous	*A mutual aid fellowship which aims to enable members to achieve personal recovery from alcoholism.*
Amy Whinehouse Foundation	*A registered charity set up in memory of English singer/song-writer Amy Whinehouse. Aims to prevent the effects of drug and alcohol use on young people.*
Approved Premises	*Formerly known as probation or bail hostels, Approved Premises (APs) are residential units which house ex-offenders in the community (a small number of which are run by voluntary sector provides).*
Calico Housing	*A charity managing approximately 4,600 homes in Lancashire. Provides accommodation for families and older people, supported housing and services for homeless people.*
Care Network	*A registered charity that provides a range of services to help people live independent lives.*
Child Action North West (CANW)	*A charity in the north west of England. Aims to support children and young people to achieve their full potential. Works particularly with families experiencing deprivation, drug and alcohol abuse, lack of self-esteem, youth crime, teenage pregnancies and broken families.*
Children's Society	*A national children's charity, formally called the Church of England Children's Society, allied to the Church of England.*
Citizens Advice	*A network of independent charities providing free, confidential information and advice to assist people with money, legal, consumer and other issues.*
Council for the Voluntary Service	*A charity in England. Councils for the Voluntary Service are places where local voluntary and community organisations speak to each other. They offer a wider variety of services and support for local organisations (e.g. training or funding advice).*
Discover	*A charity offering a range of recovery support to adults experiencing problems with drugs or alcohol in Central Lancashire.*
Empowerment	*A Blackpool-based user-led charity, providing free, independent and confidential support to Blackpool residents in relation to their health and social care needs. Also provides independent domestic violence support to children and adults.*
Fit and Fed	*Part of the charity StreetGames. A response to demand and a growing body of research on the triple inequalities of hunger, isolation and inactivity.*
Go2	*Part of the charity Inspire. A free and confidential advice and information service, offering support for young people under the age of 25 affected by drugs or alcohol.*
Housing Needs	*Assessment of entitlement to housing for homeless people or those threatened with homelessness. Provides temporary housing provision for people considered in priority need of housing.*

Inspire	*A charity providing free and confidential drug and alcohol service for adults, families, carers and others affected. Provides one-to-one and groups sessions, as well as counselling, employment and healthcare support.*
Key Unlocking Futures	*A Lancashire charity that works to help people build better lives and achieve their full potential. Supports with a range of issues, including self-confidence, wellbeing, preventing homelessness, keeping vulnerable people safe from harm and strengthening families.*
Lancashire Mind	*A mental health charity. Aims to develop resilience in people from an early age and work with communities to build a happier Lancashire.*
Lancashire Women's Centres (LWC)	*A registered charity working towards a Lancashire where all women and girls are valued and treated as equals. Provides a drop-in and telephone service around mental health, wellbeing, employment, skills, money, benefits, debt, justice and safety for example.*
Making Space	*A local charity providing supported housing for individuals recovering from mental illness.*
N-Compass	*A charity operating across the North West of England to make a positive difference and enhance life opportunities for adults and young people disadvantaged by disability, physical or mental illness, age or social exclusion. Provides advocacy, carers and counselling services.*
Nest Lancashire	*Part of the charity Victim Support. Provides confidential support and advice for young people who have experienced crime either as a victim or witness.*
Preston Domestic Violence Services (PDVS)	*A Preston-based organisation supporting adults and children experiencing (or who have experienced) domestic abuse.*
Relate	*A charity providing relationship support throughout the UK. Services include counselling for couples, families, young people and individuals, as well as sex therapy, mediation and training courses.*
Richmond Fellowship	*A leading charity and voluntary sector provider of mental health services in England.*
SafeLives	*A national charity dedicated to ending domestic abuse. SafeLives provides research, training and support to frontline domestic abuse services and professionals but does not provide direct service support to people experiencing abuse.*
Safenet	*Charity providing domestic abuse services throughout the North West (e.g. refuge and support).*
Safer Preston	*A Preston-based charity supporting children and adults who experience abuse, exploitation or violence.*

Shelter	*A charity providing face-to-face services, one-to-one, personalised help for people experiencing housing issues.*
Silverline	*A charity operating across England and Wales providing a helpline for older people.*
StreetGames	*A registered charity aimed at changing lives through sport.*
Victim Support	*An independent charity dedicated to supporting victims of crime and traumatic incidents. Supports individuals to get to the point where they feel they are back on track with their lives (e.g. Independent Domestic Violence Advisors).*
Women's Aid	*A grassroots charity aimed at ending domestic abuse for children and families. Provides research, training and education, as well as direct services (e.g. Independent Domestic Violence Advisors and Refuges).*
Young Carers	*Part of Child Action North West. Provides help and support to young people between the age of 8 and 25 who care for people at home.*