



University of the  
West of England

## **Police identity in a time of rapid organizational, social and political change: A pilot report, Avon and Somerset Constabulary.**

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Executive summary.

This project was developed by a research team at the University of the West of England (UWE) under the direction of the Principal Investigator (PI) Dr. James Hoggett. Dr Hoggett initially approached the Constables Central Committee (CCC) of the Police Federation in November 2011 to discuss the possibility of developing a project to look at police officer perceptions about a range of changes occurring within the police service and how these changes may be impacting on police officers lives. The Constables Central Committee agreed to help facilitate the research project. In May 2012 the PI attended the annual Police Federation conference in Bournemouth to conduct focus groups with officers to enable the identification of the issues and changes that matter most to the police. These focus groups formed the basis for the development of a questionnaire survey which was constructed using the online survey software package Qualtrics in collaboration with Drs Redford, Toher and White of the University of the West of England, Bristol.

A draft of the questionnaire was reviewed by members of the CCC who agreed to its format and content. With the assistance of the CCC, Avon and Somerset Constabulary volunteered to act as the pilot force for the research project. All officers from the rank of Police Constable to Chief Inspector were emailed the questionnaire survey via their work PNN email address (a total of 3017 officers). A total of 1400 officers completed at least 98 of the 108 survey questions (a response rate of 46%) and the statistical results in this report are based on the responses from these officers as of 16:00 on 01/11/2012. Three focus groups were also conducted with officers from the Avon and Somerset Constabulary. These focus groups addressed issues raised within the survey and also examined officer's views about being a police officer in 2012/13 and the issues which impact upon them. These focus groups were conducted by the PI at police stations or Federation buildings within the Avon and Somerset force area.

A number of key themes were identified from the questionnaire survey and focus group analysis which form the basis of this report. In summary, these themes are that the role of the police in 2012/13 is multifaceted and reducing the role to simply that of a crime fighter is overly simplistic and potentially problematic for the police and the public as it may affect the nature of interactions between them. The report also identifies the police in Avon and Somerset have a strong sense of organisational identity. In other words, being a police officer

is a fundamental part of their self concept (who they are) and what affects one officer impacts on other officers.

In relation to the current social, economic and political changes impacting upon the police service a number of themes were identified, ranging from issues about the government and the Winsor reviews in general to more specific issues of pensions, retirement and redundancy, fitness testing, direct entry and educational requirements, privatisation and police and crime commissioners. The report identifies that officers in Avon and Somerset have a negative view of recent and proposed changes to the police service and also have negative opinions about the Winsor reviews. Issues identified of most concern for officers were changes to pensions, retirement age and privatisation, while those of comparatively less concern were fitness testing, changes to the promotion system and changes to role and skill based pay.

The report also illustrates that police officers are not against the idea of the need for change and reform in the police service in general. However, the report identifies that officers believe that any change processes should be made in collaboration with the police and be independent of politics.

The report highlights that officers believe that issues of police morale, the sacrifices made to be officers and the goodwill of the police are vitally important to the police service. The report identifies that current police morale is low at both an individual and organisational level. In other words, officers believe that their own morale and that of their colleagues is low. The report also illustrates the sacrifices officers believe they make to be in the police service. For example, the negative impact that it has on their life when they are not at work and the impact that it has on the lives of their family and identifies that a majority of officers no longer believe that the sacrifices they make for the job are worth it. The report shows that officers believe that goodwill is essential to the success of the police because it forms the bedrock of policing and the police service could not function without it. It also identifies that officers believe that the changes occurring to the police service will erode this goodwill. Despite this concern the research identifies that goodwill is still present within Avon and Somerset constabulary and that it is linked to officers unifying sense of police identity.

The final part of the report identifies that officers are concerned about the future of the police service, particularly in terms of the uncertainties they face and the lack of support they feel they are receiving at a local and national level from senior management. Moreover, the report

identifies that officers suggest that this uncertainty is leading them to consider whether alternative forms of employment would be better for them and their families’.

Table 1.1 illustrates officers responses to some of the questions asked in the questionnaire survey in terms of the percentages of those who responses ranged from strongly disagree to those that strongly agree.

**Table 1.1; Summary of key quantitative findings**

	Strongly Disagree		Neither	Strongly Agree		Total count
	%	%		%	%	
The job of the police is to fight crime	0.4	1.0	2.3	38.9	57.3	1397
The job of the police is to serve the public	0.6	0.7	3.6	39.5	55.6	1400
When I talk about the police I usually say ‘we’ rather than ‘they’	1.4	6.5	11.8	55.2	25.2	1398
I have confidence in the long term government plans for the police	69.7	25.4	3.9	0.4	0.6	1400
I am satisfied with the Winsor reviews of police pay and conditions	67.5	26.7	3.8	0.9	1.1	1400
Some change is needed in the police	1.1	2.4	9.6	74.4	12.5	1397
The morale of my colleagues is high	45.7	37.7	11.2	4.9	0.5	1399
The sacrifices are still worth it	12.1	29.7	26.8	27.5	3.9	1398
The goodwill of officers is essential to the success of the police	0.7	0.7	2.2	29.8	66.6	1400
The proposed changes to the police will not erode goodwill	49.1	31.7	5.4	7.4	6.3	1400
I would consider looking for alternative employment	9.1	21.6	18.1	35.6	15.5	1400
I would consider looking for Voluntary Severance	20.9	22.7	22.1	23.7	10.6	1399

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## Chapter 1: Introduction.

It is over 40 years since the 1962 *Royal Commission on Policing*. That report led to a major shake-up in policing, reducing the number of police forces, bringing new technology into policing and new developments in local policing. It was probably the biggest reform to policing in the UK since Robert Peel's creation of the 'New Police' in 1829. Peel's settlement lasted over a hundred years. The 1962 settlement had to confront a much faster set of changes in society and challenges facing policing. Now in 2012/13 these challenges and changes are perhaps greater than ever before and despite the pervasive spectre of a damaged economy cost is not the only dynamic driving these issues. Furthermore, these challenges and requirements to change are not unique to UK policing. In fact, it would be hard to find a police service anywhere in the world today that is not alive to the imperative of change.

Despite this imperative, change and reform has always been contentious and difficult within the field of policing (Skogan, 2008). Over the last 50 years, a raft of policing movements have sought to strategically change how policing is carried out (change what the police do and how). For example, Community-oriented policing (COP, Bayley 1994; Goldstein 1990; Skolnick and Bayley 1986, 1988; Trojanowics and Bucqueroux, 1990), Problem-oriented policing (POP, Goldstein 1979, 1990), Signs-of-crime policing (Wilson and Kelling 1982) and Hot-spots policing (Sherman et al.1989) have, amongst others, shaped the ways in which police work is conducted.

Strategic philosophies may have changed since the 1962 Royal Commission, but in the intervening years there has been relatively little in the way of systematic attempts to reform the police themselves (i.e. who they are and their role and function). This changed in 2011/12 with the publication of the Winsor reviews of pay and conditions. The two part Winsor review is actively supported by the present coalition government and a number of recommendations from Part One have already been ratified. The Winsor reviews are undoubtedly the most far reaching reform proposals for the police in the last 60 years and while previous inquiries into police pay were viewed positively by the police (e.g. the inquiry into pay conducted by Lord Edmund-Davies in 1978) the Winsor reviews have generated much controversy and opposition within policing.

Controversy not only surrounds the proposed changes to pay and conditions but also the implicit assumptions reflected in these proposals about who the police are or should be, and what they should be doing (what is valued in policing). Unlike some of the academically influenced strategic policing philosophies (mentioned above) the Winsor reviews set out to reform the police in terms of prioritising a front line crime fighting role without reference to the ideology that underpins such a position and without a recognition that such crime fighting ideology is potentially problematic and contested (Reiner, 2010). Thus in making recommendations to attempt to improve the police service, Winsor has conflated issues of cost savings with police roles and functions.

The controversy surrounding Winsor's proposed reforms from within the police service itself can in part be explained by the fact that historically, when large scale changes to policing are proposed and reforms attempted, they are primarily driven from the top-down and outside-in (Bayley, 2008). In seeking to understand why such reform processes occur in this way, research has identified that the overwhelming mindset of police departments, police reformers, and until recently criminal justice scholars, is, and always has been, that policing needs strong, top-down management (Sklansky & Marks, 2008). Conversely, the impact of reforms and changes are almost always most keenly felt by those on the inside and at the bottom, in this case the rank and file officers of the police service in England and Wales. Yet despite this, in the current climate their voice has often been missed, ignored or dismissed by those pushing both for and against these proposals, despite both often claiming to be speaking on their behalf.

Moreover, when rank and file voices are discussed they are often framed negatively as forming a cultural barrier that creates resistance to change and reform, thus their marginalisation is seen as unproblematic. Such ideas, based on traditional and outdated concepts of police culture fail to recognise how the voices of the rank and file may also allow for the possibility of change as much as it does resistance to change (Chan 1996). Moreover, with growing research support for participative management (Locke & Schweiger, 1979) the recognition of the potentially beneficial and important role that the rank and file could have in developing and managing change and reform within policing is slowly becoming recognised (Steinheider & Wuestewald, 2008)



In representing over 130,000 rank and file police officers in England and Wales, Paul McKeever former chair of the Police Federation, suggests that their role is to “*ensure that their views on all aspects of policing, including their welfare and efficiency, are accurately relayed to government, opinion formers and key stakeholders*” (Upholding the Queen’s Peace: towards a new consensus on policing’, 2012 p.2). The Federation therefore sees that part of its role is to relay the voices of the rank and file about a range of issues. Given the changes and challenges currently facing the police in England and Wales in 2012/13 the need to capture these voices and use them not only to inform debates about change but also to help manage it, has perhaps never been so pressing. Simply listing some of these current changes shows how numerous and diverse the issues faced by the police are. For example, 20% cuts to police budgets, the lowest number of police officers in over a decade, the ratification of a number of parts of Winsor one into police pay and working conditions, the publication of Winsor part two, Sir John Stevens’ independent police commission, the move to Police and Crime Commissioners, changes to targets and accountability, ongoing public sector strikes including police staff, the London Olympics, the 2011 August disorder and the proposed privatization of core policing functions are just some of the more prominent national issues.

While police leaders, politicians and academics have all voiced opinions on these issues and the impacts they may have, relatively little attention has been spent finding out what those most affected think. What are the opinions of rank and file officers on these issues and what impact, if any, are these changes having on them? The current project sheds light on such questions by providing data which enables the voices and opinions of the rank and file to become more audible.

## Chapter 2: Methods.

### *Design*

Before the research commenced ethical approval was obtained from the University of the West of England's ethics committee (see ethics section for detail). A mixed methods approach, comprising an on-line survey questionnaire and multiple focus groups was used to elicit police self-report data on a number of issues. These issues were federation member's police/professional identity (how they perceive their roles and duties and whether being a police officer is an integral part of who they are), contextual issues currently impacting on the police profession (i.e. participant's views on the changes and challenges they face as noted in the introduction) and finally issues of police morale, sacrifice and goodwill.

The questionnaire was sent out via email to all officers between the rank of Police Constable and Chief Inspector using their PNN email addresses (work email addresses that do not reveal the names of the officer but instead use their collar numbers). These email addresses were provided by police federation representatives (reps) from the Avon and Somerset Constabulary. The focus groups were conducted on three occasions with different officers from the Avon and Somerset Constabulary (representing the South West region of the Police Federation). The first focus group had 18 officers, the second 16 and the third 6 and the rationale for using focus groups was to deepen understanding of the emerging survey results. For example by using this mixed methods approach (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004), the intention is to develop a body of data that captures both what officers think about a range of different change issues (the survey questionnaire) as well as why officers may think this (the focus groups).

### *Procedure*

In terms of questionnaire development, a focus group was conducted at the annual Police Federation conference in Bournemouth in May 2012. This focus group data was then transcribed in full before being thematically analysed (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to identify some of the issues that officers themselves identified as being of greatest importance to them. These themes then formed part of the basis of the structure of the survey. Additionally, key statements from and recommendations within the Winsor reviews were used to develop survey questions and existing academic scales of Organisational Identity (Mael and Ashforth,

1992) and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (Lee & Allen, 2002) were also used to obtain information about police identity and behaviour.

In terms of developing and distributing the questionnaire survey the UWE research team utilised the software package Qualtrics which is an online software package designed to facilitate the creation and conduction of online surveys. The survey itself was designed to increase both participation and reliability of the results (thereby increasing accuracy). This was done in a number of ways. First, the key components of the survey (e.g. police identity, reforms, current issues, etc) were divided into separate blocks. Each of these blocks included a number of specific questions about the related area. The order of the blocks was randomised for each participant. Therefore each participant completed the questionnaire in a different order. This ensured that order effects, would be minimised. Furthermore, the questions within the specific blocks of questions were also randomised for each participant. Therefore even when completing questions about a specific area the questions themselves were presented in random order. Again this minimises order effects. Furthermore, randomising both blocks and individual questions within blocks, means that the impact of possible extraneous effects (e.g. fatigue effect or missing item responses) would be minimised. Any of these effects would be randomly distributed across individuals and would therefore not systematically affect the results.

The questions themselves were presented in a way to engage participation, in that they were targeted on key issues raised in focus groups, the Winsor reviews and prior academic research. Each question focused on a single issue and was designed not to lead or in any way encourage a single or unified response. Each question allowed the participants to express their views in a variety of ways. Furthermore, both positively and negatively worded questions were used in order to eliminate the impact of acquiescence responding (for example agreeing with all items). The survey was initially sent to officers on 2nd October 2012. After a two week period Qualtrics was able to identify those officers who had not responded to this initial email and a reminder was automatically sent out to them with an option to actively disengage from the study. No further reminders were sent.

The three focus groups were facilitated by local reps from the Constables Central Committee of the Police Federation and took place within police stations in the Avon and Somerset force area. The participants came from a broad spectrum of roles and ranks within Avon and

Somerset. The focus groups took a semi structured form, with questions exploring issues in the survey; however participants had the freedom to talk about their opinions on any issues that they wished. The focus groups lasted between 1-2 hours and were recorded onto a digital recorder and later loaded onto a PC locked in the office of the PI at UWE, Bristol. The recordings were subsequently transcribed in full by the PI.

*Sample/Participants*

The statistical results in this report are based on the responses from officers in the Avon and Somerset constabulary as of 16:00 on 01/11/2012. The overall participation rate was 1738 out of 3017 (i.e. 57.61%), however, not all of the responses were complete responses.

**Table 2.1:** Are you happy to consent to take part in this research?

		Frequency
Survey	Yes	1738
	No	17
	Total	1846
	Opted out	91
	No response	1177
Total emailed		3017

The questionnaire is delivered with blocks of questions in a random order. If respondents disengage with questionnaire completion due to fatigue or time constraints then the randomised order should lead to approximately equal completion rates for each section. On this basis the following analyses are based on approximately  $n = 1400$  who completed at least 98 of the total 108 questions asked (*response rate of 46%*).

In terms of respondent ages 11% were in their 20's, while 33.6% were in their 30's. However 21.5% of respondents gave 'no value' for their age and a further 15 respondents gave their

age to some age range rather than specific figure and the over forties were more likely to enter their age as a range.

74.1% of “active” respondents were Male (or, 75.4% of those who are active respondents and who answered the question are Male) compared to Home Office figures (2012) that identify male officers comprise approximately 65.41% of the constabulary. However, the Home Office figures include officers of all rank within Avon and Somerset rather than just those of Police Constable to Chief Inspector. We also asked about how many years the officer has been in service: more than 90% have been in service at least 6 years; over 30% have been in service at least 20 years.

**Table 2.2:** How many years have you been in service?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 1	8	0.6	0.6	0.6
	1-2	7	0.5	0.5	1.1
	3-5	107	7.6	7.8	8.8
	6-10	310	22.1	22.5	31.3
	11-15	270	19.3	19.6	50.9
	16-20	250	17.9	18.1	69.0
	Over 20 years	428	30.6	31.0	100.0
	Total	1380	98.6	100.0	
	Missing	20	1.4		
Total		1400	100.0		

24 officers who responded to the survey were from forces outside of Avon and Somerset (most likely on secondment).

**Table 2.3: Which Police Force do you belong?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Avon and Somerset Constabulary	1345	96.1	98.2
	Bedfordshire Police	8	0.6	0.6
	Cambridgeshire Constabulary	6	0.4	0.4
	Cheshire Constabulary	6	0.4	0.4
	City of London Police	2	0.1	0.1
	Cleveland Police	1	0.1	0.1
	Derbyshire Constabulary	1	0.1	0.1
	Total	1369	97.8	100.0
Missing	System	31	2.2	
Total		1400	100.0	

Furthermore, responding police officers were predominantly white British in origin;

**Table 2.4: Which ethnic group do you see yourself belonging to?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	White – British	1206	86.1	88.1
	White – Irish	27	1.9	2.0
	White - other white background	48	3.4	3.5
	Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	10	0.7	0.7
	Mixed - White and Black African	4	0.3	0.3
	Mixed - White and Asian	7	0.5	0.5
	Mixed - other mixed background	7	0.5	0.5
	Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	2	0.1	0.1
	Asian or Asian British - other Asian background	1	0.1	0.1
	Black or Black British - Caribbean	7	0.5	0.5
	Black or Black British - African	1	0.1	0.1
	Prefer not to say	49	3.5	3.6
	Total	1369	97.8	100.0
Missing	Missing	31	2.2	
Total		1400	100.0	

And finally respondents were predominantly from the rank of Police Constable.

**Table 2.5:** Rank

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Police Constable	1024	73.1	74.2
	Sergeant	235	16.8	17.0
	Inspector	100	7.1	7.2
	Chief Inspector	21	1.5	1.5
	Total	1380	98.6	100.0
Missing	Missing	20	1.4	
Total		1400	100.0	

The participants in the focus groups were purposively sampled with assistance from local federation reps who obtained volunteers or through emailing the PI after completing the survey identifying their willingness to participate in focus groups.

### *Ethics*

As with any research project there are a number of possible obstacles to sharing newly generated data that needed to be overcome in the planning stages of the research. In relation to the qualitative data generated (from focus groups) these are linked to ethical issues such as anonymising data and discussing archiving with participants before the research is conducted. Furthermore, informed consent was verbally sought from everyone before focus groups were started. In relation to the statistical information generated by the survey again anonymity was made a prerequisite (no names were identifiable to us from the PNN email addresses) and consent was sought from participants through an electronic link on the email they received. Only those officers who specifically clicked on the consent link were subsequently allowed by the Qualtrics software package to continue to participate with the survey. Additionally, the research had to pass the University of the West of England's ethics committee before commencement and also adheres to the British Society of Criminology's code of ethical research conduct ([www.britisocrim.org/codeofethics.htm](http://www.britisocrim.org/codeofethics.htm)).

### *Analysis*

The questionnaire taps into individual opinions and perceptions regarding the role of police in society, police identity, relationship between the police and government, views on the Winsor

reports, current issues, change and reform, the relationship with the public, and the modern police officer. Each of these topics are investigated using a series of questions each based on a five-point Likert scale (“strongly disagree”, “disagree”, “neither agree nor disagree”, “agree”, “strongly agree”). Aspects of police identity and organisational citizenship behaviour have been surveyed using an adaptation of validated surveys by Mael and Ashforth (1992) and Lee and Allen (2002) with individual questions for the later on a five-point scale (“never”, “rarely”, “sometimes”, “often”, “all of the time”). Individual item responses are therefore measured on perceived five-point ordinal scales which readily permit category percentage response rates for each question to be determined. These percentage response rates are provided here and were developed using the statistical software package SPSS version 19.

### *Qualitative analysis*

In the first instance the audio recordings of the focus groups were transcribed by the PI in full. Participants’ accounts were then analysed using principles broadly within the tradition of thematic analysis, with focus given to identifying participants’ perceptions of the issues that they currently face as police officers and whether such issues have any impact upon their working lives (Kellehear, 1993, Braun and Clarke 1996; Pidgeon, 1996; Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The material in each category was then re-read and from this themes identified, which were subsequently used to guide further rereading and analysis. Sub-themes were developed from this final reading which form the overall structure of the analysis presented here. The data included in the analysis section of this paper was selected for its representativeness in terms of illuminating the wider body of data within the thematic category. A code is given after every data extract, for example, YFG1, which signifies the particular focus group the extract is taken from and which differentiates between speakers, (e.g. YFG1 is a different person to YFG2).

The analytic approach then sought to combine both the quantitative and qualitative data sets to create an overall account of officer’s perspectives and opinions of the changes and challenges currently facing the police service in England and Wales using a process of triangulation (Denzin, 1978). This survey and focus group method was piloted on the Avon and Somerset Constabulary between October and November 2012, the results of which form the basis of the report presented here.



Chapter 3: Analysis, The role and function of the police.

Since her appointment as Home Secretary within the current coalition government Theresa May has repeatedly stated in discussions about the police service in England and Wales that their primary role and function is fighting crime, that this is the job the public want them to do and that both budget cuts and change and reforms to the police will not affect this. For example during an interview on the Andrew Marr show (11<sup>th</sup> May 2011) the Home Secretary stated;

*“People talk a lot about police numbers as if police numbers are the Holy Grail. But actually what matters is what those police are doing. It's about how those police are deployed. And it is crucial of course that Chief Constables are able to make decisions within their budgets about how they deploy their police officers to the greatest effect to ensure that they're able to do the job that the public want them to do. We want police officers to be crime fighters”.*

This idea of the police as crime fighters is one that has received a lot of attention from researchers over the last 40 years. This research has identified that what the police do in practice is actually a lot more diverse and complicated than simply fight crime (Bittner, 1974; Reiner, 2010). Similarly in addressing this issue of the role and function of the police in society, both the survey and focus group data identified that the idea that ‘police officers were only crime fighters’ is overly simplistic. The data suggests that not only does such a conceptualisation fail to fully capture what police officers do every day but it also does not appear to accurately reflect why respondents said they wanted to become police officers in the first place. As an officer noted;

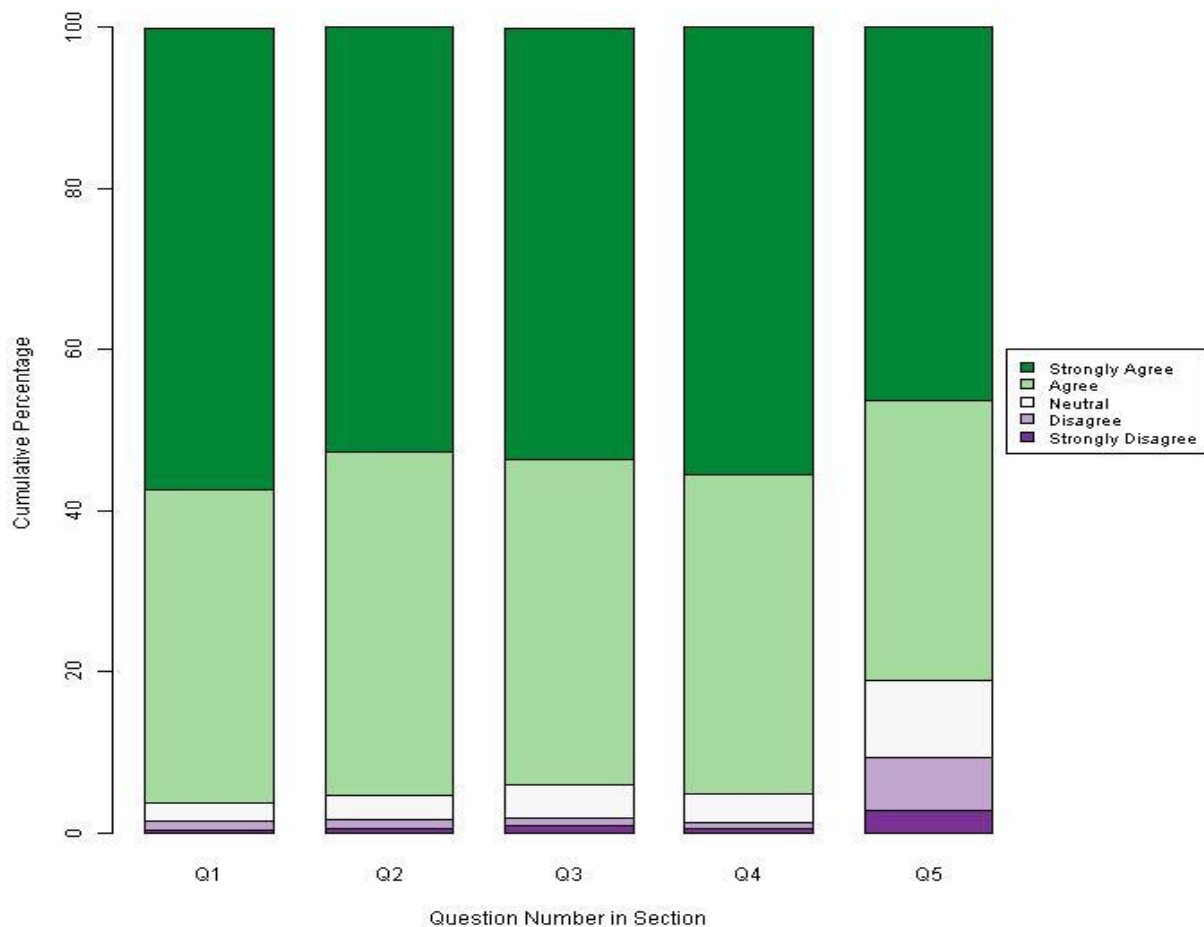
*“The fundamental principle still applies, I think the reason we all joined, that trite reason of we want to help people is the bottom line really and I think that we all still come to work genuinely wanting to help people and we do that in a variety of ways but I think that underpins everything we do” (YFG5).*

The survey data (Table 3.1 and Figure 3.1 below) identifies that fighting crime is only one part of what the police believe they do. For example, 95.1% agreed or strongly agreed that the job of the police is to serve the public (Q4). Moreover, the data identifies that officers

also perceive policing to be a vocation in that they believe it is a nonstop profession in which the boundaries between work and rest are blurred.

**Table 3.1** Role of Police in Society

	Strongly	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly	Total
	Disagree				Agree	
	%	%	%	%	%	count
Q1 The job of the police is to fight crime	0.4	1.0	2.3	38.9	57.3	1397
Q2 The job of the police is to keep the peace	0.6	1.1	2.9	42.6	52.9	1400
Q3 The job of the police is to enforce the law	0.8	1.1	4.1	40.3	53.6	1400
Q4 The job of the police is to serve the public	0.6	0.7	3.6	39.5	55.6	1400
Q5 Policing is a vocation rather than a job	2.7	6.7	9.6	34.7	46.3	1399
Q6 I can walk away from my policing duties when off duty	35.5	40.7	11.8	9.6	2.4	1399
Q7 I am effectively on duty 24/7	1.6	7.4	9.8	41.3	39.8	1398
Q8 Police officers are not motivated by money	2.8	18.7	24.9	35.7	18.0	1399
Q9 Policing is a clock in clock out job	64.8	27.9	4.2	1.7	1.4	1396



**Figure 3.1** the role of the police in society: Q1 ‘The job of the police is to fight crime’, Q2 ‘The job of the police is to keep the peace’, Q3 ‘The job of the police is to enforce the law’, Q4 ‘The job of the police is to service the public’, Q5 ‘Policing is a vocation rather than a job’.

Officer’s expanded on these ideas in the focus groups. For example, an officer explained “*we are a 24/7 service and we sign up to that, which is why we talk about it being a vocation, not a job, not a career progression that we just want to you know shoot to the top and make lots of money, it doesn’t work in the police, we do it for the x factor, for everything that we do to help people, it doesn’t matter what the situation is we are there to help people*” (BFG12).

Police perceptions about the multifaceted nature of their roles were clearly articulated by focus group data. Officers suggested that what they do on a daily basis is not so easily definable, for example one officer noted that; “*I don’t think you can quantify what we do*” (BFG6), while another agreed that “*What we do on an individual basis is not measurable*” (BFG5).

Officers suggested that one of the reasons for this lack of measurability is because they do so many different things. For example an officer stated that *“We put sticking plasters on things that for some reason fall into our remit and we try to do everything for everybody”* (BFG15), while another added that they were a *“Jack of all trades, negotiators, councillors, crime fighters, first aiders”* (BFG2).

Furthermore, officers suggested that it was due to their work with the public that their roles and functions could vary so much. For example an officer noted that *“I think our role on a daily basis is defined and re-defined by the public. We are the last emergency service that people come to and they expect us to solve whatever problem it is they have. They send us to everything, we take responsibility for everything that people come to us for, because it is not in our nature to say sorry it’s not my job, so it is crime fighting but I would say the vast majority is spent dealing with everything and anything”* (BFG8). Finally, in summing up the work of a police officer, another officer noted *“It is an entirely unique job”* (YFG4).

Officers also clearly identified that while crime fighting is an important part of their role, an overt focus on that aspect at the expense of some of the other things they do could potentially have a negative impact. For example an officer noted when discussing what they did that they *“Bring communities together, work with communities, its engagement not necessarily crime fighting and it’s never mentioned by this government, but if we get it right it can be more important because if we get it right there then we can stop crime later”* (BFG3).

This idea of working with the public was clearly linked within the focus groups to notions of police legitimacy and policing by consent. For example an officer noted that *“When we all joined, there was this ethos of policing by consent, we are out there because the public want us there, we are there to be their support and whatever the issue is whether a policing issue or not if they call us we at least go to, or at least used to, go to their address and reassure them and maybe at least direct them to where they could get help elsewhere”* (CFG5).

Officers were explicit that they felt this part of policing was being ignored by government; *“I think May is way off the mark if she just says we fight crime”* (BFG13); and also suggested that this could have a detrimental impact on the public if it was not recognised within proposed changes to the police. For example an officer noted that *“when I joined we did deal with everything and I think that is what the public still wants, a lot of which is not criminal, but we were the only people there, and we still are but now there are just a lot less of us and we have more and more commitments put on us which makes it all so much more difficult”*

(YFG6), while another suggested that *“We can only fight crime with the consent of the victims, we need to support and work with them, it can take a whole shift, you wouldn’t be able to do that without the numbers, if there is less officers then you get comms (communications) calling up and you have to leave to go to another incident”* (BFG2)

### 3A: Police culture and identity.

Talking in the Times newspaper (9<sup>th</sup> March 2011) Tom Winsor commented that *“In the past six months, I have seen a great deal of the culture of the police. It is a culture of determination, courage, hard work and achievement, of facing any challenge or danger and confronting it in full measure”*. Similarly the former New Haven police chief James Ahern wrote, *“The day the new recruit walks through the door of the police academy, he leaves society behind to enter a profession that does more than give him a job, it defines who he is. He will always be a cop”* (Ahern 1972).

Academic research on police culture has a long and conflicting history with arguments being made both for and against the concept itself, its practical usefulness and also whether it is positive or negative for the police and the public they serve (Chan, 1997; Loftus, 2010; Skolnick, 2008; Waddington, 1999). However, previous studies have failed to specifically identify the existence of a police identity from which such culture may originate, and thus debates about police culture or cultures are largely referent free abstractions. Using validated psychological scales of organisational identity (Mael & Ashforth, 1992) the present study addresses this issue by examining whether the police do have a recognisable organisational identity that forms a fundamental part of who they are as a person (Table 3.2).

The concept of organisational identity used here is based on ideas from Social Identity Theory (SIT; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Within SIT it is argued that the self-concept is comprised of a personal identity, encompassing idiosyncratic characteristics (e.g., bodily attributes, abilities, psychological traits, interests) and a social identity encompassing salient group classifications. Social identification, therefore, is the perception of oneness with or belongingness to some human aggregate. For example, a woman may define herself in terms of the group(s) with which she classifies herself (I am a British; I am a woman; I am a nurse). She perceives herself as an actual or symbolic member of the group(s), and she perceives the

fate of the group(s) as her own. As such, social identification provides a partial answer to the question, who am I? (Stryker & Serpe, 1982; Turner, 1982).

**Table 3.2: Police Identity**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	count
Q1 When someone criticises the police, it feels like a personal insult	2.1	12.3	17.1	49.6	18.9	1398
Q2 I am very interested in what others think about the police	0.7	6.2	16.7	59.7	16.7	1398
Q3 When I talk about the police, I usually say we rather than they	1.4	6.5	11.8	55.2	25.2	1398
Q4 The police's successes are my successes	2.4	11.9	30.6	44.8	10.3	1395
Q5 When someone praises the police, it feels like a personal compliment	2.0	12.3	26.3	48.0	11.4	1398
Q6 If a story in the media criticised the police, I would feel embarrassed	2.6	16.5	22.3	46.1	12.5	1397

Scale reliability analysis, identifies that there does appear to be a definable police organisational identity as the six items measuring police identity scaled acceptably (coefficient alpha = .814), so can be conflated into a single measure of police identity.

In relation to the police, what the discovery of this organisational identity suggests is that what happens to one officer can have positive or negative impact on all officers as being a police officer is a fundamental part of their self concept (who they are). This may be particularly important in times of change and reform where officers perceive themselves to be under attack or threatened by things beyond their control as this is a threat to their very being. However, unlike some earlier simplistic concepts of culture that suggested a direct link between attitudes and behaviour, the concept of identification used here describes only officer's perception of oneness, not the behaviours and effect that may serve as antecedents or consequences of this identity. To be able to explore the possible behavioural impact of this

police identity another form of psychological scale is used later in this report (p.50) which explores the idea of 'police goodwill' through the concept of Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (Lee & Allen, 2002).

Chapter 4: Social, organisational and political change.

Some of the current changes to the police service are linked to the current economic situation and moves by the coalition government to reduce expenditure and budgets within the public sector more generally. This has led to a number of debates about the impact it will have on police provision and ability to perform their duties. As Peter Neyroud, former chief constable of Thames Valley put it, police forces are trying to adapt to a situation where they are being pressured to provide a ‘better service for less’ (Neyroud, 2010). What has been lacking so far from the corresponding debates has been a clear voice from rank and file officers about how they believe cuts to budgets are and/or will impact upon them and in what way. The survey and focus group data collected help to shed light on this as officers were asked about both their relationship with the government and also the ways in which cuts to police budgets (and therefore potentially police numbers whether back middle or front line) are having on their working lives.

Survey data summarised in Table 4.1 reveals that 89.9% of officers disagreed or strongly disagreed that the current government support the police (Q1), while 95.1% did not have confidence in the government’s long term plans for the police service (Q7). Additionally 95.6% of officers were also not satisfied with cuts to budgets (Q2) and 85% believed that the cuts will impact on their ability to do their jobs (Q3), possibly due to a lack of resources (65.2%, Q5) and/or a lack of resilience (94.5%, Q8). Speaking about relationships with the coalition government one officer expressed very negative views;

*“I firmly believe that there is a conspiracy afoot, that their plans are to disassemble the police service as it is and re-arrange it in their vision and when they start being truthful and actually say this is what our plan is I would have a bit more respect for them rather than them giving us the same old flannel, that we get from the Home Secretary every time we have a meeting with them. It is dishonourable, deceitful, its dreadful and the way that they treat this service is despicable and I think you are going to get the police service that they want and that will be the legacy of this government” (YFG2).*



**Table 4.1: Relationship between the Police and Government**

	Strongly Disagree		Neither	Strongly Agree		Total
	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	
	%	%	%	%	%	count
Q1 The current government support the police	63.7	26.2	7.8	1.6	0.6	1399
Q2 I am satisfied with the government cuts to police budgets	71.1	24.5	2.3	1.2	0.9	1398
Q3 The cuts will not impact on my ability to do my job	49.3	35.7	5.9	6.8	2.4	1399
Q4 The police are covering government cuts from other public services	5.6	7.4	28.5	32.3	26.3	1400
Q5 I have the resources to work effectively	22.6	42.6	20.0	13.7	1.1	1397
Q6 The police are under resourced	3.9	2.7	4.6	33.3	55.5	1396
Q7 I have confidence in the long term government plans for the police	69.7	25.4	3.9	0.4	0.6	1400
Q8 The cuts to policing budgets will not affect the resilience of the police	67.4	27.1	2.4	2.0	1.1	1397
Q9 There is enough resilience in the police to cover specialist training	32.0	43.7	17.5	5.9	1.0	1398
Q10 Policing is being eroded into a political numbers game	6.1	2.0	5.9	33.6	52.3	1399

While other officers did not vocalise such strong views against the government the belief that the current government are mistreating the police service was reinforced by other officers who felt that their voice was being ignored. For example; *“they [the government] are just not going to listen, I don’t think any of them are listening; they may nod and say yes we are going to take this away but they don’t give damn”* (YFG3).

Officers also suggested that one of the reasons that the government were not listening or at least recognising the potentially negative impact that the budget cuts were having on the police service is because they had a rose tinted view of the police service. As an officer noted *“the problem is that MP’s will always see police officers, whether our bosses make sure we are there for them they will always have a service from the police. They have this blinkered view because when they turn around there is a police officer there, or if they phone up, our bosses will make sure that a police officer is there and they get that immediate service but the public don’t get that service”* (YFG11).

One of the main concerns of the officers raised in the focus groups was that the cuts to police budgets were reducing the number of officers which was having an impact on the force's resilience and ability to provide adequate support for officers on duty to ensure their effectiveness and safety. For example two officers' discussed that; *"there is no resilience at all, absolutely none. There are no officers; we have code one's urgent jobs backing up on our call list because we have not enough officers to attend and its well"* (YFG8)

*"Dangerous"* (YFG3),

*"Yeah dangerous and officers attending on their own to jobs as well, there is a lot more of that, when I joined it would have been a double crewed unit to go because this person could be violent but now it is just get on with it as there is no-one else"* (YFG8).

Other officers discussed how the issue of resilience resulting from cuts to police numbers was also having an impact in terms of being able to provide cover for officers so that they could take holidays or training courses.

*"Because we have such a reduction in numbers, we have no resilience left; people want training so they don't miss out, but we don't have the numbers to facilitate it. I had to do a refresher [course] on my leave day as I couldn't get released from duty. Also we can't afford the training or run it within force, so what do we do. So officers that want to achieve that bench mark cannot do so"* (BFG12), while another officer stated that *"It's tough to take your leave as there is not enough people on the squads any more to cover"* (BFG9).

The idea that budget cuts were affecting the level of service the police could provide as well as the resilience of the police themselves was also connected to the idea that they had to cover cuts from other public services. For example an officer stated that *"I just hope that the government actually wakes up to what is going on in the police service and how the public perceive us cos the public isn't getting a good idea of what we do, half the time all I hear is that the public just want to see us and there isn't enough of us or we are tied up doing other things that other agencies should be doing, we are not crime fighting we are just plugging gaps everywhere in other services so for me government wake up smell the coffee and come back with some proper reports that will help us to serve the public better not worse"* (YFG6).

This idea was further reinforced by other officers in the focus groups *"We are covering the cuts for other organisations aren't we? The government talks about cutting other*

*organisations, the number of times that social service can't deal with something but as the police we have to" (BFG10).*

#### Chapter 4b: The Winsor reviews

The recommendations of the Winsor reviews of police pay and conditions were published in two parts. The first part dealt with a set of recommendations concerned with the need to establish an improved system of pay and conditions for police officers and police staff, while the second report dealt with proposed reforms of a longer-term nature.

In the foreword and principles section of the first Winsor review, Tom Winsor, in discussing the proposals argued that *"In my view, these sets of reforms, if implemented, will materially and beneficially affect the police service, and so the public interest, for many years to come. They will affect the types and calibre of people who wish to join the police, the structures and rewards of their careers, and the efficiency and effectiveness of policing. They should endure because they will equip police forces to take the steps necessary to provide the highest possible quality of public protection using the resources provided by taxpayers, and in so doing provide a system of remuneration and conditions for police officers and staff which fully respect and value the unique nature of policing and the commitment, risks, demands and sacrifices which it entails"* (Winsor, 2011, p.9).

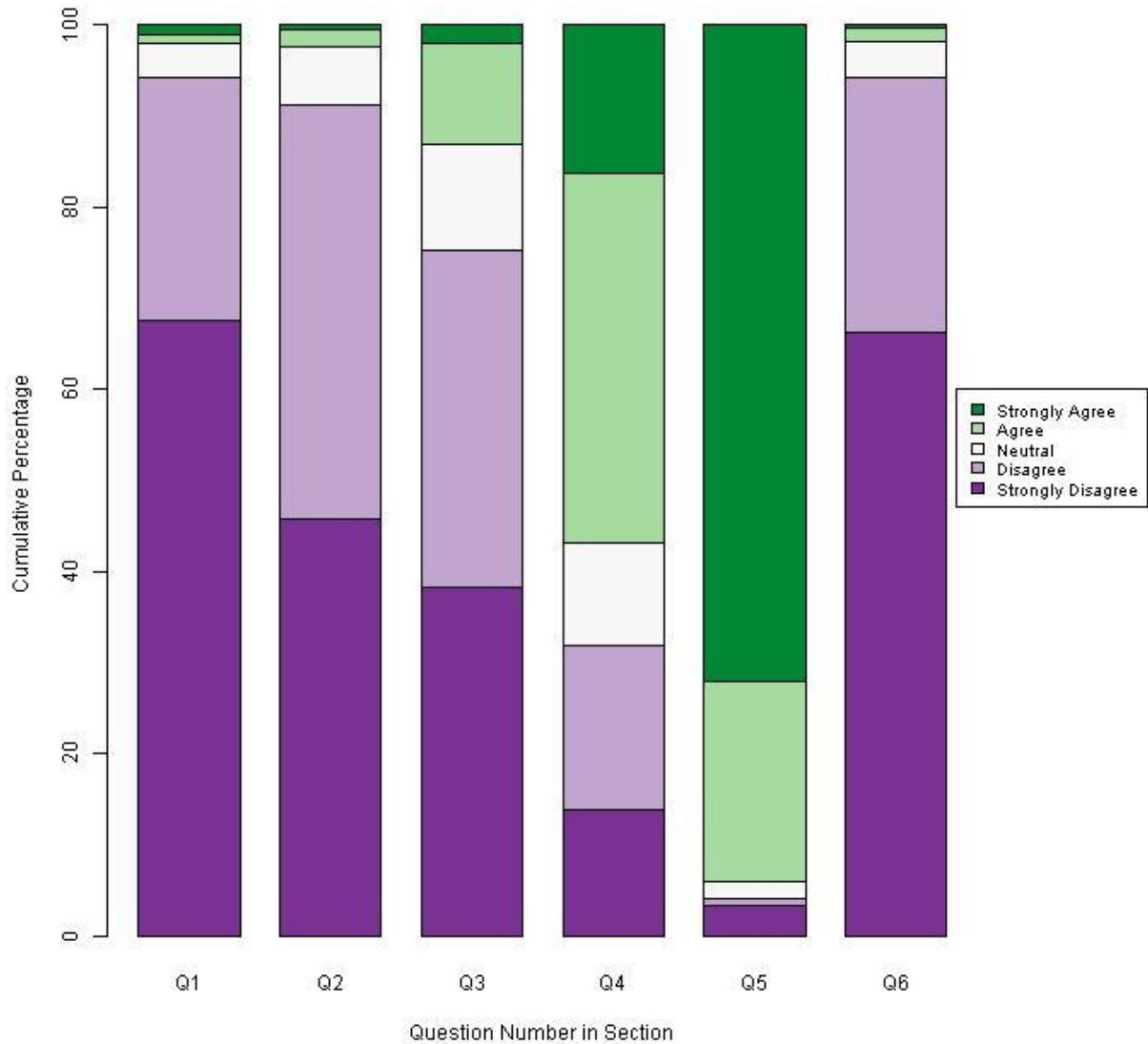
Given the far reaching nature of the changes and reforms proposed by the Winsor reviews and the impact they will have in shaping the future of the police service in England and Wales it seems obvious that the views of those that will be most directly affected, the rank and file officers, are of vital importance. Indeed Winsor notes that *"in carrying out this part of the review, I have been greatly assisted by the extensive discussions I have held with very many police officers and police staff throughout the country"* (Winsor, 2011, p.10). However, little evidence of the extent of these discussions is provided in the reviews. The current project sought to gather data on the perceptions of officers through both discussion and survey on both the reviews in general as well as on some of the more specific reforms recommended within them and some of the other changes currently impacting upon the police service.

In relation to the officers' general perceptions of the Winsor reviews, there appeared little support for the recommendations made or for the process through which the reports were

developed. For example, Table 4.2 identifies that of the officers surveyed over 94% were not satisfied with the reports (Q1), over 75% believed it would impact on their ability to do their job (Q3), 94% believed that the reviews will lead to a demoralised police force (Q5) and another 94% that the purpose of the reviews was to save the government money rather than improve the police service (Q6). The responses are also graphically illustrated in Figure 4.1.

**Table 4.2** Views on the Winsor Report

	Strongly Disagree		Neither	Strongly Agree		Total count
	%	%		%	%	
Q1 I am satisfied with the Winsor reviews of police pay and conditions	67.5	26.7	3.8	0.9	1.1	1400
Q2 The recommendations of the Winsor reviews are fair in light of the current economic climate	45.7	45.5	6.3	2.0	0.5	1399
Q3 The Winsor reviews of pay and conditions will not impact on my ability to do my job	38.2	37.0	11.6	11.1	2.1	1400
Q4 Do you agree with the statement that "the police are spending too much time sitting behind their desks doing 'two fingered typing' rather than fighting crime"	13.8	18.1	11.3	40.5	16.4	1400
Q5 The proposed changes in the Winsor reviews are leading to a demoralised police force	3.4	0.7	1.8	22.0	72.1	1400
Q6 Do you agree with the statement that "The aim of the Winsor recommendations is not to save money but to create a more efficient, productive, motivated police service"	66.2	27.9	4.1	1.4	0.4	1400



**Figure 4.1,** Views on the Winsor reports: Q1 ‘I am Satisfied with the Winsor reviews of police pay and conditions’, Q2 ‘The recommendations of the Winsor reviews are fair in light of the current economic climate’, Q3 ‘The Winsor reviews of pay and conditions will not impact on my ability to do my job’, Q4 ‘Do you agree with the statement that “people are spending too much time sitting behind their desks doing two fingered typing rather than fighting crime”’, Q5 ‘The proposed changes in the Winsor reviews are leading to a demoralised police force’, Q6 ‘Do you agree with the statement that “the aim of the Winsor recommendations is not to save money but to create a more efficient, productive, motivated police service”’.

These questionnaire results were reflected in the perceptions of officers in focus group discussions where officers noted their concerns with the review. For example; *“For me the biggest fear is that all of Winsor’s changes could squeeze me out of the job. And that is something that I have never had to think of before”* (BFG1), while another officer noted that; *“Nothing positive has come out of the Winsor review”* (CFG1).

Officers in both the survey and focus groups were then asked for their perspectives about a number of specific recommendations made within the Winsor reviews as well as on other issues such as privatisation and Police and Crime Commissioners. Tables 4.3a and Table 4.3b (below) identify that officers are concerned about proposed changes to their pensions and retirement age and also about changes to their working pay and conditions. The table also shows that officers are generally supportive of annual fitness tests but have concerns about how injuries sustained on duty may affect their jobs if they cannot pass a fitness test. The questionnaire data also identifies that respondents are concerned about the calibre of officer the force will attract due to reductions in the police starting salary and the impact that changes such as direct entry schemes and the privatisation of policing functions will have on the police service.

Some of these issues were further elaborated upon with the focus groups. For example in relation to proposed changes to police officers’ pensions it was noted that; *“certainly what I have noticed, no matter what Winsor has chucked, the one thing that has genuinely affected officers and made them really angry is the pension because there are officers who suddenly find their whole pension has changed”* (CFG5). Another officer stated that; *“its massively divisive, how they have set up this pension issues, working with people all doing the same job and all on different pay or pension”* (BFG4), while another qualified this resentment about changes to police pensions by saying that it wasn’t that officers objected to contributing more to their pensions but that they would get less back from this contribution; *“if someone would have said to me, you are going to have to pay an extra 2 or 3 % I could have stomached it, I wouldn’t have been happy but I would have put up with it if we had kept the benefits”* (CFG6).

**Table 4.3a: Issues currently faced by the Police**

	Strongly	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly	Total
	Disagree				Agree	
	%	%	%	%	%	count
Q1 The proposed change to police pensions is fair	67.6	25.4	4.7	1.6	0.7	1398
Q2 I am angry about the changes to my pension	3.6	1.4	10.9	20.8	63.4	1400
Q3 The increase in the age of retirement is fair	50.8	31.1	9.4	6.8	1.9	1395
Q4 I am angry about the proposed changes to the police retirement age	3.9	4.5	11.9	27.2	52.5	1399
Q5 Proposed changes to pay are fair	53.2	36.5	7.3	2.4	0.7	1399
Q6 Proposed changes to pay and conditions are going to force people to leave the service	1.1	3.1	8.9	49.8	37.1	1398
Q7 It is easy to distinguish between front line, middle and back office officers	12.8	27.8	22.3	29.6	7.4	1397
Q8 Paying officers different amounts depending on their duties is fair	9.0	15.8	13.6	52.1	9.5	1393
Q9 Proposed reductions to police starting salaries will help to attract the right calibre of recruit to join the police	54.7	31.6	10.0	2.6	1.1	1396
Q10 An annual fitness test for officers is a good idea	2.5	6.2	11.8	49.7	29.7	1394
Q11 I am concerned about getting injured and failing a fitness test	11.6	25.2	17.7	30.2	15.3	1399
Q12 I will not put myself at risk in case I get injured	28.7	35.3	16.2	12.9	6.9	1398

**Table 4.3b: Issues currently faced by the Police**

	Strongly	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly	Total
	Disagree				Agree	
	%	%	%	%	%	count
Q13 Concern about fitness will have no effect on how I do my job	6.3	17.1	21.2	36.8	18.7	1398
Q14 The educational requirements for recruitment of constables should be increased	10.2	29.3	30.4	26.0	4.1	1397
Q15 The direct entry scheme is a good idea	42.9	31.0	21.3	3.7	1.1	1398
Q16 The direct entry scheme will have a negative impact on my job	2.0	7.4	29.7	35.1	25.8	1397
Q17 I will be happy to have someone with no police experience as my superior	69.8	22.0	4.4	2.5	1.3	1398
Q18 Operational competence is vital for all police officers	0.6	3.4	3.9	42.2	49.9	1397
Q19 In principle privatisation of policing is a good idea	58.5	28.3	9.9	2.2	1.0	1397
Q20 Privatisation of policing will negatively impact the role of the police	1.5	3.1	9.2	35.3	50.8	1399
Q21 I am confident that privatising police functions will be beneficial to the public	45.9	34.7	15.7	2.9	0.8	1400
Q22 Private companies will serve their share holders not the public	2.1	1.6	11.5	38.1	46.7	1398
Q23 Accountability is vital for the job of a police officer	0.7	1.1	5.9	51.9	40.5	1399
Q24 Some jobs that the police are currently responsible for could be carried out by private companies	10.6	19.3	18.8	45.7	5.6	1398

Another officer described in detail how they perceived the changes to police pensions was impacting negatively not only on their own life but also on that of their family; *“Certainly for me I am coming up to 14 years in [service], it’s going to affect me with the new pension. With the new pension I will work another 15 years and get just another £4000 for that. My wife’s friend is a kitchen fitter he is on 33 grand a year and I am thinking in two years time I will be*



*35 am I crazy to stay in this job for another 15 years to then be told at 50 that you have to go, whether I want to stay on or not to top my pension up, just gone, to get some crappy pension that I didn't join up for or whatever the small print, it is not what I signed up for. It is not going to pay off my mortgage which is what a lot of us had planned. It's just really uncertain. I have had to speak with my wife, it's a job that I did love, and I do love to a certain extent, some parts of it, but it's going to be big decision time because for me, forced to retire at 50 if I have not been promoted or picked up some magical skills, I'm going to go at 50 with no skills or qualifications and have to find a job of a similar wage to continue to pay the mortgage or send the kids to university and things like that. Do I jump ship now at 35 with a change of pension and try and get that for another 20 years without the strains and stresses and hassle that we have at the moment"? (YFG1)*

Linked to changes in pensions were concerns with what officers believed were negative changes to the proposed retirement age. For example an officer noted; *"Well with the increase in retirement age, I was speaking to our MP and he said 'well oh that is ok if you have to work longer because they can take you off front line and put you in a back room job'. And I said what back room jobs; you are civilianising all of them. So you're telling me that when I get to an age where I decide that I can no longer run around the streets you will find me a backroom job? Well there aren't any"* (CFG4).

This concern about changes to retirement age was linked to concerns about redundancy, for example one noted that; *"my main fear is redundancy because they can't make us redundant at the moment. If we get in the shit or we are crap at our job then that is our own fault and they can get rid of us and we know that. But if we do our job and we have signed up for the 30 years there is going to be no security against them making us redundant"* (CFG2).

Fear about changing retirement age and the risk of redundancy were also linked to discussions about changing requirements around fitness testing. Officers seemed to object less to the idea of fitness tests than to what they appeared to believe the fitness tests were going to be used for, as a means of making people redundant. For example an officer stated; *"Yeah, if you fail your fitness test they are going to make you redundant aren't they? We all signed up for 30 years we all joined as a career for 30 years, we can't strike and we can't do a lot else to air our grievances without breaking some of our rules and regulations and now they will turn round when we are 45 or 50 and say well you're not fit enough we are not*

*going to medical you out we are going to make you redundant. We have all got families, and bills and things like that but we have no redress to deal with that” (CFG4).*

This point was further elaborated by other officers who argued that; *“a big concern is that we can be forced to retire if we are injured on duty, so if we are the only officer available and we go to a particular nasty incident, potentially save someone’s life but get injured in the process, you will then literally be thrown on the scrap heap for redundancy within two years, not taking into account what you have done, whether you have helped save a life or protect someone, its oops sorry you are not fit enough for the job within two years, you’re out mate and that’s disgusting” (YFG7).*

This fear of getting injured and therefore not being passed fit for duty and possibly forced to retire was, officers suggested, going to have an impact on what they did and how they did it. As one officer noted; *“the issue with injuries and fitness tests are going to fundamentally change the way that officers deal with people and how” (BFG5)*, while a more senior officer noted that *“it’s a contentious issue, from a managers point of view I can totally understand the reluctance to go into certain situations as a pc, I would have done the same. Whereas before people felt they were supported and protected by the organisation and the pension arrangements they would go above and beyond the call of duty to deliver that result we were talking about, but now without that protection there will be a degree of reluctance to put yourself on the line and put your colleagues on the line and jeopardise everything. Because it’s not just about your health it’s about your life, your livelihood, your families livelihood so the whole shooting match it at stake here and to remove that level of protection and support it is a big deal and it matters greatly” (YFG12).*

Another contentious issue for both the officers who completed the survey and who took part in focus groups was the proposed changes to the educational requirements to be a police officer and also the recommendations about new direct entry schemes for Inspectors and Superintendants. For example an officer in discussion about possible changes to the educational entry requirements of the police stated that *“They want degree based, I am only GCSE, but I have every day on the front lines, my wife has a degree, she is leaving as she knows she can earn a lot more elsewhere” (BFG12).*

This prioritisation of front line experience over educational attainment was also reflected in discussions about recommendations for direct entry schemes. Such schemes appeared to be of great concern to officers during focus group discussions. For instance an officer noted that

*“my main worry is the direct entry for people at a higher level, they say it works well in the armed forces, but they get baby sat for ages, but in the police they are not going to have time for that. If you have a bad governor it is a slog, so this isn't the job where you can come in and understand what everyone is doing” (BFG1).*

Other officers spoke about the importance of operational experience and how without this people in senior roles would struggle which would negatively impact on both the police force and the service they provide to the public. For example an officer explained that; *“ I'm of the old fashioned opinion that you shouldn't be promoted unless you have at least 5 years as a pc so you have some base knowledge of what you are talking about. Because it isn't something that you can read and get a grip of what it is like because unless you have been that first person at an incident and had to deal with it then you can't possibly understand how you are going to feel how you are going to react to something, so to come in as an inspector is ludicrous and is going to open up a massive bag of problems” (YFG8).*

These issues were picked up on by other officers in discussions who noted that they believed it is vitally important that junior officers both trust and respect their managers and that people who came in without first working their way through the ranks would undermine this trust. As an officer noted; *“Also it's about working your way up through the ranks. You have got to work with people and earn their respect, you have got to know them and got to know how they tick and understand, you know, it is all well and good saying follow me but if I haven't met you before and I don't know who you are and whatever, am I going to follow you and am I going to do what you ask me to do, because I don't know much about you, what your experience or knowledge of the job is or how good you are” (YFG6).*

Other officers also explained how having a manager who had no previous experience in the police would negatively impact on their self esteem and respect *“I think morale- wise though, for me, being told to go and do this by someone who hasn't done that job, I have no respect for them, you get the respect from doing that job and working your way up” (CFG2).* Other officers raised similar concerns stating that the notion that someone could come in at a senior level and successfully do the job of a police officer was disheartening as it made them feel undervalued and disrespected. For example an officer explained that *“policing doesn't come in a text book, and it is quite insulting to suggest that someone can do some training and then do everything” (CFG3).* Finally officers also expressed concerns about the ability of such direct entry officers to successfully carry out their duties and the negative impact this may

have on police public relations *“You don’t want to tell a victim that the person running a murder inquiry worked at Tesco’s yesterday”* (BFG3).

Officers also discussed concerns they had about the privatisation of policing functions as well as the introduction of Police Crime Commissioners. In relation to privatisation there was a perception that private companies were being used in some circumstances because the police no longer have the resources to be able to do everything that they used to do. As an officer explained *“they [private companies] are being used because we don’t have the resilience. If we had the officers to use then undoubtedly we would be using them. We are using them because we haven’t got other options”* (YFG4). Other officers spoke about how they believed that the increase in privatisation was simply related to the government’s desire to generate money from the police, something they could not achieve without pushing for expanded police privatisation. For example an officer noted that; *“I think they want these big companies in because they make a profit and by hook or crook they will have shares somewhere in the parent company and that is what they do, line their pockets. G4S is a prime example. The police don’t make money but they are a vast organisation that you need, they are something that if you can find a way of privatising them then you will get money from it, and pure and simple they can privatise vast areas and the public have no choice but to pay for it through taxes or other means and if you have shares in it you are going to make shed loads of money”* (YFG5).

In relation to Police and Crime Commissioners, while not specifically addressed within the pilot questionnaire survey, officers in the focus groups stressed that they perceived it as an attempt by the government to assert greater political control over the police service *“its political control isn’t it, that’s all it is”* (YFG12). This notion of the politicization of policing was also linked to concerns about PCC’s pandering to voter favour by making sure that the voting majority received a better service than others. As an officer suggested *“if you’re the crime commissioner you are going to want the majority of your voters to vote for you again, so you will please the majority of your electorate, where are they, the big towns and cities, so that is where they will focus resources make them happy cos they can vote me back in again”* (YFG6). Officers also discussed how the PCC was bringing a level of uncertainty to the police service as no one really knew what to expect or what they would do or how. For example one officer stated that *“It’s awful it just adds to the uncertainty. Is what she does going to impact us?”*(CFG4), while another explained that *“no one really knows what they*

*are going to do. They say they can do this and do that but how. I don't think we will know for a long time yet what they are going to do as they probably don't"* (CFG2).

Officers completing the survey were asked to rank order proposed recommendations and issues for reform in relative terms of those they were most in favour of (rank order 1) to those they were least in favour of (rank order 10). The results in Table 4.4 show that of the options given officers were most in favour of 1) fitness testing, 2) changes to the promotion system and 3) changes to role and skill based pay, while they were least in favour of 10) changes to police pensions, 9) changes to the retirement age and 8) Privatisation.

Ranking the reforms which officers are most in favour of (#1) to those which they are least in favour of (#10) reveals the following statistically significant differences.

**Table 4.4,** statistical ranking order.

Response	Average Rank
Fitness testing	1
Promotion System	2
Role and skill based pay	3
Academic Entry	4
Restrictive duty and recuperative pay	5
Contribution Related Pay	6
Direct Entry	7
Privatisation	8
Retirement age	9
Police officer pensions	10

The only recommendations/issues that could not be statistically differentiated in their importance were changes to academic entry and recommendations for restrictive duty and recuperative pay (rank order 4 and 5 in the list).

Chapter 5: Police officers' views of change and reform in the police service.

Debates about the nature and extent of police reform and change in Western Democracies have a long and chequered history (Jones & Newburn, 2002). As with other areas of the public sector, policing does not exist in a social, political or economic vacuum (Dölling, 1993) and there can be little doubt that over the last few decades the police service in England and Wales has undergone a great deal of change, moving away from state dominated provision towards the gradual introduction of a mixed economy (Bayley & Shearing, 1996; Loader, 2000; Crawford et. al., 2005). The contention can also be made that the present coalition government, supported by key stakeholders such as Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary (HMIC), are currently signalling an intention to take police reform further through what appears to be a fundamental change in policing provision (HMIC 2010; Home Office 2010; Winsor, 2011; 2012).

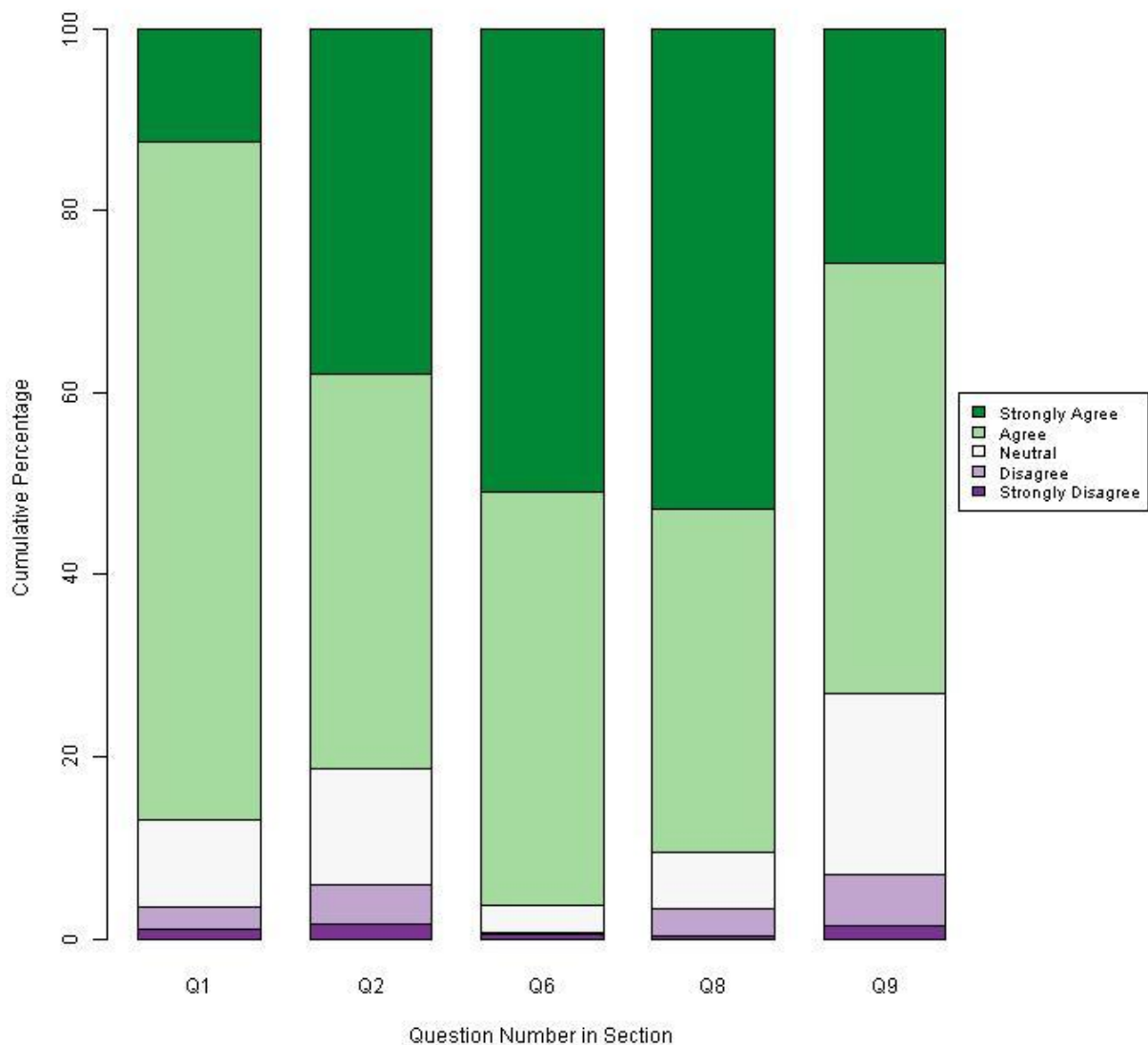
However, while the evidence from the survey data and focus groups suggests strongly negative attitudes towards Winsor's recommendations for reform it is important to establish whether the police service is against change and reform in general or whether it is simply the current proposals which it is against. As noted earlier police culture is often identified as a barrier for reform, yet little work has sought to examine this beyond broad generalisations about police resistance to change as a whole.

In conversation in focus groups officers themselves identified that not only was some change and reform needed but that they would actually support change processes if they were done in the right way. As an officer explained; *"There are some issues we would like to change, because it isn't our role"* (BFG12) , while another officer discussed that the work the police were being asked to do and the way in which they were having to do it was having a detrimental effect on their ability to provide an adequate service *"Because the government came up with the idea that we should all work in partnerships and we will all do our bit, but everyone else in our partnerships can say no, and we are the only partner in that partnership that can't say no"* (YFG8).

**Table 5.1: Change and Reform in the Police**

	Strongly Disagree		Neither	Strongly Agree		Total
	%	%		%	%	
Q1 Some change is needed in the police	1.1	2.4	9.6	74.4	12.5	1397
Q2 I am opposed to the current changes	1.7	4.2	12.8	43.4	37.9	1399
Q3 I am opposed to police reform	10.0	43.8	25.2	12.4	8.6	1399
Q4 Some police reform is needed	1.6	3.6	12.9	70.6	11.4	1399
Q5 Change should be driven by people outside of the police	30.7	43.0	21.8	3.9	0.6	1397
Q6 Change should be made in collaboration with the police	0.5	0.2	3.0	45.4	50.9	1400
Q7 Proposed change and reform must be independent of the police	22.0	42.9	21.3	9.9	3.8	1398
Q8 Proposed change and reform must be independent of politics	0.4	2.9	6.2	37.7	52.8	1397
Q9 Current proposals for change and reform will give the upper hand to criminality	1.4	5.6	20.0	47.2	25.8	1397

The survey data (Table 5.1) also added weight to the idea that the police are not against change per se but against the proposals currently being recommended by the Winsor reviews and pursued by the current coalition government. For example, 86.9% of respondents believed that some change is needed in the police (Q1), but 81.3% were opposed to the current proposals for change (Q2). Furthermore, 96.3% of respondents suggested that changes should be made in collaboration with the police (Q6), and a further 90.5% believed that police change and reform should be independent of politics (Q8). The contention can be made from this data that police officers may be against what can be termed traditional attempts at police reform and change, which are driven from a top- down and outside- in position (Bayley, 2008) but appear to be more supportive of recommendations for change and reform that have received greater police input and less political influence. Finally, by way of possible further explanation for the officers' negative attitude to the current reform proposals 73% of officers who responded to the survey agreed or strongly agreed that the current recommendations for police change and reform would give the upper hand to criminals (Q9). These results are illustrated graphically in Figure 5.1.



**Figure 5.1,** Change and reform in the police: Q1 ‘Some change is needed in the police’, Q2 ‘I am opposed to the current changes’, Q6 ‘Change should be made in collaboration with the police’, Q8 ‘Proposed change and reform must be independent of politics and Q9 ‘Current proposals for change and reform will give the upper hand to criminality’.



Chapter 6: The police and the public.

An issue raised in both the survey and focus groups was concerned with police public relations and how these may or may not be affected by proposed changes to the police service. As previously identified, in the foreword and principles section of the Winsor Review (2011), Winsor states that “*these sets of reforms, if implemented, will materially and beneficially affect the police service and so the public interest for many years to come*” (p.9) . In contrast the survey results (Table 6.1) show that 91.2% of the sample respondents did not agree that the current and proposed changes to the police service were in the best interests of the public (Q5).

**Table 6.1:** Relationship between the Public and the Police

	Strongly	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly	Total
	Disagree				Agree	
	%	%	%	%	%	count
Q1 The general public support the police	2.7	12.4	22.9	56.6	5.4	1399
Q2 The support of the general public has a positive impact on my job	1.7	3.8	12.4	54.7	27.4	1396
Q3 The general public understand what the police do	19.7	50.9	16.9	12.0	.5	1398
Q4 Winsor's proposed changes to the police will negatively impact on the relationship with the general public	1.8	5.5	18.9	41.8	32.0	1399
Q5 The current and proposed changes to policing are in the public's best interest	49.3	41.9	6.5	1.5	0.8	1398

Moreover, in discussions about relationships with the public officers expressed concern that the general public were not well informed about what the police do and why. For example, officers were of the opinion that “*they [the public] haven't got a clue what we do*” (YFG4) while others agreed that “*yeah they have no idea*” (YFG5). When asked to elaborate on what the public were unaware of the officers stated that “*If you ask a member of the public how many officers are on duty at any one time responding, if you were to ask the public, their idea of how many are out there and the reality would be totally separate entities*” (YFG4).

Officers were then again asked why they thought this and responded by explaining how part of the problem was due to the preoccupation with performance targets which they believe are negatively impacting on the service they provide to the public. As an officer explained “*it's the government that are painting one picture compared to what is actually going on.*

*Politicians are happy as long as they have been given figures by senior members of the police service saying violent crime is down 2%, X crime is down 3%, but actually what is going on, on the street is completely different as we all know that figures can be massaged so the public don't have a clue what is going on in the police" (YFG7).*

Officers also suggested that this drive for performance monitoring which prioritises certain forms of policing over others was negatively affecting their image with the public. As an officer noted *"well I think that because we are no longer being sent to certain jobs, but the public still perceive that it is a police issue, and because the police aren't turning up, they automatically go 'the police are rubbish, the police are crap because they didn't turn up to the noisy party or my car being scratched in Asda car park or whatever', and half the time the police don't even get to know about the job because it gets screened."* (CFG2).

Other officers suggested that media stories and representations of the police were responsible for the lack of understanding and potentially negative image the police have with the general public. For example an officer noted that; *"I think it is also something with the press, the relentless campaign from the press to downtrod the police highlights us as negative to the extent there are instances reported that are quite clearly nothing to do with the police. There are countless stories; you could take any paper with their negative stories against the police and it is quite clear that they have brushed over parts to make the police look bad. And that is what the public sees and the public read that we are all neo Nazi racists going round tazing everybody"* (YFG2).

Finally officers also suggested that because there was an associated lack of positive or factual press about what the police do the public were largely in the dark. As an officer explained: *"Going back to what is it about the job the public don't know, because we soldier on and do the job, we don't moan, we do the job no matter how stretched we are, the public don't know what we actually put in"* (CFG3).

*Chapter 7: Morale, Sacrifice and Goodwill.*

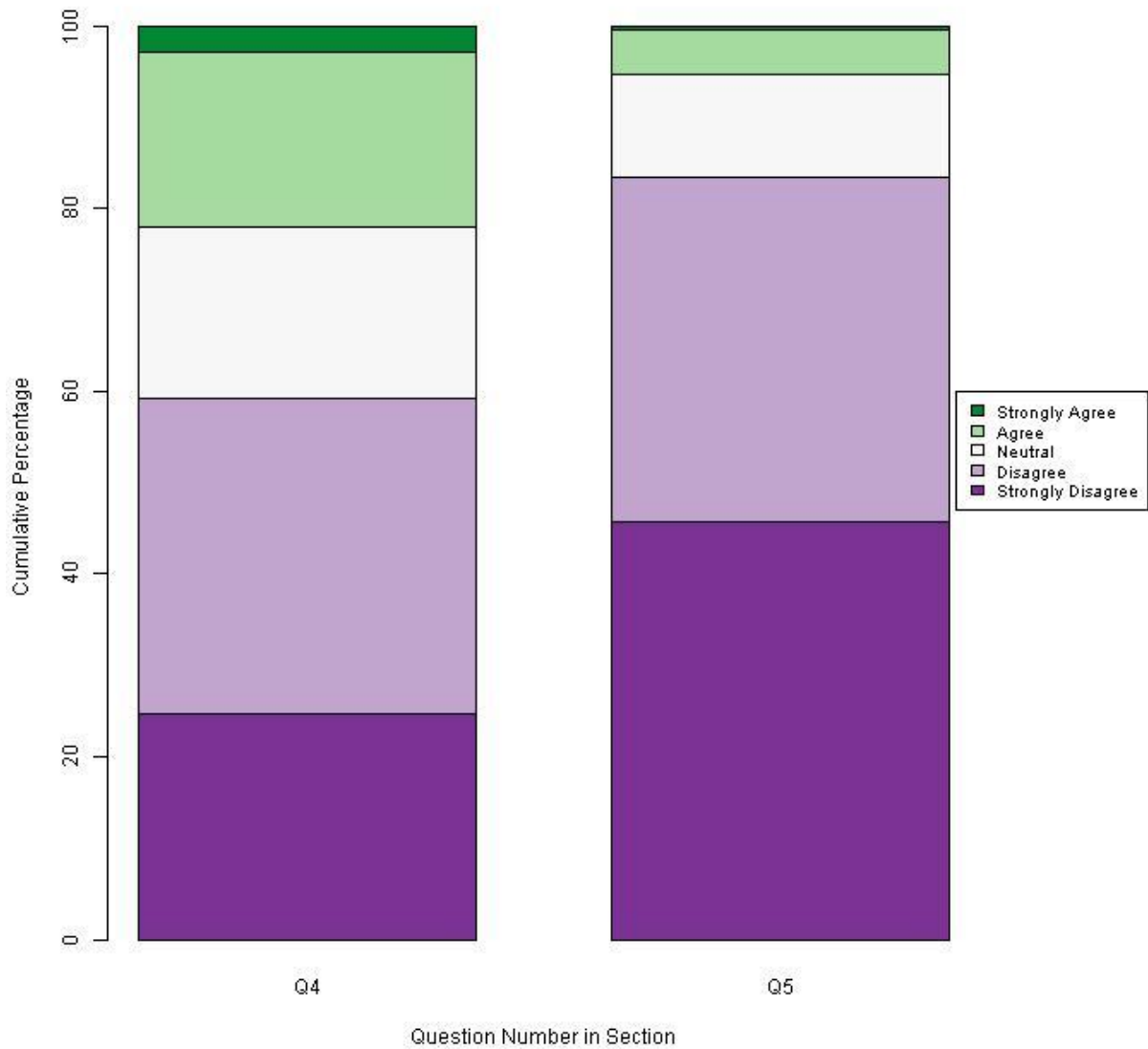
Another part of the forward and principles section of the Winsor review (2011) notes that “There is a considerable degree of goodwill in the police, in making sacrifices personal or otherwise to protect the public, deter crime, disrupt criminal networks, apprehend criminals and so make communities safer. Nothing should be done that might jeopardise that” (p.10).

One of the important components of the survey and the focus groups was to begin to look at the potential impacts that the current social, political and economic changes to policing were having on officers’ working lives. The three key themes that came out of the pilot study concerned police morale, the sacrifices people made to be a police officer and the changing nature of police goodwill.

**Table 7.1: Job of a Police Officer today**

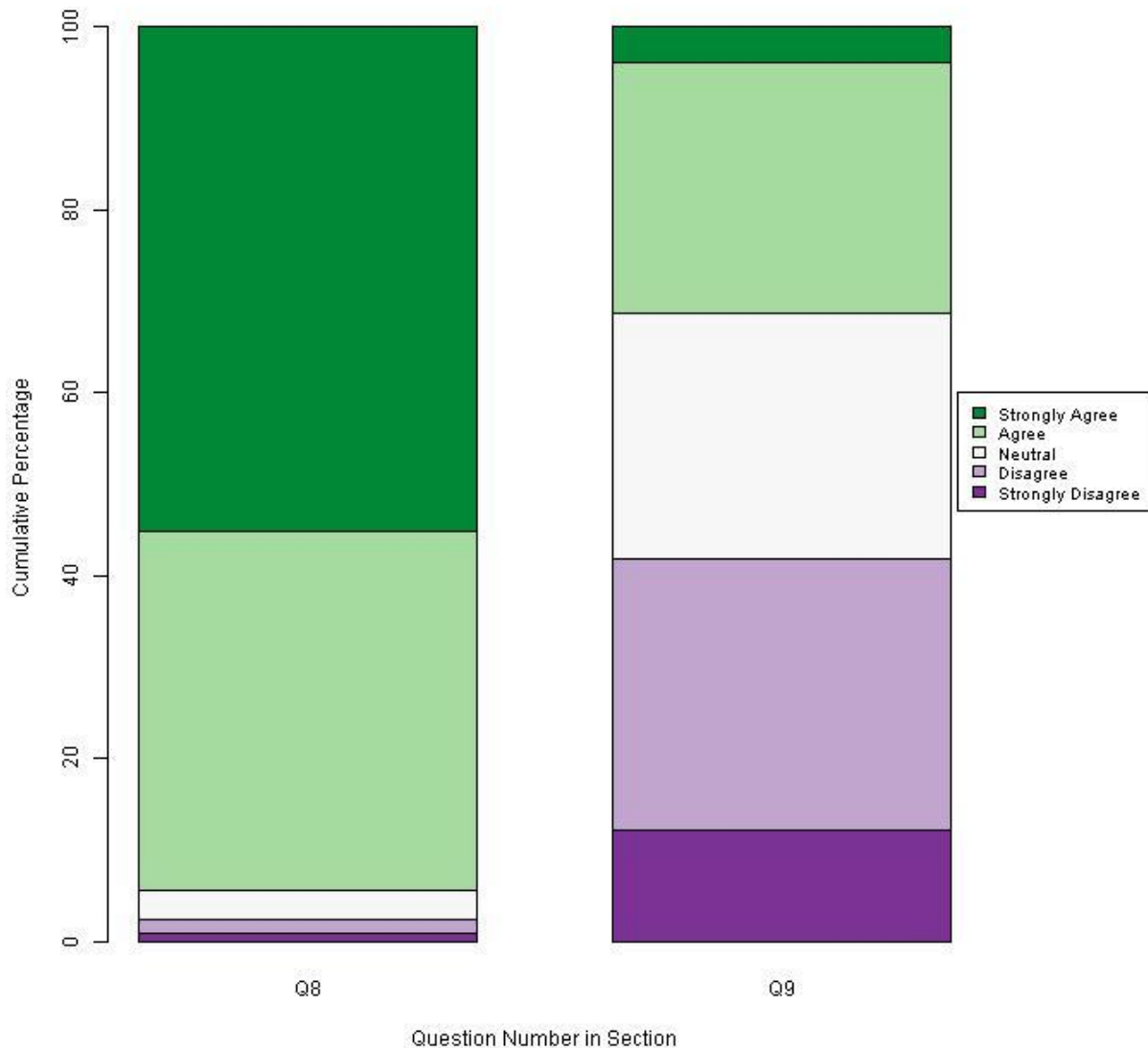
	Strongly Disagree		Neither	Strongly Agree		Total
	%	%		%	%	
Q1 I would still join the police today if starting afresh	31.9	30.3	16.9	16.5	4.4	1398
Q2 I would encourage friends of family to join the police	30.2	31.4	19.7	16.3	2.5	1399
Q3 I am satisfied with my job	8.0	23.2	23.2	41.1	4.5	1398
Q4 My morale in my job is high	24.7	34.5	18.7	19.2	2.9	1398
Q5 The morale of my colleagues is high	45.7	37.7	11.2	4.9	0.5	1399
Q6 The goodwill of police officers is essential to the success of the police	0.7	0.7	2.2	29.8	66.6	1400
Q7 The proposed changes to the police will not erode goodwill	49.1	31.7	5.4	7.4	6.3	1400
Q8 I make sacrifices to be a police officer	0.8	1.5	3.3	39.2	55.3	1397
Q9 The sacrifices are still worth it	12.1	29.7	26.8	27.5	3.9	1398
Q10 I would consider Voluntary Severance	20.9	22.7	22.1	23.7	10.6	1399
Q11 I would consider looking for alternative employment	9.1	21.6	18.1	35.6	15.5	1400
Q12 I can still provide the service I want to	8.6	32.6	22.3	32.9	3.6	1399
Q13 I can still do the job I want to	7.9	26.5	24.0	37.3	4.1	1398

In terms of morale Table 7.1 shows that 59.2% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that their ‘morale in their job is high’ (Q4), while more strikingly 83.4% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that ‘The morale of their colleagues is high’ (Q5). This is graphically illustrated in Figure 7.1.



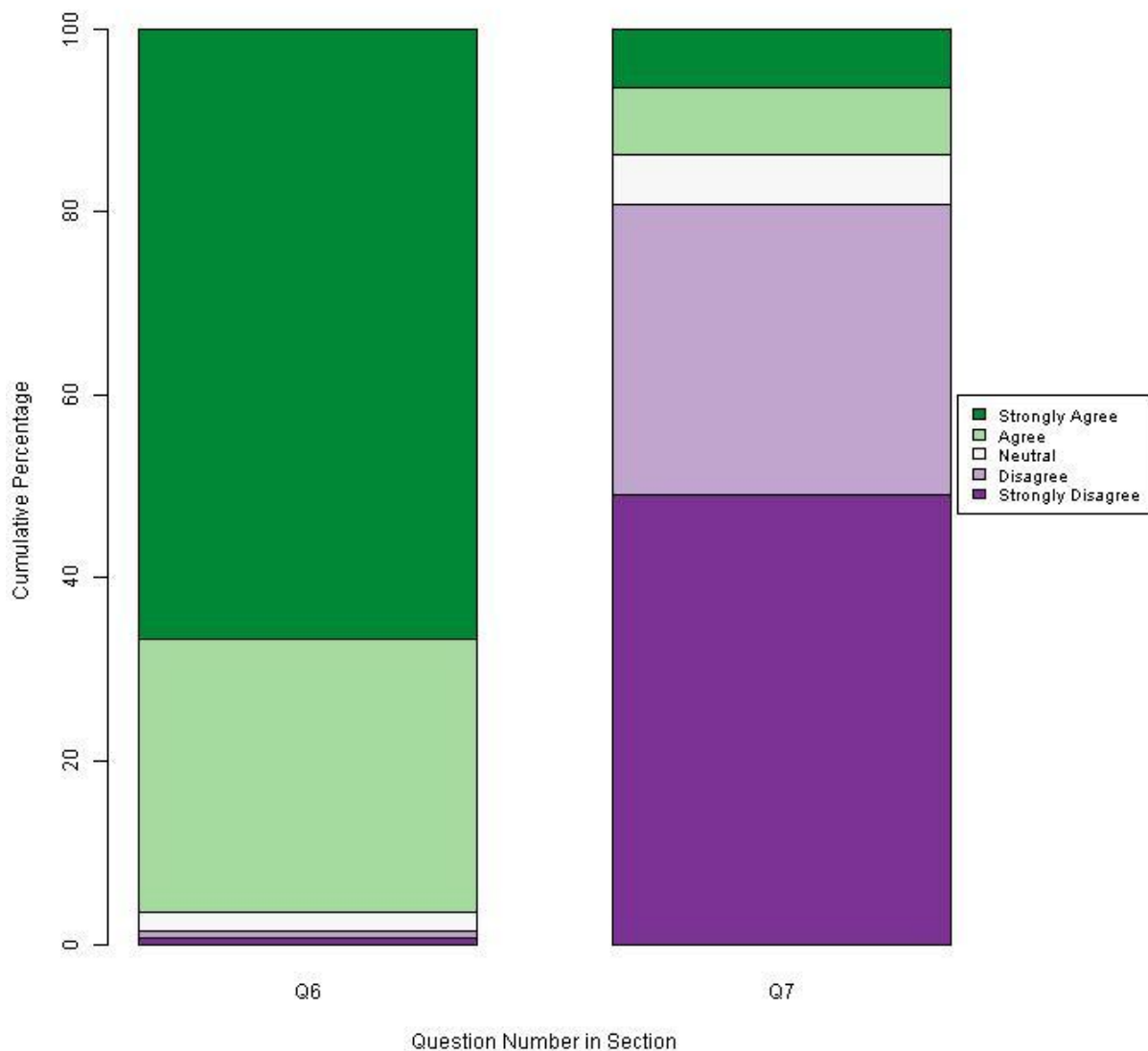
**Figure 7.1,** Police Morale: Q4 ‘My morale in my job is high’, Q5 ‘The morale of my colleagues is high’.

Furthermore Table 7.1 (above) and Figure 7.2 (below) identify that 94.5% of respondents believed that they made sacrifices to be a police officer (Q8), while only 31.4% of respondents agreed that these sacrifices were still worth it (Q9).



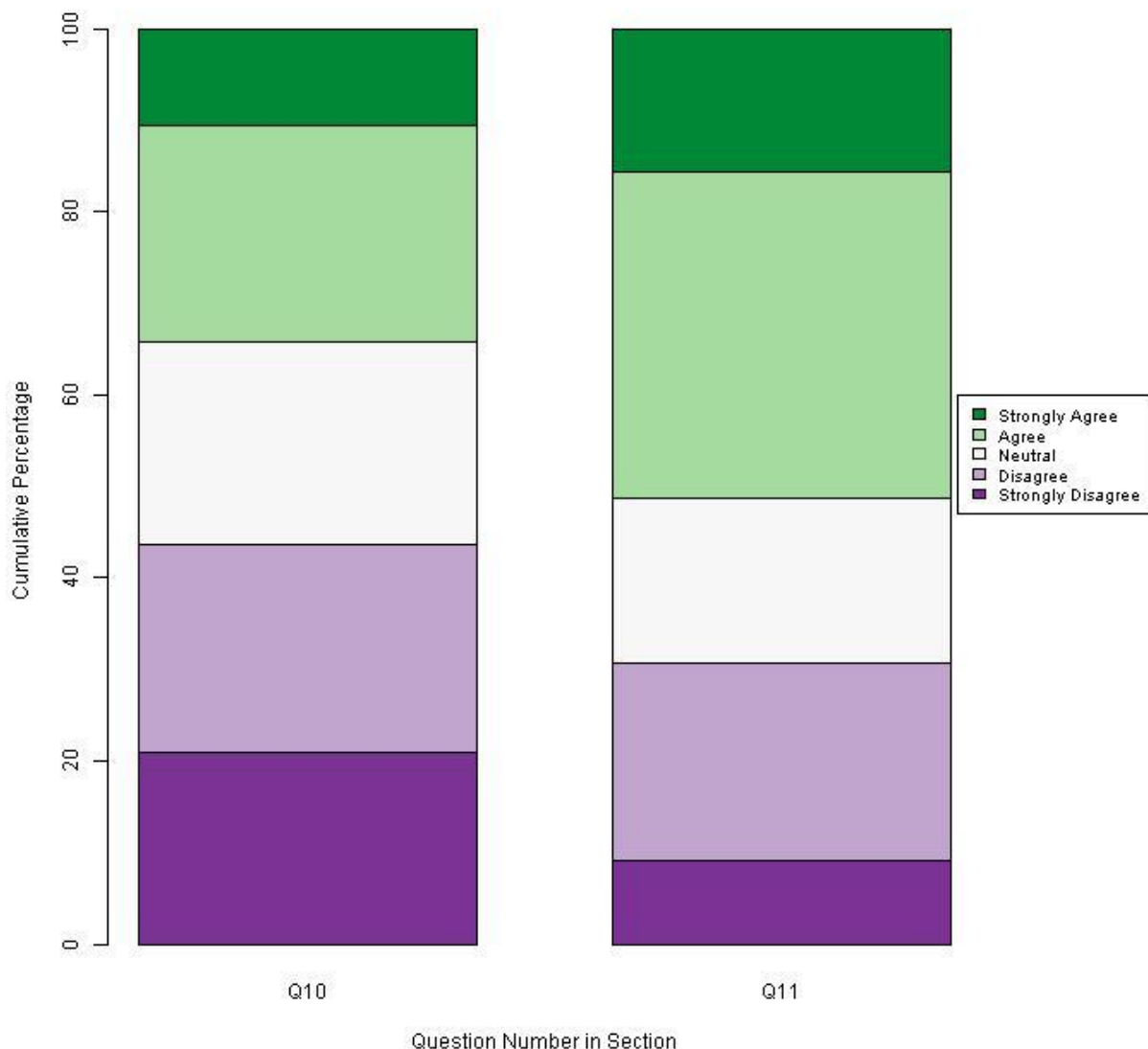
**Figure 7.2,** Police sacrifice: Q8 ‘I make sacrifices to be a police officer’, Q9 ‘The sacrifices are still worth it’.

Additionally, Table 7.1 and Figure 7.3 illustrate that 96.4% of officers believed that ‘the goodwill of officers is essential to the success of the police’ (Q6), while only 13.7% of respondents believed that ‘this goodwill would not be eroded by the proposed changes to policing’ (Q7).



**Figure 7.3,** Police Goodwill: Q6 ‘The goodwill of police officers is essential to the success of the police’, Q7 ‘The proposed changes to the police will not erode goodwill’.

Finally, Table 7.1 and Figure 7.4 show that 34.3% of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they ‘would consider Voluntary Severance’ (Q10) and 51.1% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they ‘would consider looking for alternative employment’ (Q11).



**Figure 7.4,** leaving the Police: Q10 ‘I would consider voluntary severance’, Q11 ‘I would consider looking for alternative employment’.

In terms of examining the impact that current and proposed changes to the police service were having on officers’ perceptions of these issues focus group data again helps to illuminate these questionnaire responses. For example, in discussing the issue of police morale an officer explained; *“We are all so fed up we’ve just given up. People join up with this misguided sense that I don’t know, it is not necessarily helping the public or making a difference but it is doing a job where you impact on something, but erm its just relentless now and I’m fed up of it, fed up of every day”* (YFG1). Other officers discussed how morale was negatively impacted upon because changes were creating frustrations for the police in terms

of their ability to perform their jobs; *“I don’t like the job anymore because of the way it affects people. We can’t do the job that we want to do; we can’t provide the service we want to”* (BFG12).

Other officers discussed how the multiple pressures that they felt are being placed upon them due to the current and proposed changes were negatively affecting officer morale: *“We are seen as the pillars of the community and it is a special job and not everyone could do this job, and we do it knowing that we are going to sacrifice a lot of our own social and family life, and yet the demands on us now are right, management say you are working these days, these shifts, so we don’t get any special family days. Morale is just rock bottom”* (BFG5).

Other officers were even more explicit in relation to how they believed the changes to pay and conditions would negatively impact upon the police service: *“You take the new proposed £19000 pay for a new officer, the morale of all of us is affected, we are in different pays but it effects everyone as it relates to people performance in the work place which effects everyone, it brings everyone down”* (BFG9).

Given the current and proposed changes to policing and the impact this appears to be having on officer’s morale, issues surrounding the sacrifices officers feel they make for the service and whether they are still worth taking are important. One of the key themes that emerged from the focus group data is that because officers believe policing is a vocation that you cannot clock off from, being a police officer has a massive impact on every aspect of their life not just the time they are at work. As one officer noted, *“I could stomach all this crap the government is throwing at us if they understood the blur in our lives”* (CGF1).

Other officer’s took this idea of the blur between their working and non- working lives further to highlight just what the sacrifices they make are. As an officer explained; *“I don’t think any of these reports have ever shown the impact it has on family life because certainly my wife, she gets it is the neck, ‘let’s ask her, she will know’, they will see her as the oracle for police stories, so they get it all the time, my wife suffers it, even in the playground talk, people feel that they have to stop talking in front of her or treat her differently because of the job I do, and again surrounding the children everyone knows what I do so they are treated differently because of the job I do and I don’t think that that has ever been shown. You miss out on family events; family birthdays because you can’t get there, because you can guarantee that day something happens and you have to stay on and the kids miss out, they don’t see you, your wife or husband has to sort out everything because you’re not there. It’s*



*not just a job we do, it doesn't just affect our lives it's our families' lives and reports like Winsor just don't recognise it" (YFG1).*

Officers also offered more detail about how some of the specific recommendations set forth in the Winsor reviews were making them question whether the sacrifices they make are going to be worthwhile in the future. As one officer described *"I have always wanted to be a police officer, you make so many sacrifices on so many levels, you live it 24/7 but at the end of that was the fact that I could retire relatively young, and it was certainty, so the sacrifice was worth it. But now I and a lot of others are thinking well is that sacrifice worth it? I can go somewhere else"* (BFG6).

This issue of sacrifice was further linked to officers debating whether they could or would continue to work in the police service given the changes that were occurring; *"People who would not have considered leaving are now thinking, well actually maybe I should. It's feasible to find somewhere else. I can, I self preserve and that erodes the team ethic of policing, it's gotten so bad that I just need to get myself through the day. Peoples' workloads are such now that we just aren't supporting each other"* (BFG14).

While other officers explained how they would be willing to take even more drastic action to leave the police as morale was so low *"People want to take voluntary severance (BFGO6)"*.

This desire and willingness to leave the police service was also connected to what officers felt was a lack of support from within the service in light of the changes occurring. As an officer explained; *"I thought I would be quite closeted and protected by the police family but I am not, I feel undervalued, not respected and the quicker I can get out the better"* (CFG5).

Given that officers perceived that their own morale and that of their colleagues was low and that they are beginning to question whether the sacrifices they believe they make to do their job are still worth it, the issue of goodwill and Winsor's statement that this should not be jeopardised by any changes becomes one of real interest. One of the issues highlighted by the data was that concern about officer morale and sacrifice may be particularly important as it explicitly linked to officer's goodwill, their willingness to work beyond what is contractually expected of them. As an officer explained *"Morale goes with goodwill, and I don't know how it is elsewhere but in our force it is not good. And it is across the force not just personal"* (CFG6)

Officers explicitly defined their willingness to work above and beyond what may be expected of them in terms of the concept of goodwill and suggested that it was vitally important to the successful functioning of the police service; *“The police has lived and thrived on the goodwill of its officers, turning up early or staying late, to get done what they have to do”* (BFG7). Officers also discussed how they felt that this goodwill was still fully functioning at the time because as officers they rely on their colleagues to assist and help them in their daily lives. As another officer noted; *“the goodwill is still there as it is what makes your department or whatever work, it makes things flow, you would feel like you are letting your colleagues down if you didn’t”* (CFG2).

However, despite the apparent continued existence of this goodwill officers also clearly identified that the raft of current changes impacting upon the police service was having a negative impact upon it: *“There is no light at the end of the tunnel. Officers think, well why should I give it that premier service, you know, I could go home, not be late off, not have to put in those extra hours because what’s the point, I am paid peanuts, I might as well just do the standard job and walk away. Or if I see something when I am off duty I might say well what has this government given me, I will keep walking. And that is where we say the bedrock of policing will disappear”* (BFG1). This concern about the gradual disappearance of police goodwill and the subsequent negative impact this may have on the police service was also clearly articulated by other officers, for example *“people will walk away now, and I have never seen that before in 24 years”* (BFG7). In a brief but striking statement which appears to broadly sum up the feelings of the officers who took part in the focus groups an officer explained a sense of disenchantment by saying that *“People are disillusioned now”* (CFG1).

#### Chapter 7a: Organisational Citizenship Behaviour.

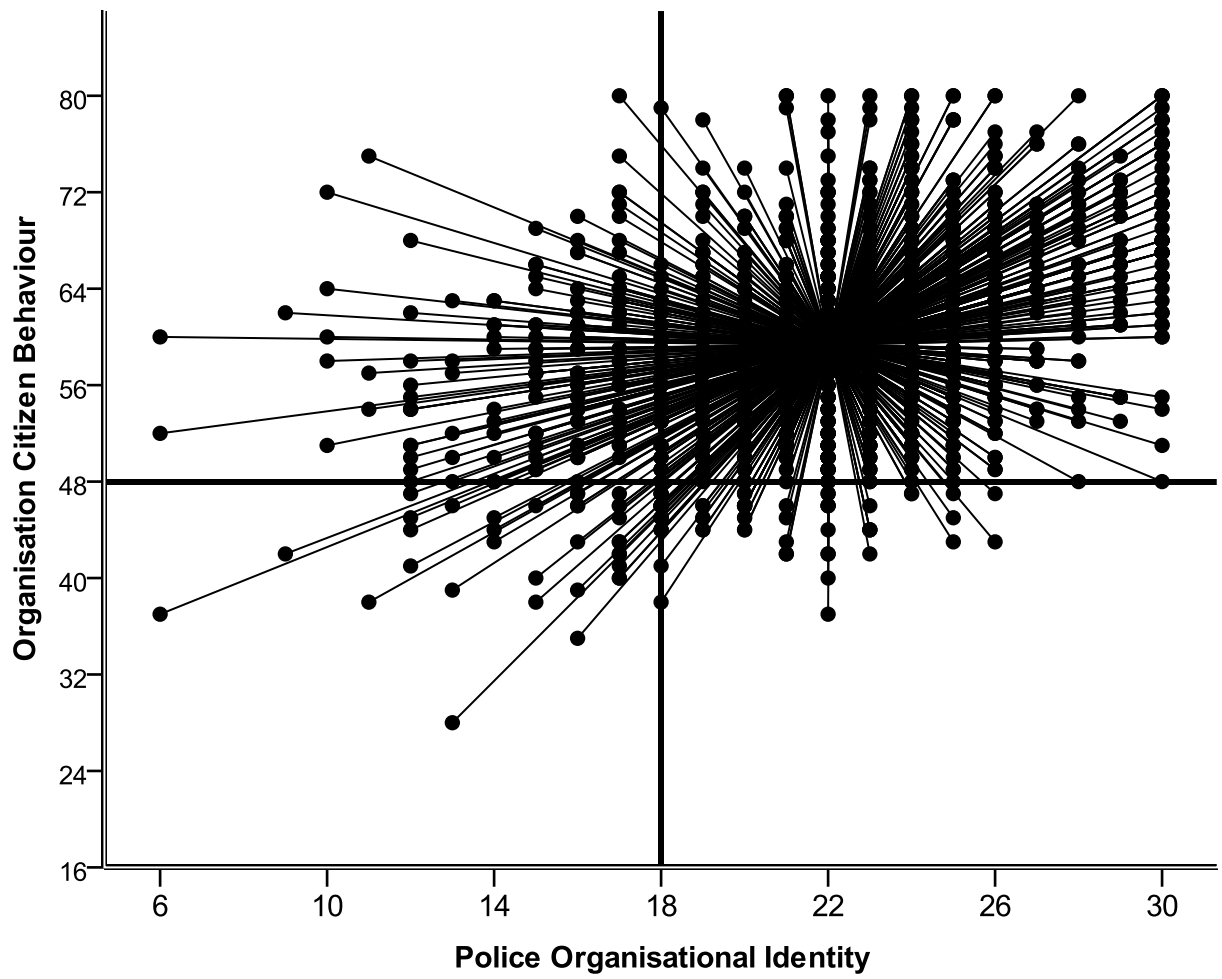
Despite some of the survey items addressing issues of goodwill and officers speaking at length about it in focus groups it is difficult to assess the extent of the current levels of goodwill. Officer’s suggested that the erosion of goodwill would have a negative impact on the police service. However, to be able to more quantifiably address the issues of police goodwill which have emerged from the data so far the survey utilised another validated psychological scale which explores the idea of goodwill through the concept of Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (Table 7.2).

Organ (1988: 4) defined Organizational Citizenship Behaviour as “*individual behaviour that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization. By discretionary, we mean that the behaviour is not an enforceable requirement of the role or the job description, that is, the clearly specifiable terms of the person’s employment contract with the organization; the behaviour is rather a matter of personal choice, such that its omission is not generally understood as punishable.*” In the current study the scale used is able to distinguish between organisational citizenship behaviour directed both at an individual and organisational level (Lee & Allen, 2002). In other words it is able to differentiate between goodwill in terms of officer’s willingness to go above and beyond for their fellow officers and the willingness to go above and beyond for the wider organisation.

The analysis identifies that all items that contribute to the measures of organisational citizenship behaviour at both the individual and organisational level are positively correlated and scale acceptably (coefficient alpha = .820 and coefficient alpha =.804 respectively). This illustrates that goodwill still appears to be operating within Avon and Somerset Constabulary. Further, analysis also identifies that that the Avon and Somerset police identity is positively correlated with OCB (organisational and individual) and that therefore the stronger this sense of identity the more likely officers are to work with goodwill (see Figure 7.5 below).

**Table 7.2: Goodwill OCB**

How often do you	All of the					Total count
	Never %	Rarely %	Sometimes %	Often %	Time %	
Q1 Help others who have been absent	0.5	6.1	34.4	44.8	14.3	1396
Q2 Willingly give your time to help others who have work related problems	0.1	4.6	26.5	49.2	19.4	1399
Q3 Adjust your work schedule to accommodate other officers requests for time off	1.3	10.4	45.3	31.6	11.4	1400
Q4 Go out of the way to make newer officers feel welcome in the work group	0.1	1.0	10.4	49.5	39.0	1399
Q5 Show genuine concern and courtesy toward colleagues, even under the most trying of work or personal situations	0.0	0.3	9.7	49.9	40.1	1400
Q6 Give up time to help others who have work or non work problems	.6	5.5	35.0	43.7	15.2	1396
Q7 Assist others with their duties	0.0	0.4	12.1	56.0	31.5	1400
Q8 Share personal property with others to help their work	4.8	15.8	38.0	30.2	11.2	1393
Q9 Attend functions that are not required but help the organisational image	18.3	31.5	29.0	14.7	6.5	1395
Q10 Keep up with developments in the organisation	0.3	5.4	31.0	50.6	12.8	1399
Q11 Volunteer for extra work assignments	3.9	12.3	37.1	34.9	11.8	1398
Q12 Work more than your you are paid for	1.9	3.3	16.8	43.7	34.4	1397
Q13 Show pride when representing the organisation in public	0.6	2.3	11.0	42.9	43.2	1395
Q14 Offer ideas to improve the functioning of the organisation	2.8	15.1	41.6	30.6	9.9	1398
Q15 Express loyalty toward the organisation	0.7	5.9	23.3	45.6	24.4	1397
Q16 Demonstrate concern about the image of the organisation	0.9	8.5	31.5	41.4	17.6	1395



**Figure 7.5:** Plot of Organisations Citizen Behaviour against Police Organisational Identity. The four quadrants in the graphic are defined by the midpoint of each scale.

Chapter 8: The future of the police service.

In the opening to the first part of the Winsor review (2011) Tom Winsor asserts that *“these sets of reforms, if implemented, will materially and beneficially affect the police service – and so the public interest – for many years to come. They will affect the types and calibre of people who wish to join the police, the structures and rewards of their careers, and the efficiency and effectiveness of policing”* (Winsor, 2001. p.9).

In light of this assertion and the data presented in this report, questions about the future of the police service from the perspective of those who are currently serving officers is of interest to see if this optimism is shared. Discussions about the future of the police service ranged from a general concern and uncertainty about what the future holds for the police *“I didn’t think I would be ever worried about my future in the police, but boy are there some big changes coming and I don’t know what my future is”* (BFG1) to the explicit acknowledgment by some officers that due to the changes occurring they would no longer join the police if they were given the chance to do so now: *“There is no way I would join this job if I had my time again”* (BFG4). Officers also explained how they would also no longer recommend a job in the police to family and friends because of perceptions about their poor treatment. For example, *“I love my job and I love what I do, I have done some great things, but now if my kids ever said ‘I want to do what you do’, I would say no chance, under no circumstances and if any one asked me I would tell them the same because of all the crap we have to put up with”* (CFG1) while another officer noted that *“I wouldn’t encourage my friends, family or anyone to join as the way we are being treated is shameful”* (BFG6).

When asked in focus groups what they believed the future of the police service would be like officers’ discussions were also framed negatively. For example one officer explained, *“What do I think about the future? It will be covering more with less support. A lot of officers I speak to are looking for alternatives”* (BFG8), while another stated that *“the police force in the future is going to be nothing like the force I joined”* (BFG1) . Other officer’s framed their explanations in simple terms about being required to do too much without adequate support or benefits, for example one officer stated that policing in the future would be based on *“too much demand for too little reward”* (BFG10).

Officers also explicitly discussed how they believed that changes to pay and conditions would affect the standard of recruits attracted to the police in the future and this would have a negative impact. An officer stated that *“Police pay in the future will attract no one of the*

*standard we need*” (BFG12), while another officer explained that *“I am not sure that the cuts have hit yet. When they do bring it in and people do leave, those that are young enough or have the balls, and can go back to something else, then people might start to question joining as the starting wage we will be paid is less than a PCSO. It might bring in different people”* (YFG9).

However officers were also realistic that despite the reduction in starting wages for police officers the promise of a full time job and salary would mean that people were still attracted to joining the police service. As an officer noted *“we are in a time of recession, so there will probably still not be a shortage of people wanting a guaranteed job with a salary”* (YFG10) and another added that *“there will never be a shortage of people wanting to join”* (YFG4). Despite this however, officers believed that it is not simply about the police service being a profession in demand as there will always be a willing labour force to supply it, but rather it is the quality and calibre of the people that want to join that would alter as a result of changes. For example, *“It’s not about quantity though it’s also about quality, we have to have quality people coming through and if the pension and the job aren’t there then we are not going to get the quality candidates coming through, we will get the numbers just not the quality”* (YFG3). Another officer was equally explicit in voicing this concern *“the individuals who are police officers now and the service that we are trying to give, once we are gone you will never replace it because with lower wages or whatever, you are going to replace us with people who are not like us and who will not give the same commitment or service and you know you will lose what you have now entirely, it will never be what is was and never be the same again”* (YFG11).

#### Chapter 8a: Managing the future.

Given the nature of the views and perceptions expressed by respondents to the pilot survey and focus groups important questions need to be raised about what can be done to try to alleviate the concerns of officers or at least help make them more manageable. This idea of manageability links into the final part of this report, in which officers discussed issues about support within the force and how it could be improved. Firstly officers expressed concern about what they perceived to be a failure to support the rank and file officers at a senior management level both nationally and within their own police force. In discussion about the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) for example an officer explained that *“what*

*annoys me is that often our own senior management team have let us down and ACPO continually throughout has let us down, they have taken the easy route at every opportunity, they have said yeah we can handle that we can do that. So we are on about the government but I think ACPO have been a massive problem for us and made our role much harder and I think that it is time that they stood up and started fighting for us” (YFG9).*

There was also a sense of cynicism directed towards senior police management with the idea that they were not facing the same issues as more junior officers and therefore the police at all ranks could no longer be said to be all in it together. For example an officer noted that *“they [senior management] are probably not going to be affected by the changes and at the end of it they will probably end up with a nice job out of it” (YFG5).* Other officers spoke about how this lack of senior support and failure to recognise how police morale and goodwill were being affected by the current changes was affecting their respect and trust of these officers. One officer discussed that *“what’s frustrating is that I have spoken to members of ACPO about all this and privately they will say that they are supportive of you, that the changes are outrageous, privately they will say that they don’t agree with the Home Secretary. But how many of them have actually gone public and stood up and said that what is happening is wrong and it shouldn’t be allowed to happen. I can only think of one or two, and it usually happens when they are on the verge of retirement or just retired. And it’s scandalous really that they are not prepared to stick their heads above the parapet and say what they really think” (YFG7).* Again a level of cynicism was expressed when officers discussed the lack of explicit senior opposition to the current and proposed changes. For example an officer stated that *“it’s because they are looking for these good jobs afterwards” (YFG2).*

Officers also discussed what they perceived to be specific problems with the senior management in their own force, for example one officer stated that *“They [senior management] are just not visible, they are not contactable, well they are, but they are not easily approachable” (YFG5)* while another officer picked up on this idea of visibility and support by explaining that *“they can’t communicate, there are some that can but they are few and far between” (CFG2).*

Given the largely negative views expressed towards police senior management by the officers in the study, questions about what they would like senior management to do to address these issues and concerns are of value. One officer noted that he would like senior management



*“To be more visible and approachable, some are a lot better than others, but some are not interested in us”* (CFG4) while another explained that *“It wouldn’t hurt for them to remember what it was like to be one of us [lower rank] because they were all there once”* (CFG3). Furthermore officers explained that they believed that remembering what it is like to be a police officer was vital for police management; *“I think that good bosses are good coppers”* (CFG1) but that this remembrance was often missing; *“it’s sad that they really seem to have forgotten what it is like”* (CFG2). Asked to explain how this made them feel officers simply explained that *“it just makes us feel really undervalued”* (CFG5).

Chapter 9: Summary and future directions.

It is the intention of the UWE research team to reproduce the study nationally by sending the survey to all officers from PC to CI in the remaining 42 police forces in England and Wales as well as conducting a focus group in each of the remaining 7 geographical police federation areas. This means that at least one force in each of the eight federation regions (South West, Wales, South East, London, Midlands, Eastern, Northwest and Northeast), will have been sampled for qualitative data, forming a geographic representation of the federation areas in England and Wales.

In relation to Avon and Somerset Constabulary the information within this report suggests that a local focus is given to dealing with officers concerns about changes to pensions, retirement age, privatisation and direct entry.

The report also suggests that senior management engagement and the development of management procedures to address the uncertainty created by such change is important so that officers feel both supported and protected by the senior ranks.

Another recommendation of the report is to utilise ideas from participative management to more actively engage officers in the change process itself. Using a wealth of experience and ideas from within the rank and file of Avon and Somerset may identify new and effective ways of working and also increase the sense of police organisational identity which appears so important for the maintenance of officer goodwill.

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