

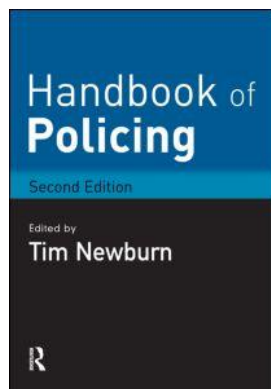
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Chapter 27

Leadership and performance management

Bob Golding and Stephen P. Savage

Introduction

In November 2007, in a news item headed 'Targets let dangerous criminal escape net' (*The Times* 13 November 2007), the Chief Executive of the National Policing Improvement Agency, Peter Neyroud, challenged the 'target culture' surrounding the British police service, on the basis that pursuit of particular, government driven, targets – in this case around the 'numbers of offences brought to justice' – was becoming detrimental to the policing of serious, violent crimes. That specific case aside, this was a significant intervention in the development of performance management within British policing, because it signalled a concern amongst those clearly not unsympathetic to performance management *per se* that perhaps things had gone 'too far', or that the particular forms which performance management had taken were driving policing in inappropriate directions. Once again, it seemed, performance management in the policing context was becoming a hotly contested issue. Alongside the debate over the role of performance management in policing, another, closely related, theme has also been the focus of recent controversy: police leadership. Reflecting what has been called the 'never-ending crisis of police leadership' (Rowe 2006), the Labour government's radical programme of police reform, launched in the early years of the new millenium (Savage 2007a: 188–205), identified the 'quality of police leadership' as one area in need of reform (Home Office 2003). Although in this context what was embraced by the notion of 'leadership' was much more comprehensive than previous 'crises of leadership' – as shall be seen later, it encompassed 'leadership' at all levels of the police organisation, not just senior levels as tended to be the case in past debates over police leadership – once again police leadership was to be at the centre of debate and policy development.

Against this backcloth, this chapter examines both leadership and performance management in the context of British policing, both current and past. After discussing the notions of 'police leadership' and 'police performance management' as relatively distinct fields of study, it will consider the interplay



of an interface between leadership and performance management by reflecting on the role of leadership within a 'performance culture'. Before that, it will be useful to consider some contextual issues.

The first point to note is that the whole debate over police leadership and performance management is premised on an assumption, now taken largely for granted, that policing can be '*managed*' as such. This is not as straightforward an assumption as it may appear; some scholars have questioned whether management principles and processes which apply to other organisations, private and public, can ever apply to the specific world of the police organisation. When the notions associated with what is now termed 'new public management' (Ranson and Stewart 1994) first began to emerge within discourses on British police management in the mid-1980s, in the form of 'Policing by Objectives' (Butler 1984; Savage 2007a: 86–92), one response was to carve out policing as a 'special case' as far as the management process was concerned. Waddington in particular has articulated this thesis, by arguing that 'management by objectives', involving a cycle of objective setting, plans to achieve objectives and assessment and review of outcomes in terms of performance, is a model which cannot realistically apply in the policing context, and for two reasons (Waddington 1986). On the one hand, policing is essentially about *reacting* to unpredictable demand, rather than the pursuit of goals set out in advance, as might be the case in other organisations. In a later study Waddington (1999) was to restate this view when, in responding to a self-posed question of whether policing is in a sense 'unmanageable', he replied: 'The answer is yes, if management and control is taken to mean the issuing of directives, guidance or any other means of influencing police behaviour *in advance* of the situation they deal with. Policing is largely reactive' (Waddington 1999: 242, emphasis in original). On the other hand, policing by its very nature does not lend itself to 'performance' measurement in the way other activities might, in the sense that not only are the police attached to 'outcomes' (such as crime rates) over which they have relatively little control, but the policing function itself is as much 'symbolic' as it is operational – or, as Reiner (2000: 112) has expressed it, what the police *are* is as important as what the police *do* – and as such, policing cannot be reduced to the execution of measurable 'tasks' as performance measurement and management appears to assume. Although contemporary debate in policing is now much more about what *forms* performance management should adopt rather than whether performance management can be applied *in principle* to policing, the questions which Waddington and others have raised in these respects are important to register at this stage.

A second contextual issue relates to the inter-relationships *between* 'leadership' and 'performance management'. Notwithstanding the differing conceptions of 'leadership' which will be considered later, a view held in some quarters is that leadership and performance management are in many ways two sides of the same coin. On the one hand, leadership is to be seen as a function whose central component *is* performance management, in the sense that effectively managing performance is what leaders do. On the other hand, effective performance management is seen as only achievable *through* strong leadership (HMIC 2007a). This view holds that leadership and performance

management operate in a symbiotic and functionally compatible relationship. This is a conception we would wish to challenge, as will become apparent later in this discussion, on the grounds that there are potential or actual tensions between the role of leadership and the machineries of performance management, at least in terms of the forms taken by police performance management in the British context. In particular, the latter has been characterised by the diminution of levels of *discretion* and degrees of autonomy which, we would argue, are critical to effective police leadership. This is a theme which will run throughout this discussion.

A third contextual issue is the interplay between frameworks of police performance management and leadership on the one hand and the structures and processes of *governance* on the other. Performance management, for example, has become almost inseparable from British police governance as 'performance culture' has permeated the mind-set of government itself, and of the national agencies responsible for the regulation of policing and of police management at force levels. To a great extent police governance has become the regulation and control of police performance, at national, force and divisional levels. Although police governance in Britain has been characterised by the increasing 'nationalisation' of police decision-making through the expansion of direct controls over policing policy (see Jones, this volume), it has also been characterised by the growth of regulatory governance in the form of what Braithwaite (2000: 49–54) has called the 'new regulatory state'. At the core of police regulatory governance are the machineries for directing, monitoring and acting upon the performance of the police at all levels, from the national to the 'micro-local'. As will be seen, this has been associated with the proliferation of agencies made responsible for maintaining standards of performance at all of those levels, all contributing to the diminution of discretion available to police leaders, as mentioned above. In these senses an examination of police performance management and its relationship with police leadership is at one and the same time an examination of systems of police governance. On this basis we can now proceed with our first concern: police leadership.

Police leadership

As has been noted earlier, effective leadership is often held to be an indispensable component of performance management and indeed to police reform itself: 'leadership is generally regarded as the key to performance, and improving police leadership is the central plank in the police reform agenda' (Dobby *et al.* 2004: 1).

Definitional and conceptual issues

There are numerous attempts in management literature and elsewhere which seek to define 'leadership', though it is widely accepted that there is no one consensually agreed definition of leadership, let alone of *police* leadership. One view is that leadership can be seen as a generic concept which cuts across

particular sectors and organisations, rendering police leadership as largely indistinguishable from any other type of leadership. Sir Ian Blair, when Deputy Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, for example, argued, with qualification, that 'police leadership is not essentially different from leadership in other spheres of activity' (cited in Adlam and Villiers 2003: 169). In the British context, a specific driver of the concern to define, or redefine police leadership has been the 'Workforce Modernisation' agenda, a key part of the Labour government's police reform programme (Crawford, this volume).

The police 'Workforce Modernisation' agenda was set out initially in the White Paper *Building Communities, Beating Crime* (Home Office 2004a), which signalled the 'second wave' of police reform under Labour (Savage 2007a: 188–90) after the Police Reform Act 2002. The Workforce Modernisation Programme itself had a number of strands, several of which were related directly to police leadership, including:

- Enhancing the professionalism of police officers and police staff
- Opening the service to 'new talent'
- Strengthening police leadership *at all levels* (Home Office 2004a: 76, emphasis added).

The notions of 'enhancing the professionalism' of the police and of opening the service to 'new talent' are closely related, because they raise once again the spectre of *direct entry* to senior police leadership levels, in place of the 'single-entry' system whereby all police officers start as constables. This issue will be addressed in a later section. The notion of strengthening police leadership 'at all levels' is particularly significant, because it signifies what might be called the 'fragmentation' or 'dispersal' of police leadership, from a process situated at the senior levels of the police organisation with effects downward throughout the organisation, to one which is multi-level and which embraces frontline policing, supervisory roles, middle management and strategic command. Waters (2007) has argued that Labour's police reform agenda was imbued with meeting the challenges not of modernity but postmodernity, of policing an increasingly pluralised, fragmented and diverse society (Johnston 1998). One reflection of that has been the re-conception of police leadership as operative at a variety of levels, and in particular at the level of the frontline officer, who is to be increasingly a 'leader' of a *team* of people constituting the fragmented and pluralised 'extended family of policing' (Crawford, this volume).

The Workforce Modernisation Programme has thus spawned a range of initiatives around the theme of police leadership. One of these has been to reinvigorate the work of the Police Leadership Development Board – a tripartite body of Home Office, ACPO and the Association of Police Authorities set up in 2001 to address concerns over police leadership and performance, and later incorporated into the 'Workforce Modernisation Board'. A working definition of police leadership emerging from this body is one which describes it as ultimately 'about ensuring that individuals, the community and the state get the best that is reasonably possible from the human and other resources

which are available to pursue the goals of policing' (Dobby *et al.* 2004: 26), quite clearly a more 'generic' definition.

The Police Leadership Academy (formerly part of Centrex, the national police training and development organisation, which was itself absorbed into the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) in 2007) has, for the purpose of developing a doctrine of police leadership, defined leadership as 'the ability to effectively influence and combine individuals and resources to achieve objectives that would otherwise be impossible' (Gibson and Villiers 2007: 6). Again, a generic definition. However, the Academy developed the definition of leadership in a more sector specific way by drawing distinctions between 'command', 'leadership' and 'management'. 'Command', they argue, is based on positional power, derived from the parameters of power granted to a person in a particular office, with success 'measured' against objective criteria and by the willingness of subordinates to follow. Leadership, is distinguished from command in this analysis in that the authority is personal (not positional) and involves a mix of exhortation, personal example and the exercise of command authority. Finally 'management' is described as an aspect of command concerned with the efficient allocation and control of resources. The 'well equipped leader', drawing these threads together is said then to 'be able to manage a substantial challenge in consequence of having solid sources of authority in each of the three domains of command, leadership and management' (Gibson and Villiers 2007: 7). These definitions offer a more nuanced picture, one that is more responsive to the particular context of policing, although still not exclusively so.

Whilst recognising that police leadership skills are *in part generic*, Gibson and Villiers identify three distinctive areas which they argue impose 'distinctive demands' on and of police leadership, themselves elements of the 'uniqueness' of policing, namely:

- the constitutional and legal context (including the issue of the exercise of discretion inherent in the office of constable)
- the variety and complexity of the nature of police work – including what was referred to earlier as 'unpredictable demand'
- the psychological and ethical pressures imposed on practitioners and the need for senior leadership to take them into account (2007: 2, 37–49).

Adlam and Villiers (2003: 215) had previously considered the distinctiveness of police leadership through an analysis of the 'police purpose' – with a view to establishing whether police *leadership* is indeed a 'distinct form of practice'. They articulate a notion of the 'policing purpose' based on a combination of functions linking together crime prevention, order maintenance and the role of the police as 'social peacekeepers', essentially restating the concept of 'policing by consent' (Reiner 2000: 48–50). 'Effective police leadership' reflects these functions within a framework of action based on the following of practice, guidelines and an underpinning ethical framework. Remaining with the notion of the 'uniqueness' of policing in the leadership context, ACPO (1993) also claimed a 'special case', listing features that make policing unique,

based on the particular nature of police responsibilities, including law enforcement, order maintenance, and helping, befriending and reassuring the community. The significance of the large degree of discretion in police decision-making, which cannot be delegated, a wide range of responsibilities, and various other features including instant decision-making, the emotional demands of policing and reliance on individual skill, judgement and initiative, they suggest, justifies the view that policing is indeed 'unique' (cited in Adlam and Villiers 2003: 217; see also Gibson and Villiers 2007: 1). According to these views, police leadership combines both generic and sector-specific demands and functions, constituting a 'distinct form of practice' (Adlam and Villiers 2003: 216).

Crises of leadership

Police leadership in Britain has been the focus of periodic and recurring criticism, at times explicit, at others more implicit, and some of it government-inspired, which has called into question the 'quality' of such leadership and its capacity to support the police sector as it attempts to meet the new challenges emerging within that sector. The discourse of a 'crisis of police leadership' is then used to legitimate programmes of central intervention and regulation and wider police reform, including, as shall be seen, performance management regimes. Vick, commenting on the background to Labour's programme of police reform, argues that:

the overarching criticism of police leadership is its perceived failure to lead and adapt to change. The Home Secretary has been critical of the conservative nature of policing. He has argued that police leaders have been less radical than politicians or academics in generating innovation. Police conservatism is matched by police conformity. Police leaders uncritically follow fashion. (Vick 2000: 4)

It is not only government which has challenged police leadership. Based on qualitative research and analysis, Gibson and Villiers (a chief police officer and academic respectively working closely with police leadership development programmes at Centrex), have identified the main criticisms of police leadership as being that it is 'overly prescriptive, inappropriately traditional, expedient, pragmatic and deeply influenced by the mores of an insular police culture' (Gibson and Villiers 2007: 16). However, much of the agenda around 'crises of leadership' has been shaped by government itself, partly with genuine concerns about the capacity of police leadership to deliver what it expects the police service to deliver, and partly as a convenient case construction to 'soften up' the police sector before wider programmes of reform are launched. It is possible to identify two phases within which a discourse around a 'crisis of leadership' has been instrumental in constructing a case for wider police reform.

The first phase occurred towards the end of Margaret Thatcher's period as Prime Minister and prefaced the police reform agenda of the early to mid 1990s, the culmination of which was the Police and Magistrates' Courts Act

1994 (see chapters by Newburn and Jones, this volume). Although Thatcher herself was highly supportive of the police sector, certainly in comparison to many other areas of the public sector, even she was moved to question the quality of police leadership towards the end of the 1980s. She was known to be interested in the notion of an 'officer class' along the military model of an officer cadre. In part this was motivated by an apparent concern to use the services of military officers freed up by the downsizing of the military in the wake of the end of the Cold-War – and Thatcher had great admiration for, if not a sense of debt to, military leaders for delivering victory in the Falklands War (Savage 2007a: 173–5). But it is also reflected in a view that the police sector, at a time of rising crime, needed an influx of 'new blood' directly into leadership levels. As Thatcher argued: 'It is essential to ensure that police leadership is of the highest calibre. All organisations need to consider how best to recruit talent and subsequently to develop it. All organisations stand to benefit from an injection of new blood and new ideas' (quoted in Judge 1994: 448).

This baton was subsequently handed on to other Conservative government ministers, who were becoming increasingly frustrated with the seemingly poor 'returns' on the high levels of investment and expenditure committed to the police sector throughout the 1980s – considered later in relation to the issue of 'value for money'. The discourse of a 'crisis of leadership' was then used as part of the armoury surrounding the Conservatives' agenda for the reform of police governance, police pay and conditions of service, and police roles and functions which were to be a feature of the policing scene of the early 1990s (Savage 2007a: 173–9).

The second phase of a 'crisis of leadership' came with the Labour government's strategy for police reform in the early years of the new millennium. Labour's radical programme of police reform had many dimensions and was supported by a range of concerns (Savage 2007a: 188–90), but some of them related directly or indirectly to the quality of police leadership. For example, it was claimed that police performance varied too much between police forces and that police resources need to be 'better managed' (Home Office 2001: 102), both claims clearly indicating shortfalls in police leadership. However, what differed this time around was that the scope of what was to be called 'police leadership' was to be widened significantly, to embrace *all levels of the police organisation*, not just middle and senior management levels. A particular focus in this respect was the need to bridge the 'reassurance gap' between actual levels of crime and people's perceptions of crime, by strengthening local or 'neighbourhood' policing. There was to be a renewed focus on developing police leadership at the level of frontline policing, via neighbourhood policing *teams*, which included not just warranted officers but other members of the extended policing family.

Such discourses have been used to strengthen cases for wider programmes of change and reform, though this does not make their claims justified or legitimate. Two points can be made in this respect. Firstly, there is counter-evidence to the claim that police leadership in Britain suffers from a lack of 'quality', and not just from within the sector. The Campaign for Leadership (part of the Work Foundation) maintains a database of over 40,000 leaders,

peers and staff, as part of a 'Liberating Leadership' profiling tool based on 38 'constructs' which are identified through research as critical in effective leadership (Tampoe 1998). Within that database are 5,000 profiles of police leaders. Analysis of that database has indicated that police leaders compare favourably with both the public sector, and all sectors in the UK – not consistent with a view that police leadership is in some way poorer than that found in either the public or private sector (Gibson and Villiers 2007: 14). Secondly, it should not be ignored that much change and reform of policing has been *internally driven by police leaders*. Reiner (2000: 204–8) has documented the key roles in developing the 'service-ethos' in British policing by police leaders such as Kenneth Newman and Peter Imbert, and Savage (2007a: 128–41) has analysed the roles played by 'police visionaries' (such as John Alderson) and police 'policy entrepreneurs' in driving reform from within, often against the tide. These are prime examples of 'leadership' in the strictest sense of the term. Furthermore, there is evidence that when police leaders work in partnership with other public sector bodies and leaders, they exhibit relative strengths in 'leading' as such. As HMIC have commented, '[ACPO] has, through its members, contributed much to the success of the partnerships. It is evident that the police service . . . often takes the lead in partnership activity' (HMIC 2000a: xi).

This would not, however, mean that there was no scope for continuing the quest to prepare police leadership for the new challenges facing contemporary policing (Dobby *et al.* 2004: v–vi), a task which was now to be charged to the Police Leadership Development Board within Centrex and latterly the NPIA. Not only did the work of the Board embrace the wider conception of 'police leadership' referred to earlier, it also sought to develop best practice and support particular models and styles of police leadership itself. This moved inexorably into the territory of *transformational leadership*.

Models and leadership styles – the pursuit of transformational leadership

One of the key themes in recent literature on police leadership is the concept of 'transformational leadership' (Burns 1978; Long 2003; Adlam 2003; Dobby *et al.* 2004; Gibson and Villiers 2006). Bass (1990) distinguishes between 'transactional' and 'transformational' leadership, the former being an exchange where leaders hand over rewards when followers meet expectations – akin to a contractual arrangement or management based on contingency reward (Long 2003: 644); the latter involving the raising of followers' sense of purpose and levels of motivation. Transformational leadership, in summary, 'encompasses those being led, the employees, subordinates or followers in the leadership process', characterised by 'inspirational motivation', 'intellectual stimulation' and 'individualised consideration' (Barker, cited in Long: 2003: 644). In general, transformational leadership has been found to be more effective in both the long and the short term than transactional leadership, in that it leads to greater effort and commitment by staff through providing for self confidence, developing learning and communicating a vision which develops in turn new ways of thinking (Bass and Avolio 1994; Hinkin and Tracey 1994; Geyer and Steyrer 1994; Hater and Bass 1988, cited in Dobby *et*

al. 2004: 1). Arguably, transformational leadership is a more 'democratic' style of leadership.

Specific research on police leadership was undertaken in 2004 to inform the Police Leadership Development Board on ways in which police leadership needed to change (Dobby *et al.* 2004). This identified 53 behaviours as being related to effective leadership, of which 50 were closely matched to a 'transformational' style, affecting positively subordinates' attitude to work, job satisfaction and commitment to the organisation (Dobby *et al.* 2004: v). A critical issue also highlighted was the damaging impact caused by those who did not exhibit a transformational approach, in terms, for example, of damaging morale and performance (Dobby *et al.* 2004: 25), and it was concluded that 'leadership behaviours described as transformational should be provided by every police leader who has direct line management responsibility for other staff', on the basis that it is more likely to result in higher performing, better motivated, teams (Dobby *et al.* 2004: 25; Gibson and Villiers 2006: 3).

In policing terms, however, it has also been argued there 'is a need for the police leader to be able to exhibit flexibility in leadership styles . . . the skilled police leader has to recognise where transactional leadership would unnecessarily constrain or inhibit more junior officers and prevent them from making a valuable contribution to organisational success' (Long 2003: 645; see also Adlam and Villiers 2003: 211). Gibson and Villiers (2006: 28) talk of a 'leadership continuum' (after Tannenbaum and Schmidt 1958) and contend that the 'use of other styles of leadership is important also for an all round effective leader'; so whilst the ability to lead with a transformational style is important, they argue that 'this must be coupled with a situational awareness and knowledge of how other styles can be effectively used' (Gibson and Villiers 2007: 3).

In moving towards the development of a Police Leadership Qualities Framework (PLQF), Gibson and Villiers reviewed the prevailing theory on leadership and sought to relate it to policing (2007: 19–30). Drawing on the thesis that police leadership was part generic and part specific to the policing role, they developed a position beyond simply advocating a transformational leadership style in the particular context of the requirements of police leadership. They identify arguments against transformational leadership alone, for example an over-emphasis on personality and attributes, quoting Bolden (2005) who argues that 'a range of more inclusive models of leadership are now emerging which argue for a quieter, less dramatic leadership at all levels within the organisation' (cited in Gibson and Villiers 2007: 29; see also Wexler *et al.* 2007, in the context of US policing based on Collins' thesis on 'Good to Great' leadership (Collins 2001)). The 'post heroic leadership style' (after Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe 2005), based on research in the public sector, reinforces this evolution, identifying six features of leadership as:

- valuing individuals
- networking and achieving
- enabling (empowers, delegates, develops potential)

- acting with integrity
- being accessible
- being decisive.

Gibson and Villiers further considered the notion of 'distributed leadership' – a situational/contingency approach, recognising working arrangements whereby teams are not necessarily co-located, where leaders problem solve by drawing on others' expertise such that there is a degree of interdependence, thereby fitting modern organisational (and police) practice more realistically. Here leadership is 'a shifting and shared enterprise', is 'morally desirable', 'promotes participation and empowerment', and 'does not degrade followers' (Gibson and Villiers 2007: 28). So leadership in this thesis is practised throughout the police organisation at all levels; it is 'a style rather than a school or doctrine of leadership', and as such does not replace 'transformational leadership' which should not, they argue, become effectively a cult of personality. Finally, consideration and support is given to democratic leadership (as opposed to autocratic), based on consultation and involvement of staff, whilst retaining ultimate responsibility (Gibson and Villiers 2007: 30). This then set out the basis of a doctrine for police leadership, and a means for developing the performance of police leaders.

How was, or is this intended to be, taken forward then in a practical sense? The existing Integrated Competency Framework (ICF) for police personnel, developed on behalf of the police service by 'Skills for Justice', and required to be incorporated within police personnel systems like promotion, development, performance management and workforce planning (see Home Office circular 42/2002), was not felt to include the values and qualities of highly effective leaders (Centrex 2007b)). Consequently the PLQF based on the police service-led 'view' and research (through the Centrex and latterly the NPIA), added to the ICF the PLQF leadership development tool domains (headed 'leading people, leading organisations, leading the way and personal qualities and values' (Centrex, 2007b)). The implications of the approach to police leadership is that all police officers, and indeed police staff, exercise leadership in circumstances particular to the policing role, based on providing a key leadership role in society, and where public expectations require 'higher' standards of conduct. Based on the ethos that police leadership applies to all officers and staff, five 'integrated' leadership levels – along the lines of what we have called the 'dispersal of police leadership' – have been established:

- *Leading by example* – focusing on providing a professional lead, dealing with the public and relating to colleagues and partners. The Initial Police Learning and Development Programme (IPLDP) and Core Leadership Development Programme provide development at this stage.
- *Leading others* – this is development aimed at supervision, and the link between individual character, values and the exercise of leadership.
- *Leading teams* – related to development at second tier management.
- *Leading units* – related to development at senior management team level.

- *Leading organisations* – related to development at strategic levels, involving the performance and capability of the whole organisation (Gibson and Villiers 2007).

The direction for police leadership and its development is therefore established, and driven through mechanisms like the Integrated Competency Framework and the Police Leadership Qualities Framework. Whilst there are critics of the competency approach to leadership (Bolden *et al.* 2003), this is none the less the approach adopted by the Workforce Modernisation Board for policing in England and Wales, and as such is effectively a 'given'. How then does this relate to performance management in the early twenty-first century?

Leadership and performance management – a contradiction in terms?

In the context of police leadership this arguably raises a 'paradox of leadership', whereby the qualities required of the police 'transformational' leader may 'impel' the leader to challenge the 'objectives of government or the methods by which it chooses to address them – or both' (Adlam 2003: xii). Traditionally, the concepts of constabulary independence and discretion have underpinned the philosophy of policing in the UK (Lustgarten 1986), although the Patten Inquiry into policing in Northern Ireland, favoured the concept of 'operational responsibility' over operational independence (Patten 1999). In the particular context of performance management, Villiers observed that 'the performance management culture has weakened the protective constitutional barrier of operational independence which was the police version of professional autonomy' (Villiers 2003: 24).

The contexts of New Public Management (NPM) and the earlier Financial Management Initiative (FMI) have provided an influential driver on the business of policing (Savage 2007a: 83–95). As it has done so it has arguably represented a constraint on the limits of discretion. It has been argued that 'never has [policing] been under so much pressure to retreat to an environment of autocracy and prescription' (Miller and Palmer 2003: 116). Therefore, the question arises as to whether there are unintended consequences in the application of NPM and the centralisation implicit in terms of what has been described as 'the nationalisation of policing' (Johnston 2000: 91–6; Jones 2003: 613–16).

Setting aside the constitutional implications for the 'office of constable' and 'constabulary independence', the impact of a centralised performance management regime raises an issue in relation to police leadership – the balance between 'leadership' and 'management' (Adlam and Villiers 2003: xii). Bennis points out that management is about control, administration and 'doing things right', whereas leaders innovate, inspire trust and have the ability to challenge the *status quo* (Bennis 1989, cited in Long 2003: 643). This leadership/management dichotomy has been identified in the wider literature on leadership. Kotter (1996, cited in Cameron and Green 2004: 127), for example, argues that 'we have raised a generation of very talented people to be managers, not leader/managers, and vision is not a component of effective management'. Leaders differ from managers in his analysis in that they set

direction rather than plan and budget; they align people rather than organise and staff; and they motivate people rather than control and problem solve. Neyroud and Beckley, in the policing context, appear to support Kotter when they observe that the 1980s and 1990s were dominated by the demand for 'better management' in policing, arguing that 'the shift to devolved budgets and the increasing homage paid to managerialism' (2001: 218) has led to leadership becoming a subset of management. In the managerialist vision, they argue, public confidence will be won through ever improving performance, which in reality sits 'uneasily' alongside public perceptions that, despite improving 'performance', policing is performing poorly (Neyroud and Beckley 2001: 218–19).

Leadership is not necessarily incompatible with performance management – much depends again on the nature of the performance management regime, and the extent to which it permits leadership (and discretion), or simply requires management. However, 'there remain significant tensions between the processes that are necessary to the inculcation and stimulation of progressive forms of leadership and those that underpin the contemporary culture of performance management . . . good leadership cannot merely be reduced to good performance management' (Long 2003: 649). There is also another context for police leadership in the twenty-first century – change. The 'rise and rise' of the performance culture (Savage 2007a: 212) is arguably just one side of the coin, the other being the (related) growth of 'consumerism' and its impact on public sector reform as a whole; a recent Cabinet Office report noted that 'Britain's public services face unprecedented challenges at the start of the 21st century. They include demands to modernise public services and orient them more closely to the needs and wishes of customers, and higher expectations on the part of the general public' (Cabinet Office 2001). Arguably this is the very context in which transformational *leadership* rather than performance *management* as such is required. This leads us to address performance management head-on.

Performance management

If 'leadership' is a notion which has been associated with the British police since its effective inception in the nineteenth century, particularly given the traditions of militaristic police command structures, performance management was an altogether more recent arrival on the policing scene. Indeed, when, under the 'Thatcher revolution' in the 1980s, other areas of the public sector were to feel the full force of the 'value for money' culture, of which performance management was a key part, the police sector remained for some considerable period of time a 'privileged' sector (Morris 1994: 308; Loader and Mulcahy 2003: 289).

Explanations for the relatively privileged status of the police during the Thatcher years are varied, and range from the role of the police as an esteemed sector, alongside the armed forces, within the ideology of 'Thatcherism' (Patten 2006: 69), through the pivotal status of the police within the politics and politicisation of law and order (Savage 2007a: 167–73), to Jenkins' equally

blunt, thesis that it was a matter of 'Thatcher's gratitude for the Police Federation being the first trade union to campaign for the Tory Party (in 1979)' (Jenkins 2006: 169). Whatever the explanation for the relatively late arrival of the value for money culture within the police sector, it is difficult to deny that performance management within policing made stuttering starts and did not fully unfold until well into the 1990s. We will briefly trace that development here.

A recent 'official' definition of 'performance management' in the policing context holds it to be: 'the practice of: *reviewing* current performance and the factors that might affect future performance; and *taking decisions* in response to that information; so that appropriate *actions* are taken in order to make future performance better than it might otherwise be' (Home Office/ACPO: 2008: 4, emphasis in original). If this is how performance management is to be conceived then in a sense the essence of police performance management was spelt out many years ago in the form of 'policing by objectives', initially in the USA (Lubans and Edgar 1979), and subsequently in Britain (Butler 1984), both drawing upon the general management philosophy of 'management by objectives' (Drucker 1955). 'Policing by objectives' was an attempt to clarify and rationalise the processes related to police actions and decision-making by framing police management within a 'planning cycle' of goal-setting, objective setting, action-planning, implementation and assessment of results. A core feature of this cycle was *measurement and review* of police performance, in terms of 'inputs' – resources spent on policing activity – and 'outputs' – what police actions do or achieve. The measurement and review of 'performance', as a basis for future actions and decisions, was something therefore mapped out some considerable time ago with the first stirrings of what Weatheritt (1986: 120) called 'planned policing'. However, as has already been noted, and despite some interest from within the police service in the more systematic use of performance measurement and management (Savage 2007a: 92–3), there was little pressure from *government* during the 1980s for this to be spread to any great extent across the police sector. Admittedly, the arrival of the Financial Management Initiative – the Whitehall inspired attempt to drive the public sector down the road of the '3 E's', efficiency, effectiveness and economy (Horton 1993: 134–5) – at the door of the police service in the form of the famous Circular 114/83 (Savage 2007a: 92–4), did spawn such efficiency measures as the 'civilianisation' of police roles. However, even this and related initiatives failed to really transform the specific management of *performance* as such. The first emphatic shift towards police performance management followed on the heels of the police reform agenda which took hold under the Conservative government in the mid-1990s (Loader and Mulcahy 2003: 288–9; Savage 2007a: 173–9). As with later reform agendas, as shall be seen later, this programme of reform and the rise of performance management culture associated with it were prefaced by concern with what might be called a *crisis of performance*. Just as the push by government to overhaul police leadership has been legitimised by discourses on 'crises of leadership', as seen earlier, so too have agendas for re-shaping police performance regimes been rationalised by apparent failures in police 'performance'.

The particular 'crisis of performance' constructed in this case involved concerns within government towards the end of the 1980s that despite the

'special treatment' of the police sector as a public service – in terms of repeated favourable financial settlements – the police were failing to deliver on the crime front. This helped pave the way for government, amongst other things, to tighten the screws of performance management. Critical in this respect were HMIC and the Audit Commission, regulatory agencies which had already begun during the 1980s to further the cause of 'New Public Management' (Ranson and Stewart 1994) in the policing context. Both agencies in particular had pressed for the greater use of *performance measurement* by police managers and others associated with police resource management; central to that was to be the formation of police Performance Indicators (PIs). The 'crisis of performance' case added energy to the movement for measurable indicators of police performance – after all, how could performance be driven up if what is to be driven up is not defined and subject to measurement? A government directive in 1993 (Home Office 1993) issued the first set of national PIs (Waters 2000: 270), which HMIC and the Audit Commission jointly worked on to operationalise, and the Police and Magistrates' Courts Act 1994 set out a schedule of National Key Performance Indicators based on the government's new powers to draw up national priorities for policing; the Act also made the drawing up of local policing plans a requirement, another mechanism which encouraged the measurement of performance. By 1995 the Audit Commission published its first set of national results (Audit Commission 1995), presenting force-by-force 'performance' in a range of areas – effectively the first *league tables* for policing, including:

- speed of response to 999 calls
- total amount of crime
- rate of detection
- number of officers available for operational duty
- cost of policing per head of population.

After criticism and pressure from ACPO that this framework paid undue homage to the more 'quantifiable' dimensions of policing, the Audit Commission qualified their schedule to include more 'qualitative' indicators, such as 'percentage of people satisfied with the level of foot and mobile patrol' (Savage 2007a: 103). As well as developing more sophisticated PIs, the regulatory agencies began to develop more informative league tables – comparing Dyfed-Powys with the Metropolitan Police Service is not very revealing or helpful! In particular, in 1997 HMIC created the framework of 'families of forces' across England and Wales, bracketing together forces considered to be operating in similar environments (Hale *et al.* 2005: 4), in order to be able to compare 'like with like'.

Whatever the specific forms taken by the framework of performance measurement, and despite the view that policing was a 'special case' when it comes down to assessing 'performance', making measurement nigh on impossible (Waddington 1986), the ethos of performance management had by now become firmly established in the 'mind-set' of British policing, within and

without the service. That mind-set is heavily steeped in what is now known as New Public Management (NPM), a cultural shift in the management of public sector organisations, not just in the UK but elsewhere (Ranson and Stewart 1994). NPM has a number of dimensions. Firstly, it contains an assumption in the superiority and effectiveness of markets in service provision. Where the state is the provider of services then market mechanisms, or 'quasi-markets' (Bartlett and Le Grand 1993), should be developed, and competition between service sectors encouraged. Under the Conservatives, one reflection of this was compulsory competitive tendering (Parker 1990). Secondly, it holds to the notion that there should be a separation between the bodies responsible for policy and budgets on the one hand, and those responsible for service delivery on the other; what Osborne and Gaebler (1992: 34) famously called the separation of 'steering' and 'rowing'. Thirdly, it displays a preference for highly decentralised decision-making with decisions made as close as possible to consumers of public services (Savage *et al.* 2000: 32–6). Pollitt (2002: 276) summarises the key features of NPM as focusing on:

- being close to customers
- being performance driven (targets, standards)
- continuous quality improvement
- lean flat structures – decentralised decision-making
- tight cost controls
- performance related human resource (HR) systems.

Although there was a synergy between NPM and the 'Thatcher revolution', NPM was by no means threatened when Labour came into office in 1997; the change of political administration did little to halt the further development of NPM. The compulsory competitive tendering regime of the Conservative administration was replaced by the 'best value' agenda under Labour, a robust framework to deliver value for money based on the 'four Cs' – the need to *challenge* how and why a service is provided; the need to *compare* a service's performance with the performance of other services; the need to *consult* with taxpayers and service users; and the need for *competition* within the sector (DETR 1998; Savage 2007a: 109). To accompany the 'four Cs', government developed a suite of 'best value performance indicators' (BVPs) that were given statutory underpinning within the Local Government Act 1999, which, in the policing context, amended the Police Act 1996 to allow HMIC inspection and reporting to the Secretary of State on the extent to which Police Authorities complied with the Best Value regime. Furthermore, the Audit Commission was given a role in quality checking the 'Best Value Performance Plan'. One area this function highlighted was crime reporting, clearly a central issue for police performance management. The apparent under reporting of crime was identified and subsequently highlighted in a 1999 Audit Commission Report, and concerns were raised about 'statistical manipulation' in the field of crime reporting (HMIC 2000b). Changes followed over time to encourage the

recording of more reliable performance data (for example, the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard; sanctioned detection rates; offenders brought to justice targets).

Best value, however, was only a stage in Labour's programme of reform around police performance management. The whole agenda of NPM in the policing context and of performance management in particular stepped up a gear with Labour's radical reform programme early in the new millennium. In this context the governance of performance management was to shift both upwards in terms of national machineries for managing police performance, and downwards in terms of localised elements of PIs. Once again, however, reforms were introduced on the back of an apparent 'crisis of performance' in policing, in this case one more complex than simple crime rates and involving two sets of concerns.

Firstly, the police service in general, and the Metropolitan Police Service in particular, were rocked by the findings of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (Macpherson 1999; see chapter by Bowling *et al.* this volume). Whilst most attention over Lawrence was, and still is, focused on the question of institutional racism and the failings of the police in responding to the murder of Stephen Lawrence which related to institutional racism, another damning dimension of Lawrence were concerns about the basic *competence* of the police operation, the competence of the officers taking part, and of the way decisions and decision-making were *managed*. This may have helped steel the Labour government to consider the more fundamental reforms of policing which did emerge within several years of the publication of the Lawrence Inquiry.

The second dimension of the 'crisis of performance' did relate more directly to crime but not just to levels of crime. The document which launched the radical reform agenda, *Policing a New Century: A Blueprint for Reform* (Home Office 2001) presented a case for reform based on the following, all of which reflect on 'problems' of performance:

- that levels of crime remain 'too high', particularly crimes of violence and antisocial behaviour
- that fear of crime remains too high and that the gap between actual and perceived crime remains too great
- that police detection rates are too low
- that police performance varies too much between individual police forces
- that police resources need to be better managed
- that public confidence in the police is falling and is particularly low within some minority ethnic communities (Home Office 2001: 102).

Subsequently, the Police Reform Act established the National Policing Plan, granting a prescriptive role for the Home Secretary to set out annual three-year plans, against which police forces were required to develop their local three-year strategies – a centralising measure given that it sets the framework within which BVPIs are incorporated and within which forces, and indeed

Basic Command Units (BCUs), can be 'ranked' (Long 2003: 637). The Act also created the Police Standards Unit (PSU), a national body to regulate the performance of individual police forces and sub-force operational command units (BCUs). The PSU would operate at three levels to regulate police performance (Home Office 2005). Firstly, by using comparative data it would identify 'poor performing' policing units. Secondly, it would have the power to conduct investigations into units not performing 'to their best' and to set out 'remedial actions', including direct intervention and management from the PSU. Thirdly, the PSU could identify 'best practice' in strategic and operational policing and disseminate this across the police service. These powers constituted a significant shift in the police performance management regime because it goes beyond the 'naming and shaming' or PIs and league tables to the active *management* of performance from the centre.

The PSU started operating within the Home Office in 2004, and began to develop the 'Police Performance Assessment Framework' (PPAF) based on centrally collated and developed statistics (iQuanta). This approach included comparative managerial/performance management systems using concepts like 'most similar forces' and 'families' of BCUs, key diagnostic indicators and a range of graphical charts and tables designed to 'allow users to compare performance against peers, identify significant changes in performance and track progress towards targets' (Home Office 2008: 111; see below). 'Baseline assessments' through inspections by HMIC were used to reinforce the process. The Home Office Unit has since been realigned following its transition from the PSU in 2007 into a Police and Crime Standards Directorate (PCSD), so that it was now concerned *primarily* with the management of performance, and leads on the co-ordination and development of performance monitoring and assessment tools for policing, crime reduction and community safety, moving on from the PPAF towards Assessments of Policing and Community Safety (APACS) (Home Office 2008: 102). APACS replaced (from April 2008) the PPAF and other assessment arrangements for Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs), with a view not only to simplify the wider 'performance landscape' but also to align the performance frameworks of community safety partners (see Byrne and Pease, this volume). The new performance assessment framework differs from the PPAF in that:

- It covers policing and community safety issues, including terrorism, violence, and 'protective services', in response to criticisms that the previous PPAF was skewed against these critical areas (note the context here of the failed attempt at police force amalgamations as a response to capacity and capability issues identified in delivering 'protective services' (HMIC 2006)).
- It promotes joint agency working through alignment with 'partners' and other performance frameworks for other public services.
- It reflects the National Crime Strategy and Public Service Agreements (PSAs) (described below).

APACS provides indicators for use by the Home Office to monitor and track performance in local areas, and include relevant performance indicators for

local authorities, in five key areas – confidence and satisfaction; tackling crime; serious crime and protection; organisational management, with the first round of assessments being published in 2009.

APACS are part of a wider and increasingly complex national performance landscape, including:

- The 'Local Government Performance Framework', setting out performance indicators and targets between local partners (e.g. CDRPs) and central government through Local Area Agreements (LAAs), and published performance assessments through Comprehensive Area Assessments (CAAs) and a National Improvement and Efficiency Strategy to deliver an 'improvement regime'.
- The 'National Community Safety Plan 2008–11' (published in December 2007). This sets out national performance arrangements, relevant Public Service Agreements (PSAs – see below), and strategic policing priorities and key actions for the police. It emphasises the importance of partnership working.
- The 'Crime Strategy' (*Cutting Crime: A New Partnership 2008–11*) published in July 2007. This set out a 'vision' for crime and community safety and an end-to-end framework from early intervention, situational prevention, enforcement and reducing offending, with some scope for reflecting local priorities.
- 'Public Service Agreements' (PSAs) agreed between government departments and the Treasury. Affecting policing are PSA 23 (making communities safer); PSA 24 (effective Criminal Justice System); PSA 25 (reducing harm caused by alcohol and drugs); and PSA 26 (reducing risk from international terrorism). These represent a shift from high-profile national targets to reduce volume crime and increase the number of offenders brought to justice, to a focus on the most harmful crimes, tackling drivers of crime and with a focus on local priorities.

In principle, therefore, APACS should provide assessments of performance against local and national priorities for community safety involving the police (and partners, including CDRPs), including priorities identified, for example, within Local Area Agreements, and Community Safety Strategies. The assessment will continue to be against a standard (e.g. average of peers and thresholds, which are subject to change over time). As such APACS, as with PPAF which preceded it, will continue to be primarily concerned with quantitative performance indicators. The weaknesses of APACS according to some stakeholders, in what remains a centrally derived performance management regime, have parallels with the arrangements which preceded it, even though the proposed assessment is more comprehensive and reflects a more 'rounded' and 'joined up' partnership regime. In its response to the APACS consultation, ACPO (2008), for example, has commented on the following:

- A failure to interpret or set performance in context – for example, there is no provision for commentary about the relative performance and engage-

ment of different organisations; judgements here should necessarily be qualitative.

- Potential for inconsistency – it is likely, for example, that within a force area (or top tier local authority) different CDRPs will have different local priorities; again an argument for assessments to be put in context.
- Some areas of activity are not susceptible to measurement, for example, the serious crime and protection domain.
- The need to develop the balance between local and national priorities remains.
- Central government needs to *relinquish* control on local priorities and allow for flexibility in local priority management and measurement – these priorities are flexible and dynamic, particularly given the neighbourhood policing and neighborhood management policy approach adopted by police forces in line with national policy.
- ‘Pooled’ accountability for delivery of service locally is unlikely given that lines of accountability to central government for partners and agencies involved are unco-ordinated – partner agencies are accountable to different departments of central government. Relatedly it is unclear what the outcome will be, if anything, where a CDRP partner chooses not to ‘engage’, or has limited engagement with the APACS agenda.

Whilst, therefore, current arrangements based on APACS and the National Community Safety Plan seek to provide for more discretion in the selection of relevant ‘targets’ by police authorities, and partners, the underlying nature of performance management in the police in England and Wales remains one of increasing complexity, centralisation and control. That stems not solely from the Home Office, but from wider government, and notably, through PSAs, the Treasury. It also stems from a degree of influence over the performance management process. The centralised direction in England and Wales towards performance management is underlined also by the publication in 2004 and 2008, of ‘practical guides’ to police forces on performance management, setting out, with case examples, *how* effective performance management processes should be applied in police forces – including the nature and running of performance review meetings (Home Office 2008: 57).

The process is arguably an adaptation of Compstat, derived from a New York initiative in the 1990s, which was embraced in the early 2000s by the then Home Secretary, David Blunkett (Home Office 2004b: Foreword; Home Office 2008: 20–1) (for a fuller discussion, see Jones and Newburn 2007: 106–40).

The governance of performance management

The governance of performance management is also multi-tiered, and involves interfaces between the national/force/police authority levels, national/BCU levels and national/‘neighbourhood’ levels.

The *national/force/police authority* level of governance has already been considered (see Jones, this volume) and is evident in national league tables of

force performance and the extent to which forces are required to operate around a national suite of performance indicators and according to nationally determined performance targets. A key role in this respect was played by HMIC through the Police Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF) through which HMIC formed annual judgements on force-level performance in terms of families of forces with a similar profile in a range of broad 'performance areas'. Although, as we have seen, the PPAF is being translated into the APACS, the framework of the PPAF is well worth consideration for what it reveals about the governance of performance management. The 'performance areas' were:

- tackling crime
- serious crime and public protection
- protecting vulnerable people
- satisfaction and fairness
- implementation of neighbourhood policing
- local priorities
- resources and efficiency.

Force performance was assessed along these dimensions around two sets of considerations, 'delivery' (how the force is delivering on the PIs in question) and 'direction' (whether the force is doing better, the same, or worse compared with the previous year's performance), with delivery graded on a scale 'poor/fair/good/excellent' and direction on a scale of 'deteriorated/stable/improved'. The results of the assessment are made public and can be easily accessed by anyone wishing to know from the HMIC and Home Office websites. The essence of this model is that on the one hand police forces and authorities are given a clear steer on what government expects of them in terms of priorities (based largely on the National Policing Plan) and the ways in which performance against those priorities are to be measured, and on the other hand their actual performance or delivery is presented in ways which intend to 'drive up performance' through comparisons with others. In these ways the discretion for forces or police authorities to set their own priorities and decide how they are to judge themselves is heavily circumscribed.

The *national/BCU* level of performance management is really an extension of the force level framework, but given the rise in significance of the BCU as the 'hub' of the police organisation (Savage 2007a: 104–7), the BCU level of performance has not suprisingly attracted particular attention from the centre, and from HMIC and the Audit Commission as regulatory bodies. Throughout the 1990s, forces were 'encouraged' (for example, through the HMIC inspection regime) to adopt a BCU structure (O'Byrne 2001). Using the building block of the BCU, the Police Standards Unit developed a framework of BCU comparisons with which to assess and compare performance at that level, so that each BCU is part of a 'family' of most similar BCUs, akin to the framework for centralised performance management involving 'most similar forces'.

Through HMIC, a BCU inspection regime developed alongside force inspection arrangements.

Following the rise of the 'protective services' agenda and the demise of the police force merger plans supported by the then Home Secretary and HMIC in 2005/06 (Loveday 2007: 4), however, the certainty around the BCU as a fundamental structure which can be relied upon for performance management comparisons has weakened. Some smaller forces have, in seeking to develop capacity and capability to deal with the protective services agenda, abandoned the basic command unit structure, with consequent implications for the existing performance management landscape (HMIC 2007a: 29). It is interesting to note (particularly in the context of the drive towards a BCU structure some 15 years earlier (O'Byrne 2001)), that HMIC were now to describe the outcomes of dismantling the BCU structure (in one force example) in positive terms, as an approach which had produced efficiencies, benefits (including increased capability within protective services), streamlining of structures, standardisation of practices, and the ability to use resources more flexibly (HMIC 2007a: 39–40).

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs), in which the police at BCU level are a significant partner, are also subject to centralised 'performance management' comparisons, and as such are increasingly subject to the most recent manifestations of NPM (Byrne and Pease, this volume). Regional Government Offices have a role in monitoring CDRP performance arrangements on behalf, and as an agent, of central government. The complexity and interdependencies involved in the current arrangements for performance management involving partnerships presents potential for conflict around 'local (community safety) priorities', for example, between CDRPs, first and second tier local authorities, BCUs and police forces, local and central government, and indeed between central government departments, given that partner agencies within CDRPs are accountable to different departments of central government. These conflicting lines of accountability underline a criticism of 'a lack of pooled accountability', and a lack of clarity as to the outcome should a CDRP fail to engage, or engage effectively, in the community safety agenda, notwithstanding the National Community Safety Plan and the APACS framework (ACPO 2008). An outcome of this performance landscape is identified in the HMIC inspection of performance management (2007b), which identifies the reality that many CDRP and LAA targets 'are simply the sum of each partner's individual targets', such that 'partners still remain focused on their own outcomes rather than embracing partnership as a true joint venture' (HMIC 2007b: 23). The extent to which the new APACS regime can move this on in terms of effective community safety partnerships remains to be seen.

The possible tensions within the governance of performance management are complicated further by a third level of governance, the *national/neighbourhood* level. It has already been noted that neighbourhood policing is in itself a 'performance area' in the audit and inspection regime, and forces are assessed on the degree to which they have carried neighbourhood policing forward, so in that sense neighbourhood policing *is* performance. However, a measure of the reach of national government in performance management terms down to the 'micro-policing' levels of the ward or district are the nationally determined

PIs for local policing. For example, the Police Authorities (Best Value) Performance Indicators for 2008 included:

- the percentage of people who agree that the police and local councils seek their views on antisocial behaviour and crime in their area
- the percentage of people who agree that the police and local councils are dealing with antisocial behaviour and crime that matters in their area
- the percentage of people who perceive a high level of anti-social behaviour in their local area
- the percentage of people who perceive people being drunk or rowdy in public places to be a problem in their local area
- the percentage of people who perceive drug use or drug dealing to be a problem in their local area (Stationery Office/Home Office 2008).

In a somewhat contradictory way these PIs operate as forms of *central directives to 'go local'*, in effect as a source of tensions between centralism/nationalisation and 'localism' – perhaps part and parcel of the 'new localism' in British policing (McLaughlin 2005). In that sense performance management is hooked on the horns of a dilemma. As one of us has argued elsewhere Savage (2007b), the police reform programme launched in the first years of the new millennium forced policing in two directions. On the one hand there has been a process of centralisation whereby authority over policy and decision-making has moved more and more to the national level, where the discretion available to senior police managers has diminished as they are required to comply with government set policies and standards of performance – a form of 'disempowerment' of the police. On the other hand, in an attempt above all to bridge the 'reassurance gap' – the gap between actual crime and the fear of crime – there has been a process of strengthening and widening of police powers of discretion and an enhancement of the authority of frontline officers at the neighbourhood level – a form of 'empowerment' of the police. In the context of performance management this poses some interesting challenges, because the logic of 'going local' is to allow flexibility in policing arrangements so that they can reflect local priorities; that may in turn generate different sorts of 'performance areas' to those set by central government as priority areas. For example, whilst the PIs around antisocial behaviour above clearly seek to capture what have been the main concerns of local people at the neighbourhood level, it *may* be that in particular communities antisocial behaviour is not a priority concern. If this were the case, the nationally set PIs, so evidently based on the presumption that antisocial behaviour would be of local concern, would fail to capture what, for those particular localities, are local preferences for policing to address. This might pose the dilemma that neighbourhood policing teams may be 'succeeding' in terms of nationally set PIs but failing to satisfy local consumers of policing services, or satisfying those consumers but 'failing' by the standards of the PIs set by central agencies.

One response to this dilemma has been to adjust the governance of performance management at the neighbourhood level not only to reflect local

priorities but also, to do that more effectively, to allow for some PIs themselves to be locally set, for example, having as one local PI the 'numbers of crack-houses closed down' (London Assembly 2007: para 3.7). Such a specific PI would only be of significance to certain areas and communities in the country and would as such be of only limited relevance nationwide. However, unless the governance of performance management allows for a degree of 'localism' in determining what performance is considered important, and what the indicators of that performance should be, 'going local' will remain inhibited at the performance management level.

Returning to our wider discussion, this dilemma is mirrored by a tension of another kind, and one referred to earlier: between performance management itself and effective *leadership* in policing.

The challenge of police leadership within a performance culture

Performance management, leadership and discretion

The overall outcome to date of the NPM regime in England and Wales is that, by means of the enhanced regime of inspection and audit, performance measurement and performance management in general, as key components of the wider performance culture, have become deeply embedded in the 'mind-set' within and around policing (Savage 2007a: 104). For example, in 2008 the then Home Secretary Jacqui Smith described performance management as being 'central' to policing (Home Office/ACPO 2008: i). It is possible to think of the rise of performance management in three phases: first the 1980s with an emphasis on inputs, and a steer towards effectiveness and efficiency; secondly, a phase emerged in the 1990s, with a focus on effectiveness and use of resources, and the development of league tables and performance indicators; thirdly, and most significantly, a phase where the driving of performance would become much more the direct responsibility of central government. In this context the performance culture is nigh on oppressive, with an underlying management culture in the police akin to the company boardroom. The centralised performance management regime continues to hold its ground. The 2008 Home Office guidance on police performance management promoted '12 hallmarks' of an effective performance management framework, across three domains of people and relationships, structures and processes, and data and analysis (Home Office/ACPO 2008), arguing as a basic principle that 'performance management is just good *management*' (2008: 5, emphasis added). In the context of this chapter, 'hallmark 2' of the Home Office guide to police performance management ('active, visible leadership and ownership of performance management . . .') is of particular interest here (Home Office 2008). The 2008 guidance makes reference back to the police leadership 'style' set out in the NPIA Core Leadership Development Programme discussed earlier in this chapter, and in particular the transactional/transformational leadership distinction (Home Office/ACPO 2008: 17–18). Key leadership behaviours associated with performance management are set out, and the importance of 'discretion' in performance management leadership is

promoted. In that context, the guidance suggests 'managing performance' is not about slavishly servicing a system of numbers and targets, but that discretion is an essential element and that there will be times when the right thing to do will be in conflict with the needs of a target. The guidance further adds that that 'they [officers and staff] will be supported and would be penalised for doing the wrong thing just to meet a target' (Home Office/ACPO 2008: 19).

How realistic is this view of police discretion and leadership in an NPM context? The NPM regime and centralised performance management arrangements do, arguably, limit discretion and the capacity truly to 'lead'. The development of police performance management arrangements are part of the 'nationalisation of policing' landscape (Savage 2007a: 84–116), which has been seen, as discussed earlier, as having the effect of disempowering the police at senior levels, as well as being linked with the 'demise of localism' (Jones 2003: 592; Loveday and Reid 2003; Newburn, this volume). In strategic and constitutional terms, the doctrine of operational independence of Chief Officers has been directly challenged (Home Office 2003), with a suggestion that the notion of 'operational responsibility' may be more appropriate. This theme is developed by Smith (2004: 205), who concludes that 'just as the doctrine of constabulary independence evolved over time, it is apparent that the process has been reversed at the instigation of central government', and 'for the doctrine [of constabulary independence] to serve as a foundation for pragmatic and principled policing, the government has to relinquish some control.' He argues both for checks and balances within police governance arrangements but also for a system which 'protects against the politicisation of policing'. The centralised approach to police performance management is, arguably, a strong manifestation of that politicisation, alongside the diminution over 40 years of the powers of local police authorities (Loveday and Read 2003).

The extent to which the APACS regime represents a balancing of the pendulum in favour of local autonomy remains to be seen. 'Getting results' from the police is likely to continue to be a major goal of government, such that the police service may be under long-term pressure to demonstrate compliance with the performance culture, with all the implications that follow for limiting discretion and the capacity and capability to truly 'lead' rather than simply 'manage' a performance management regime. It is in this context that the *selection and development* of leaders becomes crucial. One potential resolution to the dilemma of matching effective leadership with performance management is the creation of leadership development programmes which can reconcile the inevitability of performance management with the benefits of transformational leadership.

Developing leaders within a performance regime

The capacity of police leaders to function within a performance culture is something which will, no doubt, become a permanent requirement of police leadership. This raises the issue of how leaders are to be recruited and developed and, linked to that, how the qualities deemed to be necessary for a modern (or postmodern) police leader are to be defined. Two sets of debates

are appropriate in this respect: the 'direct entry v. single entry' debate, and the debate over how leadership is to be developed, including the role to be played by higher education.

The question of 'direct entry' to more senior police leadership roles has appeared periodically over the past two decades and is seemingly once again on the agenda. The traditional recruitment and selection framework of British policing has been the 'single entry' system, whereby all police officers at whatever rank have started as constables and, if they were to progress up the ranks, would in most cases have acted at each and every rank in the police rank hierarchy. This differs from many other countries (Leishman and Savage 1993), which operate 'direct entry' systems, according to which middle and senior ranks enter the organisation at some point further up the rank structure – for example, at inspector level. However, as concerns about the 'quality' of police leaders have emerged, so too has the spectre of introducing direct-entry into the British framework. It has already been noted that in the late 1980s the notion of an 'officer class', along military lines, was floated, in that context as part of injecting 'new blood' at the level of senior police leadership. More recently, one element in Labour's police Workforce Modernisation agenda was the desire to 'open the service to new talent' as one means of 'strengthening leadership at all levels' (Home Office 2004a: 76) – one option being, although not explicitly stated, to allow for direct entry of 'civilians' such as business leaders into positions of senior police management. Even more recently, battle lines were drawn between the Association of Police Authorities and the police staff associations over the direct-entry case, when the Chairman of the APA, went as record as saying:

We have been working on the leadership issue for some time. It started with supply and demand problems we have been having [for chief officers] . . . We have had problems with the quantity and quality and whether peoples' skills were appropriate to modern policing . . . skills such as finance and partnership issues. (*Police Review* 29 February 2008)

One solution was to draw upon skills 'from outside the service'. The 'police response' was as swift as it was predictable (*Police Review* 7 March 2008 and 18 April 2008), with representatives of police staff associations at all levels insisting on the necessity of 'operational experience for effective police leadership', in effect the case for the maintenance of the 'sacred' principle of single entry. The debate over direct entry will no doubt continue in the years ahead, but two points should be noted. Firstly, that police 'leaders' have for some considerable period time been recruited from outside the ranks of warranted officers in the form of directors of finance, human resource managers and the like. The shift, which began in the late 1980s and continued apace in the 1990s, to 'civilianise' what were formerly senior posts held by warranted officers, meant effectively that ACPO-level or near-ACPO-level appointments included non-sworn staff from 'outside' – even if chief officer posts were kept exclusively for warranted officers. The 'exclusivity' case had already been breached, although admittedly not under the banner of 'direct entry'. Secondly, the counter argument to the direct entry case which draws

on the sanctity of 'operational experience' and therefore supports single entry, often wrongly assumes that 'operational experience' must include *constable-level* experience. Operational experience can be gained at any one of a number of levels of the police organisation, as continental models of police management reveal (Leishman and Savage 1993). If chief officer posts are to be restricted to those with operational experience, that should not mean that only those who joined *as constables* can be eligible.

Wherever the direct entry debate goes in the future, questions still remain over how police leaders are to be *developed*. Although there have been many initiatives and developments over the years in the mechanisms for the recruitment, selection and development of senior police leaders (Charman *et al.* 1999), the formation of the NPIA has entailed a fundamental overhaul of the police leadership framework, in terms of the 'reach' of 'police leadership' – as discussed above, now to include multi-level leadership including constable/sergeant levels – and a leadership strategy and framework for the training, education and development of police leaders or 'future' police leaders. The foundation of the new framework has been the identification of 'leadership domains', a clarification of the core responsibilities of and accompanying skills and development requirements, for police leaders at differing levels of the police organisation. The leadership domains (NPIA 2008: 55) would now be:

- 'Professional Policing Skills Incident Command' – largely around operational policing demands and skills, such as leading on public order policing, counter-terrorism and intelligence management
- 'Executive Policing Skills' – covering governance processes (such as working with partners in the tripartite framework) and partnership working, essentially involving 'political' skills
- 'Business Policing Skills' – largely around resource and budgetary management, *performance management* and corporate leadership.

The identification of such skills sets, themselves a clear recognition of the key role to be played by business and corporate skills in modern police leadership, would then act as the basis for the design of leadership development programmes. These would be delivered through multiple stages, partly based on existing models of professional development but now fully comprehensive in their coverage of the police organisational hierarchy (NPIA 2008: 78–9), namely:

- the High Potential Development Scheme for those deemed on application or soon after joining the service to be possible 'future leaders' (once known as the 'Special Course')
- the Core Leadership Development Programme for constables, sergeants and inspectors
- the Senior Leadership Development Programme for inspectors, superintendents and chief superintendents, but also dove-tailing into the scheme for selecting those deemed suitable for ACPO level

- the Strategic Command Course for those considered to be approaching appointment to ACPO positions
- the Chief Officer Development Programme for ACPO ranks.

Part of the emerging framework for police leadership development was to be a more robust and systematic approach for police engagement with *higher education*, no doubt with one eye on models of professional qualifications and development in other areas of professional service, such as teaching, medicine and law. If not an 'all graduate profession' along the lines of other professions – resistance to that from within and without the service would have been extremely strong – the new structure would involve a pivotal position for higher education (i.e. universities) in the 'accreditation' of the leadership development programmes delivered in service within a higher education qualifications framework, and the development of Continuing Professional Development through ongoing undergraduate and postgraduate study. Universities had already played a role in the police leadership development process through accreditation of some development programmes and, in the case of the linkage between the Strategic Command Course and Cambridge University, what emerged under NPIA's tutelage was to be a much comprehensive and strategic form of engagement with the university sector, referred to as 'a refreshed focus on graduate and postgraduate education in policing' (NPIA 2008: 5).

The NPIA's initiative on renewed engagement between police leadership development and the universities is interesting not least because it heralds the latest – but much more strategically-based – phase in the history of relationships between the police and higher education. Clements, Jones and Savage (2007) have argued that police engagement with higher education can be broadly grouped into three phases:

- The 'Scholarship Phase', operating from the 1960s until roughly the late 1980s, when the focus was on individual officers, considered to be potential 'high fliers', being sponsored to undertake full-time degree study at universities – at a time when the graduate was very much a rarity in the police organisation.
- The 'Partnership Phase', operating from the late 1980s until the early years of the new millennium, when higher education institutions worked with (often local) police forces in loosely-linked ways to develop and run degree courses, usually part-time and voluntary, for cohorts of officers; in some cases, although not all, officers thought to have possible senior management potential, often through bespoke courses in 'Police Studies' and the like.
- The 'Contract Phase', emerging in recent years, where higher education institutions, and in some cases further education institutions, were engaged by the police in order to fully or partly 'outsource' police training – usually the training of new constables – which had formerly been the preserve of the police organisation itself.

What the NPIA strategy for police leadership development appears to seek is an extension of the 'contractual' phase of police engagement with universities, with elements of the outsourcing of the training/development requirement, particularly in areas identified with 'executive' and 'business' skills development. However, in this case the driving force behind outsourcing would appear to be less reducing costs and more the upgrading of the quality of the training and education to be provided for police leaders, present and future. Whether this will bear the fruits the police leadership strategy intends remains to be seen.

Conclusion

We have argued, as have others, that the relationship between (effective) leadership and performance management is one based on tensions and dilemmas. Leadership must be seen as more than performance management – how much more is the critical question. In that regard we return to an earlier distinction between the 'what' and 'how' of policing. There seems little scope for a return to the notion that the 'what' of policing – what policing is there to do and what it should be about – can be left to the individual discretion of chief officers claiming immunity in the name of 'operational independence'. Although there is still a lack of clarity as to what the 'police purpose' is to be, it seems inevitable that it will not or cannot be left to the service itself, or its constituent elements, to determine that conception, although police leaders should and must play a key part in that process of defining the 'what' of policing. Of course central government has a legitimate interest in influencing the shape of the 'police purpose' as part of the democratic mandate. This does not mean, however, that the 'how' issue, how policing goes about realising the 'police purpose', should also be closely determined or directed by national government, as has seemed to be the case in the context of the centralised performance management regime. For example, the centrally derived APACS 'menu' of 288 performance measures (Home Office 2007: 25–6), whilst in principle allowing for local priorities (through, for example, community safety strategies, and local area agreements), imposes by its very nature and scale restrictions on the flexibility and freedom within which local priorities can be determined and policing issues responded to – arguably a constraint, as discussed earlier, on the neighbourhood management policy underpinning the neighbourhood policing model adopted nationally as a fundamental policing approach (ACPO 2008). It is for this reason that ACPO (2008) presented the case for central government to *relinquish* control over local priorities and allow for flexibility in local priority management and measurement – the 'how' of policing. Indeed, the possible perverse effects of the current arrangements were alluded to by HMIC itself, when it identified in its inspection of performance management in 2007 that 'some forces focus resources and processes unduly on obtaining high gradings in HMIC and PPAF assessments', at the expense of local priorities (HMIC 2007a: 37). Arguably, however, this is an understandable outcome in a centralised performance management regime whereby the assessments are used by government, and through government key stakeholders and the public, in evaluating the performance of

a force or BCU. In that context the need to prioritise limited resources will perhaps inevitably be influenced by the performance assessment framework.

Interestingly, and possibly an early sign of a degree of 'thawing' of the performance management regime, HMIC have also challenged a performance management framework which comprises an extensive range of targets and indicators, concluding in its inspection report that 'the best performing forces have relatively few key priorities' (HMIC 2007a: 9). However, in an environment where performance management is fundamental, it is hardly surprising that forces and BCUs will seek to manage down the 'list' of performance priorities, with local priorities being the most expendable. In terms of leadership, and the nature of police performance management in the twenty-first century, the earlier discussion in this chapter on the distinction between management and leadership is relevant, in the sense that the preferred style and approach to leadership in policing, underpinned by the national competency framework, the PLQF and the leadership development programme, may not rest comfortably with a role which is more 'rowing' than 'steering'. In accountability terms the direction of the centre through national targets, indicators, assessment and accountability structures are superordinate to priorities which might otherwise be selected at a more local level.

APACS may represent an opportunity for a 'looser' approach and the potential for a re-balancing of central and local priorities within the performance management regime, most notably through its replacement of the PPAF. There is, however, a sense of *déjà vu* in this. Waters concluded in 2000 that state oversight of policing, and the propensity of governments to intervene in policing, were at that time set to increase (Waters 2000: 283). It is a matter for conjecture whether at the time of writing this underlying trend will change with the APACS regime. In the context of APACS, comprising some 288 targets and indicators (Home Office 2007: 25–6), it would appear that the new arrangements are a further extension of NPM, this time involving police partners like CDRPs and local authorities in the regime. The extent to which police leadership and the preferred leadership style can respond to local policing demands in a timely and flexible way by influencing the 'what' of policing (the steering) as well as the 'how' of policing (the rowing) remains, as now, constrained by the performance regime.

In his interim report for the *Review of Policing* Sir Ronnie Flanagan, Chief of HMIC, argued that, notwithstanding the legislative changes over the previous decade or more, the fundamental principles of the tripartite relationship between the Home Secretary, police authorities and chief constables 'remain at the heart of police governance' (Flanagan 2007: 6). That said, he later recognised that 'the police service has never been so comprehensively inspected and audited as it is today' (2007: 13). He moved on to consider APACS, recommending that weight be given to neighbourhood policing outcomes and alignment with the new local government framework – effectively a rebalancing of national and local priorities. This theme is reflected in other government publications. The *National Community Safety Plan 2008–2011*, with its focus on the strategic direction for police and community safety partners, sets out the principles underpinning performance management for crime and policing, which include:

- a focus on priorities set out in the Governments PSAs
- the use of LAAs to drive performance and establish local community safety priorities
- flexibility in the setting of local policing and community safety priorities.

The Police and Crime Standards Directorate (PCSD), which had operated until May 2007 through 'engagements' with a whole police force, would monitor CDRP performance, with an emphasis on local level interventions with CDRPs, BCUs and forces. It was proposed that there be a 'ladder of interventions' for under performance ranging from light touch (e.g. peer support, best practice advice and improvement plans), through to direct government intervention (Home Office 2007: 19). Best performers would receive 'flexibilities and freedoms'; the worst performers could come under intensive scrutiny from the Home Office (Home Office 2007: 20). It was becoming clear that APACS would provide government with a method for assessing achievements against PSAs in relation to policing and community safety at national regional and local level.

Notwithstanding the aim of 'rebalancing' national and local priorities, the role of the centre remains significant, with a developing role emerging on behalf of government through regional Government Offices, as well as existing mechanisms through, for example, the PCSD and HMIC inspections. It is also notable that LAAs will require 'signing off' by ministers (*National Community Safety Plan 2008–2011*, Home Office 2008: 25), thus representing a continuing element of central control. The formalisation of the police relationship with partners through the APACS performance management regime is perhaps an extrapolation of the existing partnership approach encapsulated within the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. However, the earlier dilemma remains – the extent to which the strategic direction, the 'steering' role involving police leaders, is constrained by the national performance framework, together with the degree to which local priorities can emerge and be reflected in the 'what' of policing within the APACS regime. The question is whether police leaders continue to be simply managing a performance management framework ('rowing'), or whether the context created by APACS will allow them to develop a leadership role in setting, with partners, the direction of travel ('steering').

It may be appropriate to end on the theme of 'ethical leadership'. The continuing and developing centralised culture of performance, and its impact on preferred leadership styles in policing developed in the particular context of the policing role, raises some ethical policing issues. The fundamental importance of recreating trust in public policing is identified by Neyroud and Beckley, who describe as 'one dimensional' the managerialist vision that public confidence 'will be won through ever improving performance tables' (2001: 219). They conclude that 'good policing' in the twenty-first century requires more than good performance; it needs 'a renewal of the contract between police officer and the citizen, which itself requires greater openness and scrutiny, improving professional standards, and a commitment to ethics at the core of policing' (Neyroud and Beckley 2001: 220; Neyroud, this

volume). Police performance management has been described as an 'unbalanced scorecard', whereby police officers adopt coping behaviour to meet demands in the context of resource limitations and performance expectations, with differential 'rewards' for complying with performance expectations rather than with ethical considerations, with police leadership duly mirroring this state of affairs (Neyroud and Beckley 2001: 117–18). Perhaps 'good policing' requires more.

In this respect it is significant that, at the time of writing, there is even further evidence of the mood change within the ranks of chief officers, identified in the opening sentences of this chapter, over the issue of the target regime. In an attempt to re-balance the scorecard, and in the thinly coded language of a 'return to common-sense policing', a small number of chiefs, possibly with the support of some other colleagues, made public their own views on 'target culture'. One in particular, cited under a newspaper headline 'Top Police Boycott Official Paperwork', went as far as to say 'quite simply, local people's safety, confidence in police and their satisfaction when they call us for help are more important than misleading targets' (*The Times* 31 May 2008). Perhaps British policing was beginning to turn full circle, away from the performance culture which had so transformed it.

Selected further reading

The literature on police performance management and leadership in the UK is not extensive and much of it is practically oriented and prescriptive rather than reflective and critical. However, a useful analysis of the 'transfer' of the Compstat model of performance management from the United States to the UK is provided in Jones and Newburn's *Policy Transfer and Criminal Justice* (2007) (chapter 5). Moving on to police leadership, a significant source which sets out to relate police leadership to relevant theory is provided in the Centrex publication by Gibson and Villiers, *Leading for Those We Serve* (2007). Adlam and Villiers' *Police Leadership in the Twenty-first Century* (2003) is useful in providing a range of perspectives on police leadership. A different perspective, admittedly in the US context, is provided in Wexler *et al.*'s *Good to Great Policing – Application of Business Management Principles in the Public Sector* (2007) which considers the application of the leadership guru Jim Collins' thesis, *Good to Great – Why Some Companies Make the Leap and Others Don't* (2001), to policing.

As well as reading further around leadership and management, it is important to appreciate the grounding of both within the broader framework of 'new public management' (NPM). In this respect it is useful to locate NPM within the public sector as a whole as a means of situating the police sector within the NPM framework, in which case Flynn's study *Public Sector Management* (2007) offers a very comprehensive analysis of areas such as audit and inspection, management performance and the role of markets across the public services. With particular reference to policing, McLaughlin's *The New Policing* (2007) (chapter 4) reflects on 'new perspectives' and new movements in British policing, which includes the nature and rise of NPM within the police sector. Additionally, Savage's *Police Reform: Forces for Change* (2007) devotes a chapter to the impact of 'value for money' and NPM in driving change and reform within British policing.

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