New insights on police culture: A critical evaluation of direct entry into senior leadership roles in the police service

Richard Smith

The thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Criminal Justice of the University of Portsmouth.

September 2016
Declaration

Whilst registered as a candidate for the above degree, I have not been registered for any other research award. The results and conclusions embodied in this thesis are the work of the named candidate and have not been submitted for any other academic award.

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Signed:

Richard Smith

Date: 23/9/2016
In memory of Dr. Ross Chernin
1979 - 2016
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Abstract

In March 2012, Sir Tom Winsor published an ‘Independent Review of Police Officer and Staff Remuneration and Conditions’. This wide-ranging appraisal of the police service made a number of recommendations. One of the most controversial (recommendation 19) was that a direct entry pathway into policing, at the superintendent rank, should be established. In November 2014, the first cohort of direct entry superintendents commenced an 18-month training course, intended to equip them with the knowledge and skills to become senior police leaders.

This thesis presents the findings of a study that followed the development of these officers as they progressed through their training and into roles as operational superintendents and concludes by proposing a ‘blended leadership model for policing’. The direct entry officers were interviewed at regular intervals throughout their training, to capture their reflections on this unique experience. Influential stakeholders from the chief officer ranks, staff associations and elsewhere also took part in this research. A focus on police culture and police leadership was used to contextualise the data that was collected.

It was found that parts of the police service are insular and shackled by a lack of creativity and innovation. It was also identified that police culture doesn’t always welcome new perspectives. Importantly, it is argued that the service does not widely recognise that these issues exist and so is not equipped to resolve them from within. The direct entry superintendents were found to be engaging, motivated and credible professionals. They bring to their new roles a wealth of experience. This includes experience of delivering tangible outcomes for their previous organisations and also experience of leading people. These individuals are committed to public service and are mindful of the significant responsibility that they are accepting. The first 18 months of their service has been challenging. As the first cohort of direct entry officers, the College of Policing’s training course was in no way established. The superintendents were to experience significant pockets of resistance to the direct entry scheme. This was evidenced during the recruitment process, through face-to-face interactions.
with senior officers during training and also in the workplace. Opposition to this new pathway into the service has also been particularly evident on social media platforms. Multiple entry points into the police service are now established. The third cohort of direct entry superintendents will soon be commencing their training. There are significant research opportunities associated with this, including further exploration of culture and leadership perspectives as well as further review of operational capability and competence by direct entry officers.
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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>Assistant Commissioner</td>
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<td>ACPO</td>
<td>Association of Chief Police Officers</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOCU</td>
<td>Borough Operational Command Unit</td>
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<td>BME</td>
<td>Black and Minority Ethnic</td>
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<td>CC</td>
<td>Chief Constable</td>
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<td>CoP</td>
<td>College of Policing</td>
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<td>DAC</td>
<td>Deputy Assistant Commissioner</td>
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<td>DCC</td>
<td>Deputy Chief Constable</td>
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<td>DE</td>
<td>Direct Entry</td>
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<td>FTDE</td>
<td>Fast Track and Direct Entry</td>
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<td>HMIC</td>
<td>Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary</td>
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<td>HPDS</td>
<td>High Potential Development Scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPCC</td>
<td>Independent Police Complaints Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOPaC</td>
<td>Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime</td>
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<td>MPS</td>
<td>Metropolitan Police Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPCC</td>
<td>National Police Chiefs’ Council</td>
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<td>OSPRE</td>
<td>Objective Structured Performance Related Exam.</td>
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<td>OST</td>
<td>Officer Safety Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCC</td>
<td>Police and Crime Commissioner</td>
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<tr>
<td>PC</td>
<td>Police Constable</td>
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<tr>
<td>PNAC</td>
<td>Police National Assessment Centre</td>
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<td>PPE</td>
<td>Personal Protective Equipment</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCC</td>
<td>Strategic Command Course</td>
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<td>SLT</td>
<td>Senior Leadership Team</td>
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Dissemination of this research


Other publications by this researcher


A personal perspective

In November 2004, I made my way to a grand and imposing country hotel in a rural village on the outskirts of Oxford. At 24 years old, and with eight months to wait until the commencement of my recruit training at the world famous Hendon Police College, I had progressed to the final assessment weekend of the national High Potential Development Scheme (HPDS). This was the accelerated promotion process available to sergeants, constables and those who were about to join the service, to identify those with the potential to become the chief officers of the future.

I had completed the pre-screening tests and the written exam and was now in a final group of approximately eighty officers in that year’s selection process. Up to fifty officers were identified each year and awarded a place on the scheme. I had a first class honours degree and six years experience in the private sector. I was however very rough around the edges. I stuttered my way through an interview, failed to play a full part in an assessed group discussion and gave a very poor briefing to a panel of chief officers. I was rightly sent on my way and failed to secure a place on the scheme. In advance of the assessment weekend, I had been given every assurance that, although I would be the only candidate who was not yet a serving officer, the assessments were not situated in a policing context and I would have every opportunity to succeed. My overriding memory of that weekend is that I just didn’t fit in. I didn’t talk like ‘them’. I didn’t have the same sense of humour as ‘them’. I didn’t dress like ‘them’. The ‘them’ was police officers; my first exposure to the culture of the police service.

In November 2013, with eight years experience as an officer in the Metropolitan Police Service and now holding the rank of acting Inspector I managed to secure a second chance at gaining a place on the HPDS. I was again through to the final round of the selection process, this time at the prestigious College of Policing in Bramshill, Hampshire. This time, I did fit in. I talked like ‘them’. I laughed at the same things as ‘them’. I dressed like ‘them’. Without realising it, in the nine years that had elapsed since my last attempt at the assessment
centre, police culture had seeped into me and I was now just like ‘them’. I secured a place on the ‘high potential’ scheme and was promoted to Inspector and more recently to Chief Inspector.

While I was pleased to have achieved this long held ambition, a nagging doubt remained. It was entirely correct that I was rejected at the first assessment centre in 2004. I just wasn’t anywhere near capable enough. There was however a clear additional disadvantage at that time, due to my lack of understanding of, and belonging to, police culture. It was something I had often reflected upon. It still didn’t sit easily with me when I was successful at the assessment centre in 2013. It seemed that because I could ‘talk the talk’ I was already half way to being identified as a senior leader of the future. What if I had been just as capable, but couldn’t ‘talk the talk’ in this way? How can the service find a way to embrace difference and bring new leadership perspectives into the service if there remains an expectation that officers should look, speak or act in a certain way?
Chapter One: Introduction

This thesis begins with a short summary of the policing context in England and Wales, to situate this study clearly and with due regard to the complex landscape in which the subject matter is located. The research aim and research questions are identified. The breadth of the subject matter is then explored, with justification for the particular focus that has been chosen. The introduction concludes with consideration of reflective practice and a description of the thesis structure.

The challenge of policing

The police service in England and Wales is a complex public institution. This complexity is driven by a number of factors, some of which have been present within this public service for many years; other factors are more contemporary in their nature. The governance model that underpins policing delivery is an intricate combination of national and local oversight. Reform of this governance model has been on the political agenda for much of the past 20 years (Gilling, 2014). National input from Westminster places the criminal justice outcomes of the police service at the heart of Home Office strategy. This perspective ensures crime and disorder is a point of much debate and scrutiny in conversations with the electorate (Mason, 2015). Political interest in, and influence of, the police service is a frequently visited topic. An additional layer of directly elected local governance came into effect from November 2012 with the introduction of police and crime commissioners (PCCs). They have a remit to hold chief constables to account and open a dialogue with local communities to determine policing priorities. The chief constable retains independence to make operational decisions, but the overlap between the strategic direction set by the PCC and the operational decision making of the chief constable is often a point of much contention (Bailey, 2015).

Funding arrangements present an additional layer of complexity. Home Office grants, set within a funding model that is widely criticised, and a local precept that, in theory, can be set by PCCs, make the budgetary position of forces inconsistent and difficult to predict over anything other than the short term.
National policing deliverables must also be considered as part of this funding mix. The College of Policing, Her Majesties Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) and national counter terrorism funding all place a demand on the Home Office policing budget and take funding away from local operational delivery (Allen, 2013).

Beyond funding and governance, there are also a number of more informal complexities that constrain policing and make effective delivery of policing services a challenging prospect. Scrutiny of policing outcomes is greater now than it has ever been and ensures that the work of the service is never far from the front pages of national newspapers (Davenport & Chandler, 2016). The Macpherson Report (1999) that responded to the police investigation into the murder of the black teenager Stephen Lawrence is perhaps the most widely recognised commentary that acted as a watershed for policing in London and arguably across all of England and Wales. The assertion that London’s Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) was institutionally racist left a cloud hanging over the service that, almost 20 years later, can still be felt today. In July 2005, officers in London shot the unarmed, innocent civilian Jean Charles de Menezes. Other than a Health and Safety related adverse finding against the Commissioner of the MPS, no criminal finding was made against any of the officers directly involved (Hughes, 2008). In August 2011, rioting broke out in cities and towns across England in response to the shooting of Mark Duggan by a police officer in Tottenham, north London (Davies and Taylor, 2015). From Lawrence to Menezes to Duggan and countless other incidents in between, the scrutiny of police actions is relentless.

The ability of local communities to hold the police service to account is positively encouraged, by political parties or all persuasions, by civil rights groups and, despite the challenges it presents, by the police service as well (Conn, 2013). As the organisation charged with investigating complaints made against the police and holding the service to account, the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) has a significant role to play in improving public confidence and trust in the service. The relationship between the IPCC and
chief constables is often strained and adds another dimension to the relationship between the public and the police (BBC, 2014).

Crime statistics are no longer the sole measure of police effectiveness and efficiency (HMIC, 2016). Public confidence and victim satisfaction are now also key performance indicators (MOPAC, 2014). This concept of public trust is a useful point of reflection, if considered within the context of the original mandate for policing in this country, established by the then Home Secretary, Sir Robert Peel, in 1829. His vision for policing was one of officers being regarded as citizens in uniform, exercising their power to police fellow citizens with their implied consent. The concept of ‘policing by consent’ relies upon the legitimacy of policing in the eyes of the public, based upon the transparent use of policing powers (West Mercia Police, 2015).

Beyond the complexities that are outlined above, the core issue of demand upon policing services is also evolving at pace. New threats posed through cyber methods, most notably fraud and sexual exploitation of children, are moving policing delivery away from the core acquisitive crimes that have defined much of policing services for so long and place a new expectation on the service to respond more flexibly (College of Policing, 2015 and Loveday, 2016).

This recognition of the complexities of governance, funding, public scrutiny, policing by consent and crime demand highlights the need for leadership that can navigate these issues and deliver policing services that meet the expectations of law makers, policy setters and the community. It would appear that police leaders need to be accountants, strategists, public relations specialists, managers of risk, legally astute, empathetic, responsive, flexible and able to gain the trust of those whom they are employed to lead. It is argued that the police leader of 2016 has to be all of these things and more. The selection, recruitment, progression and retention of these leaders are therefore matters of national significance (Home Affairs Select Committee, 2013).
Police reform: introducing direct entry

The police service in the UK is going through a time of change in terms of how it recruits, trains and develops its officers (College of Policing, 2014 & Winsor, 2012). Direct entry accelerated promotion have been topics of much conversation for the past five years. The ‘Superintendent Direct Entry Scheme’ is a watershed for policing in England and Wales. Lack of diverse perspectives within the chief officer ranks, cultural blockages, underrepresentation by BME communities and a desire to do things differently have all been articulated as reasons for embarking on this new journey (Winsor, 2012). The ultimate test of success will be: does the police service benefit and do the communities that are served see an improvement in policing outcomes? At the heart of this groundbreaking venture lie the individuals who apply to take on this challenge of being the first direct entrants. They will be afforded an opportunity to influence and shape their respective forces as they involve themselves in high profile leadership roles over the coming years.

In November 2014, the first cohort of direct entry superintendents commenced an 18 month training course to take them from their current positions as experienced managers in their respective fields and give them the necessary knowledge and expertise to operate as senior leaders in the police service. This was as a direct result of recommendation 19 of the ‘Independent Review of Police Officer and Staff Remuneration and Conditions’ written by Sir Tom Winsor (2012), at the behest of the Home Secretary. It was left to the chief constable of each of the 43 forces in England and Wales to make their own decision as to whether or not they wanted to recruit direct entrant(s) under this scheme. To encourage participation, the Home Office agreed that the salary of each officer, for the first three years of their employment, would be paid for out of central Home Office budgets, rather than by the individual forces.

Each force was invited to develop and administer its own selection process, to identify suitable individuals who were then required to take part in a national assessment centre at the College of Policing. With the majority of forces decreeing that direct entry at the rank of superintendent was a step too far for
their workforce modernisation agendas, only seven forces elected to take part in the scheme. Nationally, 867 applications were made, of which 46 were supported by forces for progression to the national assessment centre at Bramshill, Hampshire. Of these 46 individuals, 13 received a recommendation from the College of Policing to be awarded a place on the 18-month training programme. This was to be delivered in partnership between the forces and the College. In November 2014, nine individuals took up posts as the first cohort of direct entry superintendents (Baker, 2014).

Research aim and research questions

Much of the commentary that has surrounded the direct entry scheme has been concerned with the costs incurred in recruiting and training these officers and their ability to bring about change within the police service. Regardless of the skills and experience possessed by candidates for the direct entry positions, some commentators have been swift to dismiss their ability to transfer these skills into policing (Neyroud, 2010; Kernaghan, 2013). This thesis does not set out to consider the criminal justice outcomes that the direct entrants will be responsible for. It is, in fact, concerned with understanding more about the actors involved. It is a study that seeks to consider new insights on police culture that are offered through the testimony of those who have taken on the challenge of becoming the first cohort of direct entry superintendents. The aim of this research is therefore:

- To provide a critical evaluation of the experiences of the first cohort of direct entry superintendents.

This aim will be realised though the following two research questions:

1. What are the leadership and cultural challenges that could be resolved through direct entry into the superintendent rank?
2. What are the experiences of the direct entrants of police culture and how well are they placed to bring about cultural change?
While the actors involved in response to research question two are easily identifiable and engagement with them is achievable, the breadth of research question one is much wider and requires a greater degree of consideration. These two strands to the research are perhaps better summarised by being categorised as stakeholder engagement in response to research question one and participant engagement in response to research question two. Whilst the detail of how this engagement is undertaken is explained in detail later, it is of use to make early reference to the concept of both stakeholder and participant engagement. This is the spine of this research, which shapes the response to the ‘critical evaluation’, articulated in the research aim.

**Thesis scope**

In an effort to justify the focus of this thesis and signpost clearly the work undertaken in pursuit of responding to the research questions, it is essential also to recognise what this thesis does not seek to address. With a focus on organisational culture and the experiences of the direct entrants themselves, there is a breadth of credible subject matter, which will not be explored as part of this research. This list of excluded material includes:

- Education and Training: whilst broad reference will be made to the curriculum that has been established to train the direct entrants, this study does not attempt to critique the utility of the methods used.
- Operational Impact: this thesis is time-framed within the scope of the doctoral qualification for which it is being submitted. A longitudinal study which goes beyond the initial 18 months training of the direct entrants and considers impact and legacy upon their organisations over the medium and long term is an entirely valid study, but does not form part of this offering.
- International comparisons: whilst some consideration is given to an international perspective, this research is not a comparative piece and does not seek to situate this study within a broader global dimension.

Recognising the breadth of this subject matter, at this early stage, is of use to
assist the reader in appreciating the alternative approaches that the research could have taken. The concluding pages of this thesis offer additional commentary on further research that could be undertaken to further develop new knowledge in relation to direct entry and police culture.

**Reflective practice**

Having signposted the subject matter that does *not* form part of this research, it is equally necessary to provide clarity as to what *is* in scope. This research can be described as person-centric, dealing extensively with the cultural aspects of direct entry into the police service. This chapter opened by reflecting on personal experiences of police culture and the willingness of the service to allow ‘difference’ to permeate, particularly the more senior ranks. This personal perspective allows me to position the research with due recognition to my own experiences. I am not external to the research. It is my own experience of police culture that has both acted as catalyst for the research and informed much of the evaluation that follows. To deny this presence of prior knowledge would be to ignore an important perspective on the relationship between the researcher and the researched (Robson, 2011). Indeed, “experimenters need to have a very substantial knowledge of the phenomenon they are interested in before it is worth their while to set up a formal experiment” (Robson, 2011, p.33). The self-authored diagram below is provided to demonstrate this point:

![Figure 1: Policing experience and reflective practice](image-url)
To move superficially past this recognition of how personal perspectives have driven this research would fail to do justice to the importance of reflexivity and reflective practice, particularly in the context of a thesis that intends to demonstrate a sufficient level of doctoral cognisance.

Etherington (2004, p.19) defines reflexivity as, “an ability to notice our responses to the world around us, other people and events, and to use that knowledge to inform our actions, communications and understandings”. While simple in its construction there is a breadth to the concepts this definition includes. Recognising that new knowledge is formed through this bidirectional relationship of cause and effect could further enhance Etherington’s perspective on reflexivity.

Some of the literature that explores this area uses the terms *reflective* and *reflexive* interchangeably. Thompson and Thompson (2008) cite Fook and Askeland’s (1999) definition of *reflexivity*; “an ability to recognise our own influence”. They suggest that *reflection* is somewhat simpler – looking back and being self-aware. Upon consideration of these two terms, it could be argued that *reflection* is more transactional and concerned with oneself. *Reflexivity* is perhaps more complex and considers impacts on other people and the environment in which an individual operates and builds knowledge.

This relationship between knowledge and reflexivity is something that Schon’s (1983) work attempts to address. He proposes a hypothesis that the development of professional expertise and knowledge has its foundations in reflexivity. Schon states that society relies upon the ongoing evolution of professional knowledge and that any suggestion, within a given profession, that knowledge or expertise is failing to develop will have a damaging impact. This position from Schon is useful for understanding the relevance of reflexivity and knowledge development within the very particular context of a professional doctorate. The aim of this research is ‘to provide a critical evaluation of the experiences of the first cohort of direct entry superintendents’. This critical evaluation could equally be described as generating original knowledge in relation to direct entry and police culture. The new knowledge is created by
reflecting upon the findings, considering them within the context of what is already known and drawing reasoned conclusions. Scott, Brown, Lunt and Thorne (2004, p.1) state that professional doctorate study is situated “in the twilight zone between the university and the workplace”. This statement is perhaps supportive of the model proposed in figure 1, above.

Thompson and Pascal (2012) present an article that considers numerous existing theories that deal with reflective practice. A key theme is the oversimplification of reflective practices. They include Schon’s seminal ‘in-action/on-action’ model within this context, suggesting potential improvements. They introduce a further contention on Schon’s model; reflection-for-action. This is defined as, “the process of planning, thinking ahead about what is to come, so that we can draw on our experience in order to make the best use of the time and resources available to us” (Thompson and Pascal, 2012, p.317).

As a researching professional, my working and academic lives are entwined. This is an extremely beneficial situation. If my research interests were unrelated to my professional responsibilities I may not have the capacity to deliver in both disciplines. However this does lead to a constant internal narrative concerning these two demanding areas of my life. One of my biggest fears is becoming lost in a word of academic reflection, debate and what ifs. Scott et al (2004, p.58) summarise this concept perfectly, “it is feasible to suggest that deeper understandings of the practice setting may lead to the student becoming a less effective practitioner”. My recognition of this risk is an example of my belief in reflection-for-action, rather than reflection for reflection’s sake.

**Thesis Structure**

This chapter opened with a personal perspective on police culture that posed open questions in relation to the willingness of the service to embrace difference. A synopsis of the complexities of the national policing landscape was then offered, as a precursor to an introduction to the concept of the superintendent direct entry scheme. Having provided an overview of this
specific area of police reform, which is the foundation of this research, the scope of the thesis was then described. Finally, a discussion of reflective practice was offered, to give further context to the study and greater insight into the motivations for undertaking this work.

Chapter two: here we consider the research setting and introduce the approach taken to conduct a comprehensive review of the literature within which the research is placed. The research methodology is considered, within the context of the epistemological and ontological position of the researcher. The practical aspects of the research method are then considered, along with an explanation of the approach to data collection and analysis. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the ethical issues arising from this study.

Chapter three: this chapter considers why the police service in England and Wales has adopted a direct entry superintendent scheme. The chapter opens with recognition of the historical perspective, discussing previous iterations of ‘direct entry’ and ‘fast-tracking’. The discussion then considers lessons from abroad to understand if an international dimension could add value to understanding this new entry pathway. Thereafter the political will needed to drive transformational change in the police service is explored.

Chapter four: this chapter explores concepts of police culture and police leadership, as a means to understand how these two well researched areas can assist in better appreciating the primary data produced as part of this study.

Chapter five considers some of the wider person-focused perspectives on direct entry. A review is provided of motivations for career changes by mid-career professionals and a wider discussion of how talent management operates beyond the police service is offered. Organisational change is also a central discussion within this chapter.

Chapter six presents the findings from the primary research. To assist in comprehension of a significant volume of data, this chapter is divided into two sections. The first explores the data captured from interviews with key
stakeholders, the second considers the data from interviews with the direct entry officers.

Chapter seven provides a discussion of the key findings and considers them in the context of the literature identified earlier in the thesis.

Chapter eight identifies key conclusions, responds to the research questions, critically reflects on the success of the study and identifies opportunities for further research.
Chapter Two: Methodology

Here we consider the research setting and introduce the approach taken to conduct a comprehensive review of the literature within which the research is placed. The research methodology is considered, within the context of the epistemological and ontological position of the researcher. The practical aspects of the research method are then considered, along with an explanation of the approach to data collection and analysis. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the ethical issues arising from this study.

The research setting

The research questions highlighted in chapter one identify two key groups of people who have the experience and knowledge that meet the needs of this research. In reprising this, the two research questions are identified below. These are: -

1. What are the leadership and cultural challenges that could be resolved through direct entry into the superintendent rank?
2. What are the experiences of the direct entrants of police culture and how well are they placed to bring about cultural change?

A critical evaluation of the views of a range of stakeholders within policing provides response to the first question, supported by a detailed literature review. Obtaining the views of direct entry superintendents themselves seeks to answer the second research question. The Home Office, the College of Policing, the Metropolitan Police Service, the City of London Police, Avon and Somerset Constabulary, Sussex Police, North Yorkshire Police, the Police Federation, ACPO, Merseyside Police and the Superintendents Association provided support for the research.

The College of Policing is required to provide a review of the superintendent direct entry scheme to the Home Office. It has specifically been requested that the findings presented within this study are made available for inclusion in the review. The direct entrants have not engaged in any other formal academic
research into this new initiative. Therefore, the research is unique and provides original knowledge in a setting where very little currently exists.

**Literature review methodology**

The literature in which this research is contextualised deals with three distinct areas. One considers the policing context that led to the commission from the Home Office to establish a direct entry scheme, best summarised as ‘building the case for direct entry’. The second is concerned with police culture and police leadership. A third literature review chapter is concerned with wider perspectives that go beyond the environment of the police service. This includes motivation theory, consideration of career transition and ‘talent management’ as a human resource management tool. The literature search was wide ranging and used both traditional and more contemporary information sources. The ‘Independent Review of Police Officer and Staff Remuneration and Conditions’ by Winsor (2012) was the catalyst for the introduction of the direct entry superintendent scheme. As such, this three volume publication, with 1000 pages of secondary evidence along with primary response testimony, served as an essential basis upon which to explore the debate which formed the foundation for Winsor’s recommendation to introduce a direct entry pathway at superintendent rank.

Beyond this core text, there were other useful sources that provided invaluable information. The National Police Library at the College of Policing provided many articles. Providing the librarian with key search terms such as ‘police reform’ and ‘police leadership’ yielded extensive reading lists. Google scholar gave access to a wide range of peer reviewed publications. This included the small body of published academic work that relates specifically to direct entry (Loveday, 2013; Kernaghan, 2013; Leishman and Savage, 1993) and also the wider discipline of police reform. The literature base grew substantially, in advance of data collection, but also alongside this process. Recommendations from informed stakeholders, approached as part of the research exercise,
proved to be consistently helpful. By this method, the literature base also continued to evolve and develop as the research progressed.

While the body of literature specific to the direct entry superintendent scheme was limited, this proved in no way prohibitive. Although direct entry shapes this research, the overarching subject matter is police culture and the unique window that direct entry provides into this well researched world. Recent seminal texts from Loftus (2012) and Cockcroft (2014, 2012, 2007 and 2005) are significant sources in their own right, while also highlighting a much broader literature base.

The geographical boundaries within which the literature survey operates must also be recognised. While the research is concerned with the police service in England and Wales, there is considerable literature from other policing jurisdictions, particularly the United States, which offer an insight into police culture. This study does not enter into detailed international comparative work. However, the learning that can be taken from abroad is of great value.

The approach taken to the literature review reflects the need to recognise the contemporary literature base as being an essential part of this study. This also included numerous online forums. These included: -

- Police Oracle
- Policing Insight
- Personal Blogs

These policing-centric, online publications provided significant contributions to the direct entry debate. Beyond the authored content, the response comments posted on these forums, frequently by serving or ex-officers, provided rich evidence of police culture. This content adds to the literature review supporting this research. It is however also a source of data that contributes to the results and discussion chapters of the thesis.
Beyond the print and online media already identified, telling contributions were also provided from House of Commons debates, reports from the Home Affairs Select Committee and also from ‘You Tube’ footage of events including the annual conference of the Superintendents Association. The diversity of literature considered ensured that the widest possible breadth of information was included so as to situate the research, develop the knowledge base of the researcher and to inform the later discussion of the research findings.

Research methodology

This study provides data from two distinct groups of people:

1. Stakeholders from within the policing and criminal justice sector who had either a direct relationship with those from group (2) or who held an informed interest in the direct entry scheme and/or police culture as a whole.
2. The individuals who became the first cohort of direct entry superintendents.

It is argued that there are three primary reasons identified for undertaking research. These are to explore, to describe and to explain (Robson, 2011). This text argues further that a value hierarchy can sometimes be attributed to these three possible outcomes, where explanation becomes the ultimate aim of all research. Robson suggests that this is unnecessary and that any of these three outcomes is in itself of value. The concept of ‘exploration’ is however particularly pertinent to this research. Robson (2011 p.39) also identifies that; “in many real world studies…there is a concern…to facilitate action, to help change or make improvements, to influence policy or practice”. This position resonates particularly strongly with this research.

This study is intended to be a catalyst for action and to develop new professional knowledge. Through this analysis, the building blocks of the research purpose begin to emerge. These are i) exploration of human
perspectives on talent management and ii) desire to influence and shape future policy.

For any research to proceed on a sound footing, there must be due recognition of the ontological and epistemological position of the researcher. This includes how sense is made of the world and how knowledge is created to contribute to learning. As a sociological study, it is necessary to be clear as to the epistemological position that governs the research. Bryman (2008) provides a useful commentary on these epistemological arguments. He identifies positivism as being the domain of natural science researchers, where there is a strong bias towards conducting research to test a theory and explain what is observed. As a philosophy, it is simplistic to argue that it is only the domain of scientific researchers. However, if there were to be a continuum of philosophical perspectives, then positivism and its deductive methods would lie at one end of that continuum.

**Figure 2: Epistemological and Ontological Continuum**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positivist</th>
<th>Realist</th>
<th>Interpretivist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deductive approach&lt;br&gt;(testing a theory)</td>
<td>Inductive approach&lt;br&gt;(generating a theory)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective and value free</strong>&lt;br&gt;Ontology = objectivism</td>
<td><strong>Subjective – linked to values</strong>&lt;br&gt;Ontology = constructionism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Bryman (2008, p.27 - 31).

As this is an exploratory study, setting out to develop new knowledge, the epistemological position leans towards an interpretivist approach. It is the considerable focus on the actors involved in the direct entry scheme and the opinions that they hold, which lends itself to this particular epistemological approach.

The subject matter cannot wholly determine the research philosophy. It would be misleading to simply assume that a researcher can move with ease to
different ends of the epistemological spectrum, driven only by what is ‘natural’ for the subject being researched. To suggest that there is a ‘natural’ way to research a given subject matter (be it scientific or sociological) would be to defy the ontological perspectives that drive research narrative. This is best described by Bryman (2008, p. 32). He argues that:

“the central point of orientation here is the question of whether social entities can and should be considered objective entities that have a reality external to social actors, or whether they can and should be considered social constructions built up from the perceptions and actions of social research”.

Considering where the researcher is placed in the research process is key to gaining clarity over this ontological position. Objectivism states that the researcher is a witness to social entities, placing no value judgements on the actions and behaviours that are witnessed. Constructionism removes the external perspective that separates the researcher from the researched and identifies a fluidity to social order that is ripe for interpretation and development (May, 2011).

The complexities of these concepts are highlighted by the interchangeable nature of the key terminology used by different authors. Silverman (2013) discusses naturalism versus constructionism in the same way as Bryman (2008) adopts the objectivism versus constructionism debate. May (2011) offers similar complex commentary when considering these terms. Ultimately, it is concluded that naturalism and objectivism are one and the same – where subjectivity and value judgements are removed from the research process.

As identified earlier, the researcher’s position as a researching professional, engaged in policing, makes constructionism the natural ontological position. The researcher’s own world-view led to a natural bias in terms of the research method employed. As noted by Bryman (2008) there are three key characteristics of qualitative research. These are: -
1. An inductive relationship prevails between theory and research – i.e. the theory is the outcome of the research, rather than the research testing a pre-existing theory.
2. The Interpretivist epistemological position.
3. The constructionist ontological position.

In considering the above, this study employs a qualitative approach.

**Research method selection**

A survey of research method literature (Beuving & de Vries, 2015; Silverman, 2013; Bryman, 2008; Robson, 2011; Jupp, 1989; McNeill & Chapman, 2005) identifies that securing responses to research questions posed in this thesis can be achieved by way of three qualitative methods. These are:

- survey / questionnaire
- interview
- focus group

Robson (2011 p.280) states:

“The interview is a flexible and adaptable way of finding things out. The human use of language is fascinating both as a behaviour in its own right and for the virtually unique window that it opens on what lies behind our actions”.

It is this ‘unique window’ that is the particularly attractive proposition of the interview as a research instrument. The survey / questionnaire stops at the conclusion of the question, in hope of a comprehensive response from the participant. The structured research interview can be viewed as a questionnaire that is administered verbally, this is described by Gill, Stuart, Treasure and Chadwick (2008, p.291) as “a list of predetermined questions which are asked with little or no variation and no scope for follow up questions”.

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The ability to probe and open up detailed dialogue with the participant meets with the researcher’s epistemological and ontological positions and therefore makes the structured interview an undesirable methodology. As noted by McNeill and Chapman (2005, p.34): -

“the structured interview is favoured by researchers who attach great importance to the objective scientific status of the research method and process, whilst the unstructured interview is preferred by those sociologists interested in uncovering the social meanings that lie behind social action”.

The terms ‘unstructured’ and ‘semi-structured’ interviews are often used interchangeably. What is clear is that there is a spectrum of ‘structure’ that can be applied to a research interview. It is argued that the structured interview sits at one end of this spectrum, where questions are entirely predetermined, and supplementary questions are preselected (if used at all). The researcher is not therefore afforded the opportunity to take the conversation in alternative directions as the interview evolves. Bryman (2008, p.472) offers useful guidance on where other interview methods sit on this spectrum of structure: -

“Researchers who are concerned that the use of even the most rudimentary interview guide will not allow genuine access to the world views of members of a social setting or of people sharing common attributes are likely to favour an unstructured interview”.

He goes on to note that: -

“If the researcher is beginning the investigation with a fairly clear focus, rather than a very general notion of wanting to do research on a topic, it is likely that the interviews will be semi-structured ones, so that the more specific issues can be addressed”.

Beyond the default leanings that have already been articulated as a catalyst for choosing a qualitative research instrument, it is also worth noting how the specific subject matter also lends itself to being researched in this way. Robson (2011, p.24), for example, suggests that: -

“social construction indicates a view that social properties are constructed through interactions between people, rather than having a
separate existence. Meaning does not exist in its own right; it is constructed by human beings as they interact and engage in interpretation”.

This particular focus on ‘interactions between people’ and ‘engage in interpretation’ is intrinsically linked to the experience based, attitudinal data that is being sought from those interviewed as part of the research. The subtlety of how these experiences have played out in reality is a rich data output from the research. In light of the above analysis, the semi-structured interview is the qualitative research instrument that has provided the greater part of the data for this research. The semi-structured interview is identified as an option that provides flexibility, to allow the conversation to progress and evolve naturally, whilst affording the researcher confidence that their research agenda will be met (Gill et al, 2008).

In addition to this, a focus group was also used. The focus group consists of an interview with more than one interviewee present and engaged in the conversation (Silverman, 2013). As defined by Kitzinger (1995): -

“Focus groups are a form of group interview that capitalises on communication between research participants in order to generate data. Although group interviews are often used simply as a quick and convenient way to collect data from several people simultaneously, focus groups explicitly use group interaction as part of the method”.

It is the final element of this description, ‘group interaction’, that was the catalyst for deciding to conduct a focus group. This was done in order to supplement the data generated through one-to-one interviews. Having conducted three rounds of interviews with the direct entry superintendents, it was felt that there would be value in holding a focus group, in order to stimulate discussion that may not otherwise have been forthcoming through the dynamic of a single-participant interview alone. The added value, arising from the group dynamic, is recognised in the literature that considers the concept of the focus group within sociological research (Barbour, 2005; Webb & Kevern, 2001). In support of Kitzinger’s (1995) comment, Asbury (1995) notes that a focus group provides an
interaction amongst participants to elicit rich experiential data that may not otherwise have been generated.

**Practical considerations**

As the national body that received the commission from the Home Secretary to design and implement the direct entry superintendent scheme, the College of Policing was approached to seek support for this study. The College agreed to facilitate this research. An introductory presentation was delivered to the nine direct entry superintendents in November 2014. The superintendents were:

- invited to take part in the study
- advised that this would take the form a series of 60 minutes interviews, at approximately three month intervals, over the next 18 months
- asked to sign a consent form
- assured that their responses would remain anonymous
- advised that they could remove themselves from the research at any time

In terms of selection of the sample population to take part in the study, by the very nature of the research, the target group was self-selecting. As a small cohort of just nine officers, it was entirely practical to ask all of the direct entry superintendents to take part in the interviews. The selection of sample populations and indeed the size of such populations is frequently a challenge for sociological researchers. As noted by Bryman (2008, p.422) “the researcher establishes criteria concerning the kinds of cases needed to address the research questions”. This study is concerned with the experiential perspectives of these nine officers. As such the, challenges identified by Bryman (2008) and Hood (2007) in relation to identifying appropriate samples were not encountered in response to this part of the research. All were supportive of the invitation and agreed to take part (see **Appendix A** for a copy of the participant consent form).

The stakeholder element of this research presented a more complex problem in determining who was to be interviewed. The literature reviewed in chapters
three, four and five goes some way to offering a response to this section of the research. In terms of primary data, interviewees were identified from across the police service. Selection of these participants was, in part, based upon surveying the key commentators who were articulating views within contemporary police literature.

Other interviewees were identified through what is interchangeably referred to as snowball sampling (Browne, 2005) or respondent driven sampling (Kendall, 2008). While both of these studies were dealing with hard-to-reach research populations (which is not the case for this research) the principles presented remain valid. The assertion is that engagement with one respondent in a qualitative research environment can lead to other such participants being identified by that respondent.

Table 1: Interview participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President of ACPO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Commissioner of the MPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commissioner of the MPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President of the Superintendents’ Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Constable of Sussex Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Entry Lead from the College of Policing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Constable of Merseyside Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair of the National Police Chiefs’ Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Operating Officer of the College of Policing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commander from the City of London Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of People and Change from the MPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A police constable from the MPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The nine direct entry superintendents, one-to-one interviews. Three or four each.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The first two considerations of this qualitative method were: -

1. What method to use – semi-structured interviews and one focus group
2. From whom data would be sought – the nine direct entrants and stakeholders, listed above.

This however left a third consideration, which was:

3. The content of the questions for the focus group and face-to-face interviews.

The literature review provides a knowledge base from which the research takes direction and identifies where knowledge exists and where it does not. Accordingly, the question content was developed from an understanding of this literature. The iterative nature of the interviews with the direct entrants allowed the subject matter to evolve over time. This involved revisiting points of note from previous interviews, testing assumptions from previous conversations and monitoring changes in perspectives.

For these reasons, the approach to an interview schedule was driven by reflecting upon previous interview transcripts with the participant. It could be considered that the separate interviews (for each superintendent) were a single extended conversation over the course of the 18-month data collection period. The desire to understand the evolving perspectives of the superintendents was a fundamental part of developing an adequate response to the research questions. A single interview could not be deemed sufficient to capture the depth of data required for this research (Gill et al, 2008).

The subject matter explored in these interviews began with relatively transactional subject matter. This included establishing past experiences, motivations for joining the police service and expectations of what the role of superintendent might entail. Over time, the interviews generated much more insightful information. This included perspectives on credibility of direct entrants, how skills could be transferred between organisations, whether police culture would accept direct entry superintendents and how relationships were developed as the officers embarked on their 18-month training programme.
There is also an extensive literature base that identifies the importance of a rapport being established between interviewer and interviewee. This rapport can lead to enhanced trust and a greater willingness on the part of the interviewee to provide more honest and thoughtful testimony (Song & Parker, 1995; Qu & Dumay, 2011; Kuebler & Hausser, 1997). This was found to be the case.

In this study the interviews with the other stakeholders were not repeated, a single interview with each participant was undertaken. A semi-structured approach was also adopted for these interviews. The questions for these interviews were driven by:

- The literature base,
- Findings from interviews with the direct entry superintendents and testing some of the data that had been captured in these interviews,
- Findings from other stakeholder interviews, seeking confirmation of perspectives or alternative views.

[See Appendix B for a selection of the schedules that were used to conduct the interviews.] The interviews described were conducted between October 2014 and May 2016. Therefore it should be noted that the data collected is from a time constrained period, representing the views of respondents at that point in time, early in their careers. The findings of these interviews are described and discussed in later chapters.

To conclude this discussion of method selection it may be of value to reflect upon how a mixed methods approach might have been utilised for this study. It is sometimes tempting to develop an alternative angle from which to approach data collection. This may test the validity of a primary method or attempt to identify additional data that the primary method does not provide (Silverman, 2013). In fact the use of the focus group in this study was influenced by this consideration. A mixed research method would also require a quantitative approach to data collection. Two reasons are offered for not adopting such an approach. These are:

• The researchers Interpretivist approach – seeking to make sense of the subject matter, driven by rich data that, it is argued, can only be accessed by interview.

• Silverman’s (2013, p.210) contention that researchers should; “keep it simple…multiple methods seem to offer little more than a ‘comfort blanket’ to give you the feeling that, whatever the deficiencies of your research, you have, at least, covered your research topic from many angles”.

For these reasons, it is argued that the approach taken is appropriate to respond to the research questions and realise the aim of this study.

Data collection and analysis

In total, 41 interviews and 1 focus group provide the empirical data for this research. Conversations were digitally recorded in order to provide an accurate record. Minimal note taking was necessary during interviews, to allow for a clear focus on the conversation. This is recognised as an important consideration for data collection. It ensures a positive interviewer / interviewee relationship (King, 1994; Gilbert, 2001). Producing a defendable and accurate record of the research conversations is essential to ensure the integrity of the research findings and subsequent analysis. Having collected data in this way, it is necessary to carry out transcription to allow for further analysis and understanding. While it is noted that transcription is an essential part of the administration of research, there is no single recommended way to do this. As a result, the researcher has to make a decision as to how best to undertake this task to support the aims of the research (Silverman, 2013).

The work of Oliver, Serovich and Mason (2005) is helpful in understanding the complexity of research interview transcription. They identify the importance of reflecting upon the transcription purpose. It is highlighted that this process is much more than an administrative task and is, in itself, analysis. This affords the researcher an opportunity to consider interview content whilst transcription is
taking place and draw conclusions accordingly. The level of detail that is captured when transcribing is also a consideration when undertaking this task. It is noted by Graneheim and Lundman (2003, p. 111) that; “it is valuable to notice silence, sighs, laughter, posture, gestures etc. as these may influence the underlying meaning”. This perspective was balanced by Silverman’s (2013) contention that there is no single correct method to transcribe interviews. Research efficiency and effective use of time is also an entirely justifiable perspective. To this end, not all interviewer questions / prompts were transcribed verbatim. The focus was on securing sufficient data to understand what had prompted the interviewee response.

Within the context of a professional doctorate, where the researcher is well informed of the subject matter through experience and professional expertise, there is a further consideration that transcends both transcription and analytical processes. This is well defined by Graneheim and Lundman (2003, p. 111):

“Since the researcher is often the one who collects the data as well as the one who performs the analysis, the question of the researcher’s qualifications, training and experiences is important in qualitative content analysis. Interpretation involves a balancing act. On one hand, it is impossible and undesirable for the researcher not to add a particular perspective to the phenomena under study. On the other hand, the researcher must ‘let the text talk’ and not impute meaning that is not there”.

This argument identifies how the ‘researching professional’ may enjoy considerable insight, which a less informed researcher may not possess. This insight can however also lead to assumption and conjecture, which may not be supported by the data. This need for balance and continual reflection was an ever-present consideration during the analysis of the data.

During and after data collection an ongoing process of analysis took place. This was conducted manually. It is recognised that a qualitative researcher has two options from which to select an analytical method. These are either manual or automated. Deciding which approach to take is a matter for the researcher and
will depend upon the volume of data collected, the resources available to conduct the research and the ontological perspective of the researcher (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014). It is also argued that:

“Data analysis is the most difficult and crucial aspect of qualitative research. Coding is one of the significant steps taken during analysis to organise and make sense of contextual data. [This analysis] is usually seen as arduous. It is not fundamentally a mechanical or technical exercise. It is a dynamic, intuitive and creative process of inductive reasoning, thinking and theorizing” (Basit, 2003, p.143).

In support of Silverman’s (2013) and Qu & Dumay’s (2011) work, Basit (2003, p. 146) goes on to note that, “qualitative researchers believe that only qualitative data respects the complexity, subtlety and detail of human transactions”. To this end, it is argued that manual data analysis is significantly more desirable than a computer aided approach. It is only by the researcher engaging with the data in this manual way that a true depth of understanding can be achieved. Having determined that a manual approach is desirable, it is then necessary to determine how this work will be undertaken. It is accepted that there are two common methods that can be employed in analysing and presenting qualitative data. These are i) presenting the results in a coded / categorised way or, ii) providing the reader with extensive quotation of the data, in the hope that the key themes of the study emerge and can be interpreted (Bliss, Monk & Ogborn, 1983). For the purposes of this study, it is argued that the second of these approaches provides the most comprehensive method of both understanding the data and affording the reader the opportunity to digest the rich experiences identified through the research.

In terms of a practical approach to coding / classification of the data, Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014) provide a useful summary. They identify a number of approaches to coding. These include; descriptive, process, emotion, values and holistic. These different approaches (not exhaustive) are all concerned with manually reviewing data and identifying where repeated reference to one / any / all of these areas are made. All of the coding options described above (and others, see Bryman, 2008; Silverman, 2013 and
Richards, 2009) provide a highly structured approach to analysing data, which may, it could be argued, dilute the ease with which it can be understood. It is apparent that qualitative data presents a significant challenge to social researchers. As identified by Richards (2009, p.4):

“Qualitative researchers deal with, and revel in, confusing, contradictory, multi faceted data records, rich in accounts of experience and interaction. The researcher confronted by such data records almost always talks in terms of dilemmas. How to tame the data without losing their excitement, get order without trivializing accounts, or losing the reflections about the researcher’s role in making them happen. How to exert control without losing vivid recall? How to show a pattern that respects the data without prematurely reducing vivid words to numbers”?

This perspective provided by Richard’s is of use to this research, where personal experience lies at the heart of the data captured from the respondents. The coding processes described by Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014) above attempt to impose a level of sanitisation and control over the data which, it is argued, is not aligned to Richard’s vision for qualitative data analysis. She goes on to explain the different intentions that lie behind the coding of data when considering quantitative versus qualitative data. Coding of quantitative data is concerned with reduction of the data to make order and sense of it, to allow for clear presentation of findings. Coding of qualitative data is intended to provide the researcher with a method to reflect upon the data, make sense of it and then go on to articulate the data in an appropriate fashion.

In the context of a professional doctorate, impact on professional practice is the intended outcome of the research. To this end, it is essential that the findings can be understood and recognised by those who are the actors involved (Scott, Brown, Lunt and Thorn, 2004). The descriptive technique identified by Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014 p.182) as ‘Vignettes’ is a method that takes the coded data and transforms this into a narrative that tells a ‘story’ that is understandable. As they explain:-

“A vignette is a focused description of a series of events taken to be representative, typical or emblematic in the case you are studying...
There are no hard-and-fast guidelines for writing a vignette, though some may prescribe that the content should contain sufficient descriptive detail, analytic commentary, critical or evaluative perspectives… “

Of particular importance to the professional doctorate that is striving for wide readership and impact upon practitioners is the following contention that they go on to state:-

“[This approach will permit] the researcher an opportunity to venture away from traditional scholarly discourse and into evocative prose that remains firmly rooted in the data but is not a slave to it” (p.183)

Whether identified as a vignette or if simply described as a narrative account of the data, this approach is adopted for much of chapter six, to allow for the inclusion of extensive direct quotations from the respondents to be articulated interchangeably with analysis of the wider themes that emerge.

Research ethics

Undertaking research that is ethical is an important consideration for any research. The process of ethical review and securing a favourable ethical opinion from the research ethics committee of the university is concerned with establishing a ‘safety net’ for participants, the researcher and the university during the research process (Pich et al 2003). There is an ongoing ethical perspective that exists beyond the completion of the research process. This includes when dissemination and publication of the findings is under consideration (Bryman, 2008).

The guidance offered by the faculty ethics committee of the University of Portsmouth provided an initial perspective on the importance of research ethics. This was supplemented through reviewing the position of the British Sociological Association, the Social Research Association and the American Sociological Association. Ethics in qualitative research is a complex and
engaging field. A helpful summary of research considerations is provided by Diener & Crandall (1978). They describe ethics in four key domains:

- a) whether there is harm to participants
- b) whether there is a lack of informed consent
- c) whether there is an invasion of privacy
- d) whether deception is involved

By considering the ethics of this research, within the scope of the four domains provided, it is argued that the ethical undertaking of this study is assured. Guillemin & Gillam (2004) provide useful insight into research ethics and propose a model that considers ethics from two perspectives. They argue that the researcher must pay due regard to both ‘procedural ethics’ and also to what they describe as ‘ethics in practice’. ‘Procedural ethics’ is concerned with the administrative process of drafting and submitting ethical documentation to an ethics committee, in pursuit of a favourable ethical opinion. This is then supported by consistently adhering to any of the ethical commitments made within this documentation, throughout the research. ‘Ethics in practice’ is described as a much more considered and reflective activity. This part of the model requires that the researcher consistently consider how their research is impacting upon participants, and how the research should respond to any issues that this might present. Ethics in practice provides ongoing ‘ethicality’ to the research, to ensure that it is more than just an administrative exercise. This approach was adopted for this research.

Exhibiting objectivity is recognised as one of the most significant challenges when considering the ethics of research. Critically reviewing intended research activity and paying due regard to the way in which the study progresses is a continuing responsibility of the researcher that requires ongoing review (Miller, Birch, Mauthner & Jessop, 2002). Detailed narrative of the ethical issues that were considered as part of this research are presented within Appendix C, inclusive of steps taken to mitigate the ethical risks presented.

The issue of anonymity is important and so it is discussed here. Assurances of anonymity were given to the direct entry superintendents. Other participants
who held the same rank, or a lower rank, to the direct entry superintendents were treated in the same way. These assurances of anonymity were not offered to the other stakeholders involved in this research. They all hold much more senior ranks in the service and their views are a matter of public interest. However, having reflected upon the nature of their responses and the importance of showing due respect to both them and those whom they had referenced during the interviews it was decided that naming them directly within the thesis was unnecessary. The importance of their views comes from the office they hold and their views are attributed this way within the text.

Further useful insight on the importance of research ethics is offered by considering the unique insights encountered as a researching professional. The researcher’s employer and the researcher’s national professional body were the primary host organisations engaged with as part of the research. Engagement with these organisations was established through making open approaches as an independent researcher, rather than an employee. However pre-established relationships made the pathway to establishing access to both policy documentation and interview participants less problematic than may have ordinarily been the case. A professional doctorate student will often enjoy such privileged access and research outcomes may be more insightful and more impactive because of this (Scott et al, 2004). The counter view to this is that the ‘researching professional’ will need to be cautious in the reporting of findings and conclusions, particularly where these may challenge the organisations concerned. This was found to be the case during this study. It was necessary to consistently reflect upon the nature of the findings, to ensure that any contentious data was not presented in such a way as to attract undue attention toward the researcher.

The dilemma here is that the researcher should strive to report the data that is encountered and draw reasoned conclusions, but there is not an absolute freedom to do so. Additional obligations to an employer and other peers in the workplace provide a constraint that must be acknowledged. By way of example, scrutiny and editorial requests were directed toward the researcher from one of the organisations involved. It was necessary to exercise great care in navigating this dialogue to ensure that the representations made could be acknowledged.
within the article (Smith, 2016), without altering the content to such an extent that the work failed to represent the true nature of the study. Arguably, the entirely independent researcher who is external to the organisation being researched does not experience such pressures. They are unlikely, however, to enjoy the same ease of access or contextual insight to the findings that are encountered.

This chapter has described the research setting and outlined the approach taken to reviewing the literature. It has also provided an explanation of the research methodology and the practical steps taken to complete the research. The chapter then considered how the data was collected and analysed before concluding with a summary of the ethical considerations involved. The following chapter considers some of the key literature that frames this research and builds the case for direct entry.
Chapter Three: Building the case for direct entry

This chapter considers why the police service in England and Wales has adopted a direct entry superintendent scheme. The chapter opens with recognition of the historical perspective, discussing previous iterations of ‘direct entry’ and ‘fast-tracking’. The discussion then considers lessons from abroad to understand if an international dimension could add value to understanding this new entry pathway. Thereafter the political will needed to drive transformational change in the police service is explored.

In relation to the recruitment, training and development of its officers, the police service in England and Wales is going through a time of change. Direct entry into management positions and fast tracking of internal talent have been identified as the preferred means to open up the service to new perspectives and also encourage a change in police culture (College of Policing, 2014 & Winsor, 2012). The superintendent direct entry scheme is a watershed in British policing. Not since the Trenchard scheme of the 1930s has the service looked to bring in ‘talent’ at a level above that of constable. Outlooks that are considered to be too similar within the ranks of the National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC), cultural blockages, underrepresentation by BME communities and a desire to do things differently have all been articulated as reasons for embarking on this new journey (Winsor, 2012).

The ultimate test of success will be whether the police service benefits and the communities served see an improvement in criminal justice outcomes. At the heart of this new venture lie the direct entry officers who are taking on the challenge of being the first direct entrants. Academics, practitioners and political commentators have provided commentary on the utility of this pathway into the police service (Loveday, 2013; Winsor, 2012; Neyroud, 2010; Kernaghan, 2013). These new police leaders will be afforded an opportunity to influence and shape their respective forces as they engage with high profile leadership roles over the coming months and years.
Historical Perspective

While direct entry to the rank of superintendent is a new initiative for policing in England and Wales, there have been a number of previous attempts to facilitate the movement of able officers more quickly through the service. This swift progression has aimed to place capable individuals into senior ranks that hold the most power and influence. Literature dealing with direct entry and police progression is frequently drawn into offering perspectives on past (and very dated) methods for recruitment and developing talented individuals to create cohorts of excellence in police leadership (Leishman & Savage, 1993; Kernaghan, 2013).

Using the military as an organisation of direct comparison is often the favoured option, despite the very different role in society that the armed forces have. It is argued that the un-armed police officer who is a member of the public, policing by consent and exercising absolute discretion over the discharge of his powers, has a very different role to the armed soldier who operates under a highly disciplined command and control system used by the armed forces to deliver their strategic priorities (Cowper, 2000). The ‘myth’ that the police service is a paramilitary organisation is challenged by Cowper and also challenged by Jermier and Berkes (1979) in their critique of the quasi-military perception of police leadership. The thesis supports this position and argues that a comparison of police and military leadership is far too simplistic and also fails to recognise the very different roles of leaders in these organisations.

Taken a step further, it is argued that effective police leadership has as much in common with leadership in health, retail or finance as with the military. This is perhaps most clearly evidenced by reflecting upon the partnership responsibilities of the police service. Working collaboratively with education, probation, health and third sector organisations requires skills in negotiation and influence. This is more than simply desirable. The Crime and Disorder Act (1998) requires criminal justice agencies to statutorily collaborate in this way.
While framed as an ‘historical perspective’, the value in Kernaghan’s (2013) reflections on the Royal Ulster Constabulary of the 1920s and 1930s may not offer much relevance for British policing in 2016. While a tempting, and in many ways comfortable, place to situate a review of the literature that frames this study, it is argued that only basing this debate historically is unhelpful and has no application for the 21st Century challenges that direct entry seeks to address. Winsor (2012 – now HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary) concluded that the next 30 years of policing will look nothing like the last 30 years. It can therefore be argued that the re-invention of the structural framework of the police service, to mirror past endeavours, will not be sufficient to deal with the challenges that lie ahead. Financial challenges, unpredictable terrorist threats, the growth of cyber crime and as yet unresolved attempts to recruit from a wider socio-economic, intellectual and cultural base make the police service of 2016 significantly different to that of the past. However, an absolute disregard of previous talent management initiatives within the police service would fail to capture some of the key learning opportunities that this can provide.

The Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service, from 1931 to 1935, was Lord Trenchard. Formerly of the RAF, Trenchard was widely recognised as an innovative thinker within the field of police leadership and specifically the way in which promotion pathways within the service should be managed (Loveday, 2013). As Trenchard himself noted:

  “The present educational standard of the force is astoundingly low. Only eighteen per cent of the present strength have carried their education beyond the elementary school standard. The result is a narrowness of outlook and rigidity of mind even amongst those who reach the higher ranks” (Trenchard, cited in Boyle, 1962, p.616)

The concept of the ‘narrowness of outlook and rigidity of mind’ that troubled Trenchard more than 50 years ago appears to be reflected in the arguments being made today in support of direct entry.

Trenchard recognised a need to identify talent within the service that should be ‘fast tracked’ to more senior positions. He also wanted to attract qualified
individuals from other professions who could add value as leaders and influencers within the service (Boyle, 1962). As noted by Brain (2012) “the scheme worked, producing 197 graduates providing the backbone of the chief officer ranks until the mid 1970s. These included two Metropolitan Police Commissioners and many leading chief constables”. A change in Commissioner and the outbreak of war in 1939 ultimately led to the demise of the direct entry pathway that Trenchard had seen as so necessary.

The Oaksey Commission of 1949, as part of its work to report on conditions of service for the police, took evidence from Sir Charles Cunningham (Permanent Under Secretary of State at the Home Office) who noted that: -

“Whilst it was not possible to say whether the quality of leadership in the police service would have been different without the Trenchard Scheme, many of the very senior officers within the service had entered the service via that route” (Winsor, 2012 pp. 106).

This provides an interesting perspective on ‘success factors’ in relation to the management of talent. Cunningham identified that the proficiency of a pathway to promote a number of officers is not necessarily the true test of its success. It is the quality of leadership outcomes that is of greater interest to those who review the utility (or otherwise) of such schemes. From contact with the College of Policing’s direct entry programme team it is apparent that, at this stage, success factors are predominantly based around attrition rates, visible diversity and onward progression of direct entrants.

While there was some ‘experimentation’ with promotion pathways in the years that followed the demise of the Trenchard Scheme, it was the Royal Commission of 1960 that concluded it was fundamental that police officers should only be recruited at the rank of constable. Direct entry at any other rank was deemed undesirable. Fast tracking of the most capable individuals did, however, still attract some significant support.

In 1961 the ‘Special Course’ was established. A highly competitive selection process identified the most talented individuals from within the service who
were subject to a 12-month course and swift promotion to sergeant and inspector thereafter (Winsor, 2012). The attrition rate for these officers was low, with the vast majority completing 30 years service and significant success being seen in terms of senior positions being gained by graduates from this scheme. Between 1962 and 1992 the Special Course had produced 35 Chief Constables, 31 Deputy Chief Constables, 60 Assistant Chief Constables and 3 Her Majesties Inspectors of Constabulary. It is recorded that 13% achieved ACPO rank, 16% became chief superintendents and 24% became superintendents (Adler, Lowden & Snell cited in Winsor, 2012). As noted earlier, evidence as to the outcomes delivered by these officers and comparators between them and their peers who progressed along more traditional developmental pathways is difficult to identify. It can only be said that progression of officers on the special course was faster than for those who were not afforded the same opportunity.

The special course evolved and developed over the next 40 years. This evolution involved different inputs, which reflected the challenges that were identified within police leadership at the time. Finally the Special Course became the Accelerated Promotion Scheme, before, in 2002, transforming into the High Potential Development Scheme. While the content, delivery and outcome of the schemes varied over the years, the ultimate aim remained consistent, which was to speed up the development of talented individuals within the service to facilitate their progression to higher ranks.

This summary of the chronology pre-dating the new direct entry scheme offers an opportunity to understand the context of previous talent management initiatives in policing. It is not however argued that the career progression of those who saw such success as graduates of the special course meant that these internal pathways to leadership were a preferred option. Indeed, this is a clear example of focussing on the number of course members who reached the highest levels of the service. Yet no evaluation was made of their ability, impact and legacy. Reviews of the success of these schemes fall silent on these much more substantial and qualitative measures.
Between 2002 and 2013, the High Potential Development Scheme was the national system that identified a cohort of approximately 50 officers each year. These officers were drawn from constable and sergeant ranks. They were offered a number of development opportunities, aimed at preparing them for more senior ranks and facilitating swifter promotion. As with both its predecessors, the special course and the accelerated promotion scheme, the HPDS was entirely concerned with identification of talent from within and the quick development of that talent. It was not an entry and progression pathway for external applicants. The direct entry superintendent scheme is, in those terms, an entirely different proposition.

**International Perspectives**

This research is not a comparative study and no primary research data is provided from abroad. It is however appropriate to consider lessons from other countries that have developed a direct entry narrative. To ensure that any international comparisons add value to the debate, it is important to consider similar policing jurisdictions. When international comparisons are being sought in policing, the most frequently cited nations are North America, Australia and New Zealand (Poynting and Mason, 2007; Munro, 2005; Pakes, 2010).

The common law legislative framework in Australia and New Zealand has led to British officers, at both chief officer and constable ranks, being directly recruited to take on policing roles in these countries. It has been possible to achieve this with minimal supplementary training, due to the similarities in policing (Western Australia Police, 2016). However no direct entry opportunities into middle management roles are offered in either Australia or New Zealand. Considering the extensive police workforce modernisation that has taken place in both of these countries in the last two decades, it is telling that this period of reform has not taken a step to engage direct entrants into their senior ranks. In many ways, this period of change has been more ambitious than that delivered by the 43 forces in England and Wales. This is particularly so in terms of reducing the number of ranks within the service. This has had the effect of flattening the organisational structure. In 1998 the Australian Federal Police reduced its ranks
by over fifty per cent, from eleven to five, in an effort to improve responsibility and decision making (Loveday and McClory, 2007).

In his review of police remuneration and conditions, Winsor (2012) made reference to the entry pathways of other similar policing jurisdictions. Hong Kong and the Netherlands were the two particular forces referenced. These were factual descriptions that considered the entry requirements and training methods used by these two police forces to develop their officers. As described by Winsor (2012, p.142);

“The Hong Kong police recruit at two levels: police constable and inspector. Those wishing to join at inspector level require a Hong Kong degree or equivalent. They must be able to pass written Chinese and English papers. The selection process is by a written examination of six papers testing English and Chinese, aptitude and basic law, then an extended day-long interview process. After 36 weeks of basic training and passing the ‘standard one examination’ new inspectors can either complete three years’ service and then pass the ‘standard two’ and all subjects of the ‘standard three’ examinations with credits, or complete three years at inspector, pass the ‘standard two’ examination and then complete a further five years’ service and then pass the ‘standard three’ examination. After a further five years, the officer can then be promoted to chief inspector, and after a further two years, to superintendent. The fastest an inspector entrant can therefore reach superintendent rank in Hong Kong is ten years”.

The academic rigour that influences this direct entry pathway is evident, and great value is placed upon the academic achievements of applicants. This is the case prior to joining the Hong Kong Police and thereafter during training and the continuous professional development cycle. The Hong Kong Police focus is on potential, rather than proven experience. As is described on their recruitment website, candidates will be assessed on the following competences; leadership potential, management potential, motivation, personality and values (Hong Kong Police, 2016).

The direct entry scheme in England and Wales asks of potential applicants:
“you’ve proved yourself in the corporate world, now make policing your business”. Additionally, direct entry inspector applicants (not part of this study) are told they are eligible if: “you are a current middle manager with supervisory skills and leadership experience” (College of Policing, 2016). The comparative dimension provides a strong contrast in approach and priorities. The police service of Hong Kong prioritises educational attainment and potential, above the experiential knowledge that is expected of direct entrants in England and Wales.

In the Netherlands, the police also offer an example of a service that has multiple entry points. Direct entry into ranks above constable in the Netherlands is largely dependent upon academic attainment. A graduate with a bachelor’s degree is able to enter the service at a rank that would be considered similar to that of sergeant in English and Welsh forces. Progression beyond the superintending rank is only available if a master’s level qualification is obtained. For those who have a master’s degree prior to joining, the entry point would remain at sergeant level, but with accelerated progression thereafter (Netherlands Police, 2016). From narrative emanating from both the Home Office and the College of Policing, it is evident that there is a strong desire to bring more of these international perspectives to progression pathways in domestic policing. As evidenced by recent comments from the Chief Executive of the College of Policing;

“People who currently work in policing do an increasingly complex job…Quite often the police are chairing public protection meetings and everyone else round the table is supported by a degree level qualification in their area. The future workforce may well be best served by having a practical police-based degree before they join” (Police Oracle, 2016).

While the direct entry superintendent scheme does not have any academic requirements, the College of Policing is moving towards the implementation of that requirement for standard entrants. This is a position that is open to challenge. In the context of treating all new entrants to the police service fairly and consistently, this differing position to academic attainment may prove difficult for the College to defend.
Having explored the way in which an international dimension can contextualise the direct entry superintendent scheme, it is argued that these approaches are fundamentally different. This is so because of the focus, elsewhere in the world, on academic attainment. In domestic policing, leadership credentials and previous experience are deemed the preferred prerequisite for selection into senior leadership roles.

**Political influence: momentum for change**

There is considerable political will to deliver a step change in the development of talent management in the police service. As stated by the Prime Minister in July 2011:

“At the moment, the police system is too closed. There is only one point of entry into the force. There are too few, and arguably too similar, candidates for the top jobs. I want to see radical proposals for how we can open up our police force and bring in fresh leadership. Why should all police officers have to start at the same level? Why should not someone with a different skill set be able to join the police force in a senior rank? Why should not someone who has been a proven success overseas be able to help us to turn around a force here at home?” (Cameron, 2011)

This statement from the Prime Minister was given during a debate concerning public confidence in policing; no doubt an appropriate position from which to make these observations. The political will to deliver such change has endured for much of the past decade or more (Savage, 2003). There are two perspectives which act as catalysts for change. These are an internal and external perspective. The external perspective can be best summarised by considering the concept of talent management, particularly with reference to the ‘war for talent’ (Beechler and Woodward, 2009), explored in detail later. The internal perspective perhaps requires greater scrutiny. If new perspectives are required, there is, one might assume, a problem with the current perspectives (and the existing talent).
In the words of the Prime Minister, the internal talent pool is believed to be, “too few and too similar”. In short, there may be better people on the ‘outside’ than there are on the ‘inside’. The evidence base for this is less clearly articulated. It does not necessarily follow that the presence of an untapped pool of potential talent from outside the organisation means that problems exist within the existing pool of talent. Much of the commentary that is presented in relation to direct entry reflects an assumption that external is better. It might be perhaps more accurate (and certainly less provocative) to consider the external talent pool as different. The research identifies this as a significant issue, which has not always been explored as clearly as it should have been.

The direct entry debate may not involve any kind of value judgment. Rather than anything else, it may be better explained as being about diversity of ability. That is not to say that there is not an argument to be made that supports the claim that existing talent is not of the required standard. However the evidence base for this assertion is not particularly strong. This thesis presents empirical evidence that seeks to build a new understanding of what constitutes the ‘diversity of ability’ that is being offered by the direct entrants. Shortly after Cameron’s speech in the House of Commons, the cross bench Peer (and former chief constable) Lord Dear published an article arguing that there was a crisis in police leadership which could only be resolved if the police service decided to; “copy the army and big business – hire top recruits, manage cleverly, cull ruthlessly”. Lord Dear also went on to describe the resignation of the Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Paul Stephenson in difficult circumstances as part of the News of the World phone hacking scandal as “cataclysmic” (Dear, 2011).

This rather sensationalist language has, frequently, become a corner stone of the change narrative that has surrounded the debate over direct entry. Those commentators who have surrounded the issue with emotive language have, it could be argued, created a perspective that suggests there is a significant problem involving a ‘crisis of leadership’. As argued above, this narrative is unnecessary and unhelpful. Speaking in terms of difference rather than improvement may be more accurate. The ‘cataclysmic’ resignation of Sir Paul
Stephenson after unwelcome associations with the News International hacking scandal could, indeed, be referred to as a big problem (Davies, 2011). But was it really ‘cataclysmic’?

It is argued that taking a more cautious approach to language that surrounds the direct entry debate could ensure that internal stakeholders are not alienated by an unnecessarily provocative approach. This thesis does start from a position that recognises that, until such time as evidence to the contrary emerges, direct entry is a positive pathway upon which to embark. This however involves testing the recommendations made by Winsor (2012), but also ensuring that the police service can demonstrate that a modernisation agenda is something that has been truly embraced. It would seem appropriate to consider why a more provocative approach by senior political figures is sometimes used when expressing views in relation to quality of police leadership. It may be argued that building momentum to change is only possible when the issues that drive that need for change are articulated in the strongest possible terms (Cameron and Green, 2009). Stalled attempts to bring about change of this type and magnitude over the past decades demonstrate that a ‘light touch’ will not be sufficient to make things happen and that a more powerful use of language is needed to get recommendations of this type to adhere.

In evidence of the approach, the publication of Winsor’s (2012) report received swift and strong political backing:

"I do not believe it is in the best interests of the service to restrict its ability to appoint officers to senior positions to a limited number of individuals. While police leaders have undoubted strengths, I want to ensure that the police service is able to draw upon the best pool of talent available. The Government believes that the [Winsor review’s] recommendations on [direct] entry could support this and I will therefore consult partners on them" (Home Secretary, Theresa May, cited in Johnson, 2012).
The move from recommendation to action is widely regarded as challenging and the evidence base from the police service suggests that this organisation is no different. Sheehy (1993, p.3) noted that, “[police] have a special position under the law, but many of the qualities and skills which are required by police officers of various ranks are common to a number of other professions and organisations”. Macpherson (1999) and Flanagan (2008) also offered a wide-ranging commentary on leadership challenges faced by the police service. It was argued that external talent could influence these issues in a positive way. If Sheehy, Macpherson and Flanagan are considered to be watershed stages for policing that attempted to stimulate change (and successfully so in many ways) then it is useful to reflect on why their shared attempts to galvanise new approaches to police leadership failed to gather traction.

In their response to Winsor (2012), The Prime Minister and the Home Secretary took a position that ‘different’ approaches to police leadership were required. It is useful to consider what their notion of ‘difference’ may actually mean. Diversity is one of the more common approaches to describing ‘difference’. While this may be a moot point, it is argued that this justifies further reflection. Diversity is arguably concerned with visible characteristics that differentiate between individuals (gender, ethnicity etc.) whereas the proper consideration of difference would involve much wider perspectives. This could include attitudes, motivations and tactical knowledge. These are non-visible characteristics that are much more difficult to identify and define (Clements and Jones, 2008). Watters et al (2007) presented a detailed commentary on the challenges of recruiting ethnic minorities into the police service. They considered the legitimacy and consent issues that derive from the obvious absence of diversity (particularly female and BME officers) in the senior ranks of the police service.

It is apparent that the political will to develop new entry pathways into the police service is as concerned with bringing in diversity of appearance, attitudes and perspectives as it is with increasing the capability of police leadership. However, it should not necessarily be assumed that direct entry into the superintendent rank is automatically a method of increasing diversity within chief officer ranks. The ability of these direct entrants to secure promotion to the highest levels of
the service is, as yet, unproven. The issue of how diversity should impact upon
career progression receives a consistent response when considering the views
of a number of influential stakeholders. The consultation responses recorded by
Winsor (2012) highlight that both ACPO (now the NPCC) and the
Superintendents Association recognise that merit is the sole measure of
selection to a direct entry position and that any diversity benefits are purely
coincidental.

Having considered the history of talent management in policing, some key
lessons from abroad and the political pressures that have helped generate the
momentum to bring about change to police recruitment and training, this thesis
will now consider police culture and police leadership. As identified above, it is a
desire to change culture and improve leadership within the service which, it is
claimed, is the key driver for introducing direct entry. Situating the research in
the context of current literature on culture and leadership is appropriate in order
to support the primary research results that follow.
Chapter Four: Considering culture & leadership

Chapter three has hopefully provided useful understanding of how the direct entry scheme has come to fruition. Analysis was presented in relation to earlier attempts to develop leaders in the police service, lessons from abroad and also political influences that are involved. With this as the context, this chapter now explores concepts of police culture and police leadership, as a means to understand how these two well researched areas can assist in better appreciating the primary data produced as part of this study.

Police Culture

One of the key drivers for introducing direct entry into the superintendent rank is an ambition to bring new perspectives into policing. Views from within the service also articulate this need. As argued by the Chief Executive of the College of Policing; “This programme is designed to attract talented people from outside policing to bring in different skills and expertise which will allow us to develop the service” (College of Policing, 2014a). It is this concept of ‘developing the service’ that lies at the heart of the direct entry debate. There is little evidence to suggest this development is about operational decision-making, the capability to deal with critical incidents or respond to crime and disorder. The evidence presented so far suggests that ‘developing the service’ is almost entirely concerned with bringing about a change to police culture.

Police culture is a widely critiqued discipline that has attracted much attention for many years. Cockcroft (2005, 2007, 2009, 2012 & 2014) has led the way in this commentary for the past decade and offers insightful reflections on this complex area. Loftus (2012) and Crank (2004) also provide extensive comment on organisational culture. Much of this research is concerned with how police culture may be a barrier to change in the service. It is frequently concluded that the service is culturally resistant to reform and that modernisation is difficult to achieve as a result of this (Alcott, 2012; Chan, 1996)

The focus of research into police culture has been based primarily upon operational officers (those in the constable and sergeant ranks who discharge
core policing duties). Academics identified above have articulated a view that it is these officers who go on to become the superintendents and chief officers of the future who perpetuate the cultural norms that have been formed in their early careers (be they of a positive or negative disposition).

To begin to understand the dynamics that characterise police culture, it might be of use to consider Reiner’s (2000) model. He proposed seven key characteristics when attempting to describe police culture. These are identified as:-

- a sense of mission
- suspicion
- isolation / solidarity
- conservatism
- machismo
- pragmatism
- racial prejudice

Identifying these characteristics is clearly of value. However reflecting upon the behaviours that are demonstrated as a result of these characteristics is, it could be argued, of more importance when considering the nature of police culture. If, for example, the behaviours associated with characteristics of suspicion, machismo and racial prejudice are considered, it becomes clear that the cultural model proposed by Reiner may present a rather negative view of policing. This is particularly so within the context of policing by consent. By way of contrast, the Metropolitan Police Service (2016) states that “[we will] uphold our corporate values of Courage, Compassion, Professionalism and Integrity”. There is a clear tension between these values and the cultural characteristics identified earlier. Reiner’s model is also supported by other academics including; Waddington (1999), Graef, (1989), Bowling and Phillips (2002), Fielding (1994) and Skolnick (1966).

Herbert (1998) cites Kappeler et al. (1994) and Westley (1970) in commenting on the perceived difference that police officers see between themselves and the
general public. Hebert also makes reference to the work of Reiner (1992) and Rubinstein (1973) who argue that police behaviour (culture) is governed, in the main, by informal norms rather than a set of formal binding principles. It is perhaps this conclusion that explains why a true understanding of police culture is a challenging goal. Interestingly, the informal culture that is present amongst operational officers is not subject to the disapproval of more senior officers. Prenzler (1997 p.48) cites Fitzgerald (1989) in recognising this way of doing business as being “tolerated, even tacitly encouraged by those officers reaching managerial ranks”. The fact that these officers were once themselves operational again raises interesting considerations as to why police culture is perpetuated so strongly.

In the context of direct entry, the issue of acceptance of cultural norms that are recognised, understood and supported by senior officers could arguably become less of a problem. This is because these ‘new thinkers’ do not possess the same worldview as their peers who have progressed through to the superintendent rank in the traditional way. The practical consequence of this difference in experience / values is that the direct entrant may be more likely to think differently and take a position that is both unique and also challenges traditional approaches.

Within much of the literature on police culture, frequent references are made to the uniqueness of the police profession, often as a means by which to defend negative perspectives on police culture. This is captured well by Cockcroft when he argues that;

“police culture is developed as an occupationally situated response to the uniqueness of the police role and one in which our understanding is, at times, hindered by the challenges of definitional, operational and analytical concerns” (2013, p.1)

Both Fielding (1994) and Waddington (1999) have made use of the police ‘canteen’ as a proxy for describing the culture of policing. It is widely recognised as a helpful way to contextualise the way in which police officers are believed to behave. As stated by Waddington (1999) the police canteen is identified by
police as the ‘repair shop’ where they can find a safe and understanding audience to assist in making sense of the experiences that they are exposed to at work. These diverse and often challenging experiences are evidence of the uniqueness that was described above. It is argued by Cockcroft (2013, p.35) that:

“…one needs to realise that despite its image the police is a fragile institution. Police officers, like others in marginal (or marginalised) occupations, use the oral tradition of the canteen as a means of imbuing status into their work and skills, whilst simultaneously celebrating their core distinguishing factor – that of their legitimate claim to violence”.

This reference to violence is of particular interest when considering the seven characteristics articulated by Reiner (2000) and supports the negative connotations that this list engenders.

As evidence of police culture begins to build, it may be useful to consider if there is a counter view to the popular position identified on this matter. Waddington (1999) notes that there are inherent problems with the use of the term ‘culture’, particularly when attempting to make sense of social norms. He argues that the cultural norms identified within policing may not be as distant from other occupations as may initially be thought. As argued by former Home Secretary Theresa May in a speech at the Reform think tank, there are notable similarities between the police service and the fire service. She identified a “culture of bullying and harassment…a toxic and corrosive culture” that would require “reform as radical and ambitious as I have delivered in the police service since 2010” (Travis, 2016). The appetite however of police officers to distance their culture from that of wider society (however similar they may actually be) appears to be much more specific to policing.

It might be useful to re-situate this discussion with the context of the thesis. The analysis provided by Reiner (2000), Waddington (1999), Cockcroft (2013) and others provides a view of police culture that is not entirely complimentary. Whether or not this is a fair representation of the culture is immaterial. If that is the perception, then an ambition to change that culture is likely to be sustained
until both change and reform materialises. As noted earlier, the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary, the Chief Executive of the College of Policing and Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Constabulary have all voiced concern and sought a change in the cultural dynamic of the police service. It is their shared perception that fresh leadership perspectives, brought about through direct entry, could make a significant contribution to this development.

While differences in the literature on police culture are significant, there is also a binding theme that brings much of the thinking together. That takes the form of a recognition that police officers find themselves brought together through circumstance, experience and a shared appreciation of their moral endeavours (Loftus, 2012; Cockcroft, 2014; Cockcroft, 2009; Reiner, 2000). This contention is well described by Crank who notes that:-

“it is also their culture that makes them so like the rest of us. Culture marks humans; we seem compelled to commit our energies to the creation and sustenance of culture. The capacity of the police to reproduce culture is a mark of their humanity, their similarity to us, not their difference. Critics of police culture, who hold that the so called ‘police sub-culture’ is the primary impediment to change and reform and must be expunged, are unwittingly advocating that we strip cops of their humanity”. (2004, p.iii)

This sympathetic view of police culture goes further than some in terms of reflecting the complexities of the human dynamics of policing. Ultimately however it articulates a message that is identified by the authors cited earlier. Rather than perceiving this thesis as engaged in the analysis of culture, it may in fact focus on the perception of culture. It is not the culture per se that it is the source of any critique. Rather it attempts to build an understanding of what the perceptions of that culture may be.

The complexity of understanding police culture (or perceptions of it) is helpfully described by Crank (2004) where the police place pride in their ability to display common sense. As he argues:-
“the police put a high value on the application of common sense…and the ability to use common sense is a source of pride among officers. Police place great value on common sense knowledge, holding it to be crucial for survival on the street”. He goes on to note that; “there is a paradox about police work and common sense. Police work is characterised by unpredictability, not by rule-ordered predictability. Common sense implies some notion of a natural order to things, not a natural disorder. Yet disorder is central to police work – without disorder, without rule breaking, there would be no reason for the police” (p.214)

This identification of police pride in the use of common sense, in dealing with the uncommon, is a clear example of a disconnection in cultural perspectives between police and the wider community. By displaying a lesser respect of those who do not have the ‘common sense to deal with the uncommon’ there is arguably a hierarchy of common sense developing between these two populations. Reiner’s (2000) inclusion of pragmatism as one of his seven key characteristics of policing would appear to support this. It is also evidenced in the work of Manning (1976) and McNulty (1994).

In Crank’s (2004) work (cited above) it is suggested that those who argue police culture is a barrier to police reform are in effect dehumanising police officers and that it is also an unfair accusation. In the context of direct entry being a significant change programme for policing, it is clear that the question of whether or not police culture could prove to be a barrier to change is a crucial element to this study. This is subject matter that has received significant scrutiny by academics in policing and the wider criminal justice system.

In his empirical study, centred on the culture of response team policing, Alcott (2012) considered how attempts to modernise the training and development of student officers had been thwarted by the incumbent culture which existed within the teams to which these student officers were posted. He concluded that the desire of these new officers to be accepted into their new teams meant that their appetite to learn in the ‘new way’ quickly evaporated once experienced colleagues began to demonstrate how the job ‘should be done’. Whether this
was a purposeful resistance to the training regime or whether this was evidence of Reiner’s (2000) ‘pragmatism’ and Crank’s (2004) ‘common sense’ is however unclear. It appears appropriate to conclude that cultural dynamics were at play here, which served to limit the training reform agenda introduced at that time (Alcott, 2012).

Identification of a ‘them and us’ relationship is frequently highlighted in comparisons between police culture and the wider community (Stanko et al 2012; Foster, 2003). This concept of relationships between police and others has also been highlighted in relationships that emerge as part of partnership working. This would include local authorities, the health service, education and third sector partners. It has been argued that:-

“citizens are often seen as problems to be circumvented or overcome, not as partners in a collaborative project to maintain law and order. At the extreme, some officers believe some people are beyond or simply not deserving of help, let alone suitable partners in policing activity” (Myhill & Bradford, 2012, p.338).

It is the police superintendent who often leads this partnership activity and so it might be argued that, if Myhill and Bradford’s contention is true, there may be major benefits to bringing new perspectives to these partnerships.

Wood, Fleming and Marks (2008) however present a more positive view of police as enthusiastic agents of change. They suggest that the way which police culture is branded as resisting change is in fact a dated perception. It is deployed frequently because it is more challenging to identify those traits within the police service that embrace and promote change. Wood, Fleming and Marks cite Sklansky (2007) as recognising how difficult it can be, within a research context, to understand the true identity of police culture. As a result they argue it is often misunderstood. They identify the complex problem of selecting the correct voice of an organisation to gain a genuine understanding of culture. By arguing that speaking to a senior police officer will only provide a limited view of organisational culture, they suggest that the true cultural picture is best understood by speaking to those who are charged with delivery, rather
than management of services. Indeed, Wood, Fleming and Marks state that "operational officers spend much of their working life seeking creative solutions to the daily problems they face on the street, and discussions with them reveal a wealth of knowledge about policing styles and strategies that have great potential to shape organisational reform" (2008 p.73).

The work of Reuss-Ianni (1983) also provides a perspective on this debate. It deals with a further cultural dichotomy; the polarised positions referred to as 'street cops' and 'management cops'. This thesis has already argued that 'street cops' go on to become 'management cops' (unless, of course, they are direct entrants) and that this perpetuates a culture throughout the ranks. However, Reuss-Ianni (1983, p.1) argues that there are wholly different worldviews displayed by these two types of police officer and that;

"these two cultures are increasingly characterised by competing and often conflicting perspectives on procedure and practice in policing. The situation is significant since much of the research and literature of policing describes the working of a monolithic single cop culture that pervades all levels of the organisation. The emergence of two cultures has implications for the introduction of new personnel policies and procedures, as well as for understanding the manner and method of the day-to-day practice of policing”.

From the primary research presented within this thesis, it can be argued that a third dimension to the Reuss-Ianni model now exists within policing in England and Wales. This is that of the 'direct entry cop', by way of their distinctive skills and experience.

The relationship that exists between 'street cops' and 'management cops', within the context of change has been explored by Toch (2008). His research suggested operational officers felt disillusioned by their lack of inclusion in change projects. If the work of Wood, Fleming and Marks (2008) is considered in the light of Toch’s argument, a further positive dimension to police culture appears to emerge. That is police officers are intrinsically capable of being
involved in organisational change and have a strong inclination to be involved in work to reform the service, should they have the opportunity to participate.

This discussion of culture suggests that there may be two different dynamics within the police service. One that is perceived by senior officers and one that is recognised by their subordinates. However a more important dimension to this is the external perception of police culture, that is held by the community and those with political power and motivation to re-shape policing.

Attempts to define police culture can occasionally be positive but more frequently highlight negative features. In summarising these as racism, sexism, cynicism and isolation, the work of Macvean and Cox (2012) provides an example of the arguments that are frequently offered. This weight of negative commentary can prevent academics with more positive arguments from being able to advance their position. Providing a balance to the debate around policing culture is essential, particularly when some authors may be attempting to sway public or political opinion.

In a review of police approaches to partnership working, O’Neil and McCarthy (2014) argue that trust and compromise are now well understood behaviours by police officers and their involvement in partnership working is benefitting from this approach. They argue that police officers enjoy being part of effective partnerships and recognise the positive outcomes, especially those relating to neighbourhood problem solving. Their work establishes the concept of ‘new-pragmatism’ as a challenge to the old ‘pragmatism’ highlighted within Reiner’s (2000) model. This ‘new pragmatism’ appears to be concerned with getting things done, delivering positive outcomes and learning from experience. This is very different to Reiner’s pragmatism that was more concerned with police seeking to identify a path of least resistance through complex problems. This more optimistic position is described as follows:

“partnership working was not only regularly employed by police officers and Neighbourhood Policing Teams, but welcomed and valued. Over and over again, our projects uncovered wide-spread acceptance that
partnership work ‘made sense’ and was the ‘way forward’ for police forces” (O’Neil and McCarthy, 2014, p.147).

By situating the debate about police culture in real-life activity (such as that identified above) it becomes possible to add context and facilitate greater understanding of the phenomena. This positive perspective offered within the concept of ‘new-pragmatism’ further stimulates the debate as to which end of the positive/negative spectrum police culture sits.

One of the reasons that this debate polarises views in this way may reflect the existence in fact of a number of sub cultures, rather than the cultural position of the service being a single monolithic entity. This is evidenced within the work of Paoline (2004) who identified seven distinct groups of cultures within policing. He described these as:

- traditionalists
- law enforcers
- old pros
- peacekeepers
- lay lows
- anti-organisational street cops
- dirty Harry enforcers

While the descriptions are fairly informal, they provide useful insight into the kind of sub cultures that might exist within the service and move the debate away from emphasising a single cultural entity. If this model is taken to be at all representative of the police service that the direct entry superintendents are joining in 2016, it raises a question of where these individuals will situate themselves within the service and how their own values and behaviours may either succumb to or resist these cultural forces.

In the age of social media, it is appropriate to recognise more contemporary sources of information. This involves reviewing secondary sources of data beyond the more traditional mediums that have been summarised so far. To this
end, a number of active social forums upon which the direct entry scheme is discussed have been accessed. This offers useful commentary on the direct entry scheme, but it also acts as a reference point for police culture. This is because the actors involved are, in the main, current or former police officers.

The cost of training the superintendents (estimated at £180,000 per officer; Weinfass, 2014) has received significant levels of comment on social media forums. These include:-

“What a waste of money. All that money to hire a superintendent to be in charge of paper clips.”

“Whilst preaching austerity and cutting police budgets, they insist on wasting money on this fiasco but they are trying to ruin everything good about the police service achieved since its creation”.

In relation to the evaluation of the scheme and measuring its success;

“Ms May [Home Secretary, Theresa May] will never admit it has failed even if it does. She will tell CC’s to say it is working because failure would reflect badly on her. It will not fail because Ms May will ‘flower it up’ to look successful”.

In relation to the operational competence of the direct entry superintendents, it has been argued:-

“These new bright supers will be hidden and protected from making serious decisions on the spot and under immense pressure. They may be bright, but experience at all ranks is crucial in the police”

Where more balance and evidence was included in the response, the position remained one of being opposed to direct entry;

“I made Superintendent with 14 years service, Det Superintendent with 14 years service and Chief Superintendent with 18 years service. With every new promotion I ‘struggled’ and without the active help and support of those around me would have sunk without trace. I had come up through every rank on the way, (albeit faster than most because of the
special course), and at least had some experience of the ‘sharp end’ policing, but I am quite prepared to admit that my operational experience was just about the minimum that anyone should before reaching Superintendent rank. It is impossible that this new intake of Direct Entry officers will have the necessary skill, or more importantly, the confidence of those that they are paid to lead."

[All quotes above are extracts from the comments to a Police Oracle (2014) article that was published in the week that the direct entrants began their 18-month training course at the College of Policing, November 11th 2014].

This selection of responses, take from the comments section of just one article on the ‘Police Oracle’ website, are typical of those which follow many articles related to direct entry and indeed any wider police modernisation articles. Of the forty-seven responses provided to this article (Direct entry branded ‘expensive and ineffectual’), only one could be construed as a positive reaction to the direct entry scheme. Not only does this highlight the cultural resistance to the scheme, but also the inherent willingness of those engaging in the debate (many self-identified as police officers) to resist change and be vocal in this resistance.

In concluding this discussion of police culture, it may be useful to consider the conflicting perspectives of those who have commentated on the subject matter. As explored earlier, the desire of the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary and others to bring new perspectives into police leadership is clear. The evidence from academia identifies some problems within police culture, but also some scope for optimism. The evidence provided from respondents to the article above suggests what might be described as a culture of resentment to the direct entry scheme. Taken together, this presents a complex picture of police culture and suggests that direct entrants will have a challenging time in navigating the cultural landscape of the organisation in which they find themselves. This position will be tested in detail by way of the findings and discussion chapters of this thesis.
Police Leadership

This chapter has considered the cultural context that has led the way to the introduction of the superintendent direct entry scheme. It is now necessary to consider some of the broader narrative that deals with the concept of police leadership. It is new leadership perspectives that are being sought through the introduction of direct entry and so it is appropriate to explore the key literature in this field.

In attempting to establish a definition of ‘leadership’ there are immediate challenges to be confronted. Bennis (2003) and Adair (2004) provide insightful commentary on leadership. From their work, it may be concluded that is more pertinent to consider the question of what leaders do, rather than attempting to describe what constitutes leadership. Bennis (2003, p.4) notes that, “in a world, as complex and fluid as ours, we cannot function without leaders. Our quality of life depends on the quality of our leaders”. He goes on to state; “the first basic ingredient of leadership is a guiding vision” (p.33). Adair (2004, p.119) argues that a “well-managed business…still needs that extra something”. The “extra something” that Adair refers to is leadership.

It may be useful to consider what leadership is not. Adair (2004) introduces the differences between leadership and management. He suggests that management is concerned with delivery of tasks that are required by someone else. Leadership (2008) provide a definition of leadership as being the “ability to influence and combine individuals and resources…to achieve objectives that would otherwise be impossible”. Similar language is also used by Centrex (2006) as a working definition of leadership. Golding and Savage (2008 p.727) recognise that “there is no one consensually agreed definition of leadership” For the purposes of this research, the Leadership (2008) description of leadership will be used.

Cameron and Green (2009 p.147) cite Bryman’s (1992) work on transformational leadership. This model “involves the leader raising the followers’ sense of purpose and levels of motivation”. Bryman suggests that
transformational leadership will require inspiration and intellectual stimulation. There is no mention of delivering on tasks. The focus on delivering day-to-day business is referred to by Bryman as ‘transactional leadership’. This introduces a debate between these two paradigms. By referring to the work of Bennis (2003) and considering his conclusions in tandem with that of Bryman, it could be argued that a transactional leader is not actually a leader at all. Transactional leadership is akin to management. Bennis suggests that a manager will focus on structure, task realisation and a short-term view of an organisation’s delivery. A leader will be concerned with people, establishing trust, implementing change and taking a longer-term strategic view of organisational achievements. It would appear these are two different sets of characteristics that can be understood with relative ease.

While Bryman’s work on transactional versus transformational leadership is widely recognised in academia (see also Avolio and Bass (1991) cited in Antonakis (2012)) it does present problems when considering the work of other authors who make a distinction between leadership and management. Antonakis (2012) adds an additional dimension to the concept of transformational leadership by referring to it as ‘transformational and charismatic’ leadership. He suggests that it is the charismatic nature of the leader that allows the transformational vision to be realised. It is argued that the transformational (charismatic) leader focuses on the qualities that the individual possesses and the way in which this can support a visionary leadership style. Uhl-Bien, Maslyn and Ospina (2012 p.293) present the concept of relational leadership; “the nature of exchanges between formal leaders… and their followers”. They describe this as LMX (leader member exchange). They cite Sherony and Green (2002) and Hollander (2009) as recognising this terminology. They suggest that a positive LMX is dependent upon attributes such as loyalty, trust and respect. Importantly, they advance the notion of mutuality of these qualities to allow the relationship (and the leadership style) to flourish. Reflecting upon the leader/follower relationship and the qualities required of a leader to establish such a relationship is particularly relevant to
this research. The findings that follow test this theory and explore the applicability of this to the direct entry scheme.

With a view to understanding the breadth of leadership theory, it is advantageous to consider the work of Brown (2012) who provides commentary on ‘follower-centric leadership’. He identifies a number of studies that focus on the qualities, experiences and styles of the leader whilst paying insufficient heed to the experiences of those being led. He argues that only by looking at leadership from both leader-centric and follower-centric perspectives can a true appreciation of leadership be gained. Within the context of this research, empirical evidence is offered primarily from the leader-centric perspective (the direct entrants themselves). There is some reference to the follower-centric perspective (those who have worked beneath them in the hierarchy) although this is not the main focus of this study. An interesting dimension is the follower-centric perspective from the direct entrants, considering their relationship up the command chain to their respective chief officer teams.

Leadership theory offers a range of literature that reaches beyond the scope of this thesis. Recognising this breadth is necessary to select the focus. The work of Adair (2004) and Bennis (2003) are seminal offerings to the discipline. Their transactional / transformational leadership, management versus leadership comparisons and relational leadership commentary provides a valuable framework. Goleman (1998 and 2000) identifies the emotional competencies that should be displayed by a good leader. These include: self-awareness, empathy and social skills. Centrex (2006) also recognises the necessity for leaders to display such attributes. These competencies will affect the style of leadership to which the individual is pre-disposed (Armstrong, 2009). It would be fair to suggest that all of the theories and principles discussed above deal with different elements of leadership. Antonakis (2012 p.279) advances the view that there is a need to “model the full leadership process”. It appears that Bennis (2012) has made attempts to do that with his work on authentic leadership. Bennis presents a powerful argument that true, authentic leadership can only be understood when viewed within the challenge of circumstance that a leader may find him/herself.
Before considering contemporary literature relating to police leadership, it is necessary to bridge the gap between the generic leadership theories presented above and police leadership. Casey and Mitchell (2007 p.4) state that, “management and leadership are conceptually different, but senior officers need to be adept at both”. They go on to qualify this statement by suggesting that a management perspective is concerned with delivery of day to day policing objectives and a leadership perspective focuses on delivering change. Usefully, Casey and Mitchell also recognise the balance of the skill sets that will be required of police managers/leaders. They suggest that the lower ranks will need a greater focus on the transactional management skills required to implement policing strategies and higher ranks will require a skill set that is more leader focussed. Where the direct entrants perceive that they sit in the hierarchy (management focussed on leadership focussed) is point of much reflection as identified in chapter seven.

Casey and Mitchell (2007) cite Murray (2002) and Lee & Punch (2004) as recognising that the paradigm shift to New Public Management (NPM) places additional expectations upon police leaders. They present a narrative on the skills of communication, motivation and cooperation as being essential skills for these officers. NPM (2008) cites the work of Hood (1991) as recognising that the introduction of NPM moved away from post-war bureaucracy to a more customer-focussed methodology. The reference to the communicative skills and cooperation made by Murray and Lee & Punch presents similarities with Goleman’s (1998) emotional intelligence model.

From these two pieces of research relating to the management versus leadership debate and the concept of emotional intelligence it would seem reasonable to suggest that there are some opportunities for general leadership theory to be coupled with leadership research within the discipline of policing. This is despite the conclusion of Kennedy (2004) cited in Casey and Mitchell (2007 p.5) that police organisations are in a “vacuum…cloistered from the wider public service”. Even if Kennedy’s conclusion is taken to be true, it is apparent from the analysis above that leadership issues within the challenging environment of the police service are much the same as those experienced...
across the public sector. This would appear to be supportive of the arguments made in favour of direct entry into the superintendent rank.

As argued by Loveday (2008), the focus within public service organisations on onerous performance measurement and performance management regimes leads to an aversion to risk among senior officers that is unhelpful. A focus on management over leadership is also an outcome of this target driven culture. The perverse behaviours and unintended consequences that materialise from this focus on performance management is another issue worthy of wider reflection (Guilfoyle, 2013).

To present a stronger view of the relationship between leadership theories and the nuances of police leadership, it appears advantageous to make reference to further examples. Villiers (2003) presents his conclusions on police leadership within the context of consent. Useful parallels can be drawn with the work of Brown (2012) and his notion of follower-centric leadership and also Uhl-Bien, Maslyn and Ospina’s (2012) offering on relational leadership (both discussed above). Villiers (2003 p.236) argues that police leaders need to be reflective and versatile and proposes that leadership by consent requires a “ruthless integrity…[and] verifiable professionalism”. It would seem fair to suggest that a reflective leader considers the position of his subordinates. As such there is a link here to Brown’s follower-centric model and the concept of relational leadership. The term ‘consent’ engenders thoughts of engaging behaviour between leaders, followers and external stakeholders. It appears reasonable to present ideas of effective NPM within the police service as a manifestation of this approach. Leadership by consent could arguably be considered as leadership through partnership; the partnership being with both internal and external stakeholders.

Golding and Savage (2008, p.730) provide commentary on what has been called a “crises of leadership” within policing. They recognise that this negative narrative has originated from various sources, particularly from politicians and the Home Office. At the request of the Home Secretary, Neyroud (2010, p.2) offers various conclusions in relation to the challenges that face police leaders.
He states that the current leadership debate is one of huge significance, “this is a moment for radical change in the approach to police leadership and training…[I recommend] the creation of a new Professional Body for policing…responsible for leadership, learning and standards”. This is the recommendation that led to the creation of the College of Policing, the body that has gone on to deliver the direct entry scheme on behalf of the Home Secretary.

Neyroud presents fundamental arguments on the current position of policing. He notes the landscape of increasing demand, which places significant pressure on the service to deliver more with fewer resources. Neyroud (2010, p.11) makes an interesting distinction in relation to the professionalism of the police service. He suggests that, “the police service needs to move from being a service that acts professionally to becoming a professional service”. If there is one sentence that provides insight and clarity on Neyroud’s findings, this may well be it.

This work was preceded by Centrex (2006), which provided insight into the qualities that police leaders would need to display in order to be successful. Centrex (2006) cite Adlam (2004) as recognising that the constitutional position of a constable will always provide additional challenges for leadership, most notably in relation to the constable’s use of discretion and the leader’s inability, within that constitutional context, to require a constable to act in a particular way. The failings that have been presented by Vick (2000), Neyroud (2010) and others are perhaps, in some small measure, attributable to this anomaly of the police constitution in comparison to other public services.

O’Connor (2008) provides further detail that could be considered to be missing from some of the more strategic offerings to this debate. She highlights the challenges of attracting the right calibre of leader to the most senior roles within the police service, the need to ensure that BME officers are sufficiently represented in command positions and the importance of giving all leaders the skills to do their job. O’Connor also provides an example of the level of training to which a senior detective will be exposed. She notes that a police leader will
not receive, for example, accountancy training of the same magnitude to assist with financial responsibilities. Within the context of direct entry, much of the narrative offered within chapter three was concerned with new leaders bringing new perspectives into the service. Form O’Connor’s work, it would appear that new skills, of a tangible nature, may be equally necessary.

O’Connor suggests that increased graduate and post graduate training opportunities will be necessary to bridge the skills gap and produce leaders that are of sufficient quality. Neyroud (2010) also recognises the importance of academic development for senior officers. The issues of education, BME representation, skills gaps, gender equality and utilising leaders from other organisations are at the core of the police leadership debate (Policing Insight, 2016). Much of the literature in this field deals with the aspirational theory of effective leadership, it could be said that the real debate is to be found around the issues discussed by O’Connor and Neyroud.

Wright and Pandey (2009) provide some contemporary reflections on the success of transformational leadership within public sector organisations. They suggest that it is common for public sector leaders to point to bureaucratic, archaic practices as a mechanism that can stifle forward thinking. They note that such organisations are often not as bureaucratic in reality as perceptions may suggest. Furthermore, they argue that truly transformational leaders will be able to succeed, even in circumstances that appear particularly challenging. Applying this concept to the experiences of the direct entrants is a particularly insightful element of this research.

It is argued that to achieve real results, a leader will sometimes have no choice but to make unpopular decisions (Whitfield, Alison and Crego, 2008) and (Goleman, 2000). Goleman argues that there are occasions when a leader may get lost by the need to advance cultural change and provide vision at the expense of delivering results. He notes that the paradox to this is that the leader who focuses solely on results may not be delivering on the transformational expectations that are also expected. Reflection on this argument presents some interesting insight into the difficulties that a police leader could face. It could be
argued that the same leader cannot achieve these two ‘deliverables’ simultaneously. Wassenaar and Pearce (2012) introduce the concept of shared leadership, presenting a notion of combined human behaviour bringing about more desirable and more sustainable results. This may offer some respite to the difficulties that Goleman (2000) offers. Within a policing context, this could suggest a need for more fluid leadership between senior officers, rather than individual accountability.

Having considered the issues that are prevalent within the current police leadership debate, it may be useful to consider how these arguments can be developed, from theory to practice and also how such lessons could be successfully applied for the purposes of improving standards. There is an active debate around the key issues that are affecting confidence in police leadership. The very existence of this debate suggests that management and control of policing will have no choice but to evolve and improve. Direct entry is just one approach that (may) deliver this change.

Neyroud’s (2010) submission to the Home Secretary bridges the gap between theory and practice. He provides commentary on the reality of the situation while also offering tangible, time bonded options for realisation of his proposals. Winsor (2012) also provided recommendations, which, arguably, have gained more traction over the past 4 years. Vick (2000 p.8) suggests that new leaders are “…constrained by the legacy of history. The most difficult task leaders can face is the challenge of changing the culture of an organisation”. When thoughts turn to the development of new police leadership methodology and the application of these processes, it could be that the problem of cultural stagnation is the single biggest challenge. O’Connor (2008) and Neyroud (2010) support Winsor’s (2012) contention that there is a place for direct entry into the police service at senior levels, albeit not necessarily at the rank of superintendent. It may prove that this is the most powerful way to implement a shift in culture.

Pagon (2003) advances an argument that provides some evidence of how serious this challenge is. Pagon suggests that the police service needs to know
what kind of service ‘it’ wants to be. The paramilitary organisation or the community focussed / problem solving one. In recent years, the Metropolitan Police Service has seen leadership embracing a community focus (Muir, 2003) and more recently an enforcement bias seems to be more prevalent (Campbell, 2011). As these two articles suggest, the direction of the organisation will, in some part, be dependant on the pressures of the day.

Vick (2000) argues that police leaders are inflexible. Golding and Savage (2008) cite Long (2003) as recognising the need for police leaders to show flexibility in approach and to ensure that subordinate officers are permitted the freedom to have an input toward organisational direction. It could be suggested that this will require both leaders and followers to display a mutual trust. This would appear to be an example of the relational leadership theory discussed above.

The evidence presented in this chapter identifies police culture and police leadership as being complex domains that impact on each other. Understanding how police leadership may (or may not) be different from any other leadership discipline is a debate that has attracted a great deal of interest. It is apparent that the cultural identity of the police service makes leading the service a demanding responsibility. Blair (2003 p.169) notes that, “police leadership is not essentially different from leadership in almost all other spheres of activity”. If that contention is accepted, then leaders from other walks of life are well placed to offer new perspectives and challenge the cultural norms of the service.

Having explored police culture and police leadership, the third and final literature review chapter will go on to explore the wider context of talent management and leading change, beyond the police service. This additional analysis is offered to ensure that, whilst the policing centric focus to this thesis is maintained, there is a balance in perspectives achieved by considering the broader context of people management from other disciplines
Chapter Five: Managing talent & leading change

Chapters three and four analysed the reasons for introducing direct entry into the superintendent rank of the police service and considered the concepts of police culture and police leadership. This chapter considers a wider perspective from beyond the world of policing. Encouraging talented individuals to consider alternative careers and enhancing the ability of the police service to manage change lie at the heart of direct entry. Considering talent management methods and reflecting upon the difficulties encountered in leading change is, therefore, a credible position in which to situate the primary research that follows.

Critical Analysis of Talent Management

Much of the narrative associated with the direct entry debate is concerned with attracting those with different values, beliefs and characteristics into policing. Yet much of the literature that considers the arguments for and against direct entry is focussed only on policing (albeit sometimes internationally) without giving due consideration to how the wider field of Talent Management (TM), beyond policing, may inform and add value to these conversations. Defining what the term ‘talent management’ means and what effective TM outcomes look like remains a point of much contention. ‘Talent’ is presented as a highly subjective term, with a number of different perspectives being offered. As has been argued:

“An individual's skills and abilities and what the person is capable of doing or contributing to the organisation” (Slizer & Dowell, 2010 p.14).

“Talent consists of those individuals who can make a difference to organizational performance” (Tansley et al, 1997, p.8)

“[talent] is essentially a euphemism for people” (Lewis & Heckman, 2006 p.141)

“[talent is] the sum of a person's abilities – his or her intrinsic gifts, skills, knowledge, experience, intelligence, judgment, attitude, character and drive. It also includes his or her ability to learn and grow” (Michaels et al, 2001 p.12)
This sample drawn from human resources and TM literature demonstrates the breadth of perspectives that currently exist when considering this dynamic area of the human resource management function. Whether by description of outcome (making a difference to performance) or by description of the individual (gifts, skills, experience) the TM discipline appears to be complex. There is a challenge for any organisation (including policing) to develop a clear perspective on what ‘talent’ means within a given context. Having established what the talent requirement for a given organisation might be, it is then necessary to consider how to attract, develop and retain such individuals. Tansley et al (1997) suggest a significant focus of TM will be on performance and organisational outcomes. It will therefore be of great importance for the organisation to gain clarity as to what outcomes are desired and how its TM strategy can be aligned to improved delivery.

The link between talent management and organisational outcomes / priorities is important. Within the policing context, the narrative that surrounds the direct entry debate tends to be concerned with ‘new perspectives’, and ‘changing culture’. These are difficult outcomes to map and measure, compared to the more tangible areas of police delivery (e.g. reduce burglary in a given neighbourhood). Whatever the desired outcomes are, it is apparent that there must be adequate alignment between these outcomes and the skill set that is being recruited into the organisation. However, it could be argued that new talent should be exploring new organisational priorities rather than simply striving to deliver traditional outcomes. If extraordinary ability that is viewed as a ‘game changer’ for the organisation is anticipated, this may be too high an expectation. Adding value in more subtle ways may be all that is needed for TM to be deemed a success (Gallardo et al, 2013).

The level of ambition that is associated with an organisation’s talent management strategy is a consideration that is particularly pertinent to the direct entry scheme. It could be argued that there must be sufficient ambition and expectation placed upon the direct entrants to make the scheme worthwhile and add value, yet not so much ambition as to place unnecessary pressure upon those who take on the challenge of being direct entrants. The high
standards of the direct entry selection process mean that chief officer positions are a realistic goal. However it is argued that the pace with which this progression is achieved should be closely managed.

Human Resources and Corporate Strategy literature deals extensively with the motivating factors that define an organisation’s approach to talent management. Unsurprisingly, much of this narrative is presented in a chronological sequence. As proposed by Berger and Berger (2004)

- problem identification
- defining competencies
- recruitment
- diversity considerations
- training and development
- retention

These six steps to talent management realisation resonate strongly when applied to the superintendent direct entry scheme and within the context of this thesis. The ‘problem’ identified by the Home Secretary, the Prime Minister and others in chapter three appears to be clearly aligned to this model as do the leadership and cultural challenges identified in chapter four.

It could be argued that TM is a stand-alone function that sits outside of ‘normal’ human resource management policies. Leadership development is a typical strand of TM that may be viewed in this way. It is a bespoke package of developmental measures that are defined by a particular organisational need and that may be limited in terms of impact beyond the individual who is subject to such measures. Grubs (2004) identifies a more comprehensive picture of the TM discipline. He views it as complementary and inherently aligned to the wider human resources function within the organisation. This is particularly so when considering succession planning. This perspective on TM appears to widen a view of how it can impact on an organisation. It extends also to the value that can be added to organisational outcomes through successful implementation of a TM strategy. A useful analogy would be, comparing the succession planning
of a corporation with that of a sports team who have an academy and a youth team in place where there is a reliable structure to replace those that move on. As well as the internal turnover, there is also a pathway into the team from other teams. This is based on needs being met by skill sets that are more readily available from elsewhere. This argument from Grubs (2004) presents TM (framed as succession planning) as the most natural way to shape and develop a workforce.

It may also be of use to consider the workforce from an ‘investment hierarchy’ perspective. Assigning training and development resources to individuals based on their contribution to the organisation and categorising that contribution accordingly by importance. The concept of ‘superkeepers’, ‘keepers’ and ‘solid citizens’ has been identified as a model for undertaking this classification (Phillips & Phillips, 2004). The ‘superkeeper’ is the individual who adds most value and has the widest positive influence on the organisation. The ‘keeper’ also delivers performance that exceeds expectations. The ‘solid citizen’ delivers what is expected of them but no more and no less. The challenge for the organisation that wants to categorise its employees in this way would appear to be that of measurement. It is a complex problem to develop a model that provides objective tools to measure what are, often, inherently subjective outcomes (for example, confidence in their leadership by subordinates).

These performance considerations are certainly applicable within the context of police leadership. However qualitative targets and mission statements do not translate easily to quantitative key performance indicators upon which leaders can be held to account. West Mercia Police (2014) for example identified a priority outcome as being that “our communities feel safe”. Attempts have been made to build a methodology for measuring public confidence and how impacted communities feel by fear of crime. However the utility of these measurement tools is open to significant challenge (Stanko & Bradford, 2009).

It is not possible, or indeed necessary, to do justice to the full spectrum of TM theory in this thesis. It is intended that this brief synopsis identifies some of the key challenges in defining, structuring and measuring TM that is beneficial to
the organisation and attracts genuine talent. An important consideration is that this development of internal and external talent can be achieved without having any adverse impact upon the ‘solid citizens’ of the organisation.

**International Talent Management**

This research does not provide international comparative analysis through primary research. There is however secondary data that invites analysis to ensure that the research is situated in the most informed position and from which useful conclusions may be drawn. By understanding how (non-police) TM initiatives can be developed in other parts of the world, this research will be able to make more reasoned conclusions in relation to the direct entry pathway.

In an effort to attract the best people into senior positions within their public services, many of the world’s strongest economies operate a public sector TM initiative of some description. As with much of the TM literature, the ‘talent’ in question is that associated with leadership and governance, not practitioner excellence that may drive the bottom line of many (especially private sector) companies. For example, the United States offers a ‘Senior Executive Service’, Singapore has an ‘Administrative Service’ and Thailand delivers TM under the banner of the ‘High Potential Performers’ scheme (Poocharoen & Lee, 2013). Each of these schemes provide a pathway for talented individuals within the UK equivalent of the Civil Service to progress to positions of maximum influence.

The extensive use of TM schemes across the world provides evidence of Beechler & Woodward’s (2009) observation of the sea change that has impacted on the HR function over recent years. The old reality that ‘people need companies’ has been replaced by a new reality that ‘companies need people’. The diversity of the countries identified, their different cultural perspectives and the differing scales of their public sector capabilities are drawn together by the mutual recognition that their people are a powerful asset that must be managed appropriately.

The international dimension is not only *comparative*. It is, more importantly, also highly *competitive*. The recruitment of Mark Carney in 2012 to take over the
stewardship of the Bank of England is a noteworthy example of how an effective talent search can take place across borders to find the right person for the job. This applies not just within the European Union, but globally (BBC, 2012). As noted by Chambers et al, there is a ‘war for talent’: -

“Better talent is worth fighting for. At senior levels of an organisation, the ability to adapt, make decisions quickly in situations of high uncertainty, and to steer through wrenching change is critical...You can win the war for talent, but first you must elevate talent management to a burning corporate priority”. (1998, p.1)

This conclusion was the product of a comprehensive empirical study. Seventy-seven large US companies were examined, across a variety of industries and over 6000 executives were surveyed. Significant challenges were identified in terms of the quality of personnel available to fill vacant posts and achieving a balance between leaving a post vacant or recruiting someone who might not necessarily offer the skills and experience that were required. This research also discovered that the pace of the employment market was an additional challenge to be addressed. It was noted that an organisation had to take decisive decisions to recruit / retain staff before a competitor organisation takes those same steps.

Public Sector Talent Management

A review of talent management schemes within public sector organisations shows that higher salaries offered within the private sector means that attracting talented people into public sector organisations can be challenging. Research from the United States found that significant numbers of managers were tempted to leave public service to take up positions with improved remuneration elsewhere. Also, those in non-managerial positions recognised that their employer was not able to retain the best talent in leadership positions, which adversely impacted on the culture of the organisation (Delfgaauw & Dur, 2010). This research also presents a concept of the ‘perfect economy’ where public and private sectors offer equality of opportunity, talent, performance and
remuneration. It is only the output of the respective sectors that differs. This is seen to be fundamentally challenging to deliver, because of what Delfgaauw and Dur describe as Public Service Motivation (PSM). This is defined as a preference for working within public sector institutions. Enhanced remuneration is unlikely to be sufficient to attract all those with positive PSM to move to (or indeed start their careers in) private sector organisations. For those responsible for TM this has significant impact. However talented an individual may be, if they are not disposed toward PSM they are unlikely to be attracted to roles in the public sector. This is highly relevant when considering the recruitment aspects of TM initiatives. The PSM perspective is a concept that is tested within the findings of this research.

The National Health Service (NHS) may provide comparative opportunities when considering how TM initiatives could be enhanced in policing. It is argued that the NHS is a much more useful comparator than the armed forces. No apology is offered therefore for moving this debate away from the limited comparisons between the police service and the Ministry of Defence. There are some notable similarities between NHS TM provision and that of the police service, not least the complexity of this provision. This complexity relates to the many strands of the NHS talent strategy in place and, as identified in the empirical results of a study in the NHS, the difficulties that respondents had in navigating this landscape while managing their careers. The willingness (and ability) of managers to support their ‘talented’ team members through the TM pathways was seen to be a key issue of contention. It was noted that this provision was delivered well by some managers and less so by others (Powell et al, 2013).

The NHS ‘Leadership Academy’ is, from the outside, a highly developed approach to delivering TM in the health service. The academy states that, “our philosophy is simple – great leadership development improves leadership behaviours and skills. Better leadership leads to better patient care, experience and outcomes” (NHS, 2015). There are 12 programmes offered by the ‘Leadership Academy’, with the aim being that there should be a leadership pathway and targeted, effective development of potential at every level in the
organisation. This thesis does not seek to critique the quality of TM provision that lies behind these programmes. However in terms of the strategy that has been put in place to create these inclusive pathways, there is a cohesive vision. There is a consistency of approach to the narrative around ‘self-selection’ into management roles (and therefore onto TM pathways). The argument is that with so many pathways on offer, it is the norm for employees to manage their own progression through the organisation, rather than waiting to be ‘managed’ by a third party. It could be argued that the sheer volume of schemes offered by the NHS may dilute and devalue overall TM provision. The police service may wish to consider this as direct entry superintendents, direct entry inspectors, fast track inspectors and high potential development scheme officers grapple for position. This applies without consideration of the non Home Office accredited schemes that many forces have also elected to run in an effort to enhance their management of talented personnel.

This review of TM could be of significant value to the direct entry debate in the UK. Other than the theory of succession planning, the challenges of developing a comprehensive TM structure and the perspective of ‘public service motivation’, there is one very clear message. This is that it is entirely appropriate and indeed necessary for the police service to have in place a structured TM pathway that allows for the identification and development of talented people. There is, as evidenced above, an obvious ‘war for talent’ (Michaels, Handfield-Jones & Axelrod, 2001). This is the case locally, nationally and internationally and the police service needs to involve itself in this to enable it to secure the best people to deal with current challenges faced by the service.

**Leading Change**

Direct entry superintendents are being recruited to lead cultural change in the police service. Management of change is a widely researched subject. It is seen as being, paradoxically, a constant across both public and private sector organisations (Paton and McCalman, 2000; Cameron and Green, 2009). While change is all around us, there are very few examples of genuinely successful
change initiatives (Burnes, 2005 cited in Senior and Swailes 2010). While it may appear to be a negative view about the discussion of change management, Burnes is not alone in presenting an air of cynicism when contemplating this discipline (Oss and Hek 2011). Senior and Swailes provide commentary on what may be the catalyst for amending the way an organisation operates. Usefully they also discuss such catalysts within a policing context. They refer to the case of Baby P and the associated failings within the police and other partner agencies, which led to the untimely death of Baby P. They argue that there is a tolerance of “unacceptable situations, idly waiting for the critical incident that will act as a change trigger” (Senior and Swailes, 2010 p.13). This would suggest that organisations (including policing) could be seen as guilty of waiting for change to be necessary rather than proactively looking for improvement opportunities. There may in fact be a useful point of reflection here in relation to how police culture (see chapter 4) may or may not be supportive in identifying a proactive change agenda.

Senior and Swailes present the theory of the PESTLE analysis as a useful means of understanding the range of external factors that prompt organisational change. These are Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Ecological considerations, which are the areas that influence the way in which any organisation operates. A useful example of this model is provided by Travis (2011). A ruling by the High Court manifestly changed the way in which police bail legislation was to be interpreted. Travis notes that this change in legislation led to rushed guidance being issued by the Home Office and the Metropolitan Police Service. It is stated that the Home Office failed to react in a timely fashion when the legislative change was first identified. This is a useful example of the “critical incidents” referred to by Senior and Swailes (above). This would appear to suggest that the correct application of the PESTLE model requires a regular scanning of these six environmental factors to identify future opportunities or threats. In this instance, the model had not been applied. This led to reactive, rather than proactive interventions being necessary.

Randall (2004) supports this notion of an ‘organisational willingness’ to identify change opportunities early and then take appropriate action. There is also a
person centric perspective to this. This is that leaders within the organisation need to take the initiative in order to shape the change agenda. Where this is at odds with organisational culture, it could be argued that direct entrants could offer alternative perspectives that might support this ambition. The ability and willingness of direct entrants to foresee change opportunities and manage them accordingly is something that is tested through the findings of this study.

Once change has been identified as being necessary, be it through a PESTLE analysis of other means, it is appropriate to comment on how such transformation could be introduced.

Hamlin and Davies (2001 p.48) use the term “strategies for change” to introduce the concept of selecting the means by which change is introduced. They cite Buchanan and Body (1992) who highlight the importance of selecting a reasonable time span for implementation and ensuring that change is perceived as an enduring process rather than just an outcome. Hamlin and Davies provide useful commentary on the notion of change being a part of an organisation’s culture rather than a stand-alone event. This conclusion would appear to support Senior and Swailes’ observations that it should not be a critical incident that encourages a change process. Hamlin and Davies (2001, p.51) also provide a model that details the behaviours that implement change.

1) Unfreezing – challenging the way things are currently done.
2) Flux – encourage open argument.
3) Information Building – research the best way forward.
4) Experimentation – introduce the new ways, initially to leaders and managers.
5) Refreezing – making it clear that the new methods are of a permanent nature.

Cameron and Green (2009) cite Lewin’s (1951) three step model for change which is of a similar nature - unfreeze, move, freeze. The use of language does provide a useful insight into the challenge with which change management is tasked. The vocabulary appears to offer a vision of real permanence, in both the
position from where the organisation finds itself and the new position to which it wants to move.

Both of these models are interestingly of a linear nature, as a clear start and end point is identified. Alternatively, Cameron and Green (2009) present a cyclical model where there is a concluding position at the end of the change where consolidation is the target, followed immediately by establishing the need for further change. This would appear to support the earlier contention that a regular scanning of the environment in which an organisation operates is necessary to gauge when a change event will be necessary.

Figure 3: Cycle of change (Cameron and Green, 2009, p. 116)

It might now be useful to summarise some of the key conclusions in relation to leading change. First, all the theory identified so far can be applied to policing. Recognising the requirement for change depends on an appreciation of the environment in which the police service operates. The PESTLE analysis and subsequent implementation will have a greater chance of success if there is an accepted culture of change within the organisation (Hamlin and Davies, 2001). Cameron and Green (2008) also see leadership as being a key consideration that defines the success (or otherwise) of a change process. They note the
personal challenge that a leader will have in being clear as to exactly the kind of change they wish to introduce. They argue that; “sometimes these types of change become muddled in leaders’ minds” (Cameron and Green, 2008, p. 124).

Toch (2008) notes the close relationship between organisational structure and the change culture that this engenders. He argues that the hierarchical, top-down organisational structure of the police service produces an inherent resistance to all things new. This is caused by the feeling amongst rank and file officers that their opinions are ignored. As Toch argues it is apparent that organisational structure has a direct impact on the type of culture that is present and also whether it is likely to be supportive of change.

If a hierarchical structure can lead to a change-resistant culture it is worthy asking why this may be so. Toch (2008) suggests that when police leaders introduce change in response to pressure from external stakeholders (government, the media, pressure groups) there can be a feeling of insensitivity among subordinate officers tasked with introducing change and who therefore become resistant to it. There is in reality a need for police leaders to demonstrate an independent stance from such pressure (Shoesmith, 2010). This article also uses the example of the Baby P case. Where it can be concluded that where child protection teams within the police service were tasked by senior managers to make changes to working practices, there was not the necessary level of consultation with rank and file practitioners who would be delivering these new methods.

Toch cites the work of Murphy (2006) who spoke of the problems a supervising officer has in both managing day-to-day activities of his constables and the subcultures within such a team. If, as Murphy suggests, there are problems with managing day to day tasks due to remoteness of officers to the supervisor, then it is fair to conclude that introducing change can prove to be even more challenging.
This discussion of change management theory is provided to aid understanding of the complex role that the direct entry superintendents have been recruited into. This is relevant because they are required to be agents of change in their respective organisations. Furthermore, their very presence in the police service is, of itself, a seismic change. This will require appreciation of change theory and an aptitude for successful navigation of the complexities of this transformation.

Career change
As noted earlier, the research questions that have guided this work have been defined in order to consider the actors involved in direct entry, particularly the superintendents themselves. The police specific literature cited in chapters three and four is needed to understand the context within which direct entry exists and to situate the research findings so that they inform the analysis that follows. However, it is essential to further contextualise this research within human resource management literature, which explores why the ‘mid-career’ change is an option taken by some.

It is argued that motives for initial career selection (and subsequent career changes) can be seen as being internal and external. Internal motives include interest in the job, meaningful work, greater harmony between work and personal values and the opportunity to feel a greater sense of accomplishment. External motivations include remuneration and enhanced security (Holmes and Cartwright, 1994). The breadth of factors influencing this is considerable and is not confined to those identified above. Social status, time for family and ‘career fit’ are also factors seen as motivations for selecting employment of a particular type at a particular time (Richardson and Watt, 2005). The presentation of motivational factors may be better understood if considered within the context of traditional motivational theory. One of the most widely referenced is Maslow’s (1943) paper ‘a theory of human motivation’. He proposed a model that identified a hierarchy of motivational perspectives that he argued defined the needs of every human being.
Maslow argues that only once the lower order needs have been met, will an individual then seek a pathway to realising higher order needs. For example, once physiological wellbeing has been achieved (food and water) the human response is to then seek to ensure safety (health and personal safety) before moving up the hierarchy to achieve higher order needs. This model appears to add some value, if considered within the context of changing career. The concept of self-actualisation is described by Maslow as identifying what one’s full potential is and realising that potential. Applying this perspective to someone who has met all their lower order needs and is seeking greater fulfilment beyond their current career may lead to career change to properly realise self-actualisation.

One school of thought suggests the term ‘career change’ may not be an accurate description. This may alternatively be described as ‘career transition’, a more subtle use of language that supports the concept of the ‘boundary-less’ career where there is absolute mobility between disciplines and across sectors (Chudzikowski, 2012). Arguably this position supports the arguments presented by the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary in chapter three, that the ‘closed shop’ approach to police leadership is entirely inappropriate in a nation where workforce mobility should be facilitated and encouraged.
Fully understanding why the direct entry superintendents have elected to take on the challenge of this new role is a primary finding arising from this research. Much of the narrative that has been directed toward the scheme has been critical of its purpose, its cost and its effectiveness. This critique has, until now, fallen silent on attempting to understand the motivations of these individuals taking on this new career. In generating this new knowledge through participant interviews and subsequent analysis, it is also argued that a much greater understanding of their potential impact on their respective organisations has also been secured.

The literature review has been undertaken to contextualise the research within a knowledge base that can be tested and analysed against the data generated by this study. The following chapter provides the detailed findings arising from the research.
Chapter Six: Findings

This thesis has considered the concept of direct entry into the superintendent rank with a defined research aim and supporting research questions. This chapter presents the findings that emerged from over 50 recorded hours of primary data collection. The data was gathered by means of 41 semi-structured interviews and one focus group. Analysis of the data is of significance, for the purpose of:

1. Ensuring that adequate responses to the research questions can be provided.
2. Situating the data coherently in the context of the literature that has been identified, to allow for an informed discussion and associated conclusions to be made.

At this point, it is useful to revisit key aspects of the approach taken to data analysis that were described in the methodology. The context was set as follows:

“Data analysis is the most difficult and crucial aspect of qualitative research. Coding is one of the significant steps taken during analysis to organise and make sense of contextual data. [This analysis] is usually seen as arduous. [This is because] it is not fundamentally a mechanical or technical exercise. It is a dynamic, intuitive and creative process of inductive reasoning, thinking and theorizing” (Basit, 2003, p.143).

And further defined by Richard’s (2009, p.4):

“Qualitative researchers deal with, and revel in, confusing, contradictory, multi faceted data records, rich in accounts of experience and interaction. The researcher confronted by such data records almost always talks in terms of dilemmas. How to tame the data without losing their excitement, get order without trivializing accounts, or losing the reflections about the researcher’s role in making them happen. How to exert control without losing vivid recall. How to show a pattern that respects the data without prematurely reducing vivid words to numbers”.
This chapter describes the output of the coded data. It is intended that this provide a comprehensive response to the research questions and the overall aim of this thesis. In order that it can be used to inform professional practice in policing, the data is presented in a format that will be understood by the target audience, practitioners in policing.

A manual review of the data identified the themes listed in table three and table four, which are used to structure this chapter. For ease of navigating the data collected, the coding was conducted separately across the stakeholders (primarily in response to the first research question) and the direct entry officers (primarily in response to the second research question). For this reason, chapter 6 is separated into two parts, as follows:

**Chapter 6 – Part A:** findings from interviews with key stakeholders

**Chapter 6 – Part B:** findings from interviews with the direct entry superintendents
Part A: Interviews with stakeholders

Table 2 lists the stakeholders who were interviewed as part of the research. Table 3 identifies the key themes that emerged from this part of the research.

Table 2: Stakeholder interviewees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Interviewees</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President ACPO</td>
<td>Assistant Commissioner, MPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commissioner, MPS</td>
<td>President, Superintendents’ Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Constable, Sussex Police; Workforce Modernisation Lead at NPCC</td>
<td>Chief Supt. Direct Entry Lead, College of Policing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Constable, Merseyside Police</td>
<td>Chair, NPCC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Operating Officer, College of Policing</td>
<td>Commander, City of London Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of People and Change, MPS</td>
<td>Tutor constable, MPS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[For further details of the stakeholder interviews, including dates and locations see Appendix E]

Table 3: Key themes & sub themes from interviews with stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. What is the problem we are trying to solve?</th>
<th>2. Risks associated with the direct entry scheme</th>
<th>3. Opportunities associated with the direct entry scheme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Groupthink</td>
<td>Operational policing</td>
<td>Workforce modernisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community representation</td>
<td>Managing risk</td>
<td>Skills transfer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Credibility</td>
<td>New perspectives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data that captures each of the key themes from table three is presented on the following pages. This is presented before focussing on the testimony of the direct entry officers in the second half of the chapter. Research of this type would often provide a breakdown of the demographics of the participant population, with the aim of comparing the data to these demographic
dimensions, and in doing so seeking to draw out age / gender / experience differentials. This is not however the pathway that this chapter will take. It is the general principles that the data highlights which are of interest, rather than the demographic threads, which may or may not link those principles together.

**Key theme 1: What is the problem we are trying to solve?**

This is the rhetorical question that a number of the senior stakeholders articulated during their opening response in the semi-structured interviews. Without exception, all of these participants identified a need to frame the direct entry scheme within a specific need and to conceptualise why it was that this new entry pathway into the police service has been introduced. One NPCC officer argued that:

> “In [my small previous force] we had something like 9 supers at the time. So what is the ratio of direct entry to normal supers? What is the problem that we are trying to solve [with such a small cohort of superintendents]”? The Metropolitan Police Service is different, you can have 5% of your supers as direct entrants and that is still a good number. The balance would be right… The uniqueness of London, the people that we are policing, because of the big events in our history - Lawrence, the riots etc. Because of these, the need is much more compelling than in any other force in the country… We have to be seen to be looking forward and embracing change”

[Chief Officer, Metropolitan Police Service, Interview G1, 29th February 2016, New Scotland Yard, London]

In response to the comment – “seen to be looking forward and embracing change” – the interviewee was asked if direct entry was therefore tokenism, rather than about cultural or operational improvements. The response offered was:

> “Direct entrants are not going to make us representative of London, but they are symbolic and show that we are willing to welcome outsiders”.


This perspective showed that symbolism was an important factor. This was perhaps more important than the experience and capabilities offered by the direct entry superintendents from their previous careers. While this viewpoint was recognised, another chief officer from the MPS offered more practical reasons for his strong support of direct entry. This related particularly to solving the problem of a lack of staff turnover within the organisation. It was argued:

“[I am] seeking people who are not trapped by views and assumptions – the inevitability of being part of an organisation for many years. Consistency and loyalty to particular norms can be a benefit, but is also problematic, limiting progress. New perspectives bring a new pace and momentum to the organisation...Bring new ways of doing as well as new cultures. Makes the MPS more diverse, more quickly. Standing in the town hall at Tower Hamlets saying that ‘we are changing’ – but still an organisation of white middle aged men means that we are just not changing quickly enough”

[Chief Officer, Metropolitan Police Service, Interview A1, 10th October 2014, New Scotland Yard, London].

This chief officer identified the pace of change as a key priority. As was argued:-

“The evidence says that we can’t change from within – at least not quickly enough. We are an introspective organisation in many ways... As an organisation, our turnover rate is unhealthily low – 5% per annum. 20% would be too high but something like 10 to 12% would be much more healthy” [Chief Officer, Metropolitan Police Service, Interview A1, 10th October 2014, New Scotland Yard, London].

Consideration of these two perspectives provides a fair representation of the views expressed by the majority of participants into why direct entry may be needed and ‘what the problem was that they were trying to solve’. This is perhaps best summarised by considering both an external and also an internal perspective. The external perspective reflects a desire to improve levels of diversity within the senior ranks of the organisation, by looking to the wider community to take on these senior roles. Developing new pathways into the organisation can arguably increase the likelihood of making the police service more representative of the community it serves. The internal perspective...
considers existing leadership capabilities, including culture, and how new influences through direct entry may be able to enhance these capabilities.

Within the MPS, another senior leader was to expand on the view that new capabilities and a development of culture are needed within the service. As argued: -

“When I got into the Met, I realised it is an organisation that doesn't know what it doesn't know. There is a huge culture of groupthink. There is a need to put new thinking in at that key leadership role [superintendent]. It is healthy to do so… I was at a meeting in Lambeth recently with the Leadership Team. [One of the direct entry superintendents] was present. The long-term police officers in the room came at every conversation from one direction, [the direct entry officer] came from the other direction. It was so clear. Not preconditioned by the way things are normally done. If you think about a chief officer, you have spent 25 years in the organisation. Your job is about leadership, not about policing.”

[Senior Leader, Metropolitan Police Service, Interview M1, 29th February 2016, New Scotland Yard, London]

Whether supportive of direct entry or not, many of the senior stakeholders that took part in the interviews identified a concept that they collectively referred to as ‘groupthink’. They defined this term as shared views amongst police leaders, where their view of the world and their ideas on how problems should be resolved were too similar and lacked innovation. They identified how difficult it was to do things differently or be innovative when the experiences amongst the senior leaders of the police service are so similar.

Those who are supportive of the direct entry scheme held the view that the solution to the abundance of groupthink and the lack of innovative thought could be catered for by implementation of a direct entry superintendent pathway. In recognising the limitations of the existing leadership cohort in the police service, those who were not supporters of direct entry were to offer alternative solutions. For example secondments to non-policing organisations for current police
leaders was identified as a method of both expanding perspectives and improving leadership behaviours (Interview E1, 24th March 2016).

Police culture was frequently identified as a point of reflection among the senior stakeholders. It was generally the view that there are elements of police culture that should be celebrated. However there were deemed to be other elements of police culture that could be seen as part of the ‘problem we are trying to solve’. The dilemma of how to accurately conceptualise police culture was described by one of the interviewees as follows: -

“Characterising culture as good and bad isn't necessarily right. Thinking in terms of helpful and unhelpful culture is probably more accurate. The helpful bit is the teamwork and the getting things done. The unhelpful bits are the entitlement culture, the cynicism…but we train people to be cynical and questioning. Overriding problem is that we are not a learning organisation. [This is] the most pressing issue for us. We cannot learn, when the fear of misconduct investigation and the IPCC is forever there. It is a very spiteful part of the organisation… The Commissioner says that as long as it is ethical, lawful and in good faith he will support his officers, but that is totally at odds with the reality of the misconduct framework. [Chief officers] are saying to leaders, I want to empower you, but we are not yet clear on what happens if that empowerment leads to something that the board don't agree with. You just cannot learn. If you ask someone to admit they have made a mistake, they say 'why would I, you'll stick me on'.

[Senior Leader, Metropolitan Police Service, Interview M1, 29th February 2016, New Scotland Yard, London]

This powerful example of organisational learning being a proxy for understanding the culture of the organisation is of value. As identified earlier, defining and understanding organisational culture remains a challenge. Examples of culture in action such as identified in this example direct an informative lens on the cultural norms of an organisation.
Key theme 2: Risks associated with direct entry

Whether they were supporters of the scheme or not, all stakeholders interviewed identified significant risks with direct entry. However these risks were not deemed to be insurmountable by advocates of the scheme. Opponents of direct entry frequently express a view that, ultimately, these risks will expose the public to significant levels of harm that will condemn direct entry as a failed initiative. One such opponent argued that:-

“I am deeply sceptical [about direct entry]. It has not been researched or thought through… It is not about leadership, it is about politics. You may be able to teach the law, but you cannot teach complexity and context”.

[Chief Officer, National Policing Organisation, Interview B1, 18th December 2014, Victoria St, London]

When asked for observations on police culture and how direct entrants may be able to bring about positive change, this respondent went on to argue that the police service is full of positive people and excellent team working. The officer was not persuaded by the suggestion that direct entrants could bring new thinking into the service that could be of benefit to policing. Furthermore, when the direct entrants propensity for being addressed by their first names was raised (rather than Sir or Ma’am – see part B of this chapter) the interviewee stated that this was “naivety”.

Another chief officer was to argue: -

“I was always in favour of something fast tracking to inspector or direct entry Insp. Superintendents direct entry I was less comfortable with…or fear of it completely disregarding operational expertise. I wasn't sure that all round fabulousness was enough to ensure operational expertise. You could probably run a coach and horses through that argument, because many of our own supers do not have it. At council, [some chief constables] were supportive. I didn't get [my force] involved in the first year. If I could have got an intelligence or contact management superintendent involved I would have been keen - less so in relation to a generalist superintendent. I was director of PNAC at the first cohort
assessment and was impressed by them. This helped move my position a bit. Is it the end of the world to have direct entrants? I don't think so. In the general mix, I think it is fine... I said to the Home Secretary a few months ago - have you met any of them yet? She said she hadn't. I said she might be surprised at how much they now sound like police officers. She said; ‘that's not the point, we want them to be different’. I told her, she underestimates the power of the blue culture”.

[Chief Officer, National Policing Organisation, Interview H1, 29th January 2016, Victoria St, London].

The issue of the strength of ‘blue culture’ and how this has altered the behavior of the direct entry officers is a key issue to emerge from this testimony. Having interviewed the superintendents a number of times over the course of their training and into their operational roles, it is something that was observed first hand. This point is considered in detail later. Initial disquiet expressed about direct entry softened as the above respondent began justifying that position. This was a frequently experienced situation during the course of the research. Participants would often open their response with a negative view of direct entry. As arguments were articulated to support this view, it was often concluded that it ‘wasn’t ‘the end of the world’ to have direct entrants. Recent comments made by the Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police provide further evidence that a more positive stance toward direct entry is being adopted within the NPCC. He argued that: -

“We did look for a direct entry superintendent last year and didn’t recruit anyone. The people I saw will have a steep learning curve in terms of policing knowledge, but they have other skills and I think senior managers can learn a lot from that as well. I spoke to someone in a force that has done it and they said officers had almost wanted the direct entry officer to fail, but in fact when they started it was difficult to maintain that attitude because they were extremely good” (Habgood, cited in Hickey, 2016a).

Views of the utility of the direct entry scheme improving over time also emerged from a number of the participants. As was recorded: -
“Ten to fifteen years ago I wouldn't have supported this. My views have changed. Some people argue that you need to do the job for years to be effective and make decisions, have good judgement…many of our biggest failures have been a result of poor decisions and judgement by very experienced people. So it doesn’t hold true that experience is always good”.

[Chief Officer, Metropolitan Police Service, Interview A1, 10th October 2014, New Scotland Yard, London].

Another of the interviewees also identified the concept of judgement. She was to comment in relation to this: -

“Whilst I have experience to fall back on, I don't have expert knowledge of everything. What I do have is [experience of] judgement and decision making, just the same as the direct entrants. I keep saying to people, we don't have an organisation of stars, there are lots of very mediocre people around who these new people will soon be very much better than”.

[Senior Officer, National Policing Body, Interview C1, 16th April 2015, New Scotland Yard, London]

Aside from potential risks (or otherwise) in relation to judgement and decision making, there were a number of detailed reflections on the tactical risks to which direct entry officers may be exposed. As observed by one Chief Officer in the MPS: -

“The senior officer in me was concerned for the organisation and the people themselves. Things like firearms command - I've done a lot of that over the years. I was feeling anxious for these new entrants. Feeling it wasn't fair on them, or the public or the firearms officers. [But] if we brought them in and didn't give them these operational roles, we would be kidding the public and kidding them”.

[Chief Officer, Metropolitan Police Service, Interview G1, 29th February 2016, New Scotland Yard, London]

A number of the respondents made the point that if direct entry was to be deemed to be a success it was vital that the officers be exposed to genuine
operational challenges and not simply assigned to low risk, administrative roles. Such postings could arguably be held by non-warranted police staff and so would lessen the credibility of the direct entry scheme.

In their response to the Winsor Report (2012) the Superintendents’ Association of England and Wales had been vocal in opposing the scheme. Much of this opposition related to operational capability and associated risks. As described by one senior officer: -

“I personally never had an issue with bringing in different people. My biggest fear was whether or not the service was ready for them. Would they be welcomed? Would they stay? But my biggest fear was around the operational perspective. If I am commanding a firearms incident I don't know how much of that comes from training and how much comes from my experience. My concern was, can we operationally train people? We debated it internally. We had conversations. There were one or two who were happy to try. Some were open to persuasion like me, most were completely against”.

[Senior Officer, National Policing Organisation, Interview I1, 25th February 2016, New Scotland Yard, London]

Consideration of the risks associated with direct entry has considered both judgement and operational capability. Further testimony offered by one of the NPCC officers considered these issues in tandem. As was to be argued: -

“I don't see people [senior police leaders] in trouble up and down the country because they are poor strategic thinkers, I see them in trouble because they make poor operational decisions. They go through the ranks very quickly. They are treated as special. They bounce from course to project to course. They do very little. And they then took control of the extended interviews for the next generation of special course [and HPDS and fast track and direct entry] and the whole thing became a self-fulfilling prophecy. This went on for four generations. You look like me, you talk like me and so you were recruited to the special course. The mess the service is in now is as consequence of those generations of the special course. The service is full of people who have the operational
experience, the intelligence and would be excellent chief officers, but we haven't selected them. Others have fallen through the cracks and got promoted despite their skills, not because of them”.

[Chief Constable, Interview E1, 24th March 2016]

This participant went on to express strong views in relation to the consequences of poor operational judgement. As noted below: -

“The consequence is Hillsborough. The consequence is Rotherham. [Chief Officers] getting sacked, that's the consequence. I know a chief officer who was recently in a criminal interview. He said that operational policing was not what he does. What planet is he on? Of course you're not on the streets, but you cannot divorce yourself from operational policing. Ultimately it is about judgement, and you can't teach it”.

[Chief Constable, Interview E1, 24th March 2016]

The same interviewee concluded a strongly worded response by stating that: -

“I don't believe you can teach judgement. Yes you can deliver it and your policing experience will influence it. But if you start off with poor judgement, I don't believe you can end up with good judgement. It is a life skill per se. I don't doubt that there are some people out there who can come in and do a good job. But, the opportunities in this service are diminishing all the time. I have lost 1000 people over the last few years. We have got a force full of people with aspirations, but the opportunities are being cut. I don't care what the College of Policing say; direct entry is a CV builder. They think it's fine for people to come in, do 5 years and then leave. Sorry, I don't.”

[Chief Constable, Interview E1, 24th March 2016]

The views of this officer, one of the most senior in the country, provide a damming indictment of talent management within the police service. The views expressed show deep concern about privileged access to senior roles. Disdain was shown for a number of individuals who had progressed through the police service by this route. Beyond providing insightful commentary on the disquiet
that clearly exists within elements of the NPCC, these views also demonstrate the cultural challenges that the direct entrants will need to navigate if they are to be successful ambassadors for change. It is useful to consider how the position of chief officers may evolve over time as they observe the impact of the direct entry scheme, as argued by one Chief Constable:

“It is something that I will continue to consider the benefits of but I believe we already have the skills within this organisation to fill senior officer roles. We have the right people already here to take the police forward in the next 20 years. I have not yet seen any evidence that direct entry has been a major benefit to any force” (Hickey, 2016).

This Chief Constable has spent twenty-seven years of a thirty-one year career within the same force and was deputy to the previous Chief Constable for the last three years. His perspective may have as much to do with perpetuation of cultural norms, due to limited experience outside of his home force, as it does a lack of evidence of benefits that direct entry may bring.

Credibility of direct entry officers was something foremost in the minds of those who were interviewed. Defining credibility was a point of great debate. Some of the stakeholders suggested that credibility was concerned with what you had done while others were more concerned with what you were able to do. As argued by one chief officer:

“A credible superintendent looks like someone who can be true to themselves, risk assess, true to the values of the organisation, drive innovation, care for their staff…but others would say that a credible superintendent is all about the operational stuff you have done, the stories you can tell. So credibility isn’t about war stories and swinging the lamp. As long as they can stay true to themselves and deliver against the national core competencies then that is enough for credibility. There is a credibility gap in people’s mind-sets [in relation to direct entry], but there is also a credibility issue with some standard entry superintendents.”

[Chief Officer, J1, 22nd January 2016, Central London Police Station]
The most useful perspective on credibility might be offered by a more junior officer who acted in the role of tutor constable to one of the direct entry officers and then went on to be led by them. As was recorded:

“I had a very negative opinion of direct entry. This isn't the military. We don't have the intense training that would be offered to an officer at Sandhurst. I had some grave reservations and I still do. [The Borough Commander] asked me to do it [the training of the direct entry officer] and said he wanted me to. I'm just a PC; it's going to happen. So I decided I might as well use my knowledge, experience and skills to try and make this work. 50% of this job is just being able to speak to people.

It was very clear that [the direct entry officer] had the skills and attributes to speak to people. I wanted to see lack of arrogance - sitting there with crowns on her shoulder. She had to be willing to communicate and be tutored and learn. I think everyone had concerns. I agreed with the boss that we had to break the barrier down. We had to call her [by her first name]. I had no problem with her wearing her insignia. A week before she started she came on parade and met everyone. I briefed them all on what it was all about. Because of her personality she was fine, she chatted to people in the yard, she got to know people on other teams.

The section sergeants and the guvnor treated her as a PC. I had real concerns though. She was brought into the senior leadership team (SLT) straight away. On a day when she was on the late shift, she would be in at 9am doing SLT stuff and then staying on for the late shift with the response team. I think it was a distraction, a big demand on her time. I raised it with her and the boss. But she is extremely keen. In relation to training, the knowledge wasn't bad. But the practical side was really lacking. I made sure that the first thing she had was an officer safety input. We have a national expert here. He gave her a proper insight into officer safety. She had done some role plays, but nothing really prepares you.”
The testimony offered above provides a mixed view of the superintendent scheme and of the performance of this particular officer. The strong interpersonal skills and self-awareness displayed by the direct entry officer appeared to impress this interviewee. However the most telling comment from this officer may have been that: -

“I would say that by the end of her training with me, she was better equipped than many PCs at the end of their probation. It might not be the same for everyone, but because of her [communication] skills this worked for her”.

Key theme 3: Opportunities associated with direct entry

Advocates of the direct entry scheme articulated what they believed to be significant opportunities associated with this new entry point into the police service. Increasing diversity in senior ranks and making the leadership of the police service more representative of the population was an opportunity that a number of stakeholders frequently identified.

As described by one chief officer: -

“I stood in front of the SCC (Strategic Command Course) last year, 23 years after Stephen Lawrence; 35 white men, 6 white women and 6 black men – all from the Caribbean. We are not bringing through the diversity that we talk about into our senior ranks. All the time that we keep the same recruitment and promotion processes in the organisation, we are just not going to get different.

In Surrey you have a PCC who would consider it a sackable offence to recruit a direct entry superintendent. My PCC would consider it a sackable offence to not recruit a DE Superintendent”.

[Chief Constable, Interview F1, 5th February 2016, telephone interview]
The longer-term strategic intention of this chief officer is that the service should critically reflect upon the need for so many management layers in the hierarchy. He argues that too many bureaucratic levels of management cause many cultural problems for the organisation. A particular example cited was the speed with which decision-making could be made and the blame culture associated with such decision-making. This argument supported the views made earlier by other interviewees. As argued by this chief constable; “Any organisation can act on [a maximum of] five levels”. By way of contrast, the Metropolitan Police Service has eleven levels in its hierarchy. This officer was also asked how he thought direct entry officers would be able to influence their respective organisations and lead change, when they may not subscribe to the social norms of the organisation. His response was as follows:

“You have to conform enough to be credible and acceptable, but not so much that I might as well have promoted someone from within. I’m one of you, without stopping being like me”

[Chief Constable, Interview F1, 5th February 2016, telephone interview]

This was a point of considerable discussion. This officer was to argue that one of the main opportunities of direct entry was that it would show existing officers that it was possible to be different and successful in the police service. He suggested that this didn’t have to mean ‘different’ in terms of visible characteristics, but different in terms of outlook, communication style and approach. This is a point that was explored in detail with the direct entry officers (see Part B of this chapter).

This thesis has made much of the impact of the Winsor Report (2012) on the workforce modernisation agenda, including direct entry. However, the practical catalyst for these changes has been the Leadership Review published by the College of Policing (2015). This document took the recommendations from Winsor, and elsewhere, to form a comprehensive response to these challenges. As argued by a chief officer from the College of Policing:

“From a personal perspective I never had an adverse view on direct entry as a concept, but I believe that superintendent may have not been the best place to start. I believe that it would have been more appropriate to
start at Inspector and ACC [assistant chief constable]. Inspector because of the impact on constables who are doing the job day to day and ACC because it is a genuinely influential role that shapes what the service does”.

[Chief Officer, College of Policing. Interview D1, 18th January 2016, College of Policing, London]

The argument for direct entry at multiple entry points is in keeping with the work that is also being driven by the NPCC. The chief officer from the College of Policing quoted above was an advocate of change within policing and recognised that adopting new leadership perspectives was necessary to bring about the kind of change he desired. He also commented on the cultural change intentions of other forces, identifying that direct entry officers would be key agents of change. As he argued: -

“The Met has given the direct entry scheme traction. The scheme would not have landed without the support of the Met…They have got a cultural change ambition and many of their current supers just aren’t up to it”.

[Chief Officer, College of Policing. Interview D1, 18th January 2016, College of Policing, London]

It may be useful to consider this point further. It is noticeable that some of the most influential stakeholders who took part in this study have a consistent view of direct entry. They see the key opportunity as being in relation to cultural change. The narrative offered by them infrequently referenced operational capability or the impact on this. This is at variance to those who made reference to the key risks earlier in this chapter. Their focus was on operational judgement and exposure to high-risk decision making, that may have left the direct entry officers, and those they lead, exposed. This was a point acknowledged by a chief officer in the MPS. He identified that, while opportunities to develop culture were significant, there were operational risks that would need to be mitigated against. As he argued: -

“Yes, they will have significant responsibilities but they are not going to change the organisation overnight or cause huge problems overnight. They are highly manageable. [They will undergo] a lengthy training course. I would have been happy to support a two-year training
programme. They are getting 18 months, which is a significant factor for mitigating the risk. There is no guarantee of a job at the end [of the training]. If they aren’t up to standard, they will not be kept in the organisation”.

[Chief Officer, Metropolitan Police Service, Interview A1, 10th October 2014, New Scotland Yard, London].

While this thesis does not seek to evaluate in detail the recruitment, selection and training programme that the direct entry officers were opposed to, it might be useful to recognise the role that a challenging recruitment process has played in mitigating some of the perceived risks of direct entry. As was recorded: -

“We have had a lengthy internal debate about whether we are setting the bar too high for the direct entry supers. Much of the testing was at PNAC level. But we were not seeking to recruit bog standard superintendents. We wanted to attract broader strategic thinkers, who could also get things done. We have probably ended up getting ACPO level candidates on to the scheme. We set the bar high so that the first intake was less likely to fail. The scepticism in the service was too great”.

[Chief Officer, College of Policing. Interview D1, 18th January 2016, College of Policing, London]

The concept of the ‘strategic thinker who can also get things done’ is a view that was articulated by a number of the stakeholders who were interviewed. There was recognition that the direct entry officers would need to be comfortable in making strategic decisions and working with colleagues at a strategic level, but that this would not be enough to be successful. The superintendents would also need to gain support from those in the inspecting ranks below them in the hierarchy, supporting them to deliver strategic priorities.

To conclude this section, which considers stakeholder perspectives on direct entry, it is appropriate to refer to one of the key stakeholders who has a unique window on the capabilities of the people involved. The extract below is from an online blog written by an undergraduate at Canterbury Christ Church University, the individual is also a serving police inspector. As he argues: -
“Over the last few months I have become exceptionally disengaged from the ‘job’. I suddenly started to feel that there was nothing else left to give, no more difference for me to make. This was in contrast to 12 months ago when I had just started a degree in policing, I was full of ideas and believed I could change the status quo, maybe this was short sighted but this new found knowledge had recharged my love of policing. However any ideas I had were short lived, any knowledge that I felt I could share was blocked, new ways of working ignored. There are only so many times someone can be told ‘no’ before they give up and look elsewhere for. I had a professional CV created, joined agencies and applied for private sector roles.

That was until I had a conversation with a direct entry superintendent working on my Borough. She sensed my frustration and asked to speak with me about where I saw myself in the next 12 months. This was more than any of her peers had done in the preceding 12 months. She listened with interest to my concerns, and then gave me her take on the future of policing. Despite the barriers against her she paints a very pretty picture for policing. To me it was a breath of fresh air. What stuck out more than anything was her appreciation of those at the ground level, the PC’s and DC’s carrying out mission critical work. She was able to share with me individual examples of good work and even name the officers responsible, this level of detail shows how passionate she is about the officers that work on the front line as well as how much she cares about policing.

Her parting shot at our brief meeting was to say to me ‘don’t leave, we need people like you to mold the future of the job’. I walked out once again feeling inspired and refreshed. Many people have their doubts about the direct entry scheme, however in my humble opinion if we had more superintendents like this superintendent, we would have a stronger, more focused, refined and capable Met.”

[Anonymous Police Inspector, Metropolitan Police Service, Online Blog, Canterbury Christ Church University, 2016).]
While this is just one account, from one individual interaction with a direct entry officer, in one part of the country, it is arguably a powerful example of how cultural change may be advanced by virtue of new entry pathways into the police service. The former Home Secretary, in a speech to the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, highlighted this example: -

“After years of having their ideas rejected, and being told ‘this was just the way things are’, the [officer] was ready to quite policing. But the direct entry superintendent, herself frustrated by the system but committed to changing it, convinced the officer to be part of that solution. It was only when I sat listening to the story of that direct entry superintendent, and when I met the outstanding group of individuals graduating direct entry, that it truly struck me. The tired, closed culture of policing is being opened up for the first time in its history”.

[Home Secretary Theresa May cited by Weinfass, 2016]
Part B: Interviews with the direct entry officers

The second section of this chapter presents the findings from the interviews with the direct entry officers. It might be useful to recall the approach taken to this part of the research. The officers took part in one to one, semi structured interviews on either three or four occasions between November 2014 and May 2016 (depending on availability). A focus group was also conducted with four of the officers. Due to the repeated nature of these interviews, it might be beneficial to consider each of the interactions with these participants as an extended conversation that evolved over time. Each interview provided a catalyst for conversation in the next interview that followed. This involved reviewing previous transcripts, considering how perspectives were developing and changing.

Table 4: Key themes & sub themes from interviews with direct entrants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Background</th>
<th>2. Becoming a Police Officer</th>
<th>3. Strategic Issues &amp; looking ahead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career history</td>
<td>Application &amp; Selection</td>
<td>Credibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation for joining</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambition and expectations</td>
<td>Operational context</td>
<td>Leadership perspectives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key theme 1: Background

The direct entry officers come from diverse backgrounds. As may have been expected, there is a bias toward public service careers and some of the officers have also been involved in voluntary work. A summary of the background and experiences of the nine direct entry officers is provided below:
### Table 5: Introducing the direct entry superintendents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Officer</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Career History</th>
<th>Previous Policing Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>36 – 40</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Armed Forces</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>41 – 45</td>
<td>BME</td>
<td>Civil Service, Higher Education Management</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>30 – 35</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Project / Change Management</td>
<td>Senior Police Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>41 – 45</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Human Resources &amp; Change Management</td>
<td>Special Constable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>36 – 40</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Operations and Management Consultancy</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>30 – 35</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Local government – welfare reform, business continuity and emergency planning</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>41 – 45</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Local Government. Independent Police Complaints Commission</td>
<td>Special Constable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>36 – 40</td>
<td>BME</td>
<td>Civil Service Barrister</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>41 – 45</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Armed Forces</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A common thread through the experiences identified above is that the direct entry officers held senior roles in their previous organisations and had been accountable for significant delivery, often under substantial scrutiny. When asked to explain motivations for joining the police service, the following reasons were recorded:

“I wanted something that was broadly public service, making a difference”

[Interview T1, 26th January 2015, College of Policing, Bramshill]
“Looking through the Guardian website, I saw the advert for direct entry superintendent. A bit hands on, a bit of thinking, still public sector, bit of change management”
[Interview O1, 26th January 2015, College of Policing, Bramshill]

“I had read the Winsor report and decided that if direct entry ever happened I would apply. I really wanted the job, but wasn’t sure I was who they wanted. I only had a team of 12… I had a good job title, so I thought that might get me through the first sift”.
[Interview S1, 26th January 2015, College of Policing, Bramshill]

“I will always work in public service, that’s what gets me out of bed in the morning… If I could have afforded to take the pay cut, I would have contemplated joining as a PC. But I did have so much strategic level experience, there was so much I could take in to the role – that I wouldn’t be able to use as a PC. I would have felt disempowered as a PC”.
[Interview R1, 15th January 2015, College of Policing, Bramshill]

All of the direct entry officers displayed a disposition toward public service and were clearly aware of the scrutiny and expectation that they would be subject to in their new roles.

The initial interviews were conducted in the very early stages of their 18-month training course, which commenced in November 2014. After an eight-week induction at the College of Policing, the officers spent the remaining 16 months alternating between short, theoretical inputs at the College and operational placements within their respective forces.
Table 6: Forces where cohort one direct entry officers employed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Force</th>
<th>Number of Direct Entry Officers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan Police Service</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of London Police</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Yorkshire Police</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avon and Somerset Constabulary</td>
<td>2 (1 resignation &amp; 1 transfer now leaves 0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sussex Police</td>
<td>1 (transferred from A&amp;S for personal reasons)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remuneration was not cited as either a barrier or catalyst for joining the direct entry scheme, but was a point of reflection. As argued by one interviewee:

“I’d moved too far in my career to be a Police Constable, my skill set had moved on… I couldn’t afford to earn the money of a PC. I was on £100k plus benefits and a 25% bonus. [I now earn] £2k net difference a month, a material amount, but a straight comparison isn’t fair. The £70k allows me a perfectly acceptable lifestyle”.

[Interview Q1, 15th January 2015, College of Policing, Bramshill]

A number of the participants expressed a view that they had significant respect for the work of the police service and of the role that police constables are asked to perform to protect the public. Two of the cohort had previously been employed as volunteer special constables and so were particularly well sighted on the challenges faced by front line officers. An ambition to make the working life of operational officers easier and with less bureaucracy was a frequently stated intention of the participants. While there was recognition of the importance of ethical practice and public scrutiny, there was a view shared amongst the cohort that steps could be taken to increase efficiencies, without adversely impacting upon the integrity of the police service.

Different points of view emerged when the participants were asked to consider their role in terms of balancing the transactional work of a front line officer with
that of being a leader within the service. Some officers took the view that their work was entirely about leadership, enabling others to discharge their law enforcement responsibilities and removing obstacles that currently limited the efficiency and effectiveness of policing. These participants could be described as having a person centric view of their role within the organisation. They did not place great value on learning police street craft or on the tactics that they may choose to make use of as operational superintendents. Other members of the cohort placed considerable value on developing their competence as ‘hands-on’ officers who understood the detail of police tactics. This was identified as an occasional point of tension within the group. Some officers were more comfortable considering their strategic leadership role in the service while others had a preference for understanding the detail of their core policing duties. One officer argued:

“[other members of the cohort] are obsessed with the PC rotation. But this is not about us being a PC. This is about us getting exposure to the PC role to inform our thinking when we are superintendents. If I am told I am a great PC at the end of the rotation, I will be happy, but this isn’t the reason I am here. I am not going to be a PC, so it isn’t that important”.
[Interview S1, 26th January 2016, College of Policing, Bramshill]

Another officer stated: -

“You’ve got to be a police officer, but we have come in at a rank where you have to be a leader as well… You have to know the policing context though, before you can go on to be a police leader. You need both. The leadership aspect will become more apparent as our careers develop”.
[Interview U1, 21st January 2015, College of Policing, Bramshill]

There was general agreement amongst the cohort that there was a need to complete the 18-month training scheme before focussing on longer-term ambitions within the service. The officers did however display ambition in their thinking and a desire to take on more senior roles within the service. There was a clear appetite for lateral movement, to enhance skills and experience and then move into chief officer roles after that. Between three and five years was
the general timeframe identified for moving to Chief Superintendent and ACC roles. As evidence of ambition for swift progression, one officer argued: -

“My plan has changed over the past few weeks. In previous roles I have been looking at moving up and keeping momentum. [In this role I thought I would] want to get experience and understand what I am good at in a policing context then work out what role I could / should do to work out what I am best suited to, to benefit the organisation. [However] because of this growing impatience I now think that not only do I want to do the superintendent role, I also want a borough command so I can have responsibility and accountability for pushing these things through”.

[Interview Q1, 15th January 2015, College of Policing, Bramshill]

**Key theme 2: Becoming a police officer**

To secure a place on the direct entry scheme, the officers had to pass interviews and assessments with their forces and then pass an extended assessment centre at the College of Policing. Some forces made use of recruitment consultants to assist in identification of suitable candidates. It was a lengthy process, taking more than six months from initial application. The officers held strong opinions in relation to the process itself, the people they had met during that time and the evidence that this presented of culture within the police service. As one officer observed: -

“The initial Skype interview was pitched at the wrong level. The questions were too easy. [I was asked] ‘how do you sort out an underperforming member of staff’? I should have been asked ‘how do you sort out a whole team’? Some of the comments made by the police officer [chief superintendent] suggested that this person didn’t support the scheme. Because of that I emailed [the recruitment consultant] and said I was withdrawing. The questions were too low level. The job wasn’t what I thought it would be about. Thought I’d made an error in judgement...hard to gauge. The normal benchmarks (like salary) were not there to enable me to understand the job. [The recruitment consultant] talked me out of it. From there on I was committed”.

[Interview Q1, 15th January 2015, College of Policing, Bramshill]
Another officer had concerns about the way in which knowledge of diversity was assessed during the selection process. A unique observation was recorded: -

"[I was asked] ‘If you had been to a Mosque, what flavour sandwiches would you least expect to be served?’. That’s when I first had my doubts about the process. If I had been a closet racist, it wouldn’t have been that difficult to get around that question. These issues are really important and they should be dealt with properly. It was really disappointing and disheartening”.

[Interview S1, 26th January 2015, College of Policing, Bramshill]

A number of the officers, who were successful at the initial selection process prescribed by the Metropolitan Police Service and also at the national assessment centre, were then unsuccessful at a final interview panel chaired by the Commissioner. Therefore they went on to take up positions in other forces.

As was observed by one officer: -

“I thought [one of the chief officers on the interview panel] was incredibly rude. He got my name wrong. I corrected him and got a bad vibe. I’m not sure he was used to being corrected. [The NPCC officer who gave me feedback] said I was 99% there, but I didn’t have the intangible presence that supers are expected to have… This scheme is about attracting difference, but I wasn’t recruited by the Met because I’m not the same”.

[Interview S1, 26th January 2015, College of Policing, Bramshill]

A similar observation was also offered from another of the officers who was unsuccessful at the MPS final interview panel. It was concluded by this participant that age might have been a primary factor in being unsuccessful. While it is unclear as to whether this was age in its most literal sense or whether experience was the issue, it is evident that the officer felt the difference in their approach was not a ‘fit’ for the MPS.

One of the senior officers who had been present on the MPS interview panel was asked to account for these issues. She responded by arguing that: -

“If that is how they took the feedback, the fault lies with us. We were the ones communicating the message so if they have misunderstood, we
need to learn from that. When I joined the police service, I was twenty-
one years old, I was a southerner going to a northern force, I was a
woman and I had a good degree from Oxford. I had every label going
attached to me. I was concerned about how these people would be able
to get beyond their labels to ensure they were accepted… When we got
to the second time around [cohort two] we agreed that we were looking
at motivation, values and emotional intelligence. We weren’t looking at
how bright they were, that was a given from the challenging selection
process they had been through”.

[Chief Officer, Metropolitan Police Service. Interview G1, 29th February
2016, New Scotland Yard, London]

While this response suggests that the officers may have misunderstood the
feedback they had received, the concept of ‘getting beyond labels’ indicates that
some kind of obstacle remains in terms of ‘difference’. This is not likely to be the
case in terms of ‘protected characteristics’ such as race, gender or sexuality.
However more subtle perspectives on difference, including approach, outlook
and communication style may be less readily accepted. While also observing
misgivings about the force-led selection process, one officer did offer positive
reflections on the assessment centre delivered at the College of Policing. He
also defended the right of the MPS to include an interview panel at the end of
the selection process. As was to be argued:

“Overall it was a positive experience that was tested at the right kind of
level. I was surprised that people had been rejected at that final stage
[the Commissioner-led interview in the MPS]. The sense that I got was
that the scheme was going to attract media attention and the Met supers
were always going to be the most high profile – so I can understand why
the Commissioner wanted to meet us. I think it was because the spotlight
was going to be on the Met”.

[Interview U1, 21st January 2015, College of Policing, Bramshill].

Following the initial eight-week induction delivered by the College of Policing,
the direct entry officers spent eleven weeks with their forces on a ‘constable
rotation’. This commenced on 2nd February 2015, concluding on 20th April 2015.
It included a one to one training course delivered by an experienced tutor constable and was intended to provide as many skills and experiences as possible. Upon completion of this rotation, the officers attended further College led classroom training, before undertaking a second in force training rotation, this time working with sergeants and then inspectors. This commenced on 11th May 2015 and concluded on 28th August 2015. More classroom training then followed, with weekly ‘knowledge checks’ to monitor progress.

The officers then began supported work place development with experienced superintendents. The 18-month training programme required the submission of two ‘action research projects’. The first was a community research project; the second was a business improvement project. Finally, the direct entry officers also had to pass a 120 question multiple-choice exam, in the style of the OSPRE (Objective Structured Performance Related Examination) promotion examinations that officers wishing to be promoted to sergeant or inspector must pass. Work based assessment conducted by in-force assessors was undertaken throughout to ensure that the officers, in an operational setting, could meet the demands of their new roles. The direct entry officers expressed strong views in relation to the training approach and the utility of methods used. As argued by one officer:

“The style is pretty much sit down, listen in and be spoken at. Everyone has different styles of learning and I am not sure they are all being catered for. I think the 18 months is more than long enough. The challenge is working out how much of the PC knowledge we need. Because of these weekly knowledge checks, that becomes the driver of behaviour of the cohort. But actually, although we need to know these basics, the reality is we can have a Blackstones [police law and procedure manual] on our desks and can look things up [once we have completed training and are in the live environment]”.

[Interview T1, 26th January 2015, College of Policing, Bramshill]

Another of the officers provided the following observations on training delivery: -

“We haven’t had much time for role play – stop and search or arrests. The tutors are excellent. They are prepared to stay late and come in
early to help us... There is no time to reflect and digest what we have learnt. I’m not too bothered by it, but a lot of the group are struggling with that”.

[Interview U1, 21st January 2015, College of Policing, Bramshill].

Not all of the superintendents had such a positive view of the tutors and the environment in the classroom. As was noted by one:

“I have not enjoyed it [induction]. There has been too much to learn. There has been lots of pressure on us. You throw nine people together, it’s not going to be happy families all of the time. Some of the group like the sound of their own voices. A lot of people are not balancing the receive with the transmit. The trainers have been terrible; they have failed to stamp it out. Things are being squashed and removed from the programme because there is too much pointless conversation... It has to be interactive to a certain extent. We have had discussion about it as a group, but it is hard to resolve. It hasn’t worked. Some of the group will talk as the lecturer is talking. There’s not much self discipline and I don’t know why it is”.

[Interview S1, 26th January 2015, College of Policing, Bramshill]

To a differing extent, each of the direct entrants proved to have their own views on the dynamic within the cohort. It is outside the scope of this thesis to consider the merits of the training approach taken or the group dynamics. It is however useful to include this data, to capture the issues involved and stimulate consideration of further research in such areas. The strong personalities, the wealth of leadership experience and the enthusiasm possessed by each of the direct entry officers suggest that some tension in professional relationships is a natural outcome.

Beyond the transactional perspective of training delivery, some useful insights on police culture were also observed during the induction period. As articulated by one of the direct entry officers:

“Personally, I’ve not worn a uniform since I was 16 years old. Mentally, putting me in a uniform and in a classroom altered my behaviour. It
depersonalised me. I was trying to create a good impression – with peers and tutors. I was used to being in charge, and suddenly I wasn’t. A very difficult experience. That feeling of being the ‘child’ in the relationship played through to the PC rotation. Policing is full of parent / child relationships. Because we are students / probationers - it impacts on our behaviours”.
[Interview P2, 29th April 2015, College of Policing, Sunningdale]

The concept of the parent / child relationship between police managers and their subordinate officers (throughout the hierarchy) was something that was raised independently by a number of the participants. It was observed to be an issue that caused a number of the superintendents great concern and led them to conclude that it was disempowering operational officers. This disempowerment was, they argued, reflected in lack of confidence to make operational decisions.

After a long and challenging induction period between November 2014 and early February 2015, where powers, policy and legislation were the focus, the motivation of the cohort to embark on their first operational rotations was considerable. The second round of research interviews was conducted at the conclusion of this eleven-week period. A number of insightful comments were made. As one officer observed:

“I was expecting a lot more resistance from the PCs… A fast track officer had joined the team just before me, so in many ways he was the novelty. I’m very much aware, having worked in organisations before where there is a heroic type of leadership, that you have to create your reputation as you go and that I would be watched closely throughout. Small pebbles create big ripples… Everything I did was under scrutiny, so I made sure I made the tea”.
[Interview N2, 29th April 2015, College of Policing, Sunningdale]

This officer went on to reflect upon his relationship with his tutor constables and how he made use of his previous experiences. As recorded:

“My professional life for 19 years has been all about men. Entirely male dominated. So to now have 2 female colleagues [tutors] forced me to reflect on more than just the policing. I have to trust that they were good
people and trust the system. They had different approaches. One of them didn’t drive, so we were always on foot or bicycle, a very different approach to how we went about our patrols. I didn’t find myself becoming the supervisor at any stage. But I did find myself becoming the ‘incident commander’ drawing on my previous experiences”.

[Interview N2, 29th April 2015, College of Policing, Sunningdale]

Differentiating between a formal ‘supervisor’ role and that of ‘incident command’ was an important point to this officer. He believed that he didn’t yet have the skills or experience to be formally recognised as the supervisor, but was willing to step into a leadership role to manage the tactics around an incident. The example given was directing colleagues to search for suspects in relation to a residential burglary. The overwhelming reflection from the officers was that the time they spent with their tutor constables had been a positive learning experience and one that they would expect to benefit from long-term. As argued by one officer:

“I was really nervous, more so meeting them than when I was interviewed by the Commissioner. In any other environment where I have gone as the new boss, I would be a bit nervous, but nothing like I felt then. My PC tutor and the inspector were not fans of the programme – they told me that – but I managed to win them over. I became more and more confident about dealing with things, it’s all about communication.

I kept forgetting things and getting things wrong; applying handcuffs, remembering to tell people the allegations why they had been arrested. My tutor said to me; this is an experience, you don’t need to learn everything, you don’t need to be good at this, you just need to experience it. But, I don’t like feeling incompetent. You’ll hear from others on the cohort that they absolutely loved it, but I was broken by the end of it. I got bored. I don’t do detail.”

[Interview P2, 29th April 2015, College of Policing, Sunningdale]
One of the superintendents offered this commentary on her first few weeks as an operational officer:

“First name terms [is important to me], it helps the relationships. Building the relationships across all ranks is important to me. I spent time moving around the police station, speaking to people. I have been a special constable, so much of the transactional stuff was a refresher. I was nervous on day 1. There was some confusion, within me, about who I was; a PC, a super…. I wanted to do enough to fit in, but not too much. Everyone was really supportive, but I was acutely aware that there is a back-story to the direct entry supers. So I was grateful for the support received internally. The ‘Bullshire’ facebook page was quite negative. A picture of me was put on Twitter, and all the comments were about the fact I didn’t have any PPE [personal protective equipment] on. I did message car, ward panel meetings, schools. I got to know my ward and asked lots of questions about the borough. First arrest - by appointment at the front counter - theft employee. I arrested five people. I was told I was too nice - developing relationships with people I was arresting.

[Interview Q2, 16th May 2015, College of Policing, Sunningdale]

A number of the officers spoke of being nervous when meeting their operational colleagues for the first time. This is worth further reflection. The direct entry officers proved to be highly experienced, intelligent people with a wealth of life experience. The significant demands of this role however are undoubtedly testing. As the College of Policing now embarks on a direct entry inspector pathway into the service, it may be worth assessing how well placed these officers will be to manage expectations and their own fears of taking on these operational roles which will be subject to close scrutiny. These direct entry inspectors are unlikely to have the same level of experience and maturity that is held by the superintendents and so may find this aspect even more challenging. The operational grounding provided by the constable rotation was overwhelmingly viewed as a positive and much needed exposure to the core competencies required of a police officer. From arrests, to crime scene preservation following a murder, to searches in the street, to problem solving activities on neighbourhood policing teams, the superintendents experienced a
diverse range of policing scenarios to support their development. Operational supervision through the sergeant and inspector rotation was also viewed as beneficial, although not necessarily as challenging to the skill set of the superintendents. As argued by one officer: 

“I don’t like intrusive supervision. I think it is all about giving people responsibility. It is more about coordination of resources. I find it quite natural, but there was a requirement to be more intrusive than I might otherwise have been; digging people out, who weren’t prepared to take calls.

There were no obvious gaps in [my] procedural or legislative knowledge. Even the things that aren’t day to day. There was a shooting where the chap had got shot and driven himself to hospital. I went to the scene and everyone had that in hand. I spoke to the [detective sergeant] at the hospital; he asked me, I think as a super and not as a fellow skipper, if he was OK with me moving the car. I thought it through, we discussed the forensic issues, and we agreed that the car could be moved. Although it was a shooting, when you break it down, it was common sense.

I asked a number of questions, coaching the decision out of someone, which I then ultimately ratified, rather than commanding the decision. I didn’t feel that, not having managed a shooting scene before I couldn’t deal with it. That said, I would have had no problem putting my hand up and saying I didn’t know how to deal with it. Then, if someone with experience gave me a more reasonable plan for dealing with the situation, I would say ‘yes, I am happy to support your decision’”.

[Interview T3, 17th September 2015, College of Policing, Sunningdale]

Having presented the findings relating to the background of the direct entry superintendents and their experiences of training and operational policing, this chapter concludes the presentation of primary data by considering the wider strategic issues that emerged as the officers progressed towards the conclusion of their training.
Key theme 3: Strategic issues & looking ahead

With the negative commentary that surrounded the introduction of the direct entry scheme as the catalyst, the issue of credibility was an important element in the research. Each of the officers had a clear position on how they would meet the credibility challenge. As argued by one of the superintendents:

“It comes a lot down to character. Credibility as a person, rather than just credibility of the scheme. You have to be credible, You need to demonstrate some qualities and skills that you have brought into policing from elsewhere that are relevant. But it isn’t about being liked, it is about respect”

[Interview U1, 21st January 2015, College of Policing, Bramshill].

Another of the officers was recorded as stating:

“I will be judged on what I do and who I am. I will enter into a conversation and talk to them about why my 20 years experience provides skills that will be of use to me”

[Interview P1, 21st January 2015, College of Policing, Bramshill].

The culture that was experienced by the superintendents, both positive and negative, was a frequently visited topic during the interviews. This officer made a number of observations in relation to the team culture, which was experienced during first exposure to operational policing. As recorded:

“There were plenty of established norms, about where people sit on parade for example. My inspector was a very stereotypical, old-fashioned inspector. Believed he was the best inspector on the Borough. He didn’t do the emotional intelligence stuff very well. He did the welfare stuff – but from a transactional place, rather than a person place. Some of the teasing / banter was all very good-natured, but went unchallenged by the sergeant and the inspector. In any other public sector environment, this would have been challenged. I did notice a culture whereby public dressing downs are given. Shouting at people on parade was the way it was done. I expected to see a level of banter that was unacceptable (e.g. sexist) - that didn’t happen. It wasn’t of that ilk. There was a very strong
team ethic. I noticed a very caring culture amongst the team, but the leadership culture was not good”.

[Interview P2, 29th April 2015, College of Policing, Sunningdale]

Another of the superintendents observed cultural differences between departments. She concluded that gender might be a deciding factor on where in the police service an officer may decide to work. As was argued: -

There is something slightly more ‘feminine’ about people who work in neighbourhoods policing. The main type of person that the police service has recruited - masculine, adrenalin based, guns and helicopters…. These type of people therefore resist going to neighbourhood teams. But there is a minority of people who are more interested in ‘people’ and ‘helping people’… The language sustains this: Total Policing, Total War on Crime [MPS mission statement]. So we are not supportive of people who have different values.

[Interview Q2, 16th May 2015, College of Policing, Sunningdale]

Organisational culture was also evident when considering approaches to performance management. In this example, the officer was surprised to find that a performance framework had been established in relation to community engagement. As was to be argued: -

“I met [a senior officer] to discuss [approaches to community] engagement. They had put in place a gold, silver, bronze command structure and a spread sheet with a KPI framework to record how many people had been spoken to - all of which feels very numbers based and short term - ironically, taking people away from the long term problem solving work that genuinely builds relationships with the community”.

[Interview Q2, 16th May 2015, College of Policing, Sunningdale]

When considering whether the organisational culture of the police service would be willing to allow the workforce modernisation agenda to flourish, it is necessary to consider where the power base for that culture may lie.
Anecdotal evidence generated during this research reveals that operational officers (constable, sergeant, inspector) are largely indifferent to the introduction of a direct entry pathway into the superintendent rank. Furthermore it is argued that the rank differential is so great between (particularly) constable/sergeant and superintendent that there is no day-to-day relationship in existence. Support for direct entry is not so clear among the higher ranks of the service. This may ultimately in fact prove a cultural barrier. As described by one of the superintendents: -

“We had a ‘meet the ACCs’ event here, there were two particularly unpleasant ACCs who didn't like the programme at all. They said it would be particularly hard for us to ever get a senior role. They said I would never get a job outside [my current force]. I would never have taken the job if I thought I was going to be a super in [my current force] for the rest of my career. They told me ‘you need a story to get appointed at a senior level but your story will just be too weird’. In terms of leadership of the police service it really disappoints me. Even if he does hold those values, his role is to be progressive”.
[Interview S1, 26th January 2015, College of Policing, Bramshill]

Four months later, the cultural blockages presented by the attitudes of senior officers had continued to cause problems for this direct entry officer. As recorded: -

“I’m not pleased. Regretting it [joining the police]. Very difficult culturally. People talking about me all the time behind my back. At a social with a group of ACPO and retired chiefs, telling me; ‘you’ll have trouble moving on now, especially as a direct entrant’. I don’t know what my plans are as yet. I still love the idea of being a police officer and I carry my warrant card with a degree of pride. [It is] likely [that I will] pack it in”.
[Interview S2, 5th May 2015, College of Policing, Sunningdale]

Another direct entry superintendent also provided similar evidence. Arguing that a combination of poor leadership and a difficult culture make change within the police service difficult to achieve. As was noted: -

“When I ask the borough commander what’s important about doing
something in a given way, he says: ‘Because I'm the borough commander and I want to do it like that’. The whole SLT just look at their feet and cringe. When I talk to him about empowering staff and getting them to take more responsibility, he just says that: ‘they can't do it, they don't get it, they're no good”. He just can't get it. He struggles with the leadership. It's not about me; it's about the 850 people that work here. If he is allowed to continue the way he is at the moment, those 850 people will stay miserable. When he is off, I am able to get things done and make some progress. Then he comes back to work and takes us back a few days. Ultimately I just want to be the boss. It sounds arrogant, but I'm not at the right level. There isn't any swearing any more. Culture is starting to change. This kind of work is consuming much of time, because it is cultural change. I keep trying to impress on people that the biggest job you have as a senior leader is to empower the people below you to do a good job”.

[Interview P4, 13th January 2016, Central London Police Station]

One of the participants also noted strategic challenges in relation to the approach taken to risk management. The following example was articulated: -

“Much of what I am told is risk is actually just uncertainty. This is an example of the direct entry perspective being different. The Met want to put control measures on things that we can’t control. The fact that something might go wrong is not a reason to not do it... So when someone says that we can’t hold a boxing event because a stabbing might happen outside the event. It might happen anywhere, we are not necessarily the causative factor of that incident so we shouldn’t shy away from doing these things”.

[Interview T3, 17th September 2015, College of Policing, Sunningdale]

Leadership and Culture: Focus Group Perspective

The focus group held with four of the direct entry officers produced some of the most rich and informative data. The dynamic within the room encouraged a flow
in conversation that added significant value to the data collection process. Differences were noted between the MPS and the smaller county police forces. As argued:

“There are some very specific Met issues that are specific to the Met as opposed to county forces. In the Met, a super does not have the influence you would have in a county force. For example, an inspector in Lancashire has the same responsibility as a super in the Met. Part of that is systems based, because the Met has the obsession of running 32 boroughs in the same way. I am astonished how much time the supers spend in the weeds. I am astonished at the lack of strategy. Not in my last eight years have I seen anything like that”.

[Officer R, Focus Group, 27th January 2016, College of Policing, Sunningdale]

The issue of influence (or lack of) was a point of frequent reflection during the one-to-one interviews. The overriding conclusion from the direct entry officers was that they did not feel they had the level of influence that their skills and experience should permit them. It was also argued during the focus group that the level of the superintendent rank was not a particularly senior position. As was to be noted by one direct entry officer:

“I can point to individuals who I have met who have influence despite their rank. Perhaps someone who joined with the Chief, or were a staff officer - they influence beyond their rank. I have got less influence now than I had [in my former role] in a much larger organization. My biggest concern is that I have got chief supers and ACCs speaking to sergeants and constables about why something isn't completed on a log. I mean why are they speaking to them and more importantly why are they looking at logs… If I could ban one phrase in [my force], it would be ‘grip’. Policing thinks that this is how you must manage - through this thing called ‘grip’. They are fiddling at the wrong level, because they don’t understand the difference between tactical, operational and strategic.

[Officer N, Focus Group, 27th January 2016, College of Policing, Sunningdale]
This issue was further recognised as follows:

“The influencers on crime will be employment levels, subtle changes in ethnicity…. If all supers did the work at the right level, they would be only doing a 40-hour week, but they are doing everyone else’s job as well”.

[Officer N, Focus Group, 27th January 2016, College of Policing, Sunningdale]

Useful comparative observations were made between the ‘leadership culture’ in policing and that identified in another public sector organisation where one of the officers had previously worked. As was to be argued:

“In my previous organisation, my senior would not be scrutinising the way in which I was dealing with my work. They knew I was accountable. I knew I was accountable. So the trust and the responsibility were there. If you made a decision that led to a bad outcome, you wouldn’t be sidelined for years during an investigation – you would be allowed to learn from it”.

[Officer U, Focus Group, 27th January 2016, College of Policing, Sunningdale]

Given its significance, some concluding comments in this chapter are provided in relation to police organisational culture. As was to be argued:

“I think, that policing thinks it has a can do culture. But in reality that may not be the case. I understand the drive to be efficient and get things done quickly, hoovering up calls – that is fine. But there are those who do not work in this way, have no interest in doing a good job and that is not consistent with a can do culture.

One of the things that has really surprised me is the breadth of ability, between the most capable and the least capable. I have [frequently witnessed] excellence across the organisation [but] there are a significant number of people who probably shouldn’t be in the organisation at all. Within [operational borough policing], that part of the organisation doesn’t
have the luxury of further-selection [e.g. through enhanced fitness tests],
there are significant numbers of people who are not up to scratch”

[Officer T, Focus Group, 27th January 2016, College of Policing, Sunningdale]

As identified earlier in the chapter, “data analysis is the most difficult and crucial aspect of qualitative research” (Basit, 2003, p.143). To bring order to over fifty hours of data and highlight the key issues that emerged proved to be a challenging task. It is hoped that the data presented offers new insight into the culture of the police service, the leadership challenges being faced and the way in which direct entry officers may be able to bring about change. The following chapter considers this data in the context of these key questions and relates this new knowledge to the literature reviewed earlier in the thesis.
Chapter Seven: Discussion

The data presented provides insight into the complex narrative that surrounds the direct entry superintendent scheme. As also identified, the police workforce modernisation agenda incorporates a number of radical proposals. Entry points to the police service and progression routes within it have remained largely the same since the British policing model was conceived in 1829. This research has identified a number of established perspectives and unyielding assumptions concerning the way in which police leaders should be recruited and progress through the ranks of the police service. These perspectives are balanced by the presence of direct entry superintendents. These officers are growing in number and influence and appear to be set on challenging accepted norms. This could well alter the face of police leadership.

Further consideration of the primary data that has been identified is made here and an attempt to understand what lessons can be learned to inform the debate. The chapter considers the most informative and persuasive of the research findings. These will hopefully assist in responding to the original research questions.

Strategic support for direct entry

Chief Officers and other senior leaders from the Metropolitan Police Service made arguments in support of direct entry particularly powerfully, along with a Chief Constable who was also interviewed. One problem was identified in terms of a lack of staff turnover in policing (Interview A1, 10th October 2014, see p.99) and also a feeling of ‘entitlement’ among police officers (Interview M1, 29th February 2016, see p.101).

This means reward and promotion are linked to time served, not performance. A second significant problem was also identified. This was the ability of the service to represent the communities it seeks to protect (Interview F1, 5th February 2016, see p.110). In chapter three, this thesis considered the case for direct entry and identified the Winsor Report into police remuneration and
conditions of service as the authoritative step change that was required to
galvanise the police modernisation agenda. The evidence presented here
clearly supports the overarching view advanced by Winsor. This was that
change was required to make the police service more representative of the
community and more responsive to new demands (Winsor, 2012).

The primary advocates of direct entry share a very similar view of the need to
transform the recruitment and progression of police officers. Asked to respond
to the view that operational competence could be lacking among direct entry
officers, they were quick to offer a defence. Sound judgement was presented as
being the cornerstone of operational leadership and the source of such
judgement was not considered, by some respondents, to come from only time
spent in the police service (Interviews C1, 16th April 2015 and A1, 10th October
2014, see p.104).

As identified earlier, it is in fact the introduction of different perspectives and an
ambition to dilute the concept of ‘group think’ within the service that lie at the
centre of the workforce modernisation agenda (Cameron, 2011; College of
Policing, 2016; Watters et al, 2007). Opposition to the scheme was however
also identified. Yet strategic support comes from more influential quarters, not
least the College of Policing, the Home Office and HMIC. While vocal opposition
to the workforce modernisation agenda was clear, the research determined that
real power and influence rested clearly with those who are supportive of the
modernisation agenda (Interviews A1, 10th October 2014 and D1, 18th January
2016, see p.104 / p.111).

Opposition to direct entry
Evidence collected from the research demonstrated that concern about direct
entry was expressed by a number of stakeholders and indeed even by the
direct entry officers themselves. There was however little direct evidence of
outright opposition to this pathway. Indeed, a number of interviewees stated that
they had held greater misgivings until meeting personally with the direct entry
superintendents. They could not help but be impressed by their ability, humility and enthusiasm for their roles (Interview I1, 25th February 2016).

One of the chief constable interviewees offered the strongest opposition to the direct entry scheme. He cited examples of poor judgement by many of his peers who had developed their career through what he described as “privileged talent pathways”. The core of this officer’s argument was that good judgement cannot be taught and, within the context of exercising good judgement in policing, exposure to operational decision making over the long term was, in his view, essential. He was adamant that many of the most significant failings of the police service in recent years had been due to poor judgement by ‘fast-track’ officers who lacked sound operational judgement (Interview E1, 24th March 2016, see p.106). This chief constable was equally clear that the perpetuation of these kinds of problems, over many years, was due to a self-fulfilling prophecy arising from existing officers who had been promoted quickly, particularly from the special course of the 1970s and 1980s. He argued that they had selected people that were ‘like them’ as members of subsequent cohorts.

One counter view advanced by a chief officer from the MPS was that some of the most damaging failings of the service over recent decades had been at the hands of very experienced officers who were taken to have excellent judgement. Yet failure was still to befall them (Interview A1, 10th October 2014, see p.104). It may be useful to note that in their response to questions considering talent management within the service, the chief officers adopted a view that tended to be supportive of their own career pathways. Whatever perspective is adopted, the key conclusion here is perhaps that perspectives of senior officers endure and are largely based on their own experience. Direct entry officers are very likely to bring a different view as a result of their own experiences.

A new evidence based approach is now needed, to explore the operational competence of direct entry officers. This is considered in further detail in the conclusion. While the views of one chief officer leave no doubt as to his position
on the utility and effectiveness of direct entry, there is more subtle evidence of cultural resistance to workforce modernisation identified and considered below.

**Reflections on Police Culture**

The first exposure of the direct entry officers to police culture was provided in the course of the initial selection process. The evidence showed that some senior officers did not support the scheme. This left a number of the applicants cautious as to whether or not they wanted to join the service. One officer came very close to withdrawing after her negative exposure to an NPCC officer during an initial sifting interview (Interview Q1, 15th January 2015, see p.120). Another noted that a chief officer appeared to show great disquiet when the applicant corrected him for addressing him by the wrong name (Interview S1, 26th January 2015, see p.121). This needs to be considered in the context of a later encounter, during the first weeks of their induction at Bramshill, where the direct entry officers were advised by a group of ACCs that “you need a story to get appointed at a senior level but your story will just be too weird” (Interview S1, 26th January 2015, see p.131).

It is apparent from this that resistance to the direct entrants was widespread. This unfortunately confirms the evidence provided by one of the senior stakeholders who stated that one of her biggest fears was whether or not the direct entry officers would get the support that they would need to be able to succeed (Interview I1, 25th February 2016, see p.105). One of the superintendents continues to be affected by this interaction with the ACCs, and other negative views from senior colleagues. As a result of this attitude and the perceived limitations it will place on his career, he is unlikely to remain in the service for the long-term (Interview S1, 26th January 2016, see p.131).

Here however, the perspective of one of the most senior officers to take part in the research is particularly interesting. He has been a vocal supporter of direct entry and agreed to its introduction into his force and demonstrated that support in response to interview questions posed as part of this study. Yet it is apparent
that in terms of personal interaction, this strategic position may not be reflected in the behaviours displayed. This is evidenced by testimony from applicants who were rejected for looking ‘too young’ or not having the ‘intangible presence’ required of a superintendent (Interview V1, 15\textsuperscript{th} January 2015, see p.121). Articulation of strategic support for diversity, when under public scrutiny, may be different to displaying those same values in personal interactions.

Identification among direct entry superintendents of a ‘parent/child’ relationship between senior officers and their subordinates was also evidenced through the research (Interview P2, 29\textsuperscript{th} April 2015 and Focus Group, 27\textsuperscript{th} January 2016, see p.125). It may be useful to reflect on this further. While senior stakeholders were challenging a lack of staff turnover in the police service and also a sense of entitlement among employees, it proved to be these same commentators who were, it is argued, also happy to adopt a similar parent/child approach in their own interactions with staff. The disempowerment that some of the direct entry officers experienced, due to this cultural dichotomy, was significant. The ability to identify opportunities for re-empowerment and greater influence is something that many of the superintendents reflected on in detail.

As highlighted earlier, these officers were concerned about the apparent lack of authority and accountability delegated to them. This was not due to their role as direct entrants, but was experienced across the superintendent rank. It was particularly noticeable within the MPS. Here, a power shift toward control by NPCC officers rather than superintending ranks over recent years has become apparent (Focus Group, 27\textsuperscript{th} January 2016, see p.133 / 134). Yet these difficulties did not undermine the confidence of the direct entry officers. A desire to establish a network of likeminded colleagues (direct entry and otherwise) across their respective organisations was noticeable. This could arguably be in fact a forceful catalyst for cultural change. Yet it was recognised by the direct entry officers that the extended hierarchical structure in policing limited the scope for genuine exercise of power and influence to exclusively the highest chief officer ranks.
The concept of the ‘blue culture’ was discussed in some detail with a senior officer from a national policing body. Much of this discussion supported Reiner’s (2000) model of police culture. It considered aspects of culture including; suspicion, solidarity, machismo and prejudice. The passive resistance to change articulated by Crank (2004) and Loftus (2012) was also identified by this officer. Interestingly, she spoke positively of a change in behaviour displayed by a number of the direct entry officers. She noted that they looked ‘more like superintendents’ as their exposure to the organisation increased over time. She also identified that the Home Secretary stated that this was extremely disagreeable, because creating difference was the strategic aim. This highlighted a further tension. While enthused by the notion of the direct entry officers looking ‘more like superintendents’ this respondent also shared the view of the Home Secretary that difference was the primary aim and that this must be protected (Interview H1, 29th January 2016, see p.103).

This tension was further reinforced in the research findings. As described by one chief officer: “You have to conform enough to be credible and acceptable, but not so much that I might as well have promoted someone from within. I’m one of you, without stopping being like me” (Interview F1, 5th February 2016, see p.110). This contention introduces the concept of how influential (or not) a direct entry officer may prove to be. The argument presented suggests that an absence of credibility will adversely impact upon ability to influence the organisation. Becoming too similar to existing officers will mean that the different perspectives that are so keenly sought may be diluted irretrievably.

The earlier acknowledgement of ‘blue culture’ seeping into the direct entry officers supports this view, in tandem with the observations of the Home Secretary, who was quoted as stating she might have underestimated just how strong police culture was and also its ability to alter the behavior of direct entry officers. This view was further supported through the research. During the data collection interviews, it was noticed that there were significant changes in the participants over time. This included increased use of police jargon and cynicism over subject matter that remains inherently the domain of the “traditional police cynic”. The Home Secretary’s (now Prime Minister’s) aim to
introduce difference into the service and the frustration at the lack of influence experienced by a number of the superintendents provides useful evidence in understanding the tensions involved in achieving success for the direct entry scheme. The different worldview of the traditional police leader against the direct entry police leader is indeed at the heart of this debate. The model below (figure 5a and 5b) is presented to conceptualise this understanding and stimulate further debate on the merits of these two perspectives.

As this model evolved, it was tested extensively with each of the superintendents, to gauge its accuracy when considered in the context of their own organisational experience.

**Figure 5a:**
Smith’s traditional view of police leadership – Type A

In the Type A worldview, the police leader has detailed police knowledge, gained from years of experience in operational policing. This officer will have an abundance of tactical expertise and significant tacit knowledge (McAdam, Mason and McCrory, 2007). From a cultural perspective, the Type A leader will understand police culture well, know how to navigate existing cultural norms and as such will probably be influential within the service. These cultural traits
Chapter Seven

Discussion

will encourage the Type A leader to behave in a certain manner, in keeping with that of peers within the organisation. This type of leader is not devoid of external experiences to call upon when discharging policing duties, but will have limited exposure outside of the service.

This model does not propose that police-centric behaviours, culture, skills, values and experience will be entirely different to external characteristics. They will however be sufficiently nuanced as to be identifiable as ‘policing' rather than ‘external'. If this argument is applied to Reiner’s (2000) model of police culture, it could be argued that many of the characteristics identified including; suspicion, solidarity and machismo are not necessarily police specific. Taken together, within a policing context, they are nevertheless representative of that particular cultural group.

**Figure 5b:**
**Smith’s direct entry view of police leadership – Type B**

In contrast, the Type B (direct entry) leader has limited experience of ‘hands-on' policing and will not be able to draw upon the tacit knowledge like those who have experienced more traditional policing careers. These officers will however have a wealth of external experience and skills, gained from exposure to ‘other’
cultures and value sets that could be of use in their role as police leaders. This research does not provide sufficient evidence to make a value judgement against the Type A or the Type B leader. It is sufficient to say that there are demonstrable differences, which were frequently referenced during the interviews for this research. The view of one senior leader is useful in demonstrating this point:

“I was at a meeting in Lambeth recently with the Leadership Team. [One of the direct entry superintendents] was present. The long-term police officers in the room came at every conversation from one direction, [the direct entry officer] came from the other direction. It was so clear. Not preconditioned by the way things are normally done” (Interview M1, 29th February 2016, see p.100)

It is argued here that the challenge for the College of Policing and partner forces is to gauge how much of the ‘blue’ is required to make direct entry (at any level) a success. If there is too little the ability to influence and lead successfully will not be present. Too much ‘blue’ and the uniqueness of direct entrants is diluted to such an extent that any differentiation to promotion of existing officers from within the organisation is lost. It is recognised that this normative model of police leadership describe a simplistic view of the dynamics involved. However it is arguably of use to identify the two extremes of police leadership encountered through this research. This model is further explored and refined through the ‘blended leadership’ model proposed in the following chapter.

This argument may be concluded by considering the difference between the reality of police culture and perceptions of police culture among different police leaders. Using the model identified above, a Type A leader who was interviewed as part of this research argued that policing has an excellent ‘can do’ culture that the service should be proud of. The counter view from a Type B leader (one of the direct entry officers) is that policing thinks it has a ‘can do’ culture, but the reality suggests that might not be the case. While it is a complex challenge to decide which of these perspectives may be correct, the case made
here is that the difference in those perspectives arises from the different values, skills and experience of the exponents of each position.

In the course of conducting the initial interviews with the direct entry officers, it became apparent that they held the police service in high esteem. They had been engaged to deal with leadership challenges that the service now faces. Yet there was a clear admiration and respect for the work of frontline officers. Recognition of the need to defend frontline officers from unfair scrutiny was also a key area of concern. It was argued that, in some parts of the service, there was insufficient focus on defending operational officers from unwarranted criticism (Interview P2, 29th April 2015).

An assumption held by the superintendents was that there was a less than perfect relationship between police leaders and frontline officers. In later interviews, it was observed that some pockets of excellence had been observed. However there was an abundance of ‘intrusive supervision’ and ‘over supervision’ that limited the ability of constables, sergeants (and to some extent inspectors) from developing their own operational skills, confidence and competence (Focus Group, 27th January 2016, see p.128 / 134). The term ‘grip’ caused particular angst for one of the direct entry officers. This was defined as police jargon for an effective, hands-on approach to management. It was argued however that this represented interference in matters that were not the concern of senior officers.

Elsewhere, observations were made concerning apparent micro-cultures within individual teams. There was evidence from the research participants of a macho culture which placed significant reliance on humour and which supported the work of Cockroft (2013) and Waddington (1999). Some direct entry officers had expected to witness an abundance of sexist or racist language. This was not found to be the case. It was noted however that some of the behaviours displayed would have been more readily challenged in other, particularly public sector, environments (Interview P2, 29th April 2015, see p.129).
Considering Diversity

The concept of public service motivation (PSM) introduced by Delfgaauw & Dur (2010) was presented in the literature review as a key consideration when contemplating the ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors that can influence the ability of the police service to attract new talent by way of direct entry. The participants in the research displayed high levels of PSM and demonstrated a commitment to careers in the public service. This was the case even where remuneration and progression opportunities were not as competitive as in the private sector. The challenge for the police service is to identify how talented individuals, who do not display PSM, can be attracted into leadership roles in policing. Limiting the direct entry talent pool to only those who are of a positive PSM disposition will mean that a significant proportion of the workforce might not consider policing as being a viable career choice. Within the context of improving diversity in the service, the PSM dimension could prove to be a further limiting factor in the pursuit to increase representation from across all communities.

There was however clear evidence of diversity within the direct entry officer cohort. This was reflected in race and gender differences. One criticism often laid at the service is that leadership is, in the main, ‘pale, male and stale’ (O’Brien, 2014). Only four of the nine officers who commenced training in November 2014 were white males. A minority for this ethnic/gender mix is virtually unheard of in leadership groups in the police service, as evidenced by one chief officer. He noted that:

“I stood in front of the SCC (Strategic Command Course) last year, 23 years after Stephen Lawrence. [There were] 35 white men, 6 white women and 6 black men – all from the Caribbean. We are not bringing through the diversity that we talk about into our senior ranks. All the time that we keep the same recruitment and promotion processes in the organisation, we are just not going to get different” (Interview F1, 5th February 2016).

Yet at the first attempt, the direct entry superintendent scheme has made a contribution to delivering this much needed difference. However elements of the
selection process that were intended to reflect the diversity agenda were the subject of ridicule by some participants. It was noted by one particular officer that being asked what flavour sandwiches they were least likely to be served in a mosque was a poor attempt to get to the heart of understanding an applicant’s views on other faiths (Interview S1, 26th January 2015).

It is suggested here that a key outcome to the diversity perspective is how this can influence behaviors and values within the service. Simply being representative of a particular gender, ethnicity or sexual orientation is not enough to satisfy the requirement for increased diversity among police leadership. Leaders from diverse backgrounds must be agents for change and role models for those who they represent. Soon after being posted to her command unit, one direct entry officer formed a ‘development group’ for female officers under her command. This informal group came together to share experiences and support each other’s career development. Simple in its construction, this gesture was evidently well received. The informality of the group and the use of first name terms was also seen to be key to its success (Interview Q4, 16th January 2016 and Smith, 2016).

Performance management
A source of much frustration to the direct entry superintendents was the police services’ approach to management of performance. As an example of ‘intrusive supervision’ in action, this had been witnessed as one of the main failings in police leadership. The view of one direct entry officer was particularly strong in relation to this issue. “My biggest concern is that I have got chief supers and ACCs speaking to sergeants and constables about why something isn’t completed on a log. I mean why are they speaking to them and more importantly why are they looking at logs” (Focus Group, 27th January 2016, see p.133).

As identified earlier, another direct entry officer argued during the same focus group that the only way to respond to the peculiarities of the performance regime in the MPS was to “make sure the answers to all the questions were well
rehearsed in advance”. Another officer suggested that this meant he would have to make up the answers, because it was simply impossible to account for crime variations in all locations at particular times. It was clear from the responses recorded that performance management was seen as a distraction to the superintendents. It also has the potential to drive perverse behaviours which may deliver unintended consequences (Loveday, 2008 and Guilfoyle, 2013).

The bemusement of one of the direct entry officers was highlighted in recalling the application of a formal ‘command structure’ (gold, silver, bronze) to drive a policing operation aimed at increasing the number of people police officers in London engaged with over a set period of time (Interview Q2, 16th May 2015, see p.130). The fact that this was framed as an ‘operation’ was, in the eyes of this superintendent, entirely at odds with the spirit of what it meant to ‘engage’ with the community and undertake meaningful interactions. This might be viewed as a classic example of the Type A versus Type B approach to dealing with a policing objective. It is argued that the Type A response uses tried and tested police methods that are comfortable, binary, well understood and deliver outputs that can be easily quantified. The Type B police leader sees no value in recording the number of interactions and is more concerned with outcomes (rather than outputs). This type of leader wants to help improve skills and encourage meaningful interactions with the community.

The learning organisation
Performance management driving ‘perverse behaviours’ may be caused by a culture that is unwilling to let people learn, as much as it is the result of an ineffective performance management regime. The unwillingness of the police service to let officers learn in a ‘no-blame’ way was to be highlighted as one of the most significant challenges facing the police service (Interview M1, 29th February 2016, see p.101). It is apparent that police leaders are fearful of suggesting that they don’t know how to resolve a crime or anti-social behaviour challenge. As a result they will take steps to resolve symptoms rather than causes in the hope that scrutiny from NPCC officers will not be directed at them. The evidence from this study suggests that more junior officers feel equally
unable to use innovative tactics to resolve problems because they fear they will be criticised (or disciplined) if this leads to undesired outcomes.

An interesting contrast was provided at the focus group with the direct entry superintendents. One of the officers argued that his previous employer would encourage learning from adverse outcomes, rather than ostracising the individual or seeking to apportion blame. It is apparent that the superintendents are, as yet, unsure how they will navigate these complexities. They are aware of working in decision-making roles, where scrutiny is entirely justified. It is as yet unclear how they will be supported should a decision have negative consequences. It is however clear that these officers are already taking steps within their roles to encourage their officers to be confident in their decision-making and to offer support to them.

One superintendent described coaching a decision from a subordinate officer and encouraging him to think through available options. Interestingly, the direct entry officer ultimately ratified the decision taken by the officer and accepted accountability for it. He did not determine the decision without seeking the counsel of his team member first. Type B officers will, it is argued, frequently be in situations where knowledge of tactical options may be lacking. Therefore a willingness to deploy this approach will be needed to arrive at decisions needed to discharge their duties.

This concept of learning also extends to the risk appetite noted by one of the direct entry officers. He had reflected on the way in which risk aversion was suffocating decision making. This was particularly the case where more innovative approaches might be appropriate. This officer speculated that risk might be, in some instances, better defined as uncertainty and that uncertainty of outcome did not mean that, by default, an activity should be avoided. It is argued that this view was an example of a direct entry perspective (a Type B leadership view). This is because it was not overshadowed by a fear of failure that can be present in the minds of officers who have achieved the rank of superintendent through traditional means.
It is useful to consider this argument in the context of the views of one chief officer who argued that there is a naivety and lack of judgement displayed by those who had not benefitted from extended periods of exposure to frontline policing. Only over time, when a number of these risk based decisions are made by direct entrants (and the outcomes reflected upon) will it become clear if an appetite for uncertainty is justified and a cultural shift required, or whether a more cautious perspective remains reasonable.

New approaches to police leadership

The previous chapter presented evidence of a reflective approach to police leadership by the direct entry superintendents. Some commentary was provided in relation to their existing leadership style and how it might need to be adapted within a policing context. Strong views were expressed about the leadership approach exhibited by current officers. Those direct entrants who had experienced negativity from senior leaders during the selection process identified a similar negativity when working with these officers. Character traits included being cold, unwelcoming and aloof were to be described on a number of occasions. This was however by no means commonplace as examples of inspiring leadership were also to be recorded. Masculine characteristics displayed by female senior leaders were also noted. This was not seen as a critique of the female officers, but as a reflection of the necessity to conform to expected masculine behaviours in order to secure senior roles within the police service (Interview Q2, 16th May 2015, see p.130).

Similar arguments were presented in relation to departmental micro-cultures, which were gender specific. Response policing was identified as the more masculine domain. In the MPS it was observed that the masculine culture here was clearly aligned to the corporate approach of “Total Policing” and “Total War on Crime” (MPS, 2016). One direct entrant took particular exception to this and noted that neighbourhood policing offered a working environment that was less dominated by masculine behaviours and characteristics (Interview Q2, 16th May 2015, see p.130).
The research determined that direct entrants were not prepared to simply observe culture and behaviours that did not meet with their values. There was a very clear intention to take steps to resolve issues like this and critically address perceived cultural shortcomings. It was however also recorded that direct entry officers were aware that significant amounts of their time would be spent engaging in transactional management, rather than transformational leadership (see Antonakis, 2012, and Adair, 2004).

It was identified as a key priority for the direct entry officers to exhibit leadership behaviours that, as they described, would go on to improve organisational culture (Interview P4, 13th January 2016, see p.132). It was however widely acknowledged that this would be challenging within a context of expectations of micro-management, which characterise this role. The emotional intelligence and self-awareness displayed by the direct entry officers was notable (see Goleman, 1998 and 2000). Without exception, they recognised that their position as role models within the service was probably of greater importance than transactional oversight of policing activity. There was clear recognition of Brown’s (2012) argument for the necessity of leader-centric and also follower-centric leadership behaviours. They argued that their role was to enable and empower others to deal with transactional outputs. The intention to have positive and swift impacts on organisational culture was seen as significant. Yet it was also noted that their influence might be limited. As was to be argued by one officer: -

“Ultimately I just want to be the boss. It sounds arrogant, but I’m not at the right level. There isn’t any swearing any more. Culture is starting to change. This kind of work is consuming much of time, because it is cultural change. I keep trying to impress on people that the biggest job you have as a senior leader is to empower the people below you to do a good job” (Interview P4, 13th January 2016, see p.132).

This focus on transforming culture and enabling others to do so is arguably not seen as the core role of the superintending ranks. It might be useful to reflect on this by considering the skills and experiences of these officers. They could be better suited to other ranks in the hierarchy. As was argued earlier by a senior stakeholder from the College of Policing: -
“We have had a lengthy internal debate about whether we are setting the bar too high for the direct entry supers. Much of the testing was at PNAC level. But we were not seeking to recruit bog standard superintendents. We wanted to attract broader strategic thinkers, who could also get things done. We have probably ended up getting ACPO level candidates on to the scheme (Interview D1, 18th January 2016, see p.112).

The problem here is these officers are ultimately more capable than is necessary for the rank into which they have been recruited. In this context, the statement that ‘I just want to be the boss’ would appear to be entirely justified.

It may be considered that the challenges identified so far could limit the likelihood of the direct entry officers being able to introduce transformational change. It is worth however revisiting the work of Wright and Pandey (2009, p.11) who argue that bureaucratic, archaic practices need not stifle forward thinking and that truly transformational leaders will be able to succeed, even in circumstances that appear particularly difficult or challenging.

In the context of the recruitment benchmarks identified above and the frustrations experienced by a number of the direct entry officers over their perceived lack of influence, it is appropriate to revisit Berger and Berger’s (2004) model that provides a framework for talent management. Their six-stage process offers a clear summary of many of the issues and challenges raised here. These stages are outlined below: -

- problem identification (or determining the need for a TM policy)
- defining competencies
- recruitment
- diversity considerations
- training and development
- retention

The problem identification has been identified and steps (ii) to (v) are relatively transactional in their delivery however the most significant challenge for the
service might prove to be retaining this talent if cultural challenges prove to be too great.

This concludes the discussion of findings presented in chapter six. The final chapter offers a response to the research questions and consideration of lessons learned, along with reflections on limitations of the research. It also summarises primary conclusions, presents the concept of the ‘blended leadership model for policing’ and identifies further research opportunities in relation to direct entry.
Chapter Eight: Conclusions

The aim of this thesis has been to provide a critical evaluation of the experiences of the first cohort of direct entry superintendents. The study has reviewed the strategic context within which the direct entry scheme is placed and gathered primary data from key stakeholders and also direct entry officers themselves. Not since the Trenchard scheme of the 1930s has the service looked to bring in ‘talent’ at a level above that of constable. Lack of diverse perspectives within the chief officer ranks, cultural blockages, underrepresentation by BME communities and a desire to do things differently have all been articulated as reasons for embarking on this new journey. The direct entry officers themselves are uniquely placed to offer new and insightful commentary on the culture of the police service. These officers have also not engaged with any other academic research into their experiences. This thesis therefore provides original knowledge, to inform the debate. It can also act as a catalyst for further research in the field of workforce modernisation in policing.

Two research questions set the framework for this study. A response to these questions is provided here:

Research Question One: What are the leadership and cultural challenges that could be resolved through direct entry into the superintendent rank?

The data obtained to respond to this question was identified by way of a detailed survey of existing literature and interviews with a number of stakeholders who were prepared to participate. It was noted that the existence of ‘talent management’ in policing is not new and the strategic aim of the Home Office and senior officers has long been to facilitate the swift progression of the most able to more senior ranks in the service.

While fast-tracking has been (and remains) a key strand of the talent management pathway, the Home Secretary, the College of Policing and a number of influential senior police leaders hold a view that this does not in itself go far enough. They describe a police service that is not representative of the
communities it serves. They describe a police service that is insular and shackled by a lack of creativity and innovation. They describe a culture in the police service that is far from welcoming of new perspectives. They describe a police service, and particularly police leadership, that does not appear to have the confidence of all communities and is therefore hindered from working with them to resolve emerging criminal threats. They also describe a police service that is ignorant of these failings and as a result is not equipped to resolve these issues internally. The culture of the police service was seen as a result of its leadership and the perpetuation of that culture produces generations of leaders that look, think and speak in the same way as their predecessors. These are the leadership and cultural challenges that, it is argued, might be resolved through the introduction of direct entry.

Some of the interviewees argued that a cessation of this cyclical ‘leadership-culture-leadership-culture’ negative behaviour loop is only possible by bringing new ideas and innovation into the service at a level that has influence and which can be a catalyst for change (Interview M1, 29th February 2016, see p.100). It was argued by participants that the benefits described above may come with significant risks. These include a lack of operational credibility, inadequate experience of policing tactics and a lack of understanding of police culture. The strongest critics argued that these risks were so serious that they had the potential to damage the service and put public safety in jeopardy (Interview E1, 24th March 2016, see p.106).

This study has gathered primary evidence from an 18-month window, as the direct entry officers completed their classroom training, their operational familiarisation and their preliminary months as operational superintendents. There is not yet sufficient evidence available to determine if the leadership and cultural challenges described above are likely to be resolved through direct entry. It is also not yet clear if risks associated with a lack of operational expertise will present problems for either the direct entry superintendents or the service. This is outside the scope of the present study. It does offer significant opportunities however for further research.
Research Question Two: What are the experiences of the direct entrants of police culture and how well are they placed to bring about cultural change?

The direct entry superintendents were found to be engaging, motivated and credible professionals. They also bring to their new roles a wealth of experience. This includes experience of delivering tangible outcomes for their previous employers and also experience of leading people. They appear to be committed to public service and are aware of the significant responsibilities that they are accepting.

The first 18 months of their service has been challenging. As the first cohort of direct entry officers, the College of Policing’s training course was in no way established. The demands placed on them, particularly during their induction period, did not always appear to be supportive of identified learning outcomes. The superintendents were to experience significant pockets of resistance to the direct entry scheme. This was evidenced during the recruitment process, through face-to-face interactions with senior officers during training and latterly also in the workplace. Opposition to this new pathway into the service has also been particularly evident on social media platforms (Police Oracle, 2014).

The officers found their constable, sergeant and inspector training rotations to be valuable and evaluated them to situate their learning in an operational context. It was found that these officers were sometimes impressed, particularly in frontline operational roles, by the teamwork, positive attitude and caring nature of their colleagues. There was also extensive evidence of a police service that frequently displayed mediocrity in service delivery and was not in fact striving for excellence at all times.

In terms of direct reflections on police culture, the superintendents proved to be unimpressed with a significant proportion of leadership behaviours that were exhibited. They identified a culture of micro-management, a failure to delegate, a lack of trust and insufficient innovative thought as negative features of the culture. It was apparent to them that aspiring leaders in the police service were
expected to behave in a certain (often macho) way in order to progress. It was found that, even when senior leaders expressed support toward direct entry publicly; the behaviours displayed did not always reflect this.

The impact of police culture upon the superintendents, at an early stage of their careers, meant that they had a decision to make. Do they challenge behavioural norms and seek to improve police culture or do they accept the current culture and adapt their own behaviours in order to progress to reach higher and more influential ranks in the service? A third option also exists: which is to leave the service. For one of the direct entry officers, this was a distinct possibility during the early part of the training course. This was entirely due to the direct experiences of police culture that had been experienced at that time.

**Developing professional knowledge**

As a researching professional, working in the police service, this thesis aimed to provide some insights and analysis of the direct entry superintendent scheme. It was also expected that this would provide a unique insight into police organisational culture. By interviewing the direct entry officers at the initial stages of their training and following their progress over the 18-months that followed, it would be possible to develop a detailed appreciation of how they were able to navigate the complexities of their respective organisations and develop their careers. For the police service, this learning is wide-ranging. Despite the lack of a suitable reference point for developing a training course for direct entry officers, the College of Policing have demonstrated that it is possible to take a member of the public and give them the skills and experiences to operate as a competent police superintendent in just 18-months.

Those who have supported the direct entry superintendents to develop their operational street craft have shown professionalism and integrity in helping their colleagues reach the standard required. But many are keeping their positions under review, awaiting further evidence as the direct entry officers progress through the early years of their careers. This is a justifiable position and needs
to be respected. However, those officers, many of them in very senior positions, who have been unhelpful, less than supportive and discourteous toward direct entrants have brought the police service into disrepute. They have also displayed the very worst cultural behaviours that direct entry officers have been recruited to resolve. These officers cannot represent the future of the service and need to reflect at length on their own professionalism.

**Limitations of the research**

Defined in large part by the timescale involved, there are subsequently limitations to this research. This is particularly so in relation to the timing of the interviews, early in the careers of the direct entry officers. It is recognised that replication of the study, after training had concluded and they were more settled in their roles, may have elicited different results. The methodology permitted an appraisal of the personal experiences of the direct entry officers. The actors at the heart of the direct entry scheme have provided rich data for analysis. However his research did not observe the superintendents in the workplace, nor did it consider the criminal justice outcomes for which they were responsible. Neither did the research capture the views of a wider spectrum of stakeholders.

Extending the interview participants to include for example sergeants and inspectors who worked with the superintendents during their training rotations would have added further value to the results. However, this would have been at the expense of the detailed appreciation of the direct entry officers’ own experience. This depth of understanding was only achievable by undertaking interviews with each of them on multiple occasions.

These limitations do not question or devalue this research. They are noted here as recognition of the focus that this research did take. The interviewer/interviewee relationship developed with the superintendents over the course of this research was very positive and that trust led to the articulation of deep experiential perspectives. This may not have been forthcoming had the interviews been fewer in number of more superficial in their construction (see also King, 1994; Gilbert, 2001).
Opportunities for further research

As an approach to the development of police leadership that is still in its infancy, the direct entry scheme presents many opportunities for further research. Replication of this study with the second and third cohorts of direct entry superintendents could provide further insightful data. Anecdotally the age and experience demographics of these subsequent intakes are known to be different. Understanding how this may lead to differing perspectives could be of real value. Further replication of a ‘culture centric’ study with the direct entry inspectors who are soon to commence their training will also be of use. Taken as a whole, a replication of this research could build a picture of how police culture is evolving over time and responding to the concept of direct entry.

Beyond the cultural focus that this study has directed on to the direct entry scheme, there are wider outcomes that need further consideration. Thus a number of conflicting responses were elicited during the research. One of the most striking came from a comparison between the views of a chief officer from the MPS and a chief constable from a county force. It was argued by the former that some of policing’s most damaging problems have been caused by very experienced officers. They were expected to have excellent judgement, yet they still failed the service and the public. The chief constable from the county force articulated a view that a lack of experience and poor judgement by officers who had been swiftly promoted, with little experience, was a reason for many of the most high profile failings of the service. It was his view that experienced officers were less likely to preside over such outcomes. These differing perspectives demand that a test of the operational capability of the direct entry officers is needed over time. This would include monitoring their decision making by way of outcomes. This would allow for clearer judgements to be made as to their competence.

Direct entry is just one strand of the wider ‘workforce futures’ change programme that is being delivered in partnership by the College of Policing. Establishing a reservist capability that can be called upon at times of heightened demand, exploring opportunities for direct entry detectives and
establishing a pathway for secondments into the private sector are just some of the varied projects that will be realised over the next few years. Each of these work streams will provide opportunities for academic research and scrutiny, particularly within the context of offering perspectives on both police culture and leadership.

Concluding comments
The ‘blue culture’ of policing has, perhaps unsurprisingly, been identified as a force of resistance that direct entry officers have to manage. To this must be added the parent / child relationship between senior officers and their subordinates, the failure to delegate, the lack of trust and a performance culture that drives perverse behaviour. All have been identified by the superintendents as symptoms of a culture which they are intending to change. To this end these officers will need to immerse themselves in police culture sufficiently to influence the service, but not so much as to in any way dilute the perspectives for which they have been recruited.

The ambition for change in some parts of the service is significant. Yet it is concluded that significant numbers of existing police leaders do not have the capability to deliver this change. Neither do they recognise the limitations of that capability.

This thesis has presented models of police leadership: First the ‘Type A; traditional view of police leadership’. Here there is an abundance of police specific behaviour, culture, skills, values, and experience inherent in the individuals psyche and very little external experience. Second the ‘Type B; direct entry view of police leadership’ describes an individual who is reliant upon a non-police specific skill set which includes emotional intelligence, self-awareness and leadership behaviours developed externally. These officers possess very little operational expertise. It is argued that this does not in any way limit their capability and capacity to be effective within the police service in a leadership role.
The challenge for the College of Policing and others is to now identify the balance between the ‘internal’ and ‘external’ experiences, which are required to establish excellence in police leadership. As an extension of the Type A / Type B modelling identified earlier, below is a ‘blended leadership model’ that further considers the complexities of leadership profiling that have been encountered during this research.

**Figure 6: Smith's Blended Leadership Model for Policing**

The ‘policing experience’ (blue) and ‘non-policing experience’ (purple) from the Type A / B model endure, but are supplemented with additional perspectives that were identified during this study. Testimony from the direct entry officers, the College of Policing and a number of senior stakeholders placed great value on progressing educational attainment to the tertiary level. This was described as an opportunity to further develop policing knowledge but also further develop a wider suite of management and executive skills and behaviours.

Within the context of leadership development and talent management considered earlier in this thesis, the three discrete yet complementary areas of emotional intelligence, reflective practice and self-awareness are presented as the binding behaviours of this model. It is argued that they enable the knowledge and experience gained through education and work experience (inside and outside of policing) to be combined to form effective leadership.
behaviour. Through the testimony of the direct entry officers interviewed as part of this research and the observed behaviours that they displayed, there is sound evidence of the 'blended leadership model' being a reliable construct to define the leadership style of this new generation of police leader. Crucially the model is cyclical rather than linear in nature, to reflect the enduring requirement of the identified components. With no start or end point, the model demonstrates that effective use of the 'blended leadership model' requires continual review and development of all six parts, to maximise leadership performance.

Defining success for the direct entry superintendent scheme will continue to remain a challenge. The College of Policing is to report on direct entry to the Home Office in 2019 (Winsor, 2012; recommendation 22). The findings of this thesis will contribute to that review. If success is described in terms of diversity, community representation or attrition rates, that could be of use. But it will only tell half the story. There is also a need to develop a clearer understanding of the impact that these officers are having on the police service. This might be in terms of external impact, and would relate to criminal justice outcomes. It might alternatively be in terms of internal impact, for example in terms of cultural change. Both will be difficult to measure with accuracy. Yet the development of a method to attempt to do so will be essential in guaranteeing the long-term success of the scheme.

The thesis opened with a personal perspective of the researcher that considered how difficult it was eleven years ago to penetrate the culture of the police service as an ambitious but relatively inexperienced 25-year-old recruit. The direct entry superintendents are experiencing similar problems in navigating a challenging culture. They are also engaged in some of the most high profile and challenging roles in the police service. They are in addition under intense scrutiny. Support from some elements of the service is clearly evident. Yet others remain hopeful that they will fail. They remain an impressive group of professional people who consistently display self-awareness and emotional intelligence at a level not ordinarily exhibited by many of their peers.
There is much evidence that they will succeed but it will take both courage and fortitude to see this through. I for one wish them every success.
References


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Appendix A

Research Participant Consent Form
Direct Entry Superintendents: Participant Consent Form

• I have read and understood the Information Sheet – version 2 (November 2014).

• I understand that I can terminate any interview, at any time and withdraw from the research, at any time.

• I understand that my name will not be included in any report that is created (and published) as a product of this research.

• I agree to the audio recording of the interviews.

• I agree to the safe retention of the raw data until the conclusion of this research and to the retention of anonymised transcripts after that time.

• I agree to the use of verbatim quotes within any written report and understand they will not be attributed to me by name.

• I agree to participate in this research.

Participant Signature          Date

Researcher Signature          Date

Contact Details:
Richard Smith          Barry Loveday (academic supervisor)
UP639927@myport.ac.uk          Barry.Loveday@port.ac.uk
Appendix B

Sample Interview Schedules
Interview 1

History, Application, Induction and Expectations

The 10 individuals who have put themselves forward to be the first cohort of direct entry superintendents will be subject to significant scrutiny, from the officers they lead, their wider peer group in the organisation and interested observers across the criminal justice sector.

Gaining a detailed insight into the pathway that has led these individuals into this challenging and demanding role will be informative; to guide future recruitment projects and to build an evidence base for deepening understanding of what makes the police service an employer of choice for career changers with significant experience of leading diverse teams in alternative disciplines.

Reflections on application and induction will inform future delivery by the College. Identification of any weaknesses may lead to recognition of opportunities for improvement that could guide future FT / DE processes.

Identification of expectations at this early stage will provide a useful benchmark for subsequent interviews.

History

- Previous career
- Academic attainment
- Previous experiences of leadership
- Long held ambition?
- Family and friends.
- Previous employer reaction.
- Previous relationships with police / police service.
- Identification of FTDE scheme opportunities?
- Perceptions of the police service as: i) an employer? ii) an institution?
- Reflections on public confidence issues and recent scrutiny issues.

Application Process

- Fair and appropriate?
- Challenging?
- Terms and conditions
• Supported
• Length of time taken
• Well informed along the way

Induction
• Reflections on peers in the cohort – support network, similarities and differences
• What do you need to know?
• Anything missing?
• Transition from ‘civilian’ to ‘police’
• Perceptions of structure of the training course
• Any early reflections on culture

Expectations
• The next 18 months – perceptions and expectations
• Focus: policing or leadership?
• Credibility
• Reflections on commentary in policing – supportive and not so supportive
• Critical incident management
• Bringing skills and experience, what gets left at the door?
• 3 to 5 year plan
• On to ACPO?
• Take the experience and leave?
Interview Schedule
(Interview 2)

• Summary of Induction

• Expectations upon leaving Bramshill vs Expectations when arriving at Bramshill

• Conclusions on Culture / Values and Leadership in Policing at point of finishing Bramshill

• PC Rotation - Expectations and Fears

• Preparedness for the role

• Tutor Constable

• Perspectives on the Sergeant Role

• Perspectives on the Inspector Role

• Perspectives on SLT roles

• Involvement with your SLT at this stage

• Reflections on Culture and Leadership - and your ability to impact on that.

• Enough Experience in the PC rank?

• Themes from interview 1 -
  judge me on my character
  3 to 5 year plan - has that changed
  Scope for using your skills (strategic perspective) at this early stage?
DE Supers - Interview Schedule  
(Interview 3)

1. Initial reflections on Supt rotation:  
   - the role you've been given  
   - are you shadowing, or in reality are you just getting on with the job?  
   - the support being provided  
   - exposure to operational decision making

2. How much do you feel like a cop - or do you feel like a public sector manager

3. Do you have the influence that you hoped you would?

4. Is your voice being heard within the SLT

5. Reflections on your LM and your area Commander. Aspirations to do their role? When?

6. What development do you now need to allow you to process vertically?

7. Any aspirations for lateral development? What development do you need to achieve this?

8. How well prepared do you now feel for this role? Was your training good enough?

9. Reflections on how you are managing to permeate the hierarchy? Are you able to have relationships with the PCs? Does this matter?

10. Difference: are you able to be different? Do you find your self conforming to normalised police behaviours.

11. What are the KPIs that you will be measured against?

12. Is your view of organisational culture evolving now that you are embedding into the SLT?

13. Thoughts on performance culture. Is it driving positive or negative behaviours?
FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION TOPICS
27 January 2016
College of Policing, Bramshill

• The superintendent rank lacks influence and does not allow holders of the rank to genuinely influence organisational culture and bring about cultural change.

• Most police leaders are poorly trained and fail to grasp what is required to effectively lead their teams.

• Policing has a 'can do' culture to be proud of.

• Pathways into the police service: direct entry at all ranks is the only way to genuinely evolve organisational culture.

• Direct entry superintendents should be fast tracked to chief superintendent and supported for PNAC as soon as possible after conclusion of their initial 18 months of training.

• As a DE superintendent, time is spent resolving transactional tasks that could and should be dealt with by more junior managers.

• Partnership working is safer in the hands of direct entry superintendents.

• Direct entry superintendents are an operational liability.
Ethical Narrative

The process of securing a favorable ethical opinion is concerned with establishing a “safety net” for participants, the researcher, and the university during the research process. Furthermore, the ‘destination’ for the research (publication) will not be at odds with the values of the researcher or the researched if the process of ethical review is carried out effectively.

I have recent experience of the value of effective ethical review. Having undergone a similar process for my MSc research in June 2013, I was able to lean heavily on my favorable ethical opinion during the publication of that research in January 2014. Detailed written evidence of the host organisation’s agreement to the research, the regular updates that were provided to them during the research phase and subsequent agreement to the publication of the (anonymised) research was invaluable when the media seized upon the results and began asking intrusive questions.

Being able to lean on the university for support and guidance was absolutely appropriate, due to the favorable ethical opinion that had been secured 6 months previously. With this experience in mind, the ethical review process for this research has taken on a heightened importance that I would not have understood previously.

As with my previous research, the host organisation will be my employer (the Metropolitan Police Service) and also, more widely, other police force in the UK – accessed by the national body the ‘College of Policing’ (formerly the National Policing Improvement Agency) who are the custodians of the Direct Entry Superintendent scheme.

This Ethical Narrative draws on the information that has been drawn out of all other documents in this ethics bundle (documents E1 to E11) and particularly the sign-posting provided by the self-assessment form (E1). The starting point for this narrative is that the ethical issues identified are very much manageable and that receiving a favourable ethical opinion should be achievable. The issues for consideration are identified and discussed (mitigated) below:

- **Privileged access**: it is recognised that I have privileged access to the Police Service in the UK, particularly the Metropolitan Police Service, but also to the national body (the College of Policing) due to membership of their ‘talent management’ pool (the High Potential Development Scheme). This privileged position particularly relates to i) knowledge of who is the project manager for Direct Entry within the MPS, ii) knowledge of who are members of the project team at the College of Policing, iii) use of the host organisation’s email system. I have taken all possible steps to reduce/remove this concept of privilege – as follows:
  i) Initial approach to the MPS was made to the MPS Project Manager after his name was made public on the ‘Police Oracle’ website. I identified myself as a
researcher (rather than an employee) and requested a meeting, in the same way that any other member of the public could have done (see document E4).

ii) A similar process was adopted in my approach to the College of Policing’s project team.

iv) Permission was sought (and given) to use the MPS email system to contact the potential participant population and keep in touch with the project team (see document E4).

• Face to face contact with members of the community – the methodology involves contact in this way. All of whom will be informed volunteers, in possession of a detailed participant information sheet (see document E6).

• Access to personal data – the views expressed by the participants could be considered “personal data”. The access to it has been authorised (document E4) and assurances over confidentiality have been made (document E6).

• Role conflict – at the time of writing, there is no direct professional relationship with any of the potential participants Nationally, there will be approximately 20 members of cohort 1 of the Direct Entry scheme – up to 10 of whom will be recruited by the Metropolitan Police Service. The MPS is an organisation of 50,000 staff. The scale dilutes the likelihood off any professional contact – but does not preclude it. Should a professional relationship become involved (e.g. due to being posted elsewhere in the organisation) then the participant could be removed from the research.

• Reputational challenge to the host organisation – where conclusions from the research offer negative commentary on the organisation, there is the potential for reputational damage to the police force concerned (whether it be own or another force). The offer of anonymity prior to publication will mitigate this risk.

• Sensitivity of research topic – the topic is not deemed to be sensitive, per se.

• Data protection and storage – assurances are given in the participant information sheet (document E6) that the data will be stored on a password encrypted computer and that all written reports will anonymise the participants.

• Risks posed by research - to participants and researcher – no additional risks have been identified beyond those proposed (and mitigated) above.

• Ownership of research data - shown in document E4 (authority emails) that data is owned by the University of Portsmouth. The host organisation(s) may request copies of the final written report and reserves the right to anonymise any such reports prior to publication.

Conclusion

The ethical considerations for this research are discussed in detail above. The key considerations are those of privileged access and the informed consent of those taking part. The practitioner/researcher will inevitably have privileged access to their own organisation. This does not preclude study in such circumstances, indeed it is to be encouraged – provided this privilege is recognised, articulated and the appropriate authorities are sought. Protection of the participants is provided by virtue of the detailed information sheet and consent form (documents E6 and E9).
Mr. Richard Smith  
Professional Doctorate Student  
Institute of Criminal Justice Studies  
University of Portsmouth

**REC reference number: 13/14:34**  
Please quote this number on all correspondence.

22nd October 2014

Dear Richard,

**Full Title of Study:** Doing things differently – direct entry into British Policing – reflections on 18 months as a trainee Superintendent

**Documents reviewed:**
Consent Form  
Emails  
Ethics self-assessment  
Invitation Letter  
Participant Information Sheet  
Protocol

Further to our recent correspondence, this proposal was reviewed by The Research Ethics Committee of The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

I am pleased to tell you that the proposal was awarded a favourable ethical opinion by the committee.

Kind regards,

FHSS FREC Chair  
**Dr Jane Winstone**

Members participating in the review:

- Sukh Hamilton  
- Richard Hitchcock  
- Wendy Sims-Schouten
Appendix D

Form UPR16 – Research Ethics Review Checklist
FORM UPR16
Research Ethics Review Checklist

Please include this completed form as an appendix to your thesis (see the Postgraduate Research Student Handbook for more information).

**Postgraduate Research Student (PGRS) Information**

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<th>Richard Smith</th>
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<td>CJS</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Supervisor:</td>
<td>Barry Loveday</td>
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<td>Start Date: (or progression date for Prof Doc students)</td>
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| Title of Thesis: | New insights on police culture: A critical evaluation of direct entry into senior leadership roles in the police service. |
| Thesis Word Count: (excluding ancillary data) | 48,773 |

If you are unsure about any of the following, please contact the local representative on your Faculty Ethics Committee for advice. Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the University’s Ethics Policy and any relevant University, academic or professional guidelines in the conduct of your study.

Although the Ethics Committee may have given your study a favourable opinion, the final responsibility for the ethical conduct of this work lies with the researcher(s).

**UKRIO Finished Research Checklist:**

(If you would like to know more about the checklist, please see your Faculty or Departmental Ethics Committee rep or see the online version of the full checklist at: [http://www.ukr.io/what-we-do/cope-of-practice-for-research](http://www.ukr.io/what-we-do/cope-of-practice-for-research))

| a) Have all of your research and findings been reported accurately, honestly and within a reasonable time frame? | YES □ | NO □ |
| b) Have all contributions to knowledge been acknowledged? | YES □ | NO □ |
| c) Have you complied with all agreements relating to intellectual property, publication and authorship? | YES □ | NO □ |
| d) Has your research data been retained in a secure and accessible form and will it remain so for the required duration? | YES □ | NO □ |
| e) Does your research comply with all legal, ethical, and contractual requirements? | YES □ | NO □ |

**Candidate Statement:**

I have considered the ethical dimensions of the above named research project, and have successfully obtained the necessary ethical approval(s).

**Ethical review number(s) from Faculty Ethics Committee (or from NRES/SCREC):** 13/14:34

If you have not submitted your work for ethical review, and/or you have answered ‘No’ to one or more of questions a) to e), please explain below why this is so:

---

**Signed:** Richard J Smith  
**Dated:** 23rd September 2016
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