Civilianisation of Police in Scotland

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the past decade UK legislation has increasingly allowed for the civilianisation of 'police roles', whereby officers can be released from non-operational technical or administrative tasks which do not require their expertise. Although there have been moves towards civilianisation in Scotland since the late 1980's and early 1990's, recent interest has been largely due to a commitment by the Scottish Government to recruit 1000 extra police officers and an inquiry by the Scottish Parliament Justice Committee into police resources. The aim of this research brief is to produce a report on police civilianisation in Scotland for UNISON Scotland and update the information currently available on this issue for their Police Committee. The issues covered include: a description of the ***extent*** of civilianisation in Scotland; the ***benefits*** that this process has brought to Scottish policing; ***scope*** for further civilianisation; and an analysis of the ***options*** regarding further support including Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and Community Wardens.

The main points arising from the research are:

- In terms of WTE, police staff comprise 28% of all police personnel in Scotland. The overall numbers of WTE/FTE staff, however, have declined over the period March 2007-June 2008. In contrast with police officers, most staff are females;

- There is appreciable variation across police forces in Scotland in terms of the proportions of staff they employ and their gender balance. Despite being the largest police force, Strathclyde Police has the lowest proportion of WTE staff in Scotland;

- Staff roles are multifunctional and diverse. They mainly operate in corporate and administrative support roles in functions such as intelligence, information technology and human resources. There are also increasing numbers of staff taking on operational roles in areas such as custody and detention, investigation and surveillance. Examples of new and emerging staff roles can be seen in areas such as crime prevention, custody and detention, intelligence and scenes of crime officers;

- The roles of staff are largely determined by individual police forces. This has led to a 'patchwork' or variable use of police staff across forces where they have been used to suit local policing needs. In Scotland, staff largely occupy corporate (27%) and administrative and support (61%) roles. Just over a tenth of staff are in operational roles (12%), though this is higher in some forces;

- In terms of FTE, the analysis of job category data shows that despite staff being over a quarter of the police workforce, less than 1% of staff occupy senior management roles and only 3% occupy middle and junior roles. Staff in the most senior management positions are concentrated in a variety of business, corporate and administrative positions but there is a noticeable deployment 'gap' in very specialist areas such as finance, human resources and IT (only listed in four of eight forces). The evidence is consistent with previous research on the generally lower status of staff in police forces and their comparative lack of access to vertical and horizontal career development pathways compared to officers; and

- There were a number of interesting areas of staff deployment that police forces may be expected to look at in terms of 'deepening' civilianisation within forces. In emerging administrative and support roles, these concern dispatcher posts, contact/ service centre posts and station assistant positions. In operational roles, these concern financial investigators, process servers, scenes of crimes officers, vehicle examiners, wildlife crime officers and to a lesser extent, staff in custody and detention roles;

- Police forces in Scotland have always employed staff as an essential support to their operations and they are not a cheap option or substitute for police officers. There are many police functions where properly qualified civilian personnel are simply the most effective way to deliver the full range of routine, complex and specialized functions that are central to modern-day police forces;

- While the desire for greater civilianisation primarily arose in an attempt to generate cost savings and develop more specialist functions in areas such as forensics, recent workforce modernisation (WFM) studies in England & Wales demonstrate that further civilianisation allied to a reconfiguration of police personnel is associated with a wide range of performance, economic, stakeholder and community benefits for police forces. These studies also clearly demonstrate the effective use of staff in operational roles;

- In the WFM studies, using staff alongside officers allows: performance improvements in terms of the freeing up of police officer time, the establishment of new police functions and the quality of service; savings in costs and greater efficiencies of service; personnel benefits in terms of the increased morale and commitment of staff, recruitment and levels of diversity in the police service; and public benefits in terms of the provision of more dedicated services, the greater visibility of 'beat' personnel and local intelligence gathering;

- There are however, a number of cultural, legal and cost barriers to the increased civilianisation of police forces in Scotland: the cultural and operational resistance of officers; contractual issues affecting staff deployment; restrictive duties for police officers; and the set-up costs of initiating changes in staff-officer deployment;

- There may be some appreciable scope for further civilianisation in terms of both existing roles occupied by police officers and in new policing roles. Examples of the former may relate to core organisational functions (e.g. in leadership and management positions) and in administrative and support areas (e.g. dispatcher posts, scenes of crimes officers). Examples of the latter were in neighbourhood policing and the deployment of staff with powers and organisational capacities equivalent to PCSOs in England & Wales;

- Only three (out of eight) police forces reported that they had conducted formal research into the civilianisation of posts in the past five years. Of those who had done so, in one force civilianisation had largely involved the replacement of constables with staff, with little replacement involving senior police officer personnel. While community warden schemes operate across most local authority areas in Scotland and have little or no meaningful enforcement powers, there is

no current provision for expanding municipal policing through the deployment of PCSOs. Yet there are few reasons to think that the benefits that have been gained from the use of PCSOs in England & Wales could not also be realised in Scotland;

- PCSOs have a number of strategic and operational advantages that make their introduction in Scotland an attractive option for consideration. Compared to using officers, PCSOs are a more cost-effective approach to neighbourhood policing and provide greater geographical coverage across. They have also been shown to be a proven success in tackling high volume and low level neighbourhood crimes. Compared to wardens, they offer a number of key legal and organisational advantages in terms of their roles and powers, management, supervision and accountability, and their funding arrangements;

- Compared to wardens, PCSOs have greater role versatility combined with 'visible' enforcement powers. This potentially means greater public reassurance in neighbourhood policing. They have been shown to enhance the internal organisational capacity of police forces, who have used PCSOs in a variety of ways outside of frontline neighbourhood roles;

- Compared to wardens, PCSOs are employed by police forces. This has a number of important legal and contractual advantages in terms of their management and accountability, covering issues such as training, pay and complaints. In England & Wales, they have become part of the prevailing cultures and practices of the 'police family' and they are firmly placed within the justice system;

- Compared to wardens in Scotland, the funding arrangements of PCSOs mean that they are not as exposed to the ever competing and tightening pressures of local authority funding. In Scotland, while funding for wardens is not 'ring fenced', PCSO funding is protected. This has important implications for the longer-term sustainability of neighbourhood policing and is an undoubted strength of the approach involving PCSOs; and

- The strengths of adopting PCSOs in Scotland outweigh the criticisms of the role that have arisen in England & Wales. The approach is proven, effective, reinforced by sustainable funding arrangements and would plug an important gap in neighbourhood policing in Scotland. For these reasons we would recommend that PCSOs (or equivalent) be considered and adopted in Scotland.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background: A Changing Policing Landscape

Over the past decade UK legislation has increasingly allowed for the civilianisation of 'police roles', whereby officers can be released from non-operational technical or administrative tasks which do not require their expertise. There have been a variety of reasons for these workforce reforms in UK policing:

- **Controlling rising expenditure**. Although spending over the past decade has provided record numbers of officers and staff to tackle crime and reassure the public through 'high visibility' policing, financial pressures now mean there that for the next decade there will be far more of an emphasis on achieving efficiency in public sector bodies[1];

- **The increased scrutiny of police performance and productivity.** However, despite increased investment a recent review of workplace reform argues that police productivity is flat, suggesting there is significant scope to improve existing workforce job designs and management practices (Gash 2008)[2];

- **A recognition of particular skill shortages within policing**. For example, specialist support function administrators in finance, human resources and IT have been brought into both senior and junior roles; and

- **A changing crime environment.** This has presented new challenges to conventional police methods and has required new techniques and approaches. For example, IT in forensics and in crime intelligence methods.

All of these factors have put more emphasis on the recruitment and roles of 'civilian personnel' (or staff[3]). This has arisen in the context of a desire for a wider reconfiguration of police resources and personnel (i.e. workforce mix[4]) and has led to a number of developments involving staff:

- **Low-skilled patrol and administrative functions**, neither of which required the full powers or training of warranted officers, can be staffed more cheaply with civilian personnel;

- **Specialist support function** administrators in finance, human resources and IT are now deployed in both senior and junior roles to improve performance;

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[1] In Scotland this is reflected in the strategic intent of the Scottish Government's *'Transforming Public Services'* and the *'Efficient Government'* initiatives. This has also to account for an increase in demands which forces face including a rise in public calls for police services and assistance, and new legislation which brings additional duties and requires that additional resources are committed to these within existing budgetary constraints. There is a perception among many police bodies that current funding levels are inadequate to meet demands on the service (Scottish Parliamentary Justice Committee Report 2008).

[2] For example, by ensuring the 'right' people are in the 'right' roles and reducing segregated HR practices.

[3] Throughout this report we use the term police staff to refer to non-officer civilian police force personnel.

[4] This refers very generally to the process of reconfiguring police personnel (officers and staff) in an attempt to optimise their efficiency.

- An increased emphasis on **neighbourhood policing and tacking anti-social behaviour**. In England & Wales, Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs[5]) have been given almost total responsibility for delivering on the *'reassurance'* agenda; and

- Increased willingness to embrace **'plural' neighbourhood policing policies** by designating new enforcement powers to local authority and other public service personnel. In Scotland, Community Wardens have powers to issue 'on-the-spot' fines for specific offences, while environmental officers could issue similar penalties for offences such as littering and fly tipping.

In any discussion of police staff, it is critical emphasize that police forces in Scotland have always employed staff as an essential support to their operations. They are not a cheap option or substitute for police officers. Commentators have consistently highlighted that there are many police functions where properly qualified civilian personnel are simply the most effective way to deliver the full range of routine, complex and specialized functions that are central to modern-day police forces. Core organizational and management functions in areas such as administration, infrastructure and business services, human resource management and personnel, communications and marketing, quality control and regulation, procurement and training are wholly unsuited to generic police officer training. Similarly, police forces could not operate without the highly specialist skills of civilian staff in areas such as information technology (supports and applications) and forensics where civilian input holds unique and unquestionable advantages for effective, reliable and professional police operations.

Like elsewhere in the UK, the critical issue police forces in Scotland have increasingly been asked to address over the past two decades is whether a specific role actually needs the police officer's power of arrest, and if not, whether police staff can plug the gap (e.g. in areas such as custody and detention, resources, report checking, reports to the procurator fiscal, investigative management) and free up the deployment of more officers to operational duties where their powers are actually required[6]. Although more of a feature of debates on policing in England & Wales, in recent years, police civilianisation has also risen up the political agenda in Scotland. There were moves towards civilianisation in Scotland in the late 1980's and early 1990's (Donnelly and Scott 2005), but recent interest has been largely due to a commitment by the Scottish Government to recruit 1000 extra police officers and an inquiry by the Scottish Parliament Justice Committee into police resources.

In England & Wales however, despite the clear rationale for change initiated by the Police Reform Act (2002), changes to the workforce mix initially met with widespread opposition from police bodies. As early as 2004, reports have identified entrenched organisational resistance to increased numbers of non-warranted staff for certain functions, especially neighbourhood policing (e.g. HM Inspectorate of Constabulary 2004)[7]. The Police Federation and the Association of Police Chief Constables (ACPO)

[5] In Scotland PCSO may also be used to refer to Police Custody & Security Officers. Throughout this report we use PCSO solely to refer to Police Community Support Officers.

[6] Only 7.5% of officers were estimated to be available for front-line duty in any one 24-hour period with new legislation, processes and procedures all reducing deployment (Scottish Parliamentary Justice Committee Report 2008)

[7] This is consistent with the wider cultural resistance to staff highlighted in a recent independent survey of staff working in Scotland's eight police forces. This found that although working flexibly to accommodate change and

opposed many changes because of the perceived encroachment on the role of the warranted officers. Reform was only secured when the Government protected police officer funding and provided additional 'ring-fenced' funding for PCSOs.

As part of their response to these developments, UNISON's Scottish Police Committee considered a paper at its last meeting that highlighted what a range of police organisations and the government are saying on this issue and the implications for police staff. It was recognised that UNISON needs to be more pro-active in this debate. The current policy position recognises that there is scope for further incremental civilianisation primarily through a more consistent application of civilianisation across all police forces in Scotland. At present civilianisation is variable and the numbers of staff may come under pressure in the opposite direction from the *Efficient Government Initiative* and in particular shared services. Whilst the debate is on further civilianisation we should not forget that there will also be an interest in how administrative costs can be saved by employing fewer civilians through the shared service initiative and best value studies. However, the next large increase in civilianisation in Scotland requires a decision on how best to deploy further resources. Is that by simply increasing the overall number of police officers, providing support staff, or reconfiguring existing resources?

In England & Wales police forces have adopted a twin-track approach: looking at ways to reconfigure police officer-staff deployment, and supporting neighbourhood policing through the provision of PCSOs. In Scotland, however, not only have there been comparatively fewer formal initiatives aimed at reconfiguring police officer-staff resources, in neighbourhood policing the approach to date has been to use Community Wardens employed by local authorities. Wardens have been paid through ring fenced funding from the Scottish Government, although in the recent 2008 budget settlement this ring fencing has ended.

In the absence of any recent study of civilianisation in Scotland various assertions have been made by police organisations regarding the future role of police staff. These range from a degree of hostility from the Police Federation (PF), through a neutral position of the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS) to the radical support of the Scottish Police Services Authority (SPSA). Not surprisingly these tend to reflect their vested interests. The Scottish Government response to date indicated no plans to introduce PCSOs but is open to reviewing this and further civilianisation, in particular through their *Antisocial Behaviour Strategy* review. UNISON Scotland however, have a concern that the Scottish Government has a tendency to view the delivery of public services through the prism of the lead profession and wants to make the case for police staff more strongly. However, the UNISON Scotland Police Committee recognised that their case would be strengthened if more detailed research was conducted on this issue. This would also assist UNISON Scotland in developing a policy and campaign position on PCSOs/Community Wardens.

1.2 Objectives

The aim of this research brief is to produce a report on police civilianisation in Scotland and update the information currently available on this issue for their Police Committee. The issues covered in the paper will include:

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modernisation, staff were "held back by old fashioned lack of status, lack of managerial support, low pay, unequal pay, and discrimination" (Reported in Loveday et al 2007).

- A description of the ***extent*** of civilianisation in Scotland;
- The ***benefits*** that this process has brought to Scottish policing with an emphasis on quality and specialisation rather than simply cost;
- The ***scope*** for further civilianisation; and
- An analysis of the ***options*** regarding further support including PCSO and Community Wardens.

1.3 Structure of Report

The report is outlined in the following sections consistent with the above aims and objectives. Section 2 provides descriptive data on the current extent of civilianisation in Scotland, alongside detailed information on the types of roles in which police staff are deployed. Section 3 looks more closely at the benefits of using police staff for policing in Scotland and the wider UK. Section 4 looks at the scope for further civilianisation of police staff roles and functions, while Section 5 looks more closely at the issue of neighbourhood policing and options for further support in terms of current models of deployment: PCSOs and Community Wardens.

2. CIVILIANISATION IN SCOTLAND

2.1 Introduction

This section describes the extent of civilianisation of police forces in Scotland. We begin by presenting data on the numbers of staff employed by police forces in Scotland before looking more closely at their labour market and organisational characteristics. The latter present an interesting picture of the numbers of staff in the most senior leadership and management positions within forces. They show an increasing diversification in the roles being undertaken by police staff and the variation in these roles across police forces.

2.2 Numbers of Police Staff in Scotland

Figures released in August 2008 by the Scottish Government show that there are more police officers in Scotland than ever before. From the most recent police strength quarterly figures (over the period April 1-June 30) we know that there are now 16,338 police officers in Scotland, the highest figure ever recorded (Scottish Government 2008b). In contrast there are declining numbers of staff. There are currently 6,328 police staff personnel who work largely in support but also increasingly in direct operational roles.[8] Although there were also recent figures from Audit Scotland on the proportions of police officers and staff in 2007[9], we present the Scottish Government figures in June 2008 (Table 2.1). These show the whole time equivalents (WTE) of police officers and police staff in Scotland as of 30 June 2008. The figures are based on the most recent quarterly return to the Scottish Government from all police forces in Scotland.

Table 2.1: Police Officers and Staff (WTE) Employed by Scottish Police Forces as at 30 June 2008 (n, %)[10]

Force	Total Police Officers (n)	Total Police Staff (n)	% of Police Staff (%)
Central Scotland	836	369	31
Dumfries & Galloway	516	252	33
Fife	1058	477	31
Grampian	1466	722	33
Lothian & Borders	2868	1195	29
Northern	732	334	31
Strathclyde	7687	2501	25
Tayside	1175	478	29
SCOTLAND	**16,338**	**6,328**	**28**

Source: Scottish Government (2008c)

[8] This compares to a figure of 7,352 in March 2007 (Scottish Parliamentary Justice Committee Report 2008): a decline of 3% in FTE staff over this time period. The total figure also includes SPSA, secondments and temporary agency personnel. There are however, only two staff listed as SPSA which is inconsistent with reports from Unison representatives who believe there are higher numbers of SPSA staff. A further 22 staff are listed as secondments and 248 as temporary/ agency staff (mainly females and comprising a total of 3.9% of the staff workforce).

[9] The Audit Scotland figures in 2007 suggested that 31% of FTE police employees in Scotland were staff (Scottish Parliamentary Justice Committee Report 2008).

[10] The figures for 2008 are based on whole time equivalent (WTE) hours. They are not based on the numbers of police employees (i.e. headcount) but account for full and part-time employment.

In terms of WTE the national average of staff is 28% in Scotland. In England and Wales, the comparable figures in 2008 show that staff personnel are higher at 32% (Home Office 2008b)[11]. These differences however, magnify appreciably if we also include PCSOs as part of this comparison. PSCOs constitute an additional 7% bringing the staff total in England & Wales to 39%. Nevertheless, police forces in Scotland have less staff supports than their other UK counterparts irrespective of whether PCSOs are added to these figures. It raises an issue about why such differences exist and whether forces in Scotland should be more proactive in the recruitment and deployment of staff.

The figures also show an appreciable variation in the WTE proportions of police staff: from one quarter in the largest police force in Scotland in Strathclyde, to one third in Dumfries & Galloway and Grampian. Clearly smaller and medium-sized forces in Grampian, Northern, Dumfries and Galloway, Lothian & Borders and Tayside have greater proportions of staff compared to the largest force in Strathclyde: where on the basis of these figures, we would expect that there may still be appreciable scope to further extend civilianisation initiatives. While this variation between forces is likely to be the result of their local policy requirements, it is still notable that there is very little evidence of any work being done nationally in Scotland on the relative advantages and disadvantages of having different officer-staff structures (see Section 4). The variation in the figures between forces also may counter the view that further civilianisation is unlikely to come from functions that have not already been identified or known by forces. At face value, there does appear to be greater scope for further civilianisation in some forces such as Strathclyde compared to others.

2.3 Characteristics & Roles of Police Staff

There is some published data on police staff and in this section we look more closely at civilian personnel in terms of their labour market characteristics. We begin by looking at gender[12] before focusing more closely on the actual roles that staff personnel are playing in police forces in Scotland. Role diversification among staff has been an emerging feature of the policing landscape across the UK and the increased diversity, from 'backroom' and support to more frontline operational roles is also evident among staff in Scottish forces.

Gender Composition

Alongside the above figures on the proportions of staff in Table 2.1 above, the Scottish Government also recently published data on the gender composition of police officers and staff in June 2008 (Table 2.2).

While females only account for 23% of WTE police officers in Scotland, in staff they account for nearly three times that figure (64%). Nearly two thirds of WTE staff personnel are female. There is also evidence of appreciable variation between forces in Scotland. For example, female staff in Lothian & Borders comprise 59% compared to 72% in Northern Constabulary: reflecting not simply differences in local labour markets

[11] These figures are based on FTE and not headcount.

[12] Figures were also reported for ethnicity in 2005 which show that ethnic minorities comprise less than 1% of support staff strength (Scottish Government 2006). This is compared to a national population average of 2%.

and gendered employment patterns but the types of roles in which staff are being deployed in these forces.[13]

Table 2.2: Gender Composition of Police Staff (WTE) Employed by Scottish Police Forces as at 30 June 2008 (%)

Force	% Male	% Female
Central Scotland	39	61
Dumfries & Galloway	34	66
Fife	34	66
Grampian	34	66
Lothian & Borders	41	59
Northern	28	72
Strathclyde	36	64
Tayside	36	64
SCOTLAND	**36**	**64**

Source: Scottish Government (2008)

From the above figures, police staff are mainly female. As we shall see below, this is consistent with the mainly administrative and clerical 'backroom' or support roles that many staff undertake in police forces.

Staff Roles

Police forces could not function without the management, administrative and other functions that exist to support the work of officers. The recent Home Office Green Paper on policing, although placing officers at the core of police work, also recognises the vital contribution made by staff:

> *"Police officers play the central role, but they are complemented by..police staff - both operational..staff and those working to help operational delivery behind the scenes or in contact with the public"* (Home Office 2008a, p.46)

In the Green Paper, staff roles are identified as multifunctional and diverse. They operate in backroom and administrative support roles in functions such as intelligence, information technology and human resources. There are also increasing numbers of staff taking on operational roles in areas such as custody and detention, investigation and surveillance. One future role for staff is also identified in terms of the introduction of an *Identification Officer* role to carry out a function that currently has to be exercised at the rank of inspector or above.

In Scotland as elsewhere in the UK, however, the role of staff is very much determined by individual police forces. This has led to a 'patchwork' or variable use of police staff

[13] In general, females are more likely to work part-time than males and this has an impact on the WTE/ FTE figures, which are typically likely to be higher for males than females who are generally more likely to work part-time. This does not apply to headcount figures, which include both full and part-time employees.

across forces: where they have been used to suit local needs. A summary outline of their types of deployment in Scotland is provided below (Figure 2.1)[14].

Figure 2.1: Outline of Roles Undertaken by Police Staff

Corporate
These roles cover:
- *Accounts, Payroll & Pensions*
- *Architects*
- *Audit*
- *Business Development & Support*
- *Customer Services, Enquiries, Facilities*
- *Contact & Service Centre*
- *Education, Learning & Training*
- *Estates & Building*
- *Finance*
- *Human Resources & Personnel*
- *Information Services*
- *Media, Press & Marketing*
- *Occupational Health & Health and Safety*
- *Performance/ Improvement & Business Change*
- *Printing & Mail*
- *Research & Policy*
- *Resource Management & Planning*
- *Solicitors & Paralegals*

Administrative & Support
These roles cover:
- *Administration staff (including Station Assistants)*
- *Alarms & Security*
- *Animal Handlers*
- *CCTV & Camera Staff*
- *Cleaning, Catering, Maintenance & Ancillary*
- *Clerical & Secretarial*
- *Community Liaison & Support (e.g. youth, domestic abuse, alcohol and drugs)*
- *Command Centre, Controllers and Control Room Staff*
- *Criminal Records, Police National Computer & Disclosure*
- *Communications Technicians (e.g. Telecommunications, Radio, etc)*
- *Dispatchers*
- *Graphics & Designers*
- *Information Technology (programmers, development, security, desktop, database, web)*
- *Intelligence*
- *Licensing Staff*
- *Lost and Found & Stores*
- *Productions*
- *Traffic management & Road Safety*
- *Transport, Vehicle and Fleet Management*

Operational
These roles cover:
- *Custody & Detention*
- *Financial Investigators*
- *Neighbourhood Wardens*
- *Process Servers (citations)*
- *Scenes of Crimes Officers*
- *Traffic Wardens*
- *Vehicle Examiners*
- *Wildlife Crime Officers*

[14] These are based on data on the job categories of police staff supplied to UNISON Scotland by Scottish forces in February 2008.

The roles outlined in Figure 2.1 provide an illustration of the breadth of work that police staff undertake in the police service in Scotland. It is also worth looking more closely at a selection of these roles and what is required of the personnel who undertake them. On the following pages we illustrate four types of roles currently conducted by staff in Scotland:

- Crime Prevention Officers;
- Custody & Detention Officers;
- Force Analysts; and
- Scenes of Crimes Officers.

For each of these roles we provide an illustration of what the role involves in terms of its tasks and responsibilities.

It is not our intention to suggest that these roles and tasks are typical of those conducted by most police staff in Scotland. Our intention is simply to illustrate the different types of police work that is being currently undertaken by staff and their contribution to the workings of a police force. For these purposes we have deliberately presented a selection of roles that:

- would traditionally have been conducted by serving or retired police officers;
- involve varying degrees of responsibilities, skills, training and expertise. They will suit the abilities of both ex-police officers and civilian staff new to the service;
- involve a range of low and high entry qualifications, and attract graduates and non-graduates;
- are operational and non-operational;
- are reactive and proactive in terms of crime management; and
- illustrate the key role of staff in working in partnership with the public and local businesses, supporting the operation of police stations and the courts, and aiding the work of officers in tackling and solving a range of minor and serious crimes.

Crime Prevention Officers (CPOs)

CPOs are trained to provide advice and expertise to the public, local businesses and local authorities in crime prevention and community safety matters.

CPOs are supported by a range of past and present crime trends, and with a knowledge of current security methods and devices to deter crime on property and persons.

They typically provide a range of advice to a range of interest groups on security issues: planners and architects (in the design of security-optimal buildings and environments), local authorities and businesses (e.g. the design of car parks, access points, help points, cameras and surveillance and patrols), victims of crime (e.g. burglaries) and improving personal and household safety.

Custody & Detention Officers (CDOs)

CDOs are responsible for the reception and documentation of detained persons and to assist in the care of detainees whilst complying with their legislative rights to fair treatment and standards of custody care. They are responsible for a variety of tasks in these areas and providing a safe and secure custodial environment. Their tasks cover:

Health, sustenance and welfare (e.g. meals, medication, monitoring of the sick and intoxicated, supervision of juveniles and exercise periods, and minimising risks to personal safety)

Vigilance and detainee control. This includes assisting officers and using reasonable force where necessary.

Ensuring the security and integrity of detainee legal representatives, relatives and other authorised visitors.

Completion of detainee custody record and conducting standard PNC and CIS checks on detainees. Staff are required to ensure both paper and records are maintained consistent with data protection standards.

Detainee risk assessment to prevent against harm to self or others.

Detainee search, identification (taking photographs, video capture, DNA samples, finger and palm prints) and property storage.

Cell area hygiene, health and safety tasks (issue of laundry and bedding, security).

To attend court where necessary and required.

Force/ Intelligence Analysts

Force Intelligence analysts investigate who is committing crimes, how, when, where and why. They then provide recommendations on how to stop or curb the offences. As part of this, analysts produce profiles of crime problems and individual targets, and produce both strategic (overall, long-term) and tactical (specific, short-term) assessments within the confines set by the individual police force. These assessments and profiles are used to both monitor and predict crime, aiming to move policing from 'reactionary' investigation to 'proactive' investigation. Analysts look for links between a wide variety of intelligence sources to work out what is going on, and make recommendations on how to stop it. This is done at all levels, from local police stations dealing with town issues, to whole county crime, regional crime and beyond

Analysts are drawn from diverse backgrounds; some are graduates from any academic background and some are retired police officers. Most have experience working in an analytical field. They are recruited on a per-vacancy basis directly by the police force that will employ them, not through any national scheme. Analysts work very closely with regular police officers on particular areas of crime; an analyst might work with a police officer on a vehicle crime desk, or a violent crime desk, for example. Opportunities exist for progression within the profession; while individual forces differ, an analyst can become a lead analyst, senior analyst or principal analyst. Opportunities are likely to exist for analysts to work on a national level with the new Serious Organised Crime Agency.

Analysts have a variety of sources. These include the UK National DNA Database, Police National Computer, crime reports and information from witnesses, information from informants and agents, local knowledge, surveillance logs, force intelligence summaries and even newspaper reports. Intelligence Units have staff whose job is to build up and develop intelligence (such as the police officers mentioned above), and analysts are expected to make sense of this information and identify gaps for intelligence-gathering officers to fill.

Analysts have a number of IT systems to help make sense of the information**,** including i2, bespoke police information management systems, geographical mapping tools and social mapping tools. They often work closely and exchange information with other law enforcement agencies, including the Serious Organised Crime Agency, other police

Scenes of Crime Officers

SOCOs attend crime scenes to record, examine and interpret evidence. They are arguably the only resource that attends such scenes on a daily basis. They can be called out to crime scenes at any time of the day or night. They are based in police stations, but travel to wherever a crime has taken place**.** Despite this, SOCOs do not have "expert witness" status as recognised by the British judicial system, although they can be asked to give testimony based on opinion at a judge's or magistrate's discretion. The evidence they discover is then used to investigate crimes.

The tasks of a CSI may include: protecting the crime scene to avoid evidence being disturbed; searching an area for footwear marks and dusting for fingerprints; taking photographs of accidents and injuries; taking samples of saliva from people for DNA testing; examining surfaces for samples such as hair, fibres and blood ; preparing statements of evidence; and, attending court with the exhibits collected in the course of an enquiry.

SOCOs examine crime scenes ranging from criminal damage to burglary to homicide, although the forensic science provider for the particular police force in question will often be called in to deal with the more complex forensic opportunities that arise during homicide investigations.

Individual forces set their own entry requirements that vary, but graduate-level entry is becoming common. Experience in a related discipline is valued. Foundation degrees and degrees in forensic science are now available.

Many CSIs start in an assistant role, mentored by an experienced CSI, attending crime scenes and learning police force procedures. Some forces send CSIs on courses at the National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA), others run in-house training courses. CSIs take refresher courses every five years.

A CSI may progress to become a senior or principal CSI, with team-management responsibilities. With further training, experienced CSIs can be promoted to crime scene managers, responsible for crime scene investigations at major incidents. CSIs with a degree in a scientific subject may be able to become forensic scientists.

These examples of staff roles highlight some of the ways in which police staff are contributing to the workings of forces in Scotland today. While custodial and analytical roles have only emerged in recent years, the use of civilian scenes of crime officers and intelligence analysts are an even more recent development in Scotland. This brings us to the issue of the variation in staff deployment across police forces in Scotland. This is discussed below.

2.4 Police Staff Deployment in Scotland

In February 2008, UNISON Scotland asked all police forces in Scotland for information on the current job categories of police staff and how many FTE staff were deployed in each role[15]. This gives us a greater understanding of how police staff may be used and importantly how this varies across forces. Before we look at this in greater detail however, a number of issues need to be addressed in relation to the figures that were returned and the job classifications used by police forces:

- The figures are presented in terms of the total numbers of FTE staff and not the actual numbers of staff. This allows a comparison with existing figures which are based on FTE/WTE and not a simple headcount of staff[16];

- There are greater numbers of staff included as part of our figures than are currently counted in official Scottish Government returns in June 2008[17]. There may be a number of reasons for this discrepancy: a reduction in the staff workforce, differences in the calculation of FTE and WTE, retention and turnover among particular categories of staff[18] and/or non-replacement of temporary staff whose contracts were coming to an end;

- Whatever the exact reasons for the differences in the figures, we have no reasons to doubt the reliability of UNISON Scotland returns from police forces. We use them simply to look at overall deployment and differences across forces and not as a measure of the extent of civilianisation in comparison with the recent Scottish Government figures on the numbers of police officers and staff;

- We collated and recorded the information into Excel. This allowed us to aggregate categories across police forces. The rationale for aggregation, however, was not based on Standard Occupational Classifications (SOC). While SOC coding is useful at highlighting occupational differences in the general population as part of survey samples, or in comparing status between employment sectors, it has a poorer analytical purchase when the primary focus of interest is in looking at what police staff are actually doing in the police;

- Our analysis was based on grouping similar functional categories (e.g. personnel working in accounts with those dealing with finance, payroll and pensions). This allowed us to look closely at how staff were being used by forces in a more meaningful way than could be gained through SOC. This also provided useful data

15 Submitted under Freedom of Information (FOI).

16 But does not include details of staff in the SPSA.

17 6,855 compared to Scottish Government figures of 6,328, a difference of 527 staff.

18 For example, staff roles in administration and those in custody and detention services are known to have a high turnover.

on the numbers of staff working in senior managerial and leadership positions, and those working in operational areas;

- Nevertheless, a functional coding analysis does have its weaknesses; principally that it generates more categories than may be necessary and leaves anomalies. Additionally, although inter-force differences can be used to identify areas where more staff should be involved; there are no comparable figures available on the numbers of officers also involved in these positions (e.g. working in administration positions). Similarly, there is no way of analysing the data to show how many staff we would expect to be in any one position. Largely, this is because of the variation across forces and their local deployment policies; and

- any 'gaps' in staff deployment across forces therefore have to be carefully inferred from the data. In some cases these are apparent but in others, the evidence is less clear. It is also confounded by the lack of comparative data and the confusion about how many police staff are based in the SPSA.

In terms of the overall distribution of police staff across and within forces (Table 2.3), administrative and support staff comprise over three fifths of police staff (61%), with just over a quarter in corporate roles (27%). Direct operational staff only comprise just over a tenth of all staff (12%) and their variable distribution across police forces is consistent with their local deployment patterns.

Table 2.3: Staff (WTE) employed by Scottish Police Forces as at 30 June 2008 (n, %)

Force	Corporate (n, %)	Administrative & Support (n, %)	Operational (n, %)	Total (n)
Central Scotland	117 (34)	190 (55)	40 (9)	347
Dumfries & Galloway	37 (13)	193 (71)	46 (16)	276
Fife	181 (44)	177 (42)	58 (14)	416
Grampian	208 (28)	447 (60)	94 (13)	749
Lothian & Borders	300 (24)	811 (64)	148 (12)	1259
Northern	63 (18)	271 (75)	26 (7)	360
Strathclyde	861 (30)	1,647 (57)	366 (13)	2,874
Tayside	74 (13)	438 (76)	62 (11)	574
SCOTLAND	**1,841 (27)**	**4,174 (61)**	**840 (12)**	**6,855**

Given that there is a blurred distinction between corporate and administrative and support categories, the most interesting figures relate to the proportions of staff in operational roles. While there is little variation across forces, the most obvious differences concern those forces with the most (i.e. Dumfries & Galloway) and least (i.e. Northern) proportions of these staff.

In terms of each of these areas (corporate, administrative and support, and operational), there were a number of interesting staff deployment patterns. These are discussed under the headings below.

Corporate, Administrative & Support

Staff are an integral part of these positions in police forces. Their roles vary between 'frontline' areas in contact and service centres to 'backroom' roles in accounts, finance, human resources, communications, media and marketing. One key aspect of the data however, concerns the proportions of staff employed in the most senior leadership and management positions in police forces in Scotland (Tables 2.4 and 2.5).

Table 2.4: Staff (WTE) Employed by Scottish Police Forces in Key Senior Management Positions[19] (n)

Force	Business/ Corporate/ Administration	Communications & Information	Finance	HR	IT	Other[20]	Total
Central	√	-	-	√	√	-	**3**
Dumfries and Galloway	√	√	-	-	-	-	**2**
Fife	-	√	-	√	-	-	**2**
Grampian	√√	√√	-	-	√	√√√	**8**
Lothian and Borders	√√	-	√√	-	√	√√√√	**9**
Northern	√√	-	√√	√√	-	√√	**8**
Strathclyde	√√√	√√	√√	-	-	√√	**9**
Tayside	√	-	√	√	√	-	**4**
All	**12**	**6**	**7**	**5**	**4**	**11**	**45**

Table 2.5: Staff (WTE) Employed by Scottish Police Forces in Other Management Positions[21] (n)

Force	Total (n)
Central	28
Dumfries & Galloway	14
Fife	10
Grampian	38
Lothian & Borders	32
Northern	23
Strathclyde	35
Tayside	18
All	**198**

[19] Staff in senior management positions including all those listed as departmental heads, directors, or their deputies.

[20] These positions vary and examples include Head of Learning (Northern), Legal Services (Strathclyde), Logistics (Grampian) and Criminal Justice (Lothian and Borders, and Northern) and Training (Strathclyde).

[21] Staff in junior and middle management positions including all those listed as 'manager' or 'assistant manager'. This excludes those listed in 'Senior'roles (e.g. Senior Technicians).

From these figures:

- Unlike the overall figures for staff in Scotland (Table 2.1) which tend to show that larger forces have proportionally more staff, this is less apparent for the numbers of staff in management positions (i.e. larger forces such as Strathclyde and Lothian & Borders do not necessarily appear to have proportionally more staff who are listed by forces in the most senior, and in middle and junior management roles);

- Less than 1% (0.7%) of WTE staff are employed in the most senior management positions in Scottish police forces;

- Staff in the most senior management positions are concentrated in a variety of business, corporate and administrative positions but there is a noticeable deployment 'gap' in very specialist areas such as finance, human resources and IT (only listed in four of eight forces);

- 3% of WTE staff are employed in junior and middle managerial positions; and

- In cases where forces had no staff head or director, these functions were typically supported by staff at other senior, junior and middle management levels. This suggests that the most senior positions in these forces, even in specialist areas, may be occupied by senior police officers and not staff.[22]

In general, the figures may suggest that civilianisation at management levels in Scotland may have some way to go to fully breach the well documented evidence on the *'thin blue ceiling'* of officers in these positions in police forces (e.g. HM Inspectorate of Constabulary 2004). The evidence is consistent with previous research in England & Wales on the generally lower status of staff in police forces and their comparative lack of access to vertical and horizontal career development pathways compared to officers (e.g. Flanagan 2008). One of the key themes of WFM in the police is that forces are more than the sum of the aspirations of, and the opportunities available to, officers. The ability of staff to access and control management positions is an important cultural marker in these organisations, with implications for their ability to attract and retain high quality personnel. The evidence raises interesting questions about HR practices and resource deployment in Scottish forces.

There are also other interesting areas of staff deployment that police forces may be expected to look at in terms of 'deepening' civilianisation within forces. The recent Audit Scotland report of call management in 2007 was particularly useful because it provided useful comparative data on the numbers of staff and officers working in call management and dispatch (Table 2.6).

[22] For example, in Strathclyde while staff occupy personal assistant roles to the Director of Human Resources, no staff occupy this senior position. We are therefore able to infer that this is a position likely to be occupied by a police officer. This may not necessarily be the case in other areas, where IT may be directed under other departments such as communications.

Table 2.6: Proportion of Call Management Posts (FTE) held by Police Officers and Staff at 31 March 2007 (%)

Force	Call Handlers (%)		Dispatchers Posts (%)	
	Staff	Officers	Staff	Officers
Central Scotland	100	0	0	100
Dumfries & Galloway	100	0	100	0
Fife	90	10	72	28
Grampian	89	11	61	39
Lothian & Borders	89	11	80	20
Northern	92	8	75	25
Strathclyde	95	5	77	23
Tayside	100	0	89	11

While call handlers are almost wholly staff, there is a distinct and significant variation across forces in the deployment of dispatchers: Central had no staff dispatchers, while Dumfries & Galloway was fully staffed and other forces, such as Tayside and Lothian & Borders, Strathclyde, Northern and Fife were all 'heavily' staffed.

Turing back to our figures, there are other aspects which show the concentration of staff in emerging 'civilianised' positions (Table 2.7).

Table 2.7: Corporate, Administrative & Support Staff (WTE) Employed by Scottish Police Forces (n)

Force	Contact/ Service Centre	Forensic	Intelligence (Force) Analysts	Station Assistants
Central	56	1	6	-
Dumfries & Galloway	-	1	7	12
Fife	89	-	7	10
Grampian	64	4	18	
Lothian & Borders	92	3	41	109
Northern	-	-	10	-
Strathclyde	218	6	60	120
Tayside	14	-	22	-
All	**533**	**15**	**231**	**251**

These figures demonstrate the emergence and involvement of staff in highly skilled areas such as intelligence, and in 'frontline' service centre and station assistant positions. The figures show that:

- There is again considerable variation in the deployment of staff in these areas as in others across police forces in Scotland;

- *Service/ Contact Centre* staff are evident in all areas with the exception of smaller forces in Dumfries & Galloway and Northern;

- Although it may appear that staff in forensics are not represented in half of Scotland's forces (i.e. Central, Fife, Northern and Tayside), our understanding is that many if these are now SPSA staff;

- *Intelligence Analysts* are employed across all Scottish police forces; and

- *Station Assistant* roles are heavily concentrated in Lothian & Borders and Strathclyde but wholly absent in Central, Grampian, Northern and Tayside.

Operational

Because of the relatively smaller numbers of staff in operational positions, it is easier to identify differences between forces in the deployment of staff. Traffic wardens and their supervisors comprise just over a quarter of all operational staff (28%), while neighbourhood wardens only arise in Grampian (see Section 5 for an explanation of why this occurs in this area and not others). The remainder of operational staff exist in six job categories and their deployment across forces is outlined below (Table 2.8).

Table 2.8: Operational Staff (WTE) Employed by Scottish Police Forces (n)

Force	Custody & Detention	Financial Investigators	Process Servers	Scenes of Crimes Officers	Vehicle Examiners	Wildlife Crime
Central	18	1	-	-	-	-
Dumfries & Galloway	31	3	-	5	-	-
Fife	24	-	5	-	-	-
Grampian	24	2	-	-	-	-
Lothian & Borders	100	1	-	-	2	-
Northern	2	-	-	-	-	-
Strathclyde	269	-	35	-	-	1
Tayside	50	3	-	-	-	1
All	**518**	**10**	**40**	**5**	**2**	**2**

These are all examples of relatively new and emerging areas of the operational input of police staff. All are potential areas of further growth in Scottish forces. The figures show that:

- While staff in custody and detention are deployed in all Scottish police forces, the numbers employed in Northern Constabulary appear to be lower than what we would expect;

- Staff in all other areas are only deployed sporadically by Scottish police forces;
- Financial Investigators only operate in five police forces in Scotland. they are absent in Fife, Northern and Strathclyde;
- Process Servers[23] are only employed in Fife and Strathclyde;
- Scenes of Crimes Officers are only deployed in Dumfries & Galloway. Our understanding however, is that all other SCO's in other forces have been transferred to the SPSA;
- Vehicle Examiners are only employed in Lothian & Borders; and
- Wildlife Crime Officers are only deployed in Strathclyde and Tayside.

2.5 Summary

The key points arising from the material in this section are:

- In terms of WTE, police staff comprise 28% of all police personnel in Scotland. The overall numbers of WTE/FTE staff, however, have declined over the period March 2007-June 2008. In contrast with police officers, most staff are females;
- There is appreciable variation across police forces in Scotland in terms of the proportions of staff they employ and their gender balance. Despite being the largest police force, Strathclyde Police has the lowest proportion of WTE staff in Scotland;
- Staff roles are multifunctional and diverse. They mainly operate in corporate and administrative support roles in functions such as intelligence, information technology and human resources. There are also increasing numbers of staff taking on operational roles in areas such as custody and detention, investigation and surveillance. Examples of new and emerging staff roles can be seen in areas such as crime prevention, custody and detention, intelligence and scenes of crime officers;
- The roles of staff are largely determined by individual police forces. This has led to a 'patchwork' or variable use of police staff across forces where they have been used to suit local policing needs. In Scotland, staff largely occupy corporate (27%) and administrative and support (61%) roles. Just over a tenth of staff are in operational roles (12%), though this is higher in some forces;
- In terms of FTE, the analysis of job category data shows that despite staff being over a quarter of the police workforce, less than 1% of staff occupy senior management roles and only 3% occupy middle and junior roles. Staff in the most senior management positions are concentrated in a variety of business, corporate and administrative positions but there is a noticeable deployment 'gap' in very

[23] Their role typically involves all aspects of the citation process: serving legal documents on business and private addresses, and tracing missing witnesses and accused persons through police data systems and liaising with local agencies. This includes appearing as an expert witness in court if required.

specialist areas such as finance, human resources and IT (only listed in four of eight forces). The evidence is consistent with previous research on the generally lower status of staff in police forces and their comparative lack of access to vertical and horizontal career development pathways compared to officers; and

- There were a number of interesting areas of staff deployment that police forces may be expected to look at in terms of 'deepening' civilianisation within forces. In emerging administrative and support roles, these concern dispatcher posts, contact/ service centre posts and station assistant positions. In operational roles, these concern financial investigators, process servers, scenes of crimes officers, vehicle examiners, wildlife crime officers and to a lesser extent, staff in custody and detention roles.

3. THE BENEFITS OF POLICE STAFF

3.1 Introduction

While we have previously outlined the extent of civilianisation of policing in Scotland, in this section we outline the benefits of police staff for police forces in Scotland. This involves a brief discussion of the background surrounding the current debate on their deployment and roles, before presenting the evidence from recent workforce modernisation (WFM)[24] studies. Finally, we outline the principal barriers any expansion of numbers of police staff, and the lessons and good practice that have emerged from ongoing workforce modernisation projects in England & Wales.

3.2 Police Staff & Workforce Modernisation

Civilian staff offer tangible benefits in terms of costs, efficiency and professionalization and these advantages as well as others, are borne out in recent WFM studies that have been conducted in England & Wales (Home Office and Accenture 2006), and also from recent UK evaluations of neighbourhood policing (e.g. Hayton et al 2007, Home Office 2006, National Policing Improvement Agency 2008, Casey 2008). Much of the evidence available on civilian WFM comes from an evaluation of ten pilot projects in England & Wales in 2006. Following these pilots the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) launched an ongoing sponsored working programme in July 2007 to support a further eleven demonstration projects across thirteen forces to look at new ways of officer-staff working. This programme is currently in the process of being independently evaluated, though recent reviews of workplace reform have criticised its lack of focus and the absence of any clear vision of what the police workforce of the future should look like (Flanagan 2008, Gash 2008).

In Scotland, WFM is an integral part of the Vision 2010 project which aims to address the challenges for future policing as part of a pilot initiative in Central Scotland. The project was launched in 2007 to look at how the Force will be shaped over the coming years. The Scottish Government has recently funded a pilot initiative using civilian crime investigators as part of the Vision 2010 project and this is still at the operational stage.

Although establishing the benefits of civilianization is problematic because it relies on a limited and still emerging research base, the evidence suggests that a number of tangible benefits have arisen. We outline these in detail below. Although the WFM evidence is largely from England & Wales we can reasonably assume that the benefits would also be realised in Scotland. In addition, we have also included the evidence from the recent evaluations of neighbourhood policing in the UK, as this also highlighted the benefits of using staff at this operational level.

[24] A key component of wider workforce reform. The latter was broadly defined in Sir Ronnie Flanagan's 2008 review of policing as *"..joining officers and police staff in a strategic framework providing clear pathways through accreditation of skills and competencies, whilst improving demand management and workforce planning, particularly in relation to recruitment and deployment.."* (p.40). WFM generally has involved a mixture of approaches based on: job design (i.e. how work is divided and the types of workers involved in each roles, or 'workforce mix'); organisational design (i.e. the most appropriate structures for effective service delivery); training, development and skills; rewards and motivation. Although WFM does not necessarily mean 'civilianisation', for the purpose of clarity in this section, we use it in this way.

3.3 The Benefits of Police Staff

In England & Wales the WFM programme explored the potential benefits of a remodelled workforce in ten pilot sites between 2004 and 2006. These covered the deployment of staff in a range of mainly *new* and operational capabilities from custody and prisoner handling services, to response and investigative policing. WFM comprised three large (Northumbria, Met and Surrey) and seven medium-sized projects. A summary of the sites involved and a description of their aims is provided below (Figure 3.1). These involved police staff in a variety of areas: including custodial, crime investigation, major incidents and community engagement functions.

Figure 3:1: WFM Pilot Sites & Aims

Pilot Sites	Description
Dyfed Powys	Provision of revamped custody suites by restructuring facilities to accommodate new staff detention officers
Humberside	Recruiting staff as an integral part of a dedicated Major Incident Team
Lincolnshire	Civilian crime investigators as investigative officers and case builders
Metropolitan	Supporting a borough command unit in crime investigation, custody and on the beat
Nottinghamshire	Tackling anti-social behaviour by establishing a new multi-agency task force
Northumbria	Revamped custody suites and changing the ways in which detainees are looked after and processed with staff conducting welfare and investigative roles
Staffordshire	Outsourcing of custody to the private sector
Surrey	The introduction of civilian crime investigators, neighbourhood police teams and staff supporting major incident investigations
West Yorkshire	Expanding community engagement through listening to and identifying local priorities
Wiltshire	Local investigators taking a lead on witness statements, conducting searches and escorting prisoners

In Scotland, similar to those pilots in Lincolnshire, Surrey and Wiltshire, under a £250,000 initiative funded by the Scottish Government, door-to-door inquiries, interviews and crime reports are to be carried out by investigative assistants who will be overseen by police officers. A one year pilot began in April 2008 in Falkirk and is expected to free up some 10% of frontline officers. It is then expected to be rolled out across the force as a whole and then potentially across forces in Scotland. The new *Priority Crime Unit* will deal with level three and four crimes including fire-raising and housebreaking using specially trained civilian staff. Under the scheme, when members of the public phone to report crimes they will be logged and handled by experienced police officers who will decide how to divide cases between police staff and officers.

A number of key points should however, be borne in mind about the evidence presented below from all of the above WFM pilots:

- Although civilianisation was part of most these pilots, most projects did not adopt a simple one-for-one 'staff for officer' replacement approach, but instead involved a remodelling of personnel and teams to provide a new mix of functions (e.g. in neighbourhood and community engagement, case investigators) and structures (e.g. mixing staff in Criminal Investigation Department), all involving staff in new operational roles;

- Individual forces were left to interpret and deliver their own WFM project. While this allowed scope for innovation, it made it impossible to directly compare outcomes (e.g. financial and cost savings) across each project. Although this may be viewed as a weakness of the programme, the critical issue is that benefits still emerged from the ways in which staff were deployed and these have provided important lessons for new working practices; and

- The benefits arising from WFM did not arise in isolation but emerged from the configuration of roles and structures in which staff and officers were deployed. For example, while civilianising back office roles, or involving staff in new operational roles, may have been financially attractive, the amount of savings and other benefits that were realised largely depended on how police officers and staff were reconfigured.

A range of performance, cost, personnel and public benefits were identified in the subsequent evaluation of the WFM pilot projects in England & Wales by Accenture. Critically, this evaluation made it clear that while cost savings arise from using police staff, they were not the only benefit that resulted from staff. As can be seen below the benefits arising form the pilots were wide ranging: realised across key policing areas such as *investigation*, *custody*, *response*, *neighbourhood policing*, *major crime* and *serious organised* crime. Benefits arose for individual police officers and staff, and for aspects of organisational performance:

Performance

- **Increased detection rates** of high volume crimes and improved response to intervention rates in areas such as Burglary. This was especially evident in forces where investigators were concentrated in one team based in the same location in Surry and the MPS;

- **Establishment of new police functions**. For example, in Surrey where the establishment of Neighbourhood Policing Teams with officers would have cost 21% more;

- **Free-up of officer time for front-line duties**. For example, the new custody teams in Dyfed Powys were estimated to have freed-up the officer equivalent of 14,391 hours per annum and in Wiltshire, Local Investigation Officers freed-up 12,598 officer hours over 21 months; and

- **Quality of service delivery and role professionalisation** (in areas such as the quality of police files and case file building, taking statements from witnesses).

Costs

- **Expected efficiency savings** in terms of the direct replacement of officers with staff and through the reconfiguration of resources. For example, in Dyfed Powys annual savings of £265,917 arose from using mixed custody teams, in Surrey there was £600,000 in efficiency savings and in Lincolnshire £218,336. In addition, in the MPS there was a 38% (£38,620) saving over six months in using PCSOs to respond to calls that would have previously been answered by officers; and

- Using data provided by Central Scotland Police, this force estimates that cost savings arising from the civilianisation of 11 posts (currently occupied by officers) under the Vision 2010 programme would be £1.25m over 11 years (CSJPB 2008).

Personnel

- **Increased morale, commitment and motivation among police staff** arising from an increased access to more diverse roles and helping with personnel retention;

- **Increased perception of career development pathways by staff**. Sir Ronnie Flanagan's Review of Policing in 2008 however, noted particular concern that insufficient attention has been given to identifying vertical and lateral career pathways for police staff;

- **Increased value** attached to staff by officers and a reduction of cultural resistance to the increased use of staff;

- **Recruitment to police officer roles** from the use of PCSOs; and

- **Improved levels of diversity** within forces arising from the ability to recruit, attract and retain people who have traditionally been under-represented within the police service, such as women and those from ethnic minority backgrounds. It is interesting to note that Sir Ronnie Flangan's Review of Policing in 2008 noted the greater diversity among staff (including PCSOs) than officers and the need for the police service to reflect and represent the communities that they serve. Police staff recruitment appears to achieve this more successfully than comparable officer recruitment processes.

Public/ Customers/ Users

- **Facilitation of more dedicated services**. For example, in dedicating more time spent to supporting witnesses and victims;

- Greater **local visibility and accessibility** of PCSOs and wardens at the neighbourhood level making for a service more attuned to local concerns. This provides greater reassurance about crime and confidence in the response of the police;

- Local **intelligence gathering and sharing** at the neighbourhood level by PCSOs and wardens; and

- **Professional witnesses to crimes** when wardens and PCSOs monitor incidents before police officers arrive at the scene. They are able to take notes that can be passed on and used as evidence in court.

A summary of these benefits is outlined below (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2: A Summary of the Benefits of WFM Identified in Recent Studies

Organisational	Individual staff	Community
Increased detection rates of high volume crimes	Increased morale, commitment and motivation	Facilitation of more dedicated police services
Free-up of officer time for front-line duties	Access to vertical and horizontal career pathways	Local visibility and accessibility (PCSOS and Wardens)
Quality of service delivery and role professionalisation	Increased appreciation of the value of their role	Greater reassurance and less 'fear of crime'
Cost savings	Greater role diversity	Continued confidence in the police
More efficient establishment of new police functions	Retention of staff & lower turnover	
Improved levels of diversity and a more representative service		
Recruitment to police officer roles (PCSOs)		
Intelligence gathering and sharing (PCSOs and Wardens)		
Professional witnesses for the purpose of court evidence (PCSOs and wardens)		

3.4 Barriers & Practice

Much of the literature however, also highlights a number of key barriers to the greater introduction of police staff and the longer-term sustainability of implementing personnel changes to realise the benefits of staff. Arguably the most significant barrier exists at the level of policy in terms of the ongoing inertia exhibited by UK central government and police authorities to take forward and implement civilian WFM beyond the pilot stage (Gash 2008). Part of the problem may lie with the wider political debate on overall police officer numbers where these are used as the sole measure of police success rather than as one component of the outcomes delivered by the service. WFM may be associated with a reduction in the numbers of police officers and has the programme has suffered as a consequence (Flanagan 2008).

Sir Ronnie Flanagan in 2008 offered strong support for developing a clear and consistent position on WFM to counter the absence of any currently agreed medium to long term strategy for its implementation beyond the disparate approach currently pursued by some police authorities in England & Wales. The review acknowledged that only a small proportion of the tasks that are carried out by the police actually require sworn officer powers and maintaining current police numbers is not sustainable over the next three years. The emerging evidence of the WFM pilots suggests that the best use of resources will not be achieved if police officer numbers are sustained at their current levels. The Government's recent Green Paper on policing continues to fail to address these issues.

Outwith these political considerations, there are a number of other barriers to the development of civilian WFM for individual forces. These were outlined in the evaluation of the original WFM pilot projects and we list them in greater detail below.

There may be a degree of **cultural resistance to** increasing the numbers of staff by officers: explained by the status and contractual differences that have traditionally existed between these groups (Loveday et al 2007)[25], generating fears about staff encroaching on officer roles. There is also a specific issue about poor individual working relationships between staff and officers in the civilian WFM studies. However, the evidence does also suggest that: working relationships are less problematic when pre-existing officer-staff teams are used; and, that new working staff-officer working relationships improve over time once new working practices are embedded (Home Office & Accenture 2006).

Existing staff terms and conditions may have to be assessed to ensure that staff have the contractual flexibility to fulfil any new roles. This may be especially so in cases where staff are expected to fulfil new operational roles and are being moved from backroom or support functions.

Restrictive duties mean that there is a need to deploy officers on recuperative or restrictive duties away from front-line duties, a requirement made all the more important by the *Disability Discrimination Act (2005)*. There are two issues in this regard. Firstly, there is a risk that officers are simply moved into new roles without regard to where they are best suited. This may inadvertently undermine the potentially greater specialization, professionalism and efficiency of staff in some roles. Secondly, there is the issue of equal pay. Under the current system uniformed officers who are unable to continue to carry out frontline duties can be moved to a support function on grounds of ill-health. If they are retained in the service their terms and conditions (and powers) remain the same as if they were an officer ready to be operationally deployed. Consequently, officers may be on better terms and conditions than staff in the same or comparable roles. This may raise interesting legal issues around equal pay and expose forces to a greater risk of equal pay claims from staff.

Finally, there is the issue of **costs** and the provision of resources to meet the set-up and maintenance of new working practices. The WFM pilots in England & Wales highlight the increased resources involved in the establishment of new working arrangements (e.g. where new technologies are also required) and that these should initially be borne by central government without any impact on the overall budget of the service as a whole, or individual forces.

3.5 Summary

The main points arising in this section are:

- Police forces in Scotland have always employed staff as an essential support to their operations and they are not a cheap option or substitute for police officers. There are many police functions where properly qualified civilian personnel are just simply the most effective way to deliver the full range of routine, complex and specialized functions that are central to modern-day police forces;

- While the desire for greater civilianisation primarily arose in an attempt to generate cost savings and develop more specialist functions in areas such as

[25] In their contractual terms and conditions and evidenced in issues such as pay grading, eligibility for union membership, training and defined career development pathways (see for example, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary 2004).

forensics, recent WFM studies in England & Wales demonstrate that further civilianisation allied to a reconfiguration of police personnel is associated with a wide range of performance, economic, stakeholder and community benefits for police forces. These studies also clearly demonstrate the effective use of staff in operational roles;

- In the WFM studies, using staff alongside officers allows: performance improvements in terms of the freeing up of police officer time, the establishment of new police functions and the quality of service; savings in costs and greater efficiencies of service; personnel benefits in terms of the increased morale and commitment of staff, recruitment and levels of diversity in the police service; and public benefits in terms of the provision of more dedicated services, the greater visibility of 'beat' personnel and local intelligence gathering; and

- There are however, a number of cultural, legal and cost barriers to the increased civilianisation of police forces in Scotland: the cultural and operational resistance of officers; contractual issues affecting staff deployment; restrictive duties for police officers; and the set-up costs of initiating changes in staff-officer deployment.

4. SCOPE FOR CIVILIANISATION

In this section we look at where there may be scope for further civilianisation within police forces in Scotland. This builds on the material presented in Section 2, where we identified a number of areas where further scope for civilianisation may exist:

- in leadership and management positions
- in dispatcher posts
- in neighbourhood operational roles
- in operational posts such as custody and detention, forensics (i.e. scenes of crimes officers and vehicle examiners) and financial investigator roles.

In this section, 'scope' is defined as extending staff involvement within already *existing* police officer roles, which may involve staff in wholly new areas of responsibility; and in new policing roles. To investigate these issues in depth we adopted a twin-track approach relying on two principal sources of information:

- UNISON Scotland representatives to identify areas and roles further potential exists in posts and deployment in police forces
- Internal studies conducted by police forces themselves as part of a wider workforce modernisation programme which address the deployment of police staff.

4.1 Views of Unison Scotland Representatives

We consulted two Unison Scotland representatives in Strathclyde and Tayside respectively, with a view to identifying scope for further civilianisation within forces. The main points arising from these discussions were that:

- efforts to civilianise forces were ongoing in Scottish police forces, although there was still a resistance to use staff in areas consistent with their experience and expertise (e.g. in highly specialist areas such as human resources and the Job Evaluation programme currently underway in some forces such as Strathclyde)

- the focus of civilianisation in Scottish forces largely involved the replacement of officers in existing non-operational roles with staff, rather than developing innovative new working practices to reconfigure resources.

Consequently, the main areas identified by these representatives as requiring further attention were:

- civilianising all areas relating to core organisational functions such as:

    - Human Resources and Personnel
    - Corporate communications and marketing
    - Training

- civilianising more specialist roles within forces on crime analysis and investigations, and the use of police staff to conduct witness statements in areas of high volume crime such as burglary

- increasing the capacity for *neighbourhood policing* through the introduction of PCSOs in Scotland.

4.2 Internal Police Research

Through UNISON Scotland we approached all forces in Scotland with a view to identifying:

- whether they had conducted (or were conducting) their own internal research on the further use of police staff within the past five years
- whether any posts that were suitable for police staff were identified as a result and what these were
- how many staff would fill any new posts.

All of the forces were asked about this using a Freedom of Information (FOI) request made by UNISON Scotland. Of the eight forces, only three said that they had conducted research to identify posts for civilianisation. We should be careful, however, about assuming that because most forces had not conducted any formal internal research to address this issue, that no formal or informal programme of replacing officers with staff existed in these forces. The FOI request only asked about whether they had conducted any formal research into this issue in the past five years. However, the lack of any internal research may raise an important issue about their strategic intent.

The responses of each force are outlined below (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Forces Response to Conducting Research on Staff in Past Five Years.

Force	Research (Yes/No)	Officer Posts Replaced with Staff (n)	Time Period
Central	Yes	32	From 2007 onwards
Dumfries & Galloway	No	-	-
Fife	No	-	-
Grampian	No	-	-
Lothian & Borders	No	-	-
Northern	No	-	-
Strathclyde	Yes	212	From 2002 to the present day
Tayside	Yes	77[26]	From 2008 onwards

In Central, Strathclyde and all of the posts concern those which were previously staffed by police officers which have now been taken over by police staff. Although both Central and Strathclyde provided detailed information on which posts were replaced by staff, the response from Tayside Police stressed that their research programme was at too early a stage for individual posts to be identified.

The figures for Strathclyde Police make interesting reading as may clearly illustrate the use of higher paid officers in posts (covering a range of functions) that could be delivered by staff. While most of this officer-staff replacement involved police officers[27], in eleven posts (5%), it involved the replacement of officers at very senior levels (at the inspector

[26] This figure is described by Tayside Police as provisional as the research is planned to run until 2011.

[27] These were mainly officers who were Constables. The remainder had ranks that were unspecified.

level or above) with staff in key core organisational functions such as human resources and personnel, training, corporate communications and planning: all areas where we would expect that staff expertise would be better deployed.

Strathclyde Police also indicated that further civilianisation also relates to areas of Case Management, Divisional Training and Divisional Call Handling Units. Also, as a supplement to these figures, a further ten training posts have recently been civilianised by Strathclyde. The problem at this stage however, is that the numbers of posts in these areas are still to be quantified because of a delay in the scoping process.

4.3 Summary

The main points arising from this section are:

- There may be some appreciable scope for further civilianisation in terms of both existing roles occupied by police officers and in new policing roles;
- Examples of the former may relate to core organisational functions (e.g. in leadership and management positions) and in administrative and support areas (e.g. dispatcher posts, scenes of crimes officers);
- Examples of the latter were in neighbourhood policing and the deployment of staff with powers and organisational capacities equivalent to PCSOs in England & Wales; and
- Only three (out of eight) police forces reported that they had conducted formal research into the civilianisation of posts in the past five years. Of those who had done so, in one force this had largely involved the replacement of constables with staff, with little replacement involving senior police officer personnel.

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5. NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING: WARDENS & SUPPORT OFFICERS

5.1 Introduction

In the previous sections we identified a number of potential new future roles for police staff and provided evidence that their deployment has provided various benefits to police forces, including community engagement. In this section, we look at neighbourhood policing in Scotland, and at the potentially greater role of police staff in this area. A key issue for future civilianisation will be PCSOs. The approach in Scotland to date has been for local authorities to employ Community Wardens rather than bring this new level of officer into police forces. Yet reducing crime and levels of anti-social behaviour through more visible frontline policing is typically cited as a key community safety priority for residents in many areas across Scotland as in the UK as a whole. The key questions are how this can best be achieved, and how to deter low level crime and offer public reassurance. At the present time in Scotland however, while community warden schemes operate across most local authority areas with little or no meaningful enforcement powers and there is no current provision for expanding municipal policing through the deployment of PCSOs. Both wardens and PCSO roles have emerged in recent years and they represent two distinct (but not mutually exclusive) options to expand neighbourhood policing and tackle local anti-social behaviour. There are few reasons to think that the benefits that have been gained from the use of PCSOs in England & Wales could not be realised in Scotland.

In this section we consider the relative strengths and weaknesses of Community Wardens and PCSOs. After a brief outline of their respective policy backgrounds we will consider these options principally in terms of their relative:

- Roles, powers and management;
- Funding sources, levels and sustainability; and
- Acceptability by key internal and external stakeholders such as police forces and the general public and the impact of neighbourhood policing on communities.

5.2 Background

Warden schemes first arose as a result of a Scottish Executive commitment within the 2002 Scottish Budget Spending Review to tackle anti-social behaviour, the poor quality of the environment and to help people build strong, safe communities. They were originally conceived as an extra resource for the police, providing reassurance to the public and promoting community safety and development (Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland 2006). Currently, Scotland's 550 Community Wardens operate in all of Scotland's 32 local authority areas (with the exception of West Lothian).

In England & Wales, PCSOs were introduced under the provisions of the Police Reform Act 2002. The Act suggested that the key function of PCSOs was to 'provide additional capacity to combat low level disorder', and thereby help reduce the public's fear of crime. The wording suggested that this would take place through visibility and the exercising of powers to deal with minor issues. The implied distinction is that police officer capacity would focus on more serious disorder and crime. There are presently over 16,000 PCSOs in England and Wales who represent a significant resource base (7%) of the service's operational presence (combined police officers and PCSOs).

5.3 Roles, Powers & Management

Community Wardens

Wardens are described as a 'uniformed, semi-official presence in a residential area' (Scottish Executive 2003, p.8). Their role is largely to deter anti-social behaviour and provide reassurance to those whose lives are affected by crime. Given the flexibility in the design, organization and management of warden schemes, local authorities have produced their own versions based on local needs. However, despite the variety of models (and practice) that now exists across Scotland, warden schemes have a number of common features with a focus on:

- Community liaison, which is central to all schemes and involves being visible, listening to concerns and taking appropriate action;
- Security and safety, covering such things as attending, investigating and reporting incidents of antisocial behaviour and providing support and reassurance to the more vulnerable members of the community; and
- Dealing with environmental issues such as litter, graffiti, fly tipping and abandoned vehicles.

Underpinning these features is the idea of the wardens as the 'eyes and ears' of the community: identifying concerns and then either dealing with these directly or liaising with the appropriate agencies (the police, fire and rescue or local authority departments) in an attempt to resolve them. Most warden schemes undertake similar types of activities. These include:

- Supporting vulnerable adults such as the victims of crime;
- Patrolling schools during school holidays to deter vandals;
- Visiting 'pattern fire' spots to deter fire raisers; and
- Organising diversionary activities for young people.

Despite the range of activity undertaken and their local visibility in disadvantaged areas wardens have *no lawful powers* outwith those conferred on all citizens to take appropriate actions when they witness an offence being committed. Wardens have no powers to stop, search, arrest or detain anyone, or to disperse groups or assemblies. They can only respond to certain situations by contacting the relevant Emergency Service or Contact Centre if they believe that this has not already been done and to do so would benefit the community. Although the majority of wardens do not have enforcement powers, some may be empowered to issue fixed penalty notices in relation to dog fouling and litter.

Although wardens work in partnership with police forces[28], local authorities are largely solely responsible for their recruitment, training and management. Of the 32 schemes in Scotland, which were looked at by the national evaluation conducted by Hayton et al (2007), all but three (Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray) are managed by the relevant local authority. The other 3 are managed by Grampian Police.

[28] Formal protocols are in place in most schemes. These cover intelligence-sharing and co-ordination of activities at the local level.

PCSOs

The current position on the role of PCSOs is set out in ACPO Guidance, 2005, is to, *"to contribute to the policing of neighbourhoods, primarily through highly visible patrol with the purpose of reassuring the public, increasing orderliness in public places and being accessible to communities and partner agencies working at local level. The emphasis of this role, and the powers required to fulfill it, will vary from neighbourhood to neighbourhood and force to force."* (Home Office 2006) This guidance also identified areas where the use of PCSOs is not to be considered: where confrontations are likely to arise; where police action is likely to lead to a higher than normal risk of harm to anyone; where there is a clear likelihood that police action will include any infringement of a person's human rights; and, where the incident is one which is likely to lead to significant further work**.**

Compared to Wardens, PCSOs appear to have a wider set of functions and may help with issues such as:

- Providing a visible and reassuring presence within communities;
- Attending incidents of disorder, nuisance and anti-social behaviour;
- Dealing with community issues such as littering and dog fouling;
- Checking out abandoned vehicles;
- Gathering evidence through observation;
- Helping with missing persons enquiries;
- Speaking to young people who might be drunk and causing problems, confiscating alcohol and tobacco, if necessary;
- Crowd control and directing traffic at public events;
- Helping direct traffic at road blocks or scenes of accidents; and
- Assisting police with recording names and addresses or door-to-door enquiries.

Recent Home Office and National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA) reviews of role profiles and deployment policies submitted from forces showed that PCSOs are predominately undertaking these same core roles. The ACPO Guidance enabled flexibility in defining the exact nature of the duties that PCSOs would carry out locally and over time this local flexibility has resulted in PCSOs performing roles which are less closely aligned to those set out in the guidance. A number of variations were identified, in some cases with PCSOs conducting quite specialist additional functions:

- Safer Transport teams;
- Schools and youth involvement;
- Hate crime & vulnerable people liaison;
- Gypsy and traveller liaison;
- Mobile police station reception;
- Family liaison/management and domestic violence;
- Offender management;
- Police station reception;
- Joint partnership, action or cross border teams or special project teams;
- Trainers and tutors;

- Liquor and firearms licensing;
- Roads policing/ANPR teams; and
- Detention office related duties.

Although PCSOs do not have the same powers of arrest as police officers, unlike Community Wardens they do have the right to detain suspected offenders for up to thirty minutes until a police officer arrives. Unlike wardens they are *not* under local authority control and police forces are solely responsible for their recruitment, training, management and deployment.

As of December 2007 all PCSOs have a set of standard and discretionary powers to reflect the need for local flexibility and priorities. There are 20 standard powers and PCSOs can:

- Issue fixed penalty notices for littering, cycling on footpaths and dog control;
- Require names and addresses in relation to anti-social behaviour, licensing, damage to property, injury, alarm or distress, possession of drugs, road traffic offences and fixed penalty offences;
- Require persons (those under 18 years and above) drinking in designated places to surrender alcohol;
- Seize tobacco (from those aged under 16 years), drugs and vehicles (used to cause alarm);
- Enter and search premises for the purposes of saving life and limb and preventing property damage;
- Remove abandoned vehicles;
- Control traffic for purposes other than escorting a heavy load;
- Conduct road checks and stop vehicles;
- Place and maintain road signs;
- Enforce cordoned areas and stop and search in authorised areas (under the Terrorism Act 2000); and
- Photograph persons (who have been arrested, detained or issued with a fixed penalty notice) away from a police station.

In addition to these standard powers, PCSOs have a set of 22 discretionary powers. These are:

- Issue fixed penalty notices for disorder, truancy excluded pupil in public place, dog fouling graffiti and fly-posting;
- Detention of people for up to 30 minutes who does not give their name and address on request and the power to search them for dangerous items;
- Use of reasonable force to prevent a detained person from making off;
- Enforce local bylaws and licensing offences;
- Deal with begging;
- Disperse groups and remove under 16s to place of residence;
- Remove children contravening bans imposed by a curfew notice to place of residence;
- Remove truants;
- Search for alcohol and tobacco;
- Enforce park trading offences;
- Enter licensed premises;
- Stop vehicles for testing; and
- Direct traffic for escorting abnormal loads.

These powers are fully outlined in the recent policing Green Paper (Home Office 2008a).

5.4 Funding Arrangements

Community Wardens

In March 2003 the Scottish Government announced the provision of £20 million of funding (allocated through the Revenue Support Grant) to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour, environmental degradation and to help *Build Strong, Safe, Attractive Communities* (BSSAC) through the establishment of a community warden scheme in all 32 Scottish local authorities from April 2004 onwards. This built on the success of early pilot schemes in Edinburgh and Renfrewshire which were established in disadvantaged communities prior to central government funding. These pilot schemes were supported through initiatives like the Better Neighbourhood Services Fund (BNSF) established to allow councils to improve services in deprived neighbourhoods.

Of the 32 awards, most (75%) were for £400,000 or less and the most common award was for £165,000. Glasgow City Council received the largest award of £1 million. Many of the schemes covered a number of discrete sub-areas that were often geographically dispersed and most schemes have been solely reliant on central funding. Recent research by UNISON Scotland however, has shown that very few local authorities have provided additional funding for their wardens schemes: only 11 local authorities provide additional funds and of these 2 authorities only provide in-kind support (e.g. management supports, accommodation legal and personnel). Of those nine local authorities who provided additional funding this has come from a variety of other internal and external sources (UNISON Scotland 2008).

Despite the range of positive outcomes identified in two separate reports commissioned in 2007 by the then Scottish Executive[29], problems have arisen because the schemes had been financed through ring fenced funding from the Scottish Government. The Scottish Budget Spending Review 2007, however, ended this ring fenced funding and has made no additional money available for local authorities to fund warden schemes beyond March 2008. This raises critical issues about the sustainability of the schemes in their present format, given the likelihood that many local authorities simply may not choose to continue funding the scheme given competing budget pressures and targets.

PCSOs

In England & Wales despite a clear rationale for reform, changes to the workforce mix initially met widespread opposition. Reform was only secured when the Government protected police officer funding through the Police Grant and provided additional 'ring-fenced' funding for PCSOs.

Consequently, the Neighbourhood Policing Fund (NPF) was set up by the Home Office to fund the introduction of 24,000 PCSOs across forces between 2006 and 2008. The Home Office provided tapered funding over a three year period (100% in year 1 and 75% in the following two years) before finances were absorbed into the Police Grant. Police forces were expected to match any expected funding shortfalls during this period either directly, or through partners such as local authorities. This has raised a number of problematic issues: extending funding sources to a variety of partners makes funding potentially more contingent and short-term, especially if this ceases and forces must go through the costly process of either making PCSOs redundant, finding other partnership funding or funding the PCSOs themselves. Nevertheless, the recent Green Paper highlights that the funding of PCSOs will continue to be protected for the next three years.

[29] For example, Hayton et al (2007).

5.5 Stakeholder Acceptability & Impact

Both Wardens and PCSOs have attracted relatively strong and persistent criticisms of their respective roles from internal and external stakeholders. While PCSOs may be typically labelled as *'plastic plods'*, other criticisms concern their provision of policing *'on the cheap'*. This however, is despite the available evidence to date which shows that PCSOs have come to be valued both by police officers, community stakeholders and members of the public alike (National Policing Improvement Agency 2008). For example, the recently published Casey Report (2008) provided evidence of:

- High public awareness of PCSOs;
- Local 'visibility of PCSOs;
- Public confidence ratings in PCSOS that were similar to the police as a whole; and
- Public satisfaction with the role they were playing in the local community.

Similarly, in Scotland the evidence suggests that warden schemes have helped reduce local crime, the fear of crime, levels of anti-social behaviour and improved the overall quality of the environment[30]. However, the recent Scottish Executive evaluation also makes it clear that wardens:

- Were less effective in engaging with younger people, which may be especially problematic as these are a key target group of ant-social behaviour efforts; and
- Thought that they poorer partnership working relationships with the police than other stakeholders, such as local authority departments and fire and rescue services.

Recent research has also shown that concerns do still exist in local communities about the limited powers of both PCSOs and wardens and that greater reassurance may be provided by sworn police officers. Nevertheless, the evidence also suggests that with increasing public familiarity and exposure to Wardens and PCSOs, both are seen to be delivering local reassurance and perceptions of lowering levels of neighbourhood crime and nuisance.

5.6 Neighbourhood Policing Options in Scotland

Although the evidence shows that there are a number of documented strengths about the warden scheme models adopted in Scotland, the evidence on PCSOs from England & Wales sharply highlights the gaps in neighbourhood policing in Scotland. It may be argued that while developments in policing in relation to civilianisation have moved on considerably in England & Wales over recent years, there is still a strong need to develop a clear strategy on municipal policing in Scotland. In England & Wales there has been a expanding tier of local policing populated by wardens, PCSOs and police officers. In Scotland, the main approach to date has been to use wardens and no similar role for PCSOs exists despite the support of influential organisations such as the SPSA which strongly supports their introduction. Yet there are a number of strategic and operational issues that make the introduction of PCSOs in Scotland an attractive option for consideration. These are linked to the main arguments for increasing civilianisation and the benefits arising from this as outlined in previous sections. The key considerations are that:

- PCSOs in England & Wales offer a more cost-effective approach to neighbourhood policing and provide greater geographical coverage across communities than may otherwise be achieved and sustained by using police officers;
- PCSOs have been shown to be a proven success in tackling high volume and low level neighbourhood crimes; and

[30] See for example, Fife Council (2007), Hayton et al (2007), Stevenson (2006).

- In Scotland, PCSOs would offer a positive extension of civilianisation, with proven management models and approaches already in place in England & Wales.

Compared to an approach using wardens, there are a number of legal and organisational advantages arising from the use of PCSOs. These principally concern their:

- Roles & powers;
- Management, supervision and accountability; and
- Funding arrangements.

Roles & Powers

Police forces in England & Wales have shown considerable versatility in how PCSOs have been used (as detailed above) and this has been an undoubted strength of the role. Although the Home Office review in 2006 was aiming to 'tighten' and 'narrow' their range of uses, there are a number of operational and community benefits arising from their greater versatility compared to wardens. These are:

- Their relatively wider range of uses in community contexts from road traffic situations, liaison, assisting officers with enquiries provides ***greater operational abilities*** for forces than wardens who also have different sets of priorities (e.g. environmental) set by local authorities;

- Their ability to ***enforce*** across an albeit limited range of powers means that they may act as a greater deterrent and provide increased reassurance to local communities; and

- The enhanced benefits to the ***internal organisational capacity*** of police forces themselves who have used PCSOs in a variety of ways outside of frontline neighbourhood roles.

While there is still some confusion among the public in Scotland about the role, status and remit of Wardens (Scottish Executive 2007a), the powers available to PCSOs appears to have had more positive implications for public reassurance. In a recent survey for example, the vast majority (92%) of members of the public thought it was important that PCSOs should have detention powers. There were also high levels of support for PCSOs having even stronger powers of detention (standard for all PCSOs) and to issue fixed penalty notices for disorder (Casey 2007). Community Wardens in Scotland have no police powers and recent research has highlighted problems with the lack of enforcement powers available to this group and the issue of what powers wardens should have (Donnelly 2008)[31].

Although recent research shows that there was a similar demand for having additional enforcement powers among most wardens in Scotland (57%), a sizeable proportion (36%) felt that these were unnecessary and would raise important community and organisational issues for existing warden schemes. The main points arising from the research were:

- A desire among many wardens for greater powers, many of which mirror those already available to PCSOs in England Wales (e.g. powers to confiscate alcohol from those aged under 18 years and to ask for names and addresses);

- Support for having additional powers was partly based on the view that people in areas patrolled by wardens wanted them to be able to tackle local crime and anti-social behaviour in a 'stronger' fashion;

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[31] This included a postal self-completion survey of 192 wardens across 21 local authority areas in Scotland.

- Those wardens who did not wish enforcement powers largely did so because this would have a detrimental impact on their relationship with local people; and

- Managers of warden schemes in particular, largely did not support having additional powers, believing that fixed penalty powers were sufficient and that enforcement raised issues about the current low pay scales available to wardens and the limited skills and aptitudes of wardens. These were seen as barriers to greater responsibilities.

The research highlights that there are important 'enforcement', 'deterrent' and 'reassurance' gaps in neighbourhood policing in Scotland. More critically it suggests that wardens are simply not likely to be the most appropriate role in which greater enforcement powers should be placed and that there is a need to look at how these issues can be better addressed.

Management, Supervision & Accountability

The current (and largely) local authority-led warden arrangements for neighbourhood policing in Scotland mean that there may be greater variability in the operation and practice of neighbourhood policing than may be otherwise necessary or desirable. In Scotland, there are potentially thirty two models or types of neighbourhood warden 'policing' in operation, masking a high degree of variation in very localised provision, practice and delivery. This raises issues about the necessity of such variation in practice across Scotland, which would potentially be reduced if these schemes were at least police-managed. Even in those schemes that are managed by the police, there is an issue about the wider aims of warden schemes which are not simply about community safety. Although similar variability exists in England & Wales with regard to the current roles of PCSOs, the fact that they are police-led and framed largely in terms of community safety has a number of benefits for neighbourhood policing in terms of the efficiency and effectiveness of their management structures and their accountability.

The discussion on greater enforcement powers for wardens in Scotland cited above highlights that wardens may not be the most appropriate role in which greater policing enforcement powers should be placed. There are also important contractual and accountability issues that make wardens wholly inappropriate in this regard. Wardens are employees of the local authority and are subject to local government terms and conditions, discipline and grievance procedures. Because of this, distinct managerial problems would arise for local authority-led schemes if these were expanded and additional powers were allocated (Donnelly 2008). These would arise most obviously in areas such as pay, supervision, training, health and safety at work and those 'complaint procedures' which would mediate the relationship between wardens and the general public. Additionally, new protocol arrangements with existing police partners would most likely have to be revised and updated.

In contrast, PCSOs in England & Wales are solely managed by police forces as part of formally designated neighbourhood policing teams. They have become part of the prevailing cultures and practices of the 'police family'. These are important considerations. PCSOs are employees of police forces and as a consequence they are subject to the full range of internal procedures of these agencies (including a 'complaints system') which make these roles fully accountable within a policing and justice system framework. Additionally, while their initial acceptance by police officers was problematic, it can be argued that issues of integration have largely been resolved. PCSOs are now more or less firmly embedded in local police structures and accepted by officers and local communities for whom they have helped tackle a range of local low level crimes and offences which traditionally officers have failed to do.

Funding

The funding of warden schemes has been described as a 'cocktail' of central and local government sources (e.g. Donnelly 2008), although most schemes are wholly centrally funded (UNISON Scotland 2008a). This does however, present a very serious threat to the sustainability of warden schemes as the main source (or sole source for most schemes) of funding was no longer ring fenced after March 2008. Consequently, funding for wardens schemes will no longer be protected and schemes will have to compete for budgetary provision alongside a raft of other competing spending alternatives and priorities in the local government sector: one which has increasingly been expected to meet the costs of national initiatives[32] against the backdrop of a continued freeze on levels of Council Tax revenue. Not surprisingly, many local authorities have no meaningful medium to long term plans involving wardens and this has created appreciable managerial, organisational and personnel difficulties for scheme managers (Donnelly 2008). Most wardens are employed on temporary fixed term contracts (UNISON Scotland 2008a) and this absence of security of employment undermines the longer-term sustainability of the warden schemes.

PCSO funding also operates using a cocktail approach to funding but relies principally on central government funds through the Police Grant. Funding for additional PCSOs is protected though problems have arisen and constraints imposed in 2008 have already meant that the projected target figure of 24,000 PCSOs has not been met: with most forces experiencing a 33% shortfall in their overall numbers of personnel. It should be borne in mind however, that because of central funding through the Police Grant combined with ongoing efforts to civilianize forces in England & Wales and the efficiencies arising from these, this may make PCSO numbers less vulnerable to change than may otherwise be the case in a local government context.

5.7 Analysis

There are a number of key points to consider in favour of a PCSO (or equivalent) role in neighbourhood policing in Scotland. PSCO roles provide greater operational versatility for police forces combined with 'visible' enforcement powers which we know from recent evaluations are proven and effective. In Scotland, they would plug a neighbourhood gap in policing and they are likely to offer greater public reassurance than is currently experienced by local communities. Like staff in general they are also likely to be used by police forces in a variety of ways that will enhance the internal organisational capacity of forces, potentially significant at a time when policing will come under pressure to perform within increasing budgetary constraints. One of the main ways to address the issue of police productivity is through forces making greater efforts towards workforce reform and adopting the PCSO model in neighbourhood policing.

A key lesson from England & Wales is that despite almost inevitable pockets of cultural resistance of officers to their deployment, because PCSOS are directly employed and managed by the police, these problems decrease as staff become embedded in the prevailing cultures and practices of the 'police family'. PCSOs are employed by police forces which has a number of important legal and contractual advantages in terms of their operational management and for their accountability. Unlike wardens, PCSOs are directly managed by police forces. This would make them clearly accountable within a framework that is wholly appropriate for the type and range of tasks and duties that they would perform and the powers they exercise.

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[32] For example, the care needs of an increasingly ageing population, recent plans to provide free school meals for all primary school children aged 5-7 years and ongoing local government pay issues arising from the implementation of the national job evaluation scheme which has already generated numerous equal pay claims from female employees across Scotland.

There are real issues however, concerning the funding of PSCO roles. Compared to wardens in Scotland, the central funding arrangements of PCSOs mean that they would not be as exposed to the ever competing and tightening pressures on local authority funding. In Scotland, funding for wardens is not 'ring fenced', yet PCSO funding is protected in England & Wales. This has important implications not only for the 'acceptance' of PCSOs by police forces but for the longer-term sustainability of this neighbourhood policing approach. The mechanism of continued central government protection allied to a tapered absorption of their costs into police budgets is an undoubted strength of the PCSO model. Although there have been shortfalls in PCSO in the past two years in England & Wales, their funding continues to be protected and this makes this approach more sustainable over the longer term.

In conclusion, the strengths of adopting PCSOs in Scotland outweigh any of the criticisms of the role that have arisen in England & Wales. The approach is proven, effective, reinforced by sustainable funding arrangements and would plug an important gap in neighbourhood policing in Scotland. For these reasons we would recommend that PCSOs (or equivalent) be considered and adopted in Scotland.

5.8 Summary

The key points arising from the material in this section are:

- While community warden schemes operate across most local authority areas in Scotland and have little or no meaningful enforcement powers, there is no current provision for expanding municipal policing through the deployment of PCSOs. Yet there are few reasons to think that the benefits that have been gained from the use of PCSOs in England & Wales could not also be realised in Scotland;

- PCSOs have a number of strategic and operational advantages that make their introduction in Scotland an attractive option for consideration. Compared to using officers, PCSOs are a more cost-effective approach to neighbourhood policing and provide greater geographical coverage across. They have also been shown to be a proven success in tackling high volume and low level neighbourhood crimes. Compared to wardens, they offer a number of key legal and organisational advantages in terms of their roles and powers, management, supervision and accountability, and their funding arrangements;

- Compared to wardens, PCSOs have greater role versatility combined with 'visible' enforcement powers. This potentially means greater public reassurance in neighbourhood policing. They have been shown to enhance the internal organisational capacity of police forces, who have used PCSOs in a variety of ways outside of frontline neighbourhood roles;

- Compared to wardens, PCSOs are employed by police forces. This has a number of important legal and contractual advantages in terms of their management and accountability, covering issues such as training, pay and complaints. In England & Wales, they have become part of the prevailing cultures and practices of the 'police family' and they are firmly placed within the justice system;

- Compared to wardens in Scotland, the funding arrangements of PCSOs mean that they are not as exposed to the ever competing and tightening pressures of local authority funding. In Scotland, while funding for wardens is not 'ring fenced', PCSO funding is protected. This has important implications for the longer-term sustainability of

neighbourhood policing and is an undoubted strength of the approach involving PCSOs; and

- The strengths of adopting PCSOs in Scotland outweigh the criticisms of the role that have arisen in England & Wales. The approach is proven, effective, reinforced by sustainable funding arrangements and would plug an important gap in neighbourhood policing in Scotland. For these reasons we would recommend that PCSOs (or equivalent) be considered and adopted in Scotland.

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