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# THE ROLE OF EMPATHY IN POLICE CONTACT WITH YOUNG PEOPLE FROM DISADVANTAGED BACKGROUNDS:

(POLICING YOUNG CARE-EXPERIENCED  
AND LGBTQI+ PEOPLE)

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Police Scotland, the Scottish Institute for Policing Research (SIPR) and the Scottish Police Authority (SPA) joined together to provide significant funding for projects and activities which meet genuine evidence gaps and support Police Scotland to further contact and engagement with all elements of our communities in Scotland, but particularly those groups which are seldom heard.

The term 'seldom-heard groups' refers to under-represented people who may be less likely to engage with Police for a variety reasons (such as race, religion, sexuality, disability, age, and communities isolated through geography or deprivation). A focus on understanding seldom heard groups will place more emphasis on Police Scotland and our collaborators to connect with these communities ensuring their voices are heard; their needs are met; and their perspectives are understood.

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**Abertay  
University**

# The role of empathy in police contact with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds (Policing Young Care-experienced and LGBTQI+ People)

## Executive Summary

This report is concerned with a study that was funded by the Scottish Institute for Police Research as part of the *Seldom Heard Voices* project. Seldom-heard voices refers to groups or communities who may be less likely to engage with the police for a variety of reasons such as race, religion, sexuality, disability, age, or deprivation. In the case of this study, we were interested in young people identifying within the LGBTQI+ community and with the additional intersectional criteria of being care-experienced.

We have taken a critical-interrogative approach that seeks to examine the issue of policing in relation to seldom heard voices through three modes of investigation. The first examines Police Scotland's overall strategic approach in terms of policing within various communities. Police strategic reporting can be considered as displaying similar practices found in the corporate and commercial world. A key aspect of this type of reporting is laying out the future direction of the organization in terms of the vision of senior executives. Police reports in general belong to a wider reporting genre while strategic plans can be considered as part of a colony of planning genres. The aim of the first part of the investigation was therefore to examine the discursive construction of Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority's *Joint Strategy for Policing (2020): Policing for a safe, protected, and resilient Scotland*. This is a key document for publicly communicating Police Scotland's overall strategic intent with regard to community-based policing. The way that the report is rhetorically constructed is therefore important in conveying a commitment to engaging with different sections of society. In this regard the extent to which the report embraces the latest model of public sector management based upon public values is examined. It is evident the report does at times mimic the genre of strategy reports in the corporate and commercial world as well as deploying elements of the new public governance model that seeks to adopt a more inclusive and "for the public good" tone. We have chosen to depict the analysis as seeking to understand the discursive anatomy of the report as this seems an apt metaphor in getting into the 'body' of such writing. Although the rhetorical construction of the report does not set hard targets in terms of quantifiable outcomes with specified target dates, it does have an indirect impact on policing practice in terms of the strategic role adopted by higher middle level managers as the recent work of Elliot et al. (2020) has found.

The second mode of investigation was to examine police recruit training lesson material on the issue of dealing with diverse groups. Our aim was to find out the nature of what is covered in recruit training and to explore the underlying basis of what was taught in terms of prevailing concepts and ideologies. The teaching materials are analysed from a discourse analytic perspective in order to reveal discursive dilemmas within the lessons. On the one hand there is an affirmation of diversity and inclusion, while on the other prejudiced views are located 'down' at the level of individual attitudes. Overall, the teaching material presents criminal actions where diversity and inclusion are challenged as being ascertainable through suspects' discourse, often presented in the teaching material through declaratives that indicate prejudiced motives. In a similar vein, the operational nature of policing, for example in relation to dealing with youth crime or stop and search, is pitched in terms of a dilemma of duty of care versus due investigative process. This places officers in the position of operationalising rules and procedures which are sometimes presented in somewhat abstract and static terms.

The third mode of our investigation was to explore what young people have to say about their experience of coming into contact with police officers. The aim was to find out if the strategic direction of Police Scotland's approach to community policy and the training given to recruits on engaging with diverse groups was reflected in young people, some of whom identified as belonging to the LGBTQI+ community. However, we also wanted to explore an additional dimension in terms of care-experienced young people. This is important as we take the view that many of the issues that confront young people are intersectional and cross-cutting. For example, a young person may not simply identify herself as lesbian but also care-experienced. These identifications, and the concomitant experiences associated with them in terms of any contact with police officers, are crucial in understanding young people's view and reactions. In order to access these young people's views, we ran a small number of focus groups with care-experienced individuals. Our approach involved drawing upon interpretative phenomenological analysis in order to tap into the young person's lived experience. What these focus groups reveal, almost

without exceptions, is how participants talked about how they struggled with police interactions in the past and present. Three themes were prevalent: (i) embodied mistrust of police, (ii) being made to feel like a suspect, and (iii) policing without empathy. Across all themes spans the core issue of 'respecting boundaries'. While police officers have personal responsibility and accountability in responding to incidences, it must be acknowledged that certain contexts are arbitrary, and boundaries can be blurred and there is the potential for inappropriate responses.

### *Recommendations*

1. We recommend that Police Scotland's overall strategic direction with regard to contact with diverse groups should be based explicitly on a model of new public governance that recognizes and promotes modern policing for 'public good'. This could involve continuous professional development (CPD) training based on real-life contexts and associated understandings of the changing nature of society and the role of modern policing in it.
2. We recommend that Police Scotland's approach to police recruit training with respect to inclusion and diversity should focus upon 'real life' hate crime in terms of the kinds of abuse directed at certain group. This could involve experienced officers sharing with recruits in training cases of dealing with such crimes and the difficulties involved in charging offenders.
3. We recommend that Police Scotland's approach to policing young people from the LGBTQI+ community should recognise their wariness of police officers in terms of the issues of 'boundaries' in encounters. This could involve adopting 'policing with empathy' as workable solution to this problem through more research on how police officers can successfully work with young people in creating a safer and more tolerant society.
4. We recommend intersectionality should be recognised by police officers in dealing with diverse groups, especially those who are care-experienced. A demonstration of such recognition would be to act as a role model in declaring being care-experienced a protected characteristic with regard to policing in Scotland.

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# The role of empathy in police contact with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds (Policing Young Care-experienced and LGBTQI+ People)

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## 1. Examining Police Scotland's Strategic Report

Strategic management has become a commonplace beyond the world of corporate management and has colonized different domains of organizational life (Brandtner et al., 2017; Carter, 2013; Greckhamer, 2010; Greckhamer & Cilesiz, 2022; Kornberger & Clegg, 2011). As Carter et al., 2010: 573) point out the organizational world is "saturated by strategy" and indeed Carter (2013: 1047) characterizes it as "the master concept of contemporary times". This is also reflected in the production of strategy documents, and most pervades the discourse of public sector organizations where there has been a trend towards the adoption of managerialisation. However, the rhetorical form of these documents and how they seek to justify strategic choices is a relatively under-researched area. This paper examines such a document: Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority's *Joint Strategy for Policing (2020): Policing for a safe, protected and resilient Scotland*. This document sets out the priorities and plans for the future direction of policing in Scotland in the coming years and represents a refresh of an earlier strategic plan from 2017. The discourse analysis undertaken on the document reveals how strategy is discursively constructed as necessary and also draws attention to the rhetorical features of the text that enable it to convey a sense of setting out an uncontested course of action. The examination of the discursive anatomy of this document denaturalises the normative way in which strategy is constructed within the realm of public sector organisations.

### 1.1 Strategic Management Discourse in the Police Service

The field of strategic management developed as an academic field within business education (Bowman et al., 2002; Hambrick & Chen, 2008) and tends to focus on such aspects within the logic of a planning and the monitor of outputs (Alvesson & Willmott, 1995; Carter et al., 2010; Carter & Whittle, 2018; Ezzamel & Willmott, 2010; Grandy & Mills, 2004). The development of this type of approach led to an accompanying growth in corporate discourse framed around presenting projections and decisions expressed within strategy documents (Alvesson and Willmott, 1996; Balogun et al., 2014; Phillips & Dar, 2009). Much of this type of discourse is associated with a growing trend in the logic of managerialism (Alvesson and Deetz, 2000; Mueller and Carter, 2007) which has infused the public sector and orientated them towards the organizational practices found in the commercial and corporate world (Clarke & Newman, 1997; Jensen, 2021; Yeatman, 1993).

The turn towards managerialism within the police service has been commented upon by scholars who have examined the focus on targets and performance indicators. In a wide-ranging review of the nature and potential deleterious effects of managerialism in the Australian police service Vickers & Kouzmin (2001) drew attention to what they saw as several problems with this kind of approach, and most notably that its technocratic and rationalist focus could be counter-productive to public service people-facing work. Cockcroft & Beattie (2009) found widespread resistance by officer towards a concern with these type of indicators with the view that they are too narrow in focus on do not represent the breadth of the role. Martin (2003) provides a historical overview of U.K. policing and the ways in a focus on performance indicators as a measure of efficiency has led to various problems in the focus on statistics and targets meaning that government priorities dominate local concerns and agendas. Maguire & John (2006) in an assessment of intelligence-led policing which is based upon a strategic approach through the analysis and management of problems and risks, argue that it runs the risk of running up against police cultural



attitudes and misunderstanding and of becoming dominated by of centrally set targets. More recently, Beckley (2021) has drawn attention to issues associated with a culture of managerialism with the Australian police service. She points to many of the issues addressed above including, the over-zealous focus on targets and performance indicators at the expense of focusing on a high-quality public service. On the other hand, she acknowledges that the latest model of public sector management is now entering the field of police strategic thinking based upon new public governance (Morgan & Cook 2015; Osborne, 2009; Sorrentino et al., 2018; Torfing & Triantafyllou, 2013). This model incorporates "public values" into decision making and strategic aims. It is based upon the recognition that public services rely upon inter-relationships and inter-dependencies, and that these services work across multiple boundaries with diverse stakeholders in terms of what constitutes "public value." Nonetheless, Beckley concludes that the police service must confront several historical issues to reach this stage of organizational development.

## 1.2 The Strategy Report in Policing

The widespread adoption of strategic management has meant that police forces now are required to produce longer range organizational plans. This has developed from the introducing strategic planning techniques in public sector organizations (Ferlie & Ongaro, 2015) based upon clear goals and strategies that define approaches to achieve these (Bryson, 2018). However, the effectiveness of strategic planning in police forces has been the subject of question and there has been a skepticism expressed about the use of strategic management approaches in the public sector, (Williams & Lewis, 2008; Boyne & Gould-Williams, 2003). One of the few studies of the ways in which strategic planning is implemented in the police service was conducted by Elliot et al. (2020) who found that strategic plans have an indirect role in facilitating higher level middle managers in adopting a more effective strategic role as well as providing more clarity for the processual nature of interactions with external stakeholders.

Reports and plans can be considered in terms of belonging to genres of communicative purposes Bhatia (2004). Police reports belong to a wider reporting genre while strategic plans can be considered as part of a colony of planning genres. It is of course possible that there is a combination of both in a given document. Genres can be considered in terms of their communicative purposes and involve a set of discursive moves that reflect normative expectations associated of their intended audiences in terms of content and format (Bhatia, 2004; Swales, 1990). Investigations into the nature of strategic reports have focused on the discursive construction and rhetorical forms of the texts. For example Vaara et al. (2010) used a critical discourse analysis approach in examining how a strategic city plan in Finland achieves discursive power through features such as self-authorization where the text refers to its own importance as a strategy documents (e.g. "Strategy is a central tool for leading a city": Vaara et al. 2010: 690; technical discourse and terminology in terms of indicators and factors (e.g. SWOT-analysis); the use of key buzzwords (e.g. "service offerings" and "individual responsibility" Vaara et al. 2010:693; forced consensus where the decision options are presented in a limited way (e.g., "Services will not be provided according to production capacity, but will be based on real customer need." Vaara et al. 2010: 695; and the use of declaratives that turn into imperatives (e.g., "The city's finances will strengthen to the extent that the contribution margin will suffice to cover all net investments and even pay off the debt." Vaara et al., 2010: 696.

However, not all strategic plans are as authoritative in terms of the power they convey, and this is particularly the case in public sector organizations who have multiple stakeholders such as the police service. In order to accommodate these stakeholders, the discursive construction of a strategy report may rely upon a degree of ambiguity where multiple interpretations are possible and so permitting stakeholders to read into such a report their own interests. This is referred to by Benders & Van Veen as 'interpretative viability', and by Giroux (2006) as 'pragmatic ambiguity'. Both concepts refer the notion that stakeholders have leeway to interpret the text and have the potential to do so in a way that fits their own concerns and purposes. Drawing upon a conversation analytic perspective Pälli et al. (2009: 313) point out that these kind of strategy documents are part of a language game where "the choices made in the strategy text do have several possible meanings even to the strategists themselves". This has indeed been found in studies of strategic planning in public and non-profit sector organizations which indicate that discursive ambiguity is inherent in meeting the interests of various stakeholders. This is apparent for example, in hospital strategic plans that offer a degree of vagueness in terms of

development recommendations (Denis et al., 1991) or in the plan of a government granting agency (Davenport & Leitch, 2005).

Taking the points made in reviewing the literature, the aim of this research is to examine the strategic plan of Scotland's Police Service (Police Scotland) with a view to identifying some of the key discursive issues identified above, including if the selected strategy document makes use of: (i) conventional strategizing in terms of use of figures, technical terms, buzzwords and the like; (ii) the use of new public governance discourse that is more inclusive in tone; (iii) the use of declaratives and modal verbs such as "will" and so on. The next section describes in more detail the methodological approach undertaken in the study.

## 1.3 Methodology

Police Scotland's strategy report *Scotland's Joint Strategy for Policing (2020): Policing for a safe, protected and resilient Scotland* forms the basis of the analysis presented in this paper. This report is a key consultative document that lays out Police Scotland's future direction for policing in terms of community relations:

*"This Strategic Police Plan recognizes the unique role of policing in the communities we serve. It reflects the need to refocus and redirect resources to ensure that officers and staff are fully supported as they respond with commitment and professionalism to the needs of communities." (p. 5)*

Moreover, this strategic report is a legal requirement under the terms of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 Sections 34 and 35 with ministerial approval prior to publication and was laid before the Scottish Parliament on 9 April 2020. It is jointly produced by the Scottish Police Authority and Police Scotland and at some forty pages in length can be considered as a high-level strategy document that sets out policing priorities and plans in line with the Scottish Government's revision of Strategic Police Priorities.

Police Scotland was established as on 1 April 2013 as the single body responsible for policing across Scotland. It is the second largest police force in the UK after the London Metropolitan Police. It is comprised of thirteen local divisions with each being responsible for meeting local needs and priorities, although the overall strategic direction is centrally governed. Apart from the 2020 *Joint Strategy for Policing* document, Police Scotland also provides an annual police plan which aligns with the aforementioned strategic document.

Following Cornut et al. (2012), the strategy document has been examined in terms of key features of the genre of strategic reporting, and specifically with regard to policing in the context of inclusion and diversity and how this features in terms of the discursive construction of the report and its reference to inter-relationships and any consequent scope for stakeholder interpretation. The structure of the report is examined, its reference to an outcomes focus, its tone in terms of optimism and commonality, and its grammatical construction in terms of the use of modal and deontic verbs and self-referential pronouns.

## 1.4 Analysis

### 1.4.1 The Contents Page

The main aspect of discursive anatomy of importance is the structure, akin to a skeleton of the report. This in large measure corresponds with Allison & Kaye's (2011) guide to *Strategic Planning for Nonprofit Organizations* in which it is suggested that the following headers are used to structure such reports: Introduction by the President of the Board; Executive Summary; Mission and Values Statement; Organization Profile and History; Summary of Core Strategies; Programme Goals and Objectives; Financial, Administrative and Governance Goals and Objectives; Appendices. In comparing the Police Strategy report with Kaye's guide then it is possible to see how there is a high degree of correspondence, particularly in terms of laying out key statements such as Mission and Values (Values, Purpose and Vision in the report), Summary of Core Objectives (Strategic Police Priorities in the report), and Programme Goals and Objectives (Outcomes 1 -5 in the report). The Organizational Profile, including key financial information is laid out in the report in graphical form with the following sub-headers: About Us, Wider



Context, and Improvements Under Way. One of the first features that is apparent is the contents page and structuring of the report which sets up a mixture of outcomes discourse with terms that imply stakeholder inclusion and inter-relationships with communities. This mix indicated a twin focus on the traditional outcomes and measurement features of strategic plans with a more stakeholder and new public governance orientation.

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Another feature that is apparent is the contents page and structuring of the report which sets up a mixture of outcomes discourse with terms that imply stakeholder inclusion and inter-relationships with communities. This mix indicates a twin focus on the traditional outcomes and measurement features of strategic plans with a more stakeholder and new public governance orientation. The discursive tone in these headers convey efficiency and effectiveness: "a proactive and response police service"; "effective service delivery"; "confidence in policing"; "positive working environment"; "sustainable, adaptable and prepared for future challenges"; "delivering change". This discourse conveys a tone of forthright optimism in the police service and therefore sets the report up as positive and including 'deliverables'.

**Outcome 1** – Threats to public safety and wellbeing are resolved by a proactive and responsive police service

**Outcome 2** – The needs of local communities are addressed through effective service delivery

**Outcome 3** – The public, communities and partners are engaged, involved and have confidence in policing

**Outcome 4** – Our people are supported through a positive working environment enabling them to serve the public

**Outcome 5** – Police Scotland is sustainable, adaptable and prepared for future challenges

**1.4.2 Strategic Moves: Context and Priorities**

One of the key rhetorical means through which the strategic reports seek to justify their priorities is to point to a changing context that necessitates these priorities. This provides the musculature of the report, the strategic moves that it makes and its driving impetus. The police report does so by making several points concerning the changing nature of society in order justify a need for change in the way that policing is conducted. The following statements from the report show how the is built into the rhetorical format of the discourse with points made about changing nature of society followed by what this means for policing priorities.

"Society is changing. We find ourselves moving at an ever-increasing pace from the physical to the digital world; a move that creates opportunities for new and complex crime types. This shift also affects traditional crime, much of which now has a digital element. (p.14)

To protect people effectively, Police Scotland will evolve, sharpening its focus on keeping people safe from harm, whilst embracing innovative technologies and partnerships." (p.14)

"The pace of technological change means that people increasingly feature or are active participants in a digital world. Policing will reflect this in how resources are allocated, ensuring the services provided are inclusive and proactive in meeting the needs of all communities." (p.18)

It is evident from the above the changing nature of society is framed in terms of digitization and the threat of cybercrime. Note the rhetorical use of descriptions to enhance this claim ("ever-increasing pace"; "pace of technological change" "affects traditional crime"). This change which constitutes a threat to law-abiding citizens is then used to justify the priority of "keeping people safe from harm" but also utilizing "innovative technologies and partnerships". The key point here is that these changes are presented as being at "pace" and therefore requiring the police service to literally keep pace with them.

However, there is also contained within the report that the police service itself must stay at the forefront of modernization, that it must adapt to ever-changing technology. An example of this discourse can be found in the extract in which the new technology is presented as being beneficial to modern policing.

"Our frontline officers are being equipped with mobile devices, making them more autonomous and allowing them to spend more time in communities. We will continue to identify and improve functionality so that our people can be effective where they are needed most. As we change our fleet, our vehicles will become mobile working environments. As new technologies for policing become available, we will consider how they will support our frontline delivery for the public." (p.20)

What is interesting to note about this extract is the way in which the use of new technology is rhetorically presented as a means for police officers to spend more time in communities (presumably without having to return to desktop computers within a police office environment). The focus on inter-dependencies and interaction in communities is a key driver within the strategic aims of the document. This is set within the context of meeting the needs of diverse communities:

"Our understanding of the term 'community' has evolved over time and is no longer limited to communities of geography. People also identify as part of communities formed through other shared characteristics, beliefs and experiences. This includes online connections, with people feeling part of multiple community groups. We will continue to improve the services we provide as society evolves.

We will work collaboratively with the communities we serve, drawing on expertise and experience to inform our work. We will embed accessibility and inclusivity into our service design. Accessibility standards will be applied across our technology, processes and systems, both internally and externally.

Our workforce must be representative of all our communities. Following recruitment drives for under-represented groups, our workforce is increasingly diverse. We must, however, do more to attract the brightest and best candidates to policing as a positive and inclusive employer." (p. 21)

"Engaging with people strengthens relevance, responsiveness and accountability and builds trust. It helps us learn about people and create services that meet their needs. We will improve and refocus our engagement activities where these are not reaching diverse communities and are not representative of the society we serve." (p.25)

What is apparent from the above is the term 'community' is presented as reflecting modern conception of identity and that this is presented within the notion of 'inclusivity'. Clearly this echoes the model of strategic planning as part of a new public governance model. This is extended to the workforce as "being representative of all our communities" and recognises the need for recruitment from under-represented groups. Note the tone within which this is set given that there has been public criticism of police forces for their lack of diversity. This is put more positively as a 'to do' by noting that Police Scotland must "do more to attract the brightest and best candidates to policing as a positive and inclusive employer". This kind of discourse rhetorically sidesteps criticism and instead put the drive for inclusivity in affirmative terms. Likewise, rhetorical impetus is given to "engagement activities where these are not reaching diverse communities and are not representative of the society we serve." Again, although there is a

recognition that the police service does not engage with certain communities, these are left unspecified and instead a more positive tone is stressed in terms of a general attempt to reach such communities.

## 1.4.2 Outcomes and Measurements

The report focuses on five outcomes which can be thought of as the major organs of its discursive anatomy. These are laid out in sections that state the nature of each followed by declarative statements of intent explanatory comments on each. Thus, the five outcomes and statements run as follows:

### **Outcome 1**

Threats to public safety and wellbeing are resolved by a proactive and responsive police service

To achieve this outcome, Police Scotland will:

1. Keep people safe in the physical and digital world
2. Design services jointly to tackle complex public safety and wellbeing challenges
3. Support policing through proactive prevention

### **Outcome 2**

The needs of local communities are addressed through effective service delivery

To achieve this outcome, Police Scotland will:

1. Understand our communities and deliver the right mix of services to meet their needs
2. Support our communities through a blend of local and national expertise
3. Support the changing nature of communities

### **Outcome 3**

The public, communities and partners are engaged, involved and have confidence in policing

To achieve this outcome, Police Scotland will:

1. Embed the ethical and privacy considerations that are integral to policing and protection into every aspect of the service
2. Protect the public and promote wellbeing across Scotland by providing services that are relevant, accessible and effective
3. Work with local groups and public, third and private sector organisations to support our communities

### **Outcome 4**

Our people are supported through a positive working environment, enabling them to serve the public

To achieve this outcome, Police Scotland will:

1. Prioritise wellbeing and keep our people safe, well equipped and protected
2. Support our people to be confident leaders, innovative, active contributors and influencers
3. Support our people to identify with and demonstrate Police Scotland values and have a strong sense of belonging

### **Outcome 5**

Police Scotland is sustainable, adaptable and prepared for future challenges

To achieve this outcome, Police Scotland will:

1. Use innovative approaches to accelerate our capacity and capability for effective service delivery
2. Commit to making a positive impact through outstanding environmental sustainability
3. Support operational policing through the appropriate digital tools and delivery of best value

What is apparent in these declarative strategic statements is their familiarity as part of conventional managerialist planning and reporting. Each is numbered as a set of objectives and in so doing this serves

to draw attention to their importance as major statements of intent. Furthermore, in the section of 'Measuring Progress and Assessing Performance' it is pointed out that "The five strategic outcomes provide a clear message to the public and stakeholders on how policing in Scotland is expected to improve as a consequence of implementing this Strategic Police Plan." (p.37). This section goes on to explain the measurement process, but given the high level nature of the document, does not specify this in detail but instead notes that

"The policing performance framework consists of a set of measures agreed between the Authority and Police Scotland, and an accompanying public reporting regime. For each of the agreed measures, a baseline position is established at the outset, and the direction of travel is agreed.

Progress against each of the framework's measures is reported by Police Scotland to the Authority's Policing Performance Committee for initial consideration, and to the Authority's Board meeting for full review on a quarterly basis."

"The Scottish Police Authority draws on a range of publicly available information and data to produce its Annual Review of Policing, including material contained in the quarterly performance reports provided by Police Scotland during the reporting year. In compiling this comprehensive view of Policing Performance, the Authority also reaches out to each Scottish local authority, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland and other partner organisations for their views on the impact of policing, in order to reflect a wide range of data and opinion sources." (p.37)

The rhetorical effect of this kind of statement is to provide confidence that there is indeed a means of measure how far outcomes have been achieved, and moreover that these rely upon tangible data drawn from a range of sources. What is left unspecified is the extent to which such data leads to adjustments or criticisms should outcomes not be considered as being achieved or on the way to being so.

#### 1.4.4 The Grammar of Strategy

The document is discursively driven along through various strengths of modal and deontic verbs such as "will", "required", "requires" "encourage" and self-referential pronouns such as "we", "our", and "us". This can be thought of as the discursive nervous system of the document in that it relays messages through grammatical channels that act to energize the statements made. Examples of these types of grammatical features (underlined) are set out below.

*"Police Scotland will continue its programme of transformation to ensure better efficiency and effectiveness within the financial allocation, whilst articulating clearly the level of resources required for current and future services." (p.7)*

*"Greater investment here will allow us to focus our resources on partnership, prevention and early intervention, enabling us to find effective solutions together. We will utilise our unique policing insights to demonstrate a clear case for change, building a solid evidence base for targeted investment in preventative measures to address vulnerability, mental ill-health and substance misuse." (p. 17)*

*"Local engagement is critical. To do this meaningfully and effectively requires genuine dialogue, respect, integrity, transparency and accountability." (p.19)*

*"We will improve how we manage public contact and the end-to-end user experience. This will create an accessible and seamless public experience with inclusive services. It will expand our digital and online options significantly. Our aim is to get it right first time, giving the public a better service and operating more efficiently as a modern police service." (p. 24)*

*"Our people have been subjected to a recent rise in violent assaults whilst performing their duties. We will learn from each of these instances and ensure staff have the right training and equipment to deal safely with all incidents they attend." (p.27)*

*We will continue to encourage our people to challenge the status quo, recognising when they suggest better, more efficient ways of doing things. We will encourage proactivity and problem-solving. (p.31)*

*We will work in partnership with other public, third and private sector organisations to identify opportunities and threats, collectively seeking innovative solutions." (p. 31)*

*"If you have something to tell us about the Strategic Police Plan or our service, please contact us at: <https://www.scotland.police.uk/contact-us> (p.40).*

What is evident from the grammatical features drawn attention to is how they provide inclusive and yet firm statements of intent and action. In particular, the use of the modal verb "will" provides a channel for making clear the action to be taken but when combined with the pronoun "we" rather than a third person versions such as "it will" or "this will", adds to the apparent strength of resolve and accountability behind the statements made. In addition, words such as "required" add strength to the claim being made in terms of what is needed.

## 1.5 Conclusion

The Police Scotland strategic plan analysed within this study contributes to an understanding of how such public sector documents at times mimic the genre of strategy reports in the corporate and commercial world as well as deploying elements of the new public governance model that seeks to adopt a more inclusive and "for the public good" tone. I have chosen to depict the analysis as seeking to understand the discursive anatomy of the report as this seems an apt metaphor in getting into the 'body' of such writing. However, it should not be lost on the reader of such reports that they are more than just high-level statements of intent; that they are living documents where the actions of the police force are assessed in relation to those statements. Although the rhetorical construction of the report does not set hard targets in terms of quantifiable outcomes with specified target dates, it does have an indirect impact on policing practice in terms of the strategic role adopted by higher middle level managers as the recent work of Elliot et al. (2020) has found. The discursive construction of such reports therefore serves as a guide, however loosely, operational police matters. However, what is also striking about the police strategy report is that its audience is the wider 'public' in the sense that it is a public document that is open to scrutiny. Perhaps this fact, more than its role in guiding operational practices that is where its audience lies; not with police officers but with the wider public who are entitled to know how the police operate, their problems, shortcomings, successes, and plans for the future.

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## 2. Examining Police Scotland's Diversity Recruit Training

### 2.1 Police Recruit Diversity Training

Police recruit training plays a vital part in ensuring successful police-public relations and in ensuring trust and co-operation. The preparation of officers through a period of recruitment training is crucial to how they are able to handle various situations they are likely to confront, especially in relation to minority groups (Garland & Hodkinson, 2014; McDevitt et al., 2002; Miles-Johnson et al., 2021). The nature of police recruit training attempts to inculcate the capacity to tackle complex situations within various communities and most police organisations educate officers about diversity issues as part of this. For example, in Scotland recruits receive a 12-week course on inclusion and diversity issues as part of their overall training. As society has changed in becoming more inclusive and diverse, the nature of policing has had to alter accordingly, and this is reflected in the mission statements, targets and goals within police strategic plans. to identify detailed information on targeted solutions that would deliver direct and tangible positive outcomes.

Research has focused on the nature of trust between police officers and the communities they serve in terms of reciprocity and how, during the process of encounter, members of the public come to accept and defer to the authority of the police (e.g., Bradford, 2014; Davidson et al., 2015; Van Craen, 2016). What is crucial is that officers are perceived as policing in the same way for all members of society and remain even-handed without any signs of apparent bias (Innes et al., 2009). In line with shifting societal and

organisational norms, police officers are considered in terms of being service providers who can attend to incidents and engage with members of the public in a non-discriminatory manner in order to maintain law and order. Police officers must be able to attend to incidents and respond respectfully and appropriately to all concerned, including victims, suspects and witnesses (Mastrofski et al., 2016; Wood & Bradley, 2009). Police recruit training that involves teaching how officers should engage with different members of public is therefore vital in equipping them to make appropriate, fair and balanced decisions, particularly in relation to diverse groups (Cordner & White, 2010).

Inclusiveness and diversity training is now commonly included as part of the police recruit training curriculum in terms of a move towards a service-orientated approach to policing (Miles-Johnson, 2016). It is also the case that police organisations are much more aware of training related to crimes that are targeted at minority groups (Garland & Hodkinson, 2014; McDevitt et al., 2002). In addition, there is a recognition that the instruction of recruits should also include an examination of the operational factors that are appropriate when responding to calls from diverse groups in terms of common forms of victimisation and the procedural rules for recording such crimes against these groups (Mason et al., 2015). However, it must be noted that research has indicated that training courses that deal with inclusion and diversity have been found to be inadequate in terms of officers' lack of understanding and knowledge of minority groups and the nature of crimes against them (Garland & Hodkinson, 2014; Grattet & Jenness, 2005). In this regard, Chappell & Lanza-Kaduce (2010) consider the socialisation of recruits and argue that police training should involve both classroom and in-the-field elements in the curriculum so that there is a degree of congruity between what is learned formally and what is learned when on-the-job. Given that police officers are routinely involved in making decisions that involve complex judgements based on the analysis and evaluation of evidence, then recruit training that involves a combination of classroom and field-based elements makes sense (Cleveland, 2006). It has been argued that training that focuses on minority groups and that is incorporated into police officers' routine performance enables more effective engagement with diverse groups (Goldstein & Buxton, 2014; Wheller & Morris, 2010). Recruit training programmes that foster contact between police and diverse groups has been a crucial inclusion in the curriculum and it is a moot point as to how much of should be given over to this aspect of policing.

The ways in which police officers engage with diverse groups has been the subject of criticism (Constable & Smith, 2015) leading to a focus on the adequacy of police training in relation to these groups. It is also the case that minority diverse groups often voice a lack of confidence in the ability of the police service to treat them equitably and with respect and as a consequence they are often unwilling to engage with police in terms of reporting crimes against them or in offering to co-operate as witnesses (Cherney & Chui, 2009; Miles-Johnson, 2013, 2015, 2016; Murphy, 2013; Murphy & Cherney, 2011; Skogan, 2006). For example, in a contemporary report of a survey conducted by LGBTQI+ Youth Scotland (2022) it was found that 38% of LGBTQI+ participants had experienced hate crime rising to 49% of transgender respondents. Yet only 11% who experienced hate crime had reported it, and when asked to imagine if they were subject to hate crime only 17% of LGBTQI+ participants, and 12% of transgender participants indicated that would feel confident in reporting it. The report goes on to point out that many believed that:

*".....their report would not be taken seriously, or that any incident they reported would not be worth wasting police time for unless it was 'severe enough' to be worth the effort. Others described the emotional cost to them as victims of reporting hate crime, with fears centring around being brushed off, having to out themselves to police and/or parents in reporting a crime, or the potential for police staff not understanding their experience as an LGBTI person." (p. 41)*

In a study of queer youth participants reported harassment and discrimination from police officers due to both their youth and identity as LGBTQI+. The authors argue that this suggests an intersectional approach is required in understanding relations between police and queer youth (Fileborn, 2019). Miles-Johnson & Wiedlitzka, (2021) found that there were significant differences in awareness levels and perceptions of police recruits toward members of minority communities, and that factors such as recruits' gender and sexuality and types of social interaction experienced with diverse groups influenced those perceptions.



What is apparent is that this situation needs remedied as it is both in the interest of the LGBTQI+ community and the police service to ensure that all sections of society are treated with due respects and in accordance with due process to ensure efficient and effective policing (Rowe & Garland, 2013). It is therefore crucial that police recruit training involves an understanding of the frequency of victimisation of diverse groups and the procedural issues in responding to hate crimes (Mason et al., 2015).

## 2.2 Methodology

This investigation draws upon a discourse analysis approach that is concerned with ideological dilemmas and contradictory discourses within recruit teaching materials used by Police (see Billig et al. 1988, Wetherell & Potter 1992). Three main research questions were central to the analysis: How is diversity and inclusion constructed in the teaching materials? How are operational matters constructed in relation to diversity and inclusion? What dilemmas are apparent in considering diversity and due police investigative process? The focus of this investigation is on aspects of police recruit training that bears upon aspects such as teaching about diversity and inclusion, the nature of hate crimes, policing and young offenders, and stop and search policy and operational practice. These aspects play a significant part in teaching about diversity and inclusion within police recruit training in Scotland.

The analysis stresses the nature of discourse as a social construction highlighting the ways in which such discourses that maintain practices. These discourses provide a detailed view of practices in the context of police recruit training and offer and insight into interpretative repertoires or commonplace ways of referring to matters that can be used in various and flexible ways. This analytical approach is useful in examining the just-so taken-for-granted discourses drawn upon as well as the conflicting demands that they raise. Repertoires are part of larger discourses, and these are discussed in presenting analytical examples of the teaching materials below. These materials were requested as part of a projects on 'seldom heard voices' by Police Scotland. No claim is made as to being representative of police recruit training in general. Rather they serve as an analysis and intervention in examining key discursive constructions that inform police recruit training.

## 2.3 Analysis

### 2.3.1 Diversity and Inclusion

The discourse analysis undertaken focuses on Police Scotland recruit training materials and in particular how their concerns with issues surrounding inclusion and diversity. The first discourse withing the diversity and inclusion material is what may be termed an affirmation discourse where diversity and inclusion and presented as a positive benefit for policing in terms of being in touch with the communities that are served.

Police Scotland recognises and values difference. We believe that Diversity enriches the organisation and provides our officers and staff with the potential to be more creative and dynamic. Whether it is exploring new forms of community engagement to identify people's needs or considering how to get the best from staff through flexible working conditions, equality and diversity issues are at the core of Police Scotland's business." (Unit 6 Lesson 1 Valuing Diversity and Inclusion, p.1)

The aims of Valuing Diversity and Inclusion training are to help police officers understand how diversity contributes to both the richness of the organisation, our communities and the statutory framework with which officers must comply. (Unit 6 Lesson 1 Valuing Diversity and Inclusion, p.4)

Diversity is located withing the individual through the application of categories that are dislocated from any socio-political or historical dimension. In other words, these categories are presented in an essentialist manner as ways of defining aspects of personhood. This can be seen in the following extract:

Diversity is about understanding that we are all unique and recognising our individual differences. The following are just a few dimensions of diversity in no particular order:-

- Sex
- Religious beliefs

- Race
- Marital status
- Ethnicity
- Parental status
- Age
- Education
- Physical and mental ability
- Income
- Sexual orientation
- Occupation
- Language
- Geographic location

In essence, diversity awareness is about understanding and accepting that we live and work in a society where everyone is different. This does not mean that one person or group is any better or worse than the next – just different." (Unit 6 Lesson 1 Valuing Diversity and Inclusion, p.3)

The source of failure to recognise diversity is also located within individual psychology rather than any socio-political or historical dimension:

For all practical purposes we will define a stereotype as:- "A prejudicial mental image held about particular groups of people which is based around false, distorted, simplified or incomplete knowledge about that group.

You will all be able to recollect a time that you have stereotyped a person." (Unit 6 Lesson 1 Valuing Diversity and Inclusion, p.5)

Bias, conscious or unconscious, are not limited to ethnicity and race. Though racial bias and discrimination are well documented, bias can exist toward any social group. A person's age, gender, gender identity, physical abilities, religion, sexual orientation, weight and any other characteristics can be subject to bias." (Unit 6 Lesson 1 Valuing Diversity and Inclusion, p.5)

It is also the case that diversity is cast within wider legislative frameworks such as the Human Rights Act (1998):

This act gives further effect to rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights. You will receive or have already received an input lesson "Human Rights" in Unit 3.

Article 14 of the Act (Prohibition of Discrimination) provides that the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set out in the Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status. As such Article 14 does not promote equality in its own right but imposes an obligation to secure the non-discriminatory enjoyment of the rights and freedoms protected by the other articles of the Convention. Unit 6, Lesson 1, p. 8)

What is interesting about this is that inclusion and diversity are externalised through reference to legal frameworks. This is further strengthened by pointing to protected characteristics:

There are nine "Protected Characteristics" which are addressed by equality legislation:-

- Sex
- Race
- Disability
- Sexual Orientation
- Religion or Belief
- Gender Reassignment
- Age
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

- Pregnancy and Maternity in respect of females (Unit 6, Lesson 1 p.8).

While the analytic points made above indicate a focus on prejudice and discrimination as being rooted in individual psychology the lesson also draws attention to broader processes at a cultural level. For example, the concept of ethnocentrism is raised as follows:

*Ethnocentrism is a commonly experienced concept and can be explained as a belief that the people, customs and traditions of your own race or nationality are better than those of other races. It's the making of judgements about the behaviour and culture of others based upon your own culture as the norm—viewing others through the eyes of your own culture.*

*Such behaviour is likely to lead to the feeling that one group's mode of living and values (your own) are superior to those of other groups. In extreme cases ethnocentrism may manifest itself in attitudes of superiority or hostility toward members of other groups, e.g., Hitler's "Master Race" theories and the attendant persecution of those deemed non-Aryan.*

*Whilst ethnocentrism is not inevitable or excusable it is, perhaps, understandable. The socialisation process is a strong one and people tend to see "their way" as the "right way" and in extreme cases the "only way". (Lesson 6, pp. 17-18)*

While there is mention here of socialisation and the issue is pulled back to the operation of assumed psychological constructs in the form of "attitudes of superiority or hostility". This is offset later through a discussion of positive action in terms of helping "to redress the imbalance caused by history and old attitudes" (Lesson 6, p. 20). The latter gives an indication that there is an historical dimension to prejudice and discrimination. However, while this broadens the scope of the recruits' learning it is still set within a traditional psychological conceptualisation, and indeed this is strengthened further in the lesson through the introduction of Allport's (1954) book on the Nature of Prejudice and his (1-5) Scale of Prejudice and Discrimination. The lesson provides an explanation of this scale, for example:

### **Scale Point 1. Anti-locution**

*Most people who have prejudices talk about them with friends, colleagues and occasionally with strangers. This could include verbal rejection by negative talk, racist or sexist jokes or by using offensive terms.*

*Anti-locution occurs when a majority group freely make jokes and derogatory statements about a minority group. Speech is in terms of negative stereotypes and negative images.*

*This is also known as "hate speech". It is commonly seen as harmless by the majority. Anti-locution itself may not be harmful but it sets the stage for more severe outlets for prejudice. (Lesson 6, p. 29)*

At the conclusion of these points is a Key Information point for recruits that encourages self-reflection:

### **Key Information**

*It is important that as a police officer you are aware of your own prejudices, where they come from, the potential implications of holding them and how to control them. By doing this officers will eliminate the external factors which may influence their impartiality and fairness. (Lesson 6, p. 33).*

This reflective process is pitched 'down' at the level of individual police officers rather than, for example, an examination of the police recruitment processes, typical recruitment pool, or at the level of the police as an institution. The crucial point here is that responsibility for ensuring "impartiality and fairness" falls upon individual officers who must ensure that they are aware of their own prejudices and "the potential implications of holding them and how to control them". Officers must therefore exercise self-control in order to perform their duties effectively.

The diversity discourse within the above extracts presents diversity and inclusion as both a desirable aspect of society as well as a challenge

### 2.3.2 Hate Crime

In considering hate crime the following definition is offered in the training material:

Any crime which is perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated (wholly or partly) by malice and/or ill-will towards a social group. (Lesson 2, p. 2)

What is apparent from this definition is the mentalism which is apparent in the notions of perception and motivation. In other words, the definition trades on an attributional process:

To assist in identifying whether or not a Hate Crime/incident has taken place, we should ask the victim or witnesses these questions:-

- Who perceived the incident to be hate related?
- Why that person perceived the incident to be hate related?
- Remember we do not challenge another person's perception, we explore it.
- What impact did the incident have on the victim and/or community?
- The evidence of a single witness is not sufficient to prove a charge.
- However, it is competent to label a hate crime aggravation based on the evidence of one person. (Lesson 2, p. 5).

As can be seen in the above excerpt from the lesson, there is an emphasis on perception in terms of how matters are viewed and attributed at an individual level. Note how this is considered as a subjective process and that the police are concerned with exploring such views. The training material develop further the potential nature of hate crime in terms of being aggravated and its target in terms of being racial, religious, aimed at a person with a disability, or related to sexual orientation. Aggravation is explained in terms of the offender's motive:

*You will deal with numerous crimes and offences during the course of your duties and with the exception of a very few genuinely "motiveless crimes", your enquiries will reveal or indicate why the perpetrator acted the way he or she did, i.e., the offender's motivation. In many cases this motivation will be no better explained than, "I didn't like him because he was a ....." Such an explanation is a possible indication of Hate Crime, i.e., the victim became a victim because of his or her membership of a group as opposed to his or her status as an individual. Many of the reasons given for "not liking" a person will mean that the crime or offence has been aggravated because of this "dislike".*

*An Aggravation is not a substantive crime or offence in its own right but a circumstance or series of circumstances which make a perpetrator's criminal or offensive conduct even worse. (Lesson 2, p. 9)*

In looking at this explanation of aggravation the example presented relies on the discourse of the perpetrator being a relatively straightforward account ("I didn't like him because he was a....."). While there may indeed be cases where perpetrators offer such statements, what may also be the case is an awareness of the normative disinclination against such overt prejudice and that it is more likely that there may be some attempt at minimising any such motivation. In this regard it is worth noting that "a circumstance or series of circumstances" are to be taken into account although it is assumed that this will "make the perpetrator's criminal or offence even worse". This statement sidesteps the issue of how such circumstances are not simply given but may themselves be the subject of rhetorical contestation. In other words, what this kind of explanation omits is the crucial role that police officers play in gathering testimony and if questioning suspects based on a common sense understanding of discourse and how descriptions may be given of actions that seek to excuse or offer mitigation. In other words, what this kind of explanation omits is the crucial role that police officers play in gathering testimony and if questioning suspects based on a common sense understanding of discourse and how descriptions may be given of actions that seek to excuse or offer mitigation.

This point is alluded to in reference to sexual orientation and transphobic hate crimes. In pointing to the nature of such crimes the point is made about their non-specific nature:

*When a sexual orientation prejudice or transphobic hate incident becomes a criminal offence, it's known as a hate crime. There are no specific sexual orientation prejudice or transphobic hate crimes. Any criminal offence can be a hate crime, if the offender targeted a person because of their prejudice or hostility against LGBTI people.[...]*

*It might not surprise you that the test as to whether a crime or offence has been aggravated on the grounds of a prejudice based on disability or sexual orientation or transgender identity is almost identical to the test for a racial or religious aggravation.*

*Sections 1 and 2 of this Act are sufficiently widely worded to make it an aggravation to victimise an individual on the basis that he or she associates with any person with a disability or a particular sexual orientation or transgender identity. (Lesson 2, p. 13)*

This kind of wide reference and the can be considered as an acknowledgment that hate crimes are heavily contextual and open to interpretation. These kinds of alleged offences may involve a discursive element making 'reading' the context problematic given that it can be claimed that remarks directed at an alleged victim were intended in some other innocuous manner.

The learning material includes the following example:

*One man is assaulted by another man. There are no other witnesses at locus but the whole incident is captured on CCTV. A review of the CCTV footage shows the perpetrator throw a single punch at the victim who falls to the ground. The perpetrator is clearly seen saying something to the victim but there is no sound on the recording. You attend the complaint. You note a statement from the victim in which he claims to have been punched to the ground by the perpetrator who then stated to the victim:*

*"TAKE THAT. I HATE POOFS LIKE YOU."*

*You seize the CCTV footage. You have sufficient evidence to libel a charge of Assault aggravated by Section 2 of the Offences (Aggravation by Prejudice) (Scotland) Act 2009 against the perpetrator. The victim's claim of assault is corroborated by the pictures from the CCTV and his allegation of the words used by the perpetrator require no further corroboration.*

*Ultimately the perpetrator's guilt in relation to both the assault and the aggravation will be decided by the court. The victim's sexuality is not even an issue here as the perpetrator has made the assumption that he is gay.*

*Note:- Evidence of an aggravation will most frequently come from words spoken by the accused, but the important point is that there is evidence, not simply a belief on the part of the victim. (Unit 6, Lesson 2, p14)*

What is evident from the above is the recognition that "evidence of an aggravation will most frequently come from words spoken by the accused". This recognition of the central role of discourse is welcome but again does not situate utterances within subsequent police interviews with the alleged victim, witnesses and suspect. It should also be noted that the alleged remarks by the perpetrator appear somewhat invented rather than being derived from an actual case.

### **2.3.3 Youth Offending**

One of the key issues that confront the police is dealing with potential child offenders in a manner that recognises that their wellbeing must be weighed against due investigation of any potential criminal act:

Officers must treat the need to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of the child as a primary consideration. This is not the only consideration and must be balanced with the need to fully investigate crime, the need to record crime in line with SRCS and the needs and rights of victims. (Unit 6, Lesson 8.2, p.1)

This dilemma is presented in terms of the process of deciding to make an arrest:

Whilst the seriousness of the offence is the primary question to be answered this is not the only consideration. The following questions may assist that decision making process;

- What is the purpose of the arrest (i.e. interview or obtaining forensic samples?)
- Is there any history of offending behaviour by the child?
- What kind of response is in the best interest of the child?
- Is this offence of a sufficiently minor nature that it may be dealt with by a warning/RPW or referral to partners?
- Is the offence likely to go before a court or Children's Hearing?
- Are there other factors affecting the child's wellbeing in addition to the reported behaviour
- Do I have sufficient evidence to arrest (officially accused)?
- If so, is keeping the child in custody necessary and proportionate for the purposes of bringing the child before a court or otherwise dealing with the child in accordance with law. (Unit 6 Lesson 8.2, p.4)

It is also the case that child offenders are considered as being vulnerable for various reasons;

Research has shown that offending in childhood if dealt with effectively may not continue into adulthood, hence the importance of catching and dealing with this behaviour early.

Factors which can contribute to on-going offending:-

- background of childhood abuse
- domestic abuse
- poor parental attachments
- care experienced
- behavioural problems
- truancy & poor educational outcomes

The earlier we can provide help and support the better. (Unit 6, Lesson 8.2, p. 10)

This dilemma places the police in the position of having to deal with child offenders in terms of a duty of care:

*Unfortunately not all children live trouble-free lives. Some are neglected or abused emotionally, physically or sexually, often by their parents or members of the immediate family, the very people they should be able to trust. Consequently, some run away from home or from residential establishments and are further exploited. Some children commit crime which may lead to a pattern of persistent offending.*

*You will come into contact with many of these children. The law recognises that they need to be protected and you must ensure that when necessary this protection is delivered. You can make a difference to a child's life. You may be the only positive interaction a child has with an adult in their life, use any interaction you have with a child as an opportunity to have a positive influence. (Unit 6, Lesson 8.2, p.11)*

This discourse places officers in the role of protecting children even if they have potentially committed crimes. It is evident that this is a sensitive aspect of policing premised on the recognition that young



people may be exposed to poor background circumstances. The notion of influence here is tethered to psychological impact through socialisation.

### 2.3.4 Stop and Search

An area of policing that has attracted attention is the power of stop and search. In the introduction to the learning material on this it is noted that:

*Stop and Search is an essential and effective policing tactic in the prevention, investigation and detection of crime. In Scotland, Stop and Search is governed by a Code of Practice which ensures that all searches are carried out in a manner that is proportionate, legal, accountable, necessary and ethical, ensuring that an individual's rights are upheld in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equalities Act 2010.*

*All searches must be conducted using statutory powers and recorded on the National Stop and Search database. (Unit 8, Lesson 1, p.1)*

What is notable in this statement is that the power of stop and search is externalised to the code. Officers must therefore adhere to the Code of Practice in terms of applying it in operational terms. However, the nature of this comes under what is deemed to be reasonable ground for a search. This is most controversial when it applies to observed behaviour:

*Reasonable suspicion may exist on the basis of the behaviour of a person alone. For example, if you encounter someone on the street at night who is obviously trying to hide something, you may (depending on the other surrounding circumstances) base such suspicion on the fact that this kind of behaviour is often linked to stolen or prohibited articles being carried. (Unit 8, Lesson 1, p.8)*

Trainee officers are given a mnemonic to apply in order to operationalise stop and search:

Where you form the opinion that a person is acting suspiciously or that they appear to be nervous without good reason, you must be able to explain, with reference to specific aspects of the person's behaviour or conduct which you have observed, why you formed that opinion.

The mnemonic SHACKS is useful when considering the reasonable grounds

Seen - What did you see?

Heard - What did you hear, (phone calls, conversations etc.)

Actions - What did the person do?

Conversations - When engaging with the individual, what did they say, did their comments increase or reduce your suspicions

Knowledge - What do you know about the person? Is there recent intelligence?

Smell What did you smell? (Unit 8, Lesson 1, p.9)

However, the training material acknowledges the potential negative perception of stop and search actions by the police, particularly among young people:

*As previously highlighted, stop and search must be conducted in line with the principles of the Code of Practice as these interactions can affect people's perception of the police, long after the search is concluded. Despite the potential for this to be a challenging encounter, it is important that officers engage positively with the public, particularly with children and young people during a stop and search, fully informing those searched on what is happening and why. (Unit 8, Lesson 1, p.9)*

What is presented to recruits through this information is the codified basis for stop and search as well as the notion of reasonable grounds for suspicion prior to actioning such a search. While the SHACKS mnemonic is presented as a useful means of operationalising such an action it is arguable if this is applicable in situ where police officers must act as events unfold. Perhaps more likely is that the mnemonic is applied in a post hoc manner when compiling a report of the incident. In other words, it may function as a post hoc means of recording the basis for initiating a stop and search.

## 2.4 Conclusion

This aspect of the study has outlined how diversity discourse is weaved into Police Scotland recruit teaching materials. While there is an affirmation of diversity and inclusion both positive and negative attitudes towards this are located 'down' at the level of the individual attitudes. This precludes any view that both affirmative and prejudiced views are located, not within the intrapsychic world but rather in the social world and lived reality. Indeed, while the teaching materials includes information about, for example, protected characteristics such as gender orientation, this is decontextualised from the notion that police officers may deal with person with such characteristics routinely and that in the interest of effective policing and trust withing the community that they are aware of how to treat such person with due respect.

In relation to hate crime, the teaching materials present examples of what such crimes might involve in relation to aggravation. However, these examples are somewhat stilted and often bear little relation to the often elusive nature of hate crime, especially in relation to what someone said or wrote. Hate crime may involve physical assault but can also involve or be accompanied by discourse. In not presenting the ways in which such discourse is negotiated and contested by suspects of hate crimes, a distorted view is presented to recruits as if hate speech can simply be read off what is said. In turning to the material on youth offending the ideological dilemma of investigating such crime is pitched against the notion of the vulnerable child whose socialisation may have led to being engaged in criminal acts. In this sense the police officer is presented with a dilemma of protecting such children's interests while also at the same time investigating through due process criminal behaviour. While police recruits are presented with, for example video material of actual cases to discuss, this can still be considered as somewhat remote from lived the experience of officers. It would therefore be interesting for recruits to see how police officer handle these kinds of dilemmas in practice. Finally, in relation to stop and search the mnemonic that is presented is decontextualised from actual police procedure and practice and is perhaps less than credible for how officers would react in situ. Rather it may serve as a post hoc rationalisation when constructing a police report of a stop and search incident.

In offering an overall concluding point, what is apparent from this analysis is the way in which the teaching materials offer a formal education and training for recruits that is detached from the workaday realities of policework and they ways in which victims, witnesses and suspects ordinarily talk. It is a little as if the commonsense intelligibility of how people talk and how matters are reported, negotiated and contested is removed from sight in these materials. Police officers are in the midst of such matters, and this is why this report argues that earlier calls for recruits to see how policing operates in practice is crucial. This is where the realities, and difficulties of police work lie and where police officers learn about upholding the rights of all citizens but also the role of maintaining law and order in society.

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## 3. Examining Care-experienced Young People's Views on Policing

### 3.1 LGBTQI+ and Mistrust in Policing

Research indicates that LGBTQI+ young people have an increased likelihood of entering the criminal justice system due to factors such as conflicts with their family, poor support mechanisms, relative economic disadvantage, and being the subject of violence (Cammatt, 2009). However, it is also the case that LGBTQI+ victims of crime may suffer the additional burden of police discriminatory behaviour that include microaggressions, verbal abuse, and sometimes worse (Nadal et al., 2012; Tucker et al., 2019). These microaggressions can include the use of derogatory sexual terms and physical intimidation, and while it is difficult to make any claims about the extent of police microaggressions against LGBTQI+

individuals, it is considered as being somewhat underreported (Nadal et al., 2012; Platt & Lenzen, 2013). Research involving self-report surveys also suggests that when LGBTQI+ victims come into contact with police officers this can involve being ridiculed, insulted, belittled, misgendered and humiliated (McCabe et al. 2013; Wolff & Cokely, 2007; Fileborn, 2019).

As might be expected, such negative encounters can often lead to a degree of mistrust in the police amongst young LGBTQI+ people. Girardi (2021) has documented this mistrust in a study utilizing one-to-one in depth semi-structured interviews. The thematic analysis undertaken highlighted major mistrust issues associated with LGBTQI+ young reporting crime. Participants who had contact with the police found that the reporting process was cumbersome and slow and that officers appeared less than interested in pursuing matters. It was also found that young LGBTQI+ participants wished to remain invisible in the eyes of the police by passing as 'normal' in order to appear more reliable and respectful (Goffman, 1963; Pfeffer, 2014; Shippee, 2011). This issue is bound up with the notion of invisible visibility in which LGBTQI+ young persons may be visible members of such a group through distinctive patterns of degree or body modification but can at one and the same time be disregarded and discriminated against.

It is therefore apparent that LGBTQI+ young people may eschew contact with the police service because they do not trust the police will treat them fairly and with respect. Indeed, for some, the opposite is very much the case resulting in fear of being victimized by police officers, particularly in terms of homophobic and transphobic discrimination (Wolff & Cokely, 2007). In the research we report on below, such concerns are never far from the surface.

### 3.2 Methodology

We conducted three focus groups with nine young people in total. Participants were recruited through local youth and social service organisations and were compensated with £25 for their time. All participants were based in the North East of Scotland and care experienced with some participants also identifying as LGBTQI+.

We aimed to conduct 6 focus groups with about 4-6 members per discussion. This is a smaller group size than the recommended standards of 6-10 participants per group (Lunt & Livingstone, 1996) because of the participants' characteristics and the sensitive topic. Unfortunately, late cancellations and Covid interruptions in the team, and the organisations involved, meant that this target was not reached, and the focus groups consisted of 3 groups with 1, 3, and 5 young persons. In one of the groups (organisation 3), 1 participant joined online and 2 attended in person. There were 2 key workers in addition to the 2 researchers attending each group with the exemption of the smallest group where there was just one social worker. Despite not meeting our target in terms of group sizes, the focus groups provided good in-depth information for young people with care and intersectional experience, and we feel that for this characteristic cohort, the data reached saturation – which is when more incoming data would have added little or no new information (Braun & Clarke, 2013). We thus deem the overall sample of 9 participants sufficient, particularly given the seldom heard voices of care-experienced young persons. Participants were all above the age of 16 and of those who declared their gender identity or sexual orientation, one participant identified as transgender, and 2 participants as homosexual, one as bisexual, and 2 as heterosexual, with the remaining 3 not declaring their gender identity or sexual orientation.

Before participating in the focus group, participants were sent a participant information sheet to read, a consent form to sign and return to the researchers, and a list of possible times and dates for the focus groups to take place. All interviews took place at the organisations' local site. At the start of the interview, we asked participants to indicate their age and gender identity in order to have an understanding of the diversity of the cohort. The interview then continued with the reading of a hypothetical scenario to which participants were invited to respond to. A set of pre-defined questions were used as a guidance. The project received approval from the local ethics committee (EMS5535).

Each interview was recorded with a dedicated audio recording device and the interviewers also took notes during each session. Once the interviews were concluded, we transcribed the data and applied interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). This type of analysis was apposite given its concern with participants' lived experience with the aim being to interpret how they understand and make sense of those experiences in terms of recurrent themes. (Clarke et al., 2015; Smith & Fieldsend, 2021). This means

that we read through the transcripts several times before making exploratory notes linked to participant statements (i.e., quotes) for one transcript at a time. Unfortunately, due to a technical error, the recording of one focus group was incomplete. This was noted immediately after the session, and thus we had to rely on our notes taken at the time. Once we had analysed each transcript individually case-by-case, we formulated experiential statements linked to the quotes and then conducted a cross-case analysis as a team (analysis across the different transcripts). This included finding connections between our notes and clustering experiential statements. As part of our discussions, we focused on ensuring that we bracketed our own experiences and expectations and that we have a discourse on our intuitions and descriptions of the identified topics. A further element of the analysis was a focus on the existential dimensions of the lifeworld: spatiality, temporality, sense of embodiment, and inter-relatedness (sociality).

### 3.3 Qualitative Findings

The analysis of the interview data resulted in three main themes being developed, which each relating to one of the two parties involved: to how participants feel towards the police (embodied mistrust of police), what is done to participants (always made to feel like a suspect), and what the police do or do not do (policing without empathy). Each theme has several subthemes within them, which were developed from the initial meaning units to help explain the nuances experienced within each theme. While these themes and subthemes are discussed separately below to allow for the experiences to be portrayed in a clear manner, it is worth noting that there is substantial overlap and interaction within and between each theme and subtheme. Each individual's understanding of each of these themes and subthemes is unique to them, with experiences not restricted to only one theme or subtheme at a time. Rather, the data conveys a personal relationship between each participant and all of these themes and subthemes to a greater or lesser extent at any one time. Although we are discussing these experiences in a deconstructed manner, it should be kept in mind that often many (or all) of these themes and subthemes would converge within a young person's interaction with the police.

#### 3.3.1 Embodied mistrust of police – Feeling frightened and unprotected

It became clear when talking to the young people about their interactions with the police that most participants had a feeling of mistrust. These feelings had been developed from their previous experiences with police officers throughout their lives, which typically became clear during the early stages when discussing the hypothetical scenario used at the start of the focus groups:

*Carl: That's not a scenario*

*Eilidh: No, no*

*Carl: That's when I got dropped, but it wasn't a car it was a van*

*Tegan: Okay, then what happened?*

*Carl: They came up to me and they're like, where are you off to? I'm like, home. And they were like okay, WHEYYYY, and then they dropped me*

*(Organisation 3)*

The initial responses to the hypothetical scenario outlined within the focus groups were almost automatic, with the majority of participants either instantly commenting like Carl that "that's no scenario" or like Jean stating "I'd feel threatened ... A lot ... Immediately, Aye". Participants also commented that they would seek a place to hide, be it behind curtains at home or jump into the bushes – even if they knew they have done nothing wrong:

*Jean: "See, even sitting in my house seeing a police car driving past I genuinely feel intimidated"*

And later adding:

*Jean: "I actually get upset with myself when I see police because I just feel threatened"*

*(Organisation 2)*

Participants also visibly demonstrated signs of nerves, anxiety, or physical discomfort at thinking about such an event taking place. For example, one participant explicitly expressed that they cannot be in the same room as the police without re-living trauma. The participant was confident in talking to the researchers but when the researcher team enquired how it would make them feel if they found out that they were in fact from the police; the participant was put in a state of alert, confusion, and distress – being visibly scared.

Many participants reported having encountered displeasurable interactions with the police previously, including some which involved physical violence or restraint. Notably, some participants narrated instances with police going back to their early childhood which left them frightened since. This was at a time they were staying with biological relatives which the police were seeking. Such instances as these appear to have cultivated an ingrained and embodied wariness towards the police, whether directly interacting with them or not.

The participants associated the reasons for such displeasurable interactions to them being part of the Seldom Heard Communities identified by the police themselves - as a result of being young and care experienced and/or part of the LGBTQI+ community. However, being young seemed to be the most influential factor when it came to how participants understood why the police engaged with them the way they did (as discussed in the Policing with Empathy section) whereas being care experienced or part of the LGBTQI+ community made them more exposed and vulnerable overall.

*The embodied mistrust of participants is also visible in how the young people perceive the police:*

*Jean: "I just see uniform. I see their uniform because I know how much of horrible people they are. Like they can genuinely hit you and get away with it."*

*And when asked to imagine how the police officers would walk towards them in any given context, the response was*

*Jean: "I just imagine them walking towards me like in a proper aggression, like, horrible looks on their face."... "It's frightening. And like, police are meant to be like the people that you're not meant to be scared of, the people you're meant to call for help. But I can't ..."*

*This indicates to some extent the conflict of their feelings, needs, and perceptions. Importantly, some of the young people expressed feeling frightened by the police to the extent that they would not seek help from them even when needed. They state previous experiences as the reason.*

*Jean: Everybody my age they don't, they don't care about people my age. They listen to adults point of views, they listen to people when they're really young, but when you're in the ages between 13 to 19, you are seen as an easy target to the police. They treat you like complete shit.*

*(Organisation 2)*

However, the other social categories associated with these Seldom Heard Communities were also deemed to play a role within their interactions with police, with the label of being 'care experienced' frequently being cited as a reason for being treated differently to others:

Having the label of being 'care experienced' mattered in some circumstances when dealing with the police – Tracey (Organisation 1) described how when she was picked up after running away from home/residential care she was simply told she was being taken back. However, when her friend from a "perfect family" did the same they asked her why she had run away instead, wanting to explore the reasons behind why she had run away and understood her situation, rather than Tracey who was seen as a "bratty care kid" who they didn't want to understand. Also:

*Jean: "They do target me, cause if I'm out with my friends, I could be with a whole group. My friends could smash windows, but they [Police] still come to me like, well, you were there, [mm] so you're the one getting*



*lifted ... Most of my friends ... haven't been involved with police, so when a police officer comes, they know me by name. So they're just they're directly to me. They don't think about the rest of them"*

*This sense of being 'othered' was amplified when the participants were members of several of these Seldom Heard Communities at the same time – for example, Carl is a young transgender care experienced individual:*

*Carl: "I'm a tranny and I got searched by a male police officer. Like they actually pure went like that [groping action] which meant they went everywhere to check, under the strap and my binder and everything."*

*(Organisation 3)*

The experiences of those who are intersectional members of multiple Seldom Heard Communities raise an important issue regarding the use of singular labels to describe individuals – police are never engaging with 'just' a young person, or 'just' a care experienced individual, or 'just' a member of the LGBTQI+ community. There are always engaging with individuals who fall betwixt and between several different categorisations at once, meaning that empathetic understanding is crucial to understanding the individual further, and helping inform how to approach these encounters.

The experiences outlined here help to demonstrate why these particular young people, who cross several of the Seldom Heard Communities identified by the police, have such an embodied sense of mistrust when interacting with police officers. Formative interactions which have involved physical violence and restraint, patronisation because of age, and othering due to social categorisation have manifested a deep-seated physical and emotional dissatisfaction with policing.

### **3.3.2 Always made to feel like a suspect- Guilty by association**

There were several incidents where participants were made to feel guilty, or were classed as being guilty, simply by their association - whether this was their association with other people, through their association of already being 'known' to the police, or by their association with their community label. Participants feel that the blame is always being put on them. One of the most impactful examples of this was described by Jean, who discussed how the police associated her family's past behaviour with her:

*Jean: "They also need to change on like not judging people through their family, because they genuinely think I'm a horrible person just cause my family. Like, so I was in this domestic and the police got called, they didn't even take my side of the story to start with. They took the other girl's side of the story, came straight to me and said 'you're just like your uncle'. I got put in the cells for a weekend and I didn't actually get my statement taken until I was in the cells with my mattress down ready for my bed."*

*(Organisation 2)*

The young people expressed how they felt they were often prejudged by the police as being a suspect during interactions, regardless of what had happened or their role in the event. Reasons given to the young people by police officers were frequently linked to their previous ties with particular individuals, groups, or even their Seldom Heard Community labelling (e.g., being care-experienced). As such, this led to the young people being made to feel guilty in the eyes of the police, regardless of whether the young people believed they were guilty or not in any given situation. The participants frequently classed or defined their own behaviours as being 'deserving' or 'undeserving' of the verbal and physical responses given to them by police officers during their interactions. At times, they acknowledged that the police were equitable in their responses to the young person's behaviour:

*Carl: "Aye Ray's like, he likes to like make sure everyone's alright, if you're sound with him he'll be sound with you type shite, but if you're like trying to batter him he'll just cuff you and put you in the back and just tell you to calm down. That type of shite."*

*(Organisation 3)*



However, there were many occasions when the young people believed they received disproportionate responses from the police as a result of their behaviour, which instilled within them a sense of being victimised or persecuted:

*Jean: "Like they can genuinely hit you and get away with it. Just because they're police can say, Oh well, she's gonna hit me. That's what they write in the reports. They hit people for no reason and they provide their own, their reports that we've tried to attack them. I have shouted and I know that was wrong, but I have shouted at a police officer and they've got their baton out to hit me for it and told everybody I was going to fly for them".*

*(Organisation 2)*

Within these experiences there are acknowledgements of the individual having behaved 'incorrectly', resulting in either proportionate (in Carl's case) or disproportionate (in Jean's case) responses from police officers. There was a general consensus among the participants that the police should operate on an 'eye for an eye' basis, where behaviours and actions are greeted with proportionately reciprocated responses from the police. However, this leads into a significant issue regarding the ambiguity as to what might be deemed as proportionate, what are 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' behaviours, and even what can be considered as 'right' or 'wrong' - not just in terms of the law, but also in terms of both young peoples' and police officers' behaviours. There were many instances where these boundaries were blurred, or even crossed by the police officers:

*Jean: "They would come to the door and they'd chat and if I didn't answer on the first chat, they'd shout for, that they're gonna break the door in and they'll come at it with like big heavy things, Shit-panning the door, and I'd be hiding. They're really disrespectful as well because I was actually lying there with my girlfriend and, like, she never had a top on, and her top was down here and I was like, can you please leave now? Like she's meant to put clothes on and they never, they just stood there and stared like that. I think that's totally disrespectful. You could at least turn around or something. Do you know, I mean, they've got no respect whatsoever."*

*(Organisation 2)*

Alisha talked about the issue of having 2 male officers come round to ask her questions when she reported sexual assault, refused to speak after 20 mins of interrogation and feeling uncomfortable until a female officer came to ask questions, although the 2 male officers were still present. With only two male officers, she felt uncomfortable and awkward as she had to describe things in detail and using proper terminology. Being told to "use the correct words" was mentioned a lot. This is difficult when it is about their own body. (Organisation 1)

The rules of engagement were unclear for these young people, with the rules and boundaries seemingly being set, and altered during interactions, by police officers only. This led to feelings of wariness and confusion among many of the young people within this study as to how they should act around police officers, as they were never fully sure of whether their behaviours would be deemed as being acceptable or not by the police. This was exacerbated through previous interactions where the young people had been made to feel guilty or as a suspect by the police, with little regard given to their perspectives of the situation, leaving individuals with a sense of guilt and worry of being targeted:

*Jean: "Because I feel no matter where I go if there's police there, they are coming for me. That's how they made me feel" and later "I'd feel I'd feel scared that. That ... it was about me. No matter who they say it's about, I would just feel scared."*

*(Organisation 2)*

### **3.3.3 Policing without empathy - Personal accountability**

It was clear through several accounts described by the participants that very often their interactions with police did not involve much in the way of empathy. In fact, quite often these interactions were

characterised by a lack of respect being displayed by the police officers through their verbal and physical behaviours as described in some quotes above.

Participants feel that communication and value were given to different voices (i.e., child vs adult, child vs carer/key worker) at different levels:

Alisha also talked about the issue of how carers seem to be perceived as always seen to be doing something good, so they must be good people, rather than like the carer in Annie who is just doing it for the money, who she knows of people who have had similar experiences to this. (Organisation 1)

There also seemed to be a lack of understanding of needs and situation, with several participants raising the question as to whether or not police are trained in being trauma-informed:

*Lisa: "Trauma, like trauma I don't think, like I spoke to some people about it and the police aren't actually trained in trauma, like how to deal with it and things, well they are but I think maybe they need more training on it because, yeah. Just because I feel like they probably do get taught stuff but maybe they're not taught everything that might benefit them because there are obviously new things that people and experiences that make people a certain way. Sometimes police are like oh you've done a bad thing that's that, whereas sometimes there's a bit missing with certain police officers where they're not there to be understanding they're meant to be."*

(Organisation 3)

The fact that participants consistently raised this question suggests that the behaviours of the police officers these young people interacted were not trauma-informed, whether they had been trained in this or not.

There were however exceptions to the rule, which were very much framed that way by the individual's themselves (often after direct questioning by the researchers on the issue), whereby their interactions with police formed a positive encounter for the young people:

*Carl: "I would just like to say that the [local] community police are the most lovely ones ever, they're engaged with like everything that's going on, they listen to you, they want the best for you, see when they do come charge you they make it like they're disappointed in you"*

*When asked about in which ways do they act differently, and what makes them feel that they do want the best for you respondents said:*

*Eilidh: "Aye ... they [Community police] act like humans, they like walk up to you and they're just like humans, police officers are just like pigs"*

*Carl: "Because they'll tell you, they talk to you and sit and have an actual conversation with you, they'll ask you what your plans are for your future."*

*Harriet [carer]: So again it comes down to getting to know you as a person.*

*Carl: Aye*

*Eilidh: Aye, even if it's just 5 minutes, you can pick up on nice vibes.*

(Organisation 3)

We also provided participants with the hypothetical scenario that if they were tasked with hiring new police officers, what would they be looking for in an applicant. Some participants suggested that they should be good with kids. Many stated that they felt they were not treated in an age-appropriate way when it came to physical interactions, but when it was about listening, they were not treated in the way that adults were:

*Jean: "especially if like they've spoke to an adult and adult said 'Ohh, they they've done this or they've done that', they've just come straight up to me they'll handcuff me, take me to the cells and then they'll hear my point of the story. They don't, they don't like, try and hear your side. They don't speak to you. They just ... it's you.... They just make you feel threatened at my age."*

*(Organisation 2)*

In a way, participants experienced age as a characteristic that has them treated as if guilty (i.e., guilty by association with their age).

*Jean: "Everybody my age they don't ... they don't care about people my age. They listen to adults point of views. They listen to people when they're really young, but when you're in the ... the age between 13 to 19, you are seen as an easy target to the police. They treat you like complete shit."*

*(Organisation 2)*

### 3.4 Conclusion

Our data highlights that many of the current policing practices do not allow individuals from seldom heard groups (i.e., young people, care experienced, LGBTQI+, or intersectional) to make positive meaning out of the interactions with the police. On the contrary, the interactions led several of the young people to re-live trauma to the extent that it made them believe that the police training is not trauma informed. As outlined throughout these results deriving from the lived experiences of care experienced young people, we understand that one of the key foundations for these experiences is due to the issues associated with 'boundaries'. Typically, the police are trained to have in mind an idea as to what the distinctive boundaries of a given situation are. As outlined in the training material, it is in the individual police officers' responsibility to assess a situation. Yet, the reality of many given situations is that there are rarely a clear set of circumstances to operate within or respond to, meaning that boundaries are often blurred. Moreover, it is clear that only the police are allowed to step over these boundaries (such as applying physical or verbal force in the interaction between police and public), yet the boundaries are also set by the police, resulting in inherent power and knowledge differentials. For instance, outlined in the report above are incidents of physical force being used unexpectedly, of a female sexual assault victim being expected to detail here trauma to male officers, of police officers removing a transsexual individual's chest binder, as well as other situations where it is only the police officers who are defining what the acceptable boundaries are within the scenario, rather than it being mutually agreed. We would thus encourage the police to become more comfortable in having knowledge around what they do not know, which could help inform their behaviours and actions with individuals from across the seldom heard communities.

We argue that being comfortable in holding a space where there is limited knowledge available cannot be achieved successfully or gracefully through physical or verbal force or policies alone. We propose to utilise embodied practices that train individuals to recognise and question habitual responses and set perceptions, such as Feldenkrais or Alexander technique. We suggest that it would be of benefit to explore whether a technique such as Feldenkrais could raise police officers' awareness of their embodied responses and their recognition of blurred boundaries. Notably, Feldenkrais is a somatic (i.e., body-oriented) practice is applied to help individuals to learn ways to move with greater efficiency and improve overall well-being. This also allows to see different possible response options and to have a greater freedom to respond, enabling for a wider range of choices to be made possible within unknown situations. We would thus hope that supporting police officers in reconnecting with their bodies will be beneficial in dealing empathically with seldom heard communities.

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## 4. Overall Summary

The Police Scotland strategic plan analysed within this study contributes to an understanding of how such public sector documents at times mimic the genre of strategy reports in the corporate and commercial world as well as deploying elements of the new public governance model that seeks to adopt a more inclusive and “for the public good” tone. This is particularly important when set within the context of a changing society in which sexual identities are being challenged and open to change.

The second investigation supports this view, and it is evident in the teaching materials that there is a clear intention and effort to educate police recruits about issues of inclusion and diversity with respect to criminal acts and how they are reported. While there is an affirmation of diversity and inclusion, both positive and negative attitudes towards this are located ‘down’ at the level of the individual attitudes. This precludes any view that both affirmative and prejudiced views are located, not within the intrapsychic world but rather in the social world and lived reality. What was apparent from this analysis is the way in which the teaching materials offer a formal education and training for recruits that is detached from the workaday realities of policework and the ways in which victims, witnesses and suspects ordinarily talk. This is where the realities, and difficulties of police work lie and where police officers learn about upholding the rights of all citizens but also the role of maintaining law and order in society.

The third investigation leads on from this point, in terms of the lived experiences of policing among young people. Throughout these results deriving from the lived experiences of care-experienced young people, we understand that one of the key foundations for these experiences is due to the issues associated with ‘boundaries’. Typically, the police are trained to have in mind an idea as to what the distinctive boundaries of a given situation are. As outlined in the training material, it is in the individual police officers’ responsibility to assess a situation. Yet, the reality of many given situations is that there are rarely a clear set of circumstances to operate within or respond to, meaning that boundaries are often blurred. Yet ignoring uncertainties and hesitations by young people can potentially lead to inappropriate responses by officers.

In turning to where we see a potential for further investigation, we suggest that it would be useful to hear the voices of police recruits and new officers concerning policing young people from diverse groups, and especially where there are intersectional issues. A key question here is to what extent new officers and recruits regard such training as informing their police practice in terms of discretion and decision-making.

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