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Developing Strategic Capability:

**“County Fire and Rescue Service is in need of a training strategy,
would the model adopted by County Police give the service a
strategy fit for the modernised Fire Service”**

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1. Introduction

Hypothesis

“County Fire and Rescue Service is in need of a training strategy, would the model adopted by County Police give the service a strategy fit for the modernised Fire Service”

Summary

“It's all to do with the training: you can do a lot if you're properly trained. - HRH Queen Elizabeth II”¹

“Initial training can be efficient in providing firefighters who are “critical incident safe.” However, training will not be fully effective if trainees have also learnt to resist the future development of the Fire and Rescue Service”²

1.1 The roles of the Police and the Fire Service have some similarities, both work at many of the same incidents and both roles can be at times hazardous. There is a public expectation that these public servants are the best quality people who are suitably trained and equipped to carry out the role which society asks them to do. It is

¹ Television documentary, BBC1, 6 Feb. 1992

² Baigent, D., with Hill, R., Ling, T., Skinner, D., Rolph, C and Watson, A. – Sunrise a New Dawn in Training, APU Fitting-in, 2003

the training strategies of these organisations, which direct and underpin this training and link it to the objectives of the organisations.

- 1.2 It is accepted that there's more to a training strategy than the initial training of recruits but this study will take initial training as a focus which will attempt to inform the rest of the training and development of staff.
- 1.3 This paper concludes that there is much to be learnt from the Police Service, but that what is required for County Fire and Rescue Service is a more radical approach to training new recruits which is as much about organisational change in the Brigade more widely as it is about individual competency. Research from a variety of sources, including interviews, focus groups, and surveys come together to provide a checklist for a successful new strategy.

This new strategy should:

- Include elements of military discipline and respect (or professionalism);
- Include properly costed models to ensure adequate resources;
- Be closely related to the reality and experience of the work environment;
- Make a positive impact on the organisational culture;
- Deliver fire fighters who can think their way through problems, rather than just reproduce a drilled response;
- Produce the skill set to meet the modernisation agenda
- Be delivered in more manageable chunks to avoid 'academic overload'
- Have a system of validation that was practical and fits with the ways of working

The conclusions and recommendations test a potential new model against this checklist for success, and make specific recommendations about further work that should be undertaken in pursuit of a successful training strategy.

Introduction

- 1.4 In County initial recruit training has historically been carried out at the services training school, County Training Centre. This consisted of a 14-week residential training course. As part of recent developments and in an attempt to release capital from the services property portfolio this centre has been closed and the building is to be used as the Service Headquarters (this allows the release of the current Headquarters Building). This has presented a problem in that the training of Fire Service recruits at County Training Centre was pivotal to the service strategy for training and development. There have been two responses to this situation; one was a consultant's report³ which was in the form of a training strategy and the other a draft Training and Development Strategy⁴. The draft strategy suggested that the training of recruits be largely based on Operational Fire Stations, however when this was put out to staff consultation it was greeted with near universal disapproval (reasons discussed later) . This leaves County Fire and Rescue with a problem of where to train new recruits.
- 1.5 There is potential to send these trainees to be trained at other Fire Services in the country. There are several problems with this notably cost and lack of control over what is delivered. There is a danger that time and associated cost may have to be spent the re-training the trainees in the slightly different procedures that County has when compared to the training brigade. The cost of accommodation for trainees to live in or be provided with

³ Risktec Consultancy report

⁴ *County Fire and Rescue Service – Service Delivery's Training and Development Strategy 2006 – 2010, Draft Version 2*

accommodation at a training Centre is also increasingly difficult to justify.

- 1.6 Subsequent to training school recruits or trainees have been required to complete a programme of further development to show that they are competent as measured by the National Occupational Standards for Firefighters. Recently this has been rewritten in and the new development programme is proving both effective and popular.



Illustration: Explain the Police situation

- 1.7 County Polices training was quite similar in structure to that of County Fire and Rescue Service Course except that it was delivered by a regional partner Police Service. It consisted of Police procedure and law, but also featured an element of militaristic discipline. The programme was studied in the Home Office report “Training Matters”⁵ which concluded: “The current programme is not wholly fit for purpose now, nor to support the Police Service of the twenty-first century” a further work was issued in the form of the

⁵ ‘Training Matters’ report published by HMIC – at <http://inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/inspections/ptd/thematic/training-matters/tmreport.pdf?view=Binary>- accessed 20/06/07

Initial Police Learning and Development Programme⁶ guidance which forms a curriculum for Police training.

The response of County Police was to set up a new programme
“County Police began developing a new programme of training that would embrace the recommendations of these important reports and put them into action thereby ensuring that they serve in and with all the communities of County. It is as a result of this process that this Student Officer Course (SOC) has been developed by County Police in partnership with the University of Seaside, the University of Chichester and the University of County.”⁷

The course that Police Officers now follow is a Foundation Certificate/Degree in Policing in Partnership with Communities delivered in partnership with the University of Seaside at three university campuses across the County, which allows police Trainees to meet the requirements of their own National Occupational standards.

⁶Initial Police Learning and Development Programme , Home Office, http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/news-and-publications/publication/probationer-training/IPLDPG_1.pdf?view=Binary as accessed 20/06/07

⁷ Foundation Certificate/Degree in Policing in Partnership with Communities- Student Officer Course Handbook, County Police/ University of Seaside



2. Context and Background

What is strategy?

- 2.1 Davies ⁸ explains that “Strategy is from the Greek strategos, which means general. In the Greek city-states, the military general was responsible for formulating a plan for bringing the legislature’s policy decisions to fruition and for implementing that plan.” Davies argues that strategy is about the plan for implementation, and is separate from, but equal to, resources and policy in what he describes as a ‘troika’. These definitions are important, because for some, including Mintzberg⁹ argue that strategy is in fact ‘everything a company does or consists of’. This definition has some merit because it emphasises the central place strategy in organisation. Complications arise when what strategy is and what it should achieve become confused.

⁸ Davies, W (2000), *Understanding Strategy*, Journal: Strategy & Leadership 28 Vol 5 pp25-30

⁹ Mintzberg, H (2000) *The Rise and fall of Strategic Planning*, Prentice Hall, London

Mintzberg's 5 Ps of strategy define what strategy can be in an organisation plan, ploy, pattern, position and perspective, but Davies breaks this down further, interpreting strategy as separate but related to policy and resources:

"Policy defines a company's raison d'être and sets the parameters within which it intends to achieve its purpose . . . Strategy is a design or plan that defines how policy is to be achieved . . . Without resources, strategy can achieve nothing."¹⁰

2.2 It could be argued that in Davies troika applied to County Fire and Rescue Service, the strategy is the only part that can be directly controlled. As County Fire and Rescue Service is not a precepting authority, the resources are controlled by the County Council. In policy terms, what drives the operational priorities of the Fire Service is set centrally by the Government, as defined by the Best value performance indicators. Where the local service has autonomy in policy terms it is usually in matters relating to deployment of delegated resources in pursuit of the agreed operational priorities.

Consideration of useful similarities between Police & Fire

2.3 The way in which both Police and Fire trained their staff in the past was remarkably similar: 14 weeks residential training; militaristic discipline culminating in passing out parade; marching; and saluting. The newly trained Police Constable or Firefighter would then serve two-year probation on the job. The intention would be to ensure that the theoretical learning could be applied in practice,

¹⁰ Davies, W (2000), *Understanding Strategy*, Journal: Strategy & Leadership 28 Vol 5 pp25-30

but for the Fire Service often this period was a time of retraining into the watch culture, and against the working practice that had been learnt at training school.

- 2.4 Many of the writers who have commented on the Fire Service culture have identified watch culture as having a negative effect leading to Groupthink. These include Parmah¹¹ Baigent¹² et al as well as Stagg and Gunter¹³, Parmah particularly postulates that the concept of Groupthink allows negative attitudes such as and bullying and racism to be perpetuated in the Service. Research from the US military (Johnson¹⁴) also suggests that Groupthink may have dangerous effects on tactical decision making. This study will look for a training strategy that while seeing the place of discipline and unity of purpose, also allows individuals to think about and decide on their own professional judgements

Common History

- 2.5 The Fire Service and the Police Service have their origins in voluntary and private organisations formalised in the 19th Century. Over time they have become increasingly professionalized and centralised. Today both are partly funded through local taxation, and they are both subject to a degree of central direction and control from their sponsor Government Departments. However the majority of Fire Services are locally managed as part of the Local Authority Structure. This means that because of local democratic representation the formulation of strategy in the Police Service and the Fire Service can be quite different. The Police tend to be much

¹¹ Pamah, D. 2005, Watch Culture Groupthink: A Study Of The Implementation Of The EU Equal Treatment Directives In The UK Fire And Rescue Service

¹² Baigent, D., with Hill, R., Ling, T., Skinner, D., Rolph, C and Watson, A. – Sunrise an New Dawn in Training, APU Fitting-in, 2003

¹³ Stagg, G. & Gunter, D. (2002). Emotional intelligence in the Fire Service . Working paper: London Fire Brigade.

¹⁴ Effects of groupthink on tactical decision-making. Phillip M Johnson Fort Leavenworth, KS : US Army Command and General Staff College, 2000.

more centralised, since their inception they have reported directly to the Home Secretary.

- 2.6 The Fire Service has always been much more locally arranged since its formation District and Borough Fire Services Brigades. During the Second World War the Fire Service was nationalised in order to help with the war effort. However, in 1947 the service was de-nationalised and control returned to upper tier Local Authorities. In the era of New Labour the Fire Service has been a victim of the Machinery of Government Changes; that have seen responsibility shift from the Home Office, via various incarnations of what became the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, to its current home in the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG).

Significant milestones

- 2.7 The government attitude towards both services has changes as the burden of the threat of terrorism had changed from a specific Police issue of the threat of the IRA, to a more global reality that would demand cross service response. These responses have been tested in the London Bombings of July 2005, and the public's expectation is that all uniformed services form part of the protection that they expect the state to provide. The Civil Contingencies Act 2004¹⁵ and the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004¹⁶ have both made the duty of cooperation between the services a statutory requirement, and have established regional and national structure in which these responses would be coordinated. The impact of this has been to raise the expectations from the centre of the capacity to deliver through the Fire and Police Services. The visibility of both Fire and Police at significant incidents such as the London Bombings has also

¹⁵ Civil contingencies Act 2004- HMSO

¹⁶ Fire and Rescue Service Act 2004- HMSO

served to raise the public's understanding and expectation of the role of the services.

- 2.8 In terms of the way that the services conduct themselves, the social drive towards understanding diversity has significantly impacted on working practices, particularly in the Police following the Stephen Lawrence Enquiry¹⁷. The Diversity training that was introduced to the Police Service was delivered into the Fire Service partly as result of the two institutions being at the time collocated under the Home Office.
- 2.9 Public goodwill towards both services has always been quite high, although there are increasing localised incidents of violent attacks. The public perception has been that although generally poorly paid as public sector workers, that there was parity of pay between the two services. However, over time a pay gap emerged. This may be because the Police were not able to strike, but were valuable in the Tory agenda of breaking union power, and controlling the miners strike, so were relatively well rewarded. The Fire Service however, suffered under the Tories because their strongly unionised workforce was anathema to the prevailing political climate. The Fire Brigade's Union expected that New Labour Government would reverse some of this inequity, but were disappointed by the reality. The resulting strike in 2002-3 over pay and conditions was badly handled by the Union, the Government and the Fire Service Employers, but did result in a 16% pay rise linked to modernisation.

Organisational Strategy in County Fire and Rescue

- 2.10 Integrated Risk Management Plans (IRMP) are a key plank of The Government's modernisation agenda for the Fire Service, and form the basis of the organisational strategy. Between the 1947 Fire

¹⁷ MacPherson, W (1999) The Stephen Lawrence Enquiry , HMSO London

Brigades Act¹⁸ and the 2004 Fire and Rescue Services Act¹⁹ the level of fire cover in any given area was set by the division of the whole country into four basic risk categories based on population, and the location of other hazards such as industry. The IRMP cleared away this system and replaced it with a computer modelling system for risk. Now that the risk of an incident occurring in a particular area is more accurately predictable it has allowed fire cover to be adjusted accordingly. This change has been the driver for service restructuring and forms the core of current Service strategy. This can be summed up as “We can operate from fewer, but more appropriate locations to provide a better level of service to more people in County. We will employ possibly fewer, but better trained, better equipped and potentially better rewarded people”.²⁰

Power actors in the County Fire and Rescue Service.

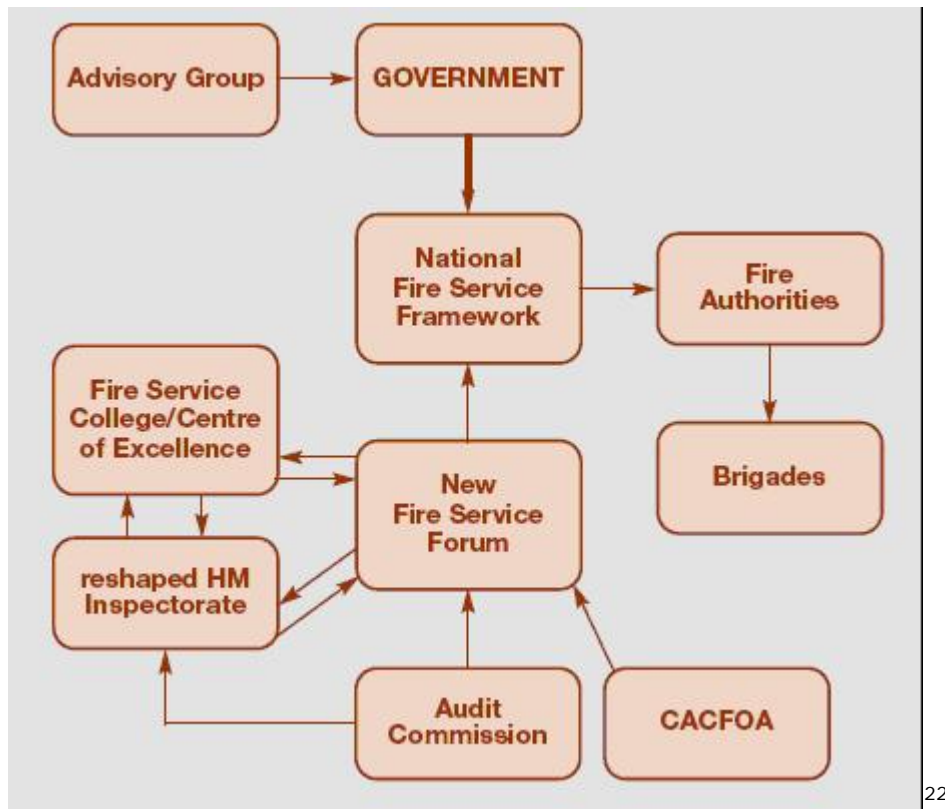
2.11 In considering Strategy, it is important to consider who controls the strategy. Or for our purposes, the question is ‘Who runs the Fire Service’. As the diagram from the Bain report²¹, reproduced below, illustrates this is a complex question with several possible answers.

¹⁸ Fire Brigades Act 1947- HMSO

¹⁹ Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004- HMSO

²⁰ SFRS Service Delivery Manifesto, (internal document derived from 3rd IRMP)

²¹ Bain, Sir George,(2002) Independent Review of the Fire Service , HMSO



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- 2.12 Central Government control the setting of the Best Value Performance Indicators which are an important driver for local strategy, and exercise a form of proxy control through the inspectorate regime, specifically the Audit Commission.
- 2.13 The National Fire Service's Framework flows from statute and is the means by which the CLG can instruct the Fire Service. Technically the framework sits within the legislative framework and takes its authority from Parliament, but as with all statutory instruments that are delegated in this way considerable control is given to the officials in the department.
- 2.14 The Fire Service College is becoming a centre of excellence as increasing levels of government funding are focussed at investing in projects based there. In terms of effect on delivery on the ground it is relatively weak, but its strategic importance with relationships

²² Reproduced from Bain, Sir George, Independent Review of the Fire Service , HMSO 2002

with government, and as an expression of the aspirations of the direction of travel for the service it is worth consideration.

- 2.15 CACFOA is the Chief and Assistant Chief Officers Association; the Fire Service equivalent of ACPO, that has now been re-branded as The Chief Fire Officers Association. They have power because of their status in their individual brigades, and because they are influential with government. Crucially they represent the bit of the Fire Service that didn't go on strike. However, they do not have a collective leadership role beyond their individual roles. Both the Fire Service and the Police Service are amalgams of local forces and brigades, and cannot be considered to be national services.
- 2.16 Interestingly the diagram from the Bain report does not include the fire service employers, the Local Authorities, represented by the Local Government Association.
- 2.17 At a more local level (not shown in the diagram) there is a Regional Management Board made up of a representative from each fire authority and a Chief Officer. This machinery could be used to run the Fire Service in a more regional way if the political will was ever strong enough to achieve this.
- 2.18 In County, the Fire Authority operates at the upper tier council level, and is effectively a committee of the County Council. The County Council itself delegate the budget to the Fire Authority. County Fire and Rescue Service are contracted by the Fire Authority to provide the operational service.
- 2.19 In considering strategy, the content of the strategy will depend on at which level of authority it is driven and controlled by, and by which level of the organisation it is directed at. There are likely to be different strategies operating at different levels of the organisation, and not necessarily all in harmony with one another.

2.20 For the purposes of this paper, it is training strategy that will be considered, at the level of the County Fire Service. Some elements of this strategy will be driven by the nationally set standards, by the agreements with the Unions and employers, and the locally identified skills need. As established above, strategy in this definition is not about policy or resources, but must have regard to both in order to be realistic and deliverable. I



3.Literature Review

- 3.1 Much of the literature relied upon in this paper is drawn from internal and central government sources. However there is some useful academic literature on Fire Service Training and Change, Police Service Training and Change management and Strategy more generally.

Fire Service Training and Change

- 3.2 An important source of research on the Fire Service is hosted on the website 'fitting in'. This website is run by Dr. Dave Baigent from Anglia Ruskin University Cambridge. The bulk of the material on this site is from Fire Service Personnel who are completing academic qualifications. It is both useful and limited by this fact. The focus of the material does also seem to be on equality issues. However there are some useful contributions from Dr. Baigent, notably the report 'Sunrise'²³ which focuses on training and organisational culture. Parmah²⁴ is another useful report on this site, which focuses on the idea of 'Group Think'. This is the idea that the values and decisions of individuals are influenced by the group, with particular reference to watch culture in the Fire Service.

²³ Baigent, D., with Hill, R., Ling, T., Skinner, D., Rolph, C and Watson, A. – Sunrise a New Dawn in Training, APU Fitting-in, 2003 accessed 20/06/07

²⁴ Pamah, D. Watch Culture Groupthink: A Study Of The Implementation Of The EU Equal Treatment Directives In The UK Fire And Rescue Service APU Fitting-In, 2003 Accessed 20/06/07

- 3.3 The strikes of 2003 form an essential part of the background to the prevailing culture within today's fire service. Burchill²⁵ presents this background usefully in his article.
- 3.4 Organisational culture in the Fire Service is explored by Fitzgerald²⁶. He argues that the organisational culture was fiercely anti change until the strikes in 2003, when this was dismantled and an acceptance of the need to change became apparent in the hierarchy. This points to continuing resistance to change in the lower ranks, but also for opportunities for change driven by senior management.
- 3.5 Burke²⁷ introduces the idea that behaviours as well as skills are an important element for training in the Fire Service. This is picked up later as part of the promotion scheme which is a key part of the Integrated Personnel Development Scheme, which includes the NVQ scheme.
- 3.6 Catts²⁸ conducted a useful survey of ten emergency service organisations, and concluded that 'organisations had high levels of insular trust and relied on training as a means of socialising new volunteers into the norms and practices of the organisation.' This points to the importance of changing training for achieving organisational change. The study was carried out in Australia, but was across a wide enough selection of organisations to be of merit in considering the situation in the UK when taken in balance with the other evidence.

²⁵ Burchill, F (2004) *The UK Fire Services Dispute 2002-2003* Employee Relations Vol 26 No 4 pp 404-421

²⁶ Fitzgerald, I (2005) *The death of corporatism? Managing change in the Fire Service* Personnel Review, Vol 34, No. 6 pp648-662

²⁷ Burke, E (1997) *Competence and Command: recent R&D in the London Fire Brigade* Journal of Management Psychology Vol 12 No. 4 pp261-279.

²⁸ Catts, R & Chamings, D (2006) *Recognising current competencies of volunteers in emergency service organisations* Journal of Workplace learning Vol. 18 No. 7/8 pp541-463

3.7 The themes of bringing in professionalism, and moving away from drill learning in favour of a more thinking approach is covered by Childs²⁹. This article argues that 'instructional methods based on rote learning, chalk and talk, and show and tell, are insufficient as a means of developing Fire Fighters capable of responding and adapting to the complex demands implicit within increasingly professionalized Fire Fighting labour.'

Police Service Training and Change

3.8 The theme 'fit for purpose' is a reoccurring one in the literature on Police Training. The article 'Probationer training: fit for purpose?'.³⁰ Is one in which Peace argues that neighbourhood or community police training had to be driven from the bottom up in order to be effective. This is not the experience that has been evidenced during the research for this paper, where the local interpretation of national standards has been successful in achieving an improvement in the engagement of Officers with the community, according to those engaged in the training.

3.9 Much of the literature and research referring to training in the Police is from the angle of diversity and equality. This is understandable given the drive on this agenda following the Stephen Lawrence enquiry, but it does rather narrow the field towards consideration of wider training agendas. One such article that focuses on under-representation of female officers, but none-the-less provides some useful background on organisational culture is by Penny Dick.³¹

²⁹ Childs, M (2005) *Beyond training: New Fire Fighter and critical reflection* Disaster Prevention and Management Vol 14 No. 4 pp558-566

³⁰ Peace, R, J (2006) *Probationer training for neighbourhood policing in England and Wales: fit for purpose?* Policing: An international Journal of Police Strategies and Management Vol 29 No. 2 pp335-346

³¹ Dick, P & Jankowicz, D (2001) *A social constructionist account of Police culture and its influence on the representation and progression of female officers* Policing: An international Journal of Police Strategies and Management. Vol 24 No. 2 pp181-199

- 3.10 Other useful literature that considers culture and sub-culture as critical to reform is by Barton.³² He concluded with this quote from Crank (1997) "Until advocates of Police change recognise the importance of culture they will continue to be as surprised as they have been for the past 100 years at the profound limitations of reform efforts to yield real and enduring changes."
- 3.11 The current Government has crime, and tackling the causes of crime very publicly high on its agenda. This has led to the proliferation of criminal justice legislation that has increased and redefined Police powers and responsibilities. These Acts have been accompanied by the inevitable raft of policy and strategy papers relating to training and development. A notable example of this is the Home Office Publication 'Training Matters'³³. This was the paper that suggested that the traditional training school (or Ashford model) was no longer fit for purpose, largely because it wasn't sufficiently community focussed. This paper sparked national and local reaction, including the drive for implementation of National Occupational Standards in the Police Service.

Strategy and Change Management

- 3.12 Mintzberg gives a useful overview of the various schools of strategy in his book *Strategy Safari*.³⁴ In 'The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning' Mintzberg³⁵ includes a useful chapter on the pitfalls of strategic planning, mentioning specifically the 'them and us' culture and the problems therein. This links nicely to the ideas of group think that are mentioned elsewhere in this paper. Paul Joyce³⁶ pins the more general ideas about strategy to the public sector. He reminds us that 'strategy in the public services is an

³² Barton, H (2003) *Understanding occupational subculture: A precursor for reform* International Journal of Public Sector Management Vol 16 No. 5 pp346-358

³³ Home Office (2002) *Training Matters*, HMIC, London

³⁴ Mintzberg, Ahlstrand, & Lampel (1998) *Strategy Safari*, Prentice Hall, London

³⁵ Mintzberg (2000) *The Rise and fall of strategic Planning* Prentice Hall, London

³⁶ Joyce, P (1999) *Strategic Management for the Public Service*, Open University Press, Buckinghamshire

unfinished and evolving phenomenon.' His thesis is that strategy in the Public services is about management of the political and public pressures rather than the pure science that is possible in the private sector. In this context he points to the importance of transformational leadership and the consensus of the workforce, and the opportunities that this context can offer to the optimistic manager; 'The consequences of strategy, in the face of overwhelming external pressures, can be major innovations in the services and activities of public services organisations.'

- 3.13 Of the journal articles on strategy and change management there are a few worth mentioning. Davies³⁷ provides useful background and definitions which are drawn upon in this paper, and it his model of the troika of strategy, process and resources which is drawn upon in analysis.
- 3.14 The importance of a training strategy that supports organisation objectives is explored by Kempton³⁸. He points to the possibility of training being the vehicle for organisational change, a theme that is picked up in this paper and forms a significant part of the recommendations.
- 3.15 Farnham et al³⁹ provide a useful overview of change in the Public Sector. They explore recent change in the NHS, the Civil Service and Local Government. It is useful context to as a reminder that the change faced by the Police and Fire Services is not unique, but a shared experience of the Public Sector under the current government.

³⁷ Davies, W (2000) *Understanding Strategy*, Strategy and Leadership, Vol 28 No.5 pp25-30

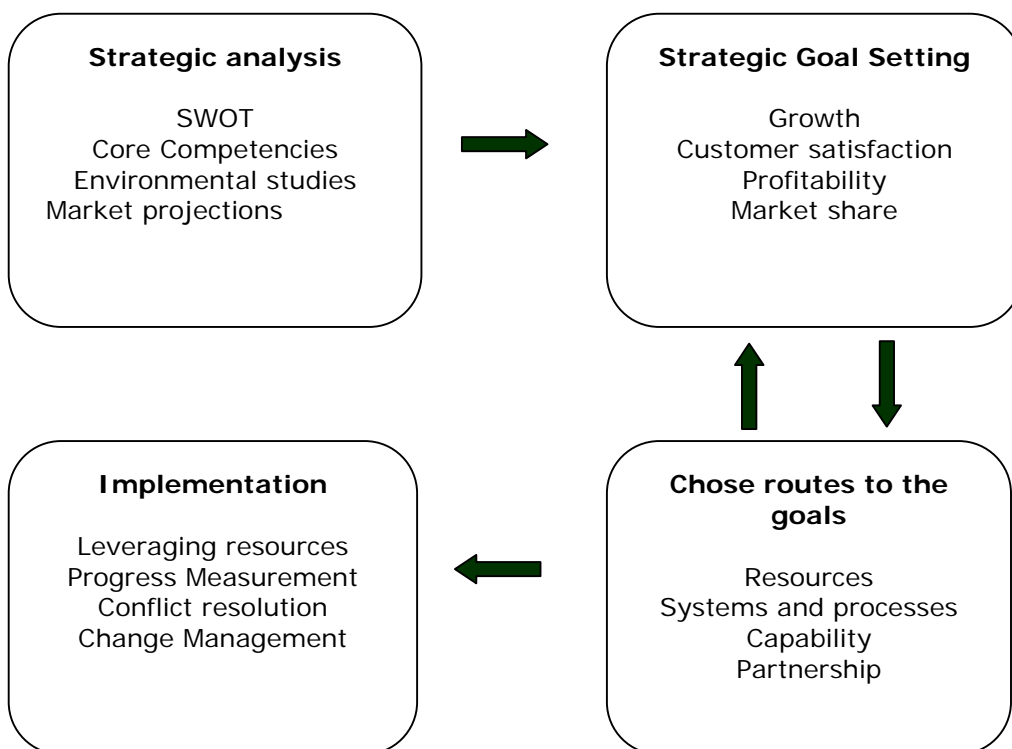
³⁸ Kempton, G (1996) *Training for Organisational Success*, Health and Manpower Management Vol 22 No. 6 pp25-30

³⁹ Farnham, D, Horton S, & White (2003), G *Organisational change and staff participation and involvement in Britain's public services* International of Public Sector Management Vol 16 No. 6 pp 434-445



4. Research Methodologies

Steps in the Strategic Process



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- 4.1 The research approach for this project will consist of a study of the training approaches of County Fire and Rescue Service and County Police.
- 4.2 These will be analysed by a combination of semi-structured interviews with key players, a survey of Learning and Development

⁴⁰ Diagram reproduced from: Mayo, Andrew, Creating A Training And Development Strategy 1998 - CIPD

practitioners in both services and focus groups to analyse perceptions of training effectiveness.

- 4.3 This will be compared with information drawn from the available literature on the subject and other publications such as central government reports, local studies and information from other non-Governmental bodies such as the Chief Fire Officers association.
- 4.4 For County Fire and Rescue Service it is acknowledged that at present there is no real system in place for initial training, however one option available is to buy into a course being run in another Brigade on the same format as the old County Training Centre Recruit course. So the research will be targeted at people who were involved in the Fourteen week programme. This may cause some issues with a common survey, but careful explanation and use of the appropriate tenses should overcome this. The approach of this research will be to use the ideas expressed in the Mayo model of Strategic analysis, Goal setting, establishment of routes to achieve these and Implementation. The implementation phase will of course be subject to the Service accepting the recommendation of the report.

Interviews,

- 4.5 The interview approach will be to conduct semi structured interviews with those responsible for the implementation and direction of training in the two services; these will look to establish what has driven changes to training and will attempt to see to what extent there is an interrelationship between strategy and training. This study will interview the Chief Inspector in Charge of Training and the head of Management and Diversity Development for County Police, The Chief Fire Officer of County Fire and Rescue and the head of Vocational Training.

Surveys

- 4.6 In order to get the best from this survey of qualitative data the structure of the questions is open with considerable scope for free comment. Another tool used to get into what people actually think is the device “what are the three best things” about x and “what are the three worst” this is based on a questioning technique used by Prof Tom Bourner⁴¹. And is useful to get participants to think about responses rather than simply give short one word answers. This device can also be useful in getting mostly positive respondents to consider the negatives or vice versa.
- 4.7 Part of the survey will be used to gather information for SWOT⁴² analysis of the two different training strategies, careful explanation will be included to provide some understanding of the concept of SWOT, but the widespread use of this model means that there is a reasonable chance that the respondents will be familiar with it.

Focus Groups,

- 4.8 The focus groups will be used to try to gain insight into the effectiveness of training strategies and delivery. Whether the trainees delivered to the frontline are accepted by the rest of the workforce, and their training is of value. They will also attempt to link in to organisational culture and try to get into the differences between being effective in a job and fitting in with the watch section or department. The participants in these groups will be invited from as broad a range of people in the organisations as possible. The groups will be conducted in an environment, which encourages the participants to be relaxed and express open

⁴¹ Action Learning in Brighton Business School, Tom Bourner and John Lawson, University of Brighton, <http://www.business.ltsn.ac.uk/resources/reflect/stories/bourner.pdf> accessed 15/06/07

⁴² Mullins. L.(2005) Management and Organisational Behaviour, 7th Ed , Prentice Hall ,London pp159

opinions. With the fairly hierarchical nature of the organisations of the Fire and Police Services it is important to encourage the participants to put aside ideas of rank and position. For this reason the focus groups will be conducted off duty and out of uniform. The participants will be assured of their anonymity in order to try and extract honest opinion from them.

- 4.9 The focus groups will be used to contribute to the context setting. In order to consider the background environment of the two services PESTEL⁴³ analysis will be carried out in the two focus groups, this will be done prior to discussion of any issues of training. This information will be recorded using a chart divided into the six sectors of the PESTEL analysis. Each sector will be considered at the local (i.e. their work area) organisational, regional, and national level.

Criticism of Research Methodology

Interviews

- 4.10 There is an argument against the use of interviews for business research, because of the perceived risk of subjectivity. However it is the intention of this study to understand the way in which the different training strategies are worked out in practice and this is difficult to measure except by studying the perception of those involved. Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe⁴⁴ State that interviews are an appropriate form of business research when:

⁴³ Mullins. L.(2005) Management and Organisational Behaviour, 7th Ed , Prentice Hall ,London pp127

⁴⁴ Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe (1991), Management Research: an Introduction, London, Sage, as cited in Hussey J and Hussey R. Business Research. Palgrave 1997 pp156

“It is necessary to understand the construct that the interviewee uses as a basis for his or her opinions and beliefs about a particular matter or situation”⁴⁵

4.11 It is also appropriate to interview and establish the personal opinion of people if their position is such that their personal opinion can shape policy or service direction. This is particularly the case when it comes to the Chief Fire Officer

Surveys,

4.12 It can generally be argued that a key flaw in survey methodology would be a small sample size. The sample size of the survey used in this study is small, but this can be justified because these surveys are primarily designed to be used to gather information from a small number of trainers. If time and budget allowed it might be better to interview all these staff, but since this is not viable in the scope of this study the survey forms a useful alternative way to gather opinion.

Focus Groups

4.13 There are several flaws and pitfalls in the Focus group approach to this research these are mostly in the way that people express opinion in public or private these are set out by Stokes and Bergin⁴⁶ as “Participants may feel inhibited in a group situation”⁴⁷ but these are far outweighed by the advantages of the focus group as expressed by Zickmund in the “10’s’s”

⁴⁵ Hussey J and Hussey R. Business Research. Palgrave 1997

⁴⁶ David Stokes, Richard Bergin, Methodology or “methodolatry”? An evaluation of focus groups and in depth interviews, Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal; Volume: 9 Issue: 1; 2006.

⁴⁷ Hedges, 1985; Greenbaum, 1998, as quoted in David Stokes, Richard Bergin, Methodology or “methodolatry”? An evaluation of focus groups and in depth interviews, Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal; Volume: 9 Issue: 1; 2006.

1. **“Synergy** – the group process generates a wider range of information than would accrue from a comparable number of depth interviews.
2. **Snowballing** – respondent interaction creating a chain of thought and ideas.
3. **Serendipity** – a great idea can drop out of the blue.
4. **Stimulation** – respondent’s views are brought out by the group process.
5. **Security** – respondents are more likely to be candid as there will probably be other similar people there, and there is less individual pressure than in a depth interview.
6. **Spontaneity** – because no one individual is required to respond to a question, this encourages a spontaneous response when people have a definite point of view.
7. **Specialisation** – a trained moderator can interview more respondents in a given session.
8. **Structure** – it is easier for the moderator to reintroduce a topic not adequately covered before than in a depth interview.
9. **Speed** – quicker than individual interviews.
10. **Scrutiny** – can be observed by members of the research team”⁴⁸.

4.14 It is hoped that the combination of these three methods of research will provide a broad picture of the state of training and development in the Fire and Police Services. The data provided will be qualitative only, but since the fundamental of what is being measured is

⁴⁸ Zikmund, W.G. (1997), *Exploring Marketing Research*, 6th ed., The Dryden Press, Fort Worth, TX. As quoted in ⁴⁸ David Stokes, Richard Bergin, *Methodology or “methodolatry”? An evaluation of focus groups and in depth interviews*, *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*; Volume: 9 Issue: 1; 2006.

whether a training strategy provides a standard of learning, this is appropriate. Learning is difficult to measure using quantitative measures; the whole of the assessment of education is an attempt to quantify qualitative data. In this study instead of going down this route, the study will attempt to take a view based on the opinion and experience of the professionals involved.



5 Results

Contextual Analysis

- 5.1** In order to consider the background and context of the two services PESTEL analysis were carried out in the two focus groups, this was done prior to discussion of any issues of training. This was done using a chart, which was divided into the six sectors of the PESTEL analysis, Political, Economic, Social, Technical, Environment and Legislative. Each sector was considered at an organisational, regional, and national level. The two resulting pestel, analyses are shown in the appendix as annex 1 and 2.
- 5.2 What is notable about these two analyses is that fire shows up a range of issues in the organisational, national and regional sectors. However the majority of issues about which the police group were most concerned remain in the national area. This reflects a key difference in the way to services are organised. The Fire Service being linked to more obviously to Local Authorities County Councils whereas the Police, while being paid for locally in part, receive the majority of their direction from central government

5.3

Previous Strategies and why they failed

5.4 Looking at the SWOT analysis that was done by staff from the County Fire and Rescue's County Training Centre training course it is clear that there were problems with management, resources, and Open College Network accreditation. This made the course too complex and overly bureaucratic. To some extent these weaknesses and failings came out in the SWOT that was undertaken by those that were involved in the training, tells us as much about the faults in the organisational culture as it does about the training system itself. These criticisms of management demonstrate that the negative elements of the organisational culture were often reinforced through the training programme. Some of the tone of this feedback suggested that the recruits were of a high quality, and were identified as the 'us' and the failings were attributed to the management or 'them'. This failure to own the organisation is a clear demonstration of failing to own and take on the change agenda. Baigent identifies how this will make trainees vulnerable to what is negative about watch culture

"Promotion of an "us and them" culture makes it more likely these probationers will readily fit-in with any (informal) agendas the watch may offer."⁴⁹

5.5 The draft training and development strategy points to more formal structural and legislative reasons for the need for a new strategy, including: Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004; Civil Contingencies Act 2004; Health and Safety at work Act 1974; Fire Service National Framework; White Paper 'Our Fire and Rescue Service'; The Integrated Risk Management Plans and Service Delivery Management Manifesto; The 2020 Vision; The Learning and

⁴⁹ Baigent, D., with Hill, R., Ling, T., Skinner, D., Rolph, C and Watson, A. – Sunrise an New Dawn in Training, APU Fitting-in, 2003

Development Strategy for England; and the new approach to Leadership Strategy. Taken together, these change the traditional requirement of the Fire Service training provision and demand that they become:

- More flexible
- Less reliant on “Drilled” responses
- Increased ability to think about bigger and more difficult incidents
- Locally tailored to the risks that are likely to be encountered in each locality

5.6 The requirements on the Fire Service have changed over recent years, and these changes are now set down in the legislation and frameworks detailed above. As useful shorthand, it is now necessary for fire fighters to have a ‘post 9/11 skill set, able to work with other agencies and in the community. Steve McGuirk who is now Chief officer of Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service wrote in 2002,

5.7 “The importance of community and partnership working is also increasingly relevant, and good communication and interpersonal skills, combined with working knowledge of other services is crucial. The Fire and Rescue Service, if it is to flourish, must be able to attract a wide range of people with different talents and skills and from different cultures and backgrounds to enter the service at all levels. This is arguably more true of the Fire and Rescue Service than many other services for a number of reasons, not least the desire for the re-engineering process taking place in relation to the role of the service as both an operational, and highly technical Fire

and Rescue Service, juxtaposed with an increasingly sophisticated intervention and safety service. ".⁵⁰

- 5.8 The draft strategy suggested that the basic training given to new recruits would be limited to only a few weeks, with the remainder of the training being delivered on station during a probationary period. This strategy was put out to consultation, where some significant difficulties in this approach were identified, not least with the strain on resources already experienced on each station. The Watch Managers would become the focus for delivering training, and are not adequately resourced or qualified for this task.
- 5.9 The other difficulty with this approach would be the variability of quality of training that would be entirely depended on the quality of the existing Watch and Crew Managers. Where good practice existed this would be replicated, but more dangerously where bad practice, or complacent attitudes prevailed on the station this would be handed down to the next generation as acceptable working practice.
- 5.10 The draft has never been translated into a working strategy, and the void for the workable training strategy has not yet been filled. In theory the previous strategy still stands
- 5.11 Another potential source of strategy the is Risktec report that was used to help provide the justification for the closure of the training school. This leaves the service with the problem that, having lost the training school; they do not have a viable or workable alternative. Risktec made interesting proposals around getting better qualified recruits in and making their training more basic. This would involve the brave move of going away from the national standards of the Integrated Personal Development Scheme and it is

⁵⁰ McGuirk, S (2002) *"Are We Serious" A strategic approach to long term equality and diversity in the UK Fire Service*, Tamworth: Chief and Assistant Chief Fire Officers Association. pp 10-11

unlikely that the local service would be given the necessary freedom by central Government to make that departure.

Mistakes that should not be repeated

- 5.12 The focus group said that they were never that keen on the militarism, but that the recruits that are now coming out of the training centre don't seem to be that respectful. People complain that those that come out of the current system don't conform to established practice, such as fitting in with the watch block leave system. The responses are that the elements of militarism that have been lost that actually are of value to the system are the discipline and the respect. The challenge will be to reintroduce these elements, without the elements of bullying and discrimination that are often associated with militaristic approach. In the interview with the Chief, highlighted the problem with the lack of respect "I don't want these people to call me mate".
- 5.13 The Fire Service Survey material was interesting as it highlighted that some of the people who were involved in the training delivery didn't have much of a concept of what was going on in the rest of the Brigade. Compared to the responses to the same question give to the Police the responses were thin and uninformed. Much of the criticism was focussed on lack of time, and there was clearly an impression that too much material was being forced into too little time. The model of the previous course consisted of an intense mix of academic lectures and physical drills. Although much of the same material will need to be covered it is important that any new strategy finds a way to deliver this learning so as not to overwhelm the recruits, rather to embed the learning into every day practice and experience.

Of the other responses, many can be interpreted as a positive endorsement for their own role in the process.

The form of accreditation through the Open College Network also comes in for criticism. This was a highly restrictive system of accreditation that lacked flexibility. It was criticised for over insistence on 'audit trailing' and 'red tape'.

The Fire Service SWOT analysis identified resources as a major issue affecting training. The people on the ground, in putting together the SWOT analysis clearly believed that there were insufficient resources to do the job, in terms of management time, and support. The Risktec report identifies a financial black hole in the training school system. In the interview with the Chief it became clear that the finance problems were actually born from the lack of proper costing in the training school, and not from the training schools system itself. There was in excess of £1000 deficit between the cost charged to outside brigades per week for training a recruit and the actual cost per candidate per course. It could be argued that the recommendation that Risktec made to disband the training schools is a very short term solution to a financial problem that could have been rectified by taking a whole cost approach to the finances in the school and restructuring the charging systems. The risk in this is that the other brigades would not be prepared to pay the increased prices would the training school actually become unviable. **In the future it is vital that proper costing models are attached to training proposals so that similar mistakes are not made.**

Opportunities for the new system

- 5.14 New training strategy for County Fire and Rescue gives an opportunity to create or reinforce the new organisational culture that is both demanded of the service from national policy and encourage by the personal vision of the Chief Fire Officer. An opportunity to get out of the 'training school' mentality exists. Although the consultation about this approach was negative

because stations felt that the burden would fall to them and that would be under-resourced for this task. However, the Chief Fire Officer introduced the possibility of another structure whereby a redundant or retained station could become the training base, and the courses could run on a basis more similar to the way an operational Fire Station runs, with a realistic work based approach to training. This would have the benefit of being separately resourced from the main stations, but be sufficiently in the fire community not to establish a separate organisational culture. The culture at the training station can be nurtured to be compatible with, but better than, the prevailing organisational culture. The new course in this model could be as short as seven weeks, so some further training and development would have to be delivered locally as part of the Firefighter development programme, but this should give the opportunity to tailor the individual training to local situation as demanded in the national framework.

- 5.15 new system based on a training station model could work on the basis of seconding operational Watch Managers to run 'training camps' rather than training centres. This would mirror the approach taken in the military whereby serving officers and Non-Commissioned officers are seconded into training as and when required. This would give opportunities for those Watch Managers to develop in their training skills, but also to breakdown the individual watch culture, and get those Watch Managers to appreciate the corporate and change agenda. In the focus group the comment was made that 'some Watch Managers need to get out of the bubble that they live in.'

Checklist for the new strategy

- From the research conducted in the various form previously described, a summary checklist for a successful new training strategy for the Fire Service would :

- Include elements of military discipline and respect (or professionalism);
- Include properly costed models to ensure adequate resources;
- Be closely related to the reality and experience of the work environment;
- Make a positive impact on the organisational culture;
- Deliver fire fighters who can think their way through problems, rather than just reproduce a drilled response;
- Produce the skill set to meet the modernisation agenda
- Be delivered in more manageable chunks to avoid 'academic overload'
- Have a system of validation that was practical and fits with the ways of working.

What works in the Police strategy / lessons learnt

5.16 The police SWOT analysis identified the following strengths from their new training system:

- Inclusively;
- Training self directed to be appropriate to individual learning needs;
- Higher education certified;
- Job specific;
- Delivers all that previous training achieved plus community awareness and confidence in role;
- Based in campus teams and professional development units;
- Training conducted in the community they will be posted in;
- Learning followed by practical application 'real but controlled environments'
- No further training required once they've achieved independent patrol.

5.17 However, this SWOT analysis was carried out by those who are currently part of the training system. Interesting nuances on these views were explored during the police focus group. They were critical of the levels of discipline achieved through the University

based system. While recognising that the technical knowledge of the law of the new recruits was excellent, they seemed to have problems integrating into the sections. 'They know all about procedures, but nothing about how to get a job done.' There was a perceived problem around the lack of role-playing in the new system compared to the previous training school model. The focus group recognised that the new tutors were much more professional than in the old system, however this is balanced against the lack of specific mentoring on station. The professional development units (PDU) run as an effective closed shop of training professionals, after which the recruits have to act independently on station. In the previous system the tutor provided more of a link between training and operational practice, and was also available as a mentor.

"We have the same entry level but at the end of the 43 week initial training they are more academically able and have more practical experience than previous recruits would have"⁵¹

6.17 The length of training is now 43 weeks rather than 14. This impacts on the resources available for deployment. The time the recruits spend on active duty during this training period is limited in its focus, and so The PDUs cannot be counted on for deployment to any type of incident; the same applies to the resource in terms of tutors being taken away from active duty. This has an impact on how well the recruits are able to integrate when they do come on station, because those on station feel like they have already had to 'carry' the weight of these trainees for many weeks before they arrive.

"There has been a high level of successful completion and much less drop-out than in previous training approach... the first cohort of officers are performing very well during the first months of Independent Patrol."⁵²

⁵¹ Quote taken from the Police Survey

⁵² Quote taken from Police Survey

- 6.18 The focus group also identified the University based learning as causing problems with identity, in that recruits seemed unsure of whether they were students or Police Officers. In both old and new systems recruits are enrolled and given the status and uniform of Police Officers on day one. In the training school situation they are then contained for the duration of the 14 week course, where they can test the limits of this new authority and become accustomed to their new role. In the University model, this transition is carried out in a much more public and community based setting. The focus group saw this as problematic and cited examples of the 'students' having to be disciplined for inappropriate behaviour whilst in uniform, and the reverse is also true in that the lack of discipline or 'student' behaviour then demonstrated on station is also a problem.
- 6.19 The Police Chief Inspector in overall charge of the training programme was critical of the difficulties of integrating Police culture with University culture. The requirement on Police Officers to become lecturers at the University, and work within that very different culture. His view was that this was something that had to be overcome.
- 6.20 The new Police training system has been seen to be a good driver for change. In trying to recruit minority groups, one of the identified problems is that rigid residential courses prevent representation from those with family commitments, or other obligations. Because it is run on three campuses, the travel distances can be minimised. The SWOT identified "More rounded officers; officers from differing backgrounds would have been unable to join previously due to period away from home."

"Officers have a broad understanding of specific issues and able to deal professionally with Members of the public"

Read across from Police experience to the Fire Service Situation

6.21 Both Fire and Police have National Occupational Standards that originally emanated from central government and their associated Quangos . There is local freedom about how these standards can be delivered and accredited. In this study the comparison is between County Fire and Rescue Service that uses an NVQ based system, and the County Police, which use a Certificate leading to a foundation degree. Both systems involve an element of training centre or university based learning coupled with work based experience or probation. The discussion about the balance of these elements, and the relative merit between 'book learning' and 'the real job' is a subjective judgement that has been argued over in the relative SWOT analysis and focus groups.

Although the systems and demands are different, there is useful read across between the current experience of the Police Service and the plans for delivery a new training strategy in the Fire Service.

6.22 The Fire Service training package will need to find a way to embed the change agenda into its new recruits. The Police Service training system seems to deliver this successfully. The SWOT analysis attributes this to the community based learning, rather than a pressure cooker for turning out organisational clones. This may well be the same point that came out of the Police focus group as lack of discipline of new recruits. To embed change, the new recruits are being encouraged to challenge authority where they do not perceive it to be legitimate. Barton ⁵³describes the solidarity and team work of the police organisational culture and points to its positive benefits in working together well in crisis, but also to the 'dark side' of 'closing ranks' 'covering up' and corruption. The

⁵³ Barton H , (2003) Understanding occupational (sub) culture – a precursor for reform: The case of the police service in England and Wales, *International Journal of Public Sector Management* , Volume: 16 Issue: 5 Page: 346 - 358

benefit of a training system that allows the recruits freedom outside of the organisational structure might be interpreted by those serving as lack of discipline, and 'not fitting in' but if the wider goal is organisational change this should be regarded as a positive feature. **In transferring learning across to the new Fire Service Training system, it should be noted that negative feedback from serving officers may in fact be confirmation of the success of the aim to change organisational culture. Careful analysis and questioning of any such results should be undertaken before any knee jerk reactions against new training systems are made.**

- 6.23 The survey results from the Police draw attention to the cultural clash between the University and the Police. Although there are arguably some benefits to be derived from the change of approach that this clash forces into the Police, it was highlighted as a negative feature in many of the returns. It could be argued that the risk of culture clash in the Fire Service will be more significant as traditional recruits will have a less academic background, and the fire service culture is well documented to be resistant to 'book learning' at the lower ranks. Care must be taken to ensure that where culture clash is an issue, it is handled carefully and deliberately as part of a supported change programme.
- 6.24 In financing the Police system, the training Inspector was clear that the initial rationale for running the course in the way they had was the funding injection from the Home Office. This funding was available for the first two years, and he was now nervous about the future viability of the system. Other police forces, including County, have adopted an NVQ based system where candidates complete the formal qualification during a 2 year period of probation after an initial 14 week training course. Although a shorter course will appear cheaper, the costs of administering NVQ alongside mainstream work should not be underestimated.

Management time will be taken from operations into training, and the costs would be masked in the operational budget. In taking lessons across to the Fire Service the importance of full cost modelling has already been noted. In the Fire Service there is capacity during work time to undertake other tasks. However, as the modernisation agenda increasingly seeks to account for this time and make it productive, the training cost implication will need to be made explicit and properly accounted for. **It may be that an NVQ based system to make best use of spare capacity on station is the method that would be most efficient for the Fire Service taken as a whole system, but the appropriate allowances should be made in accounting between the training budgets and the budgets for other work. .**

- 6.25. The new Fire Service training should deliver firefighters that can work well in the community. The Police experience has shown that delivering the training in the community helps embed these skills. Training at a University, has the benefit that the recruits will be training alongside a much more diverse selection of individuals than would be found within the police force .The Police SWOT analysis also identified the possibility of the new style course to allow franchising of elements of the course to bring in other services, and share elements of the training. Individuals who can succeed in the University environment are much more likely to be individuals who will succeed in the work in the community. In breaking down the 'them and us' culture there is however the risk that the new recruits will fit in well with the community, but not with their colleagues. The new Fire Fighters will also be required to operate on much more of a community level, interact with community groups; carry out home fire risk checks in people's homes; deal with education in schools; and represent the Fire Service on community partnerships. The service should find ways of dealing with issues of 'fitting in' as the benefit of the strengthened community representation will be so

great. The community based training should encourage a more diverse workforce (as evidenced by the Police SWOT) but also get the recruits used to dealing with a more diverse public.



6. Analysis and discussion

Overview of significant findings

- 6.1 This study has found there is much value in the comparison of the approach of police and Fire Services to training which can inform the formation of new training strategy and be use also to inform the change or modernisation process in County Fire and Rescue Service.
- 6.2 The interrelationship between negative aspects of the organisational culture in the training environment and on the Fire station should be considered a high priority for change in new strategy,
- 6.3 And in evaluating any new proposals consideration needs to be given to the idea supported by the research that when attempting to modify organisational culture a negative feedback is not only to be expected but may be an indication that a policy is heading in the right direction This will require very careful management as the idea that consultation needs to be carried out as part of such processes is embedded in the advice and direction set by the DCLG and fire national bodies. Government's encouragement of consultation.

- 6.4 The polices system of a combination of University and practical training in the PDUs seems to have great merit when it comes to meeting objectives set in Training Matters⁵⁴ moving away from training behind the walls of Ashford and into the heart of the Community. The application of such a system to the Fire Service would however be a different proposition. What must be addressed is what is different about the levels and balance between the practical and academic skills required for the two jobs. It would seem from the research to be true that the University environment is good for teaching the Police Officers the law and procedures which they need to do their job effectively. The trainee firefighters although now required to be more knowledgeable than they were in the past, do not require the same level of detailed academic input that Police Officers do. What may be more appropriate to the Fire Sector is not to be based in the University Community, but to be taken away from a training school environment and receive training not only closer to the community of County but closer to the actual community of the Fire Service. If a training strategy can be a driver of change the new culture of the training must be visible to the rest of the workforce in order for it to have a positive effect on them. .
- 6.5 Another key difference in the work of County Police and County Fire and Rescue Service is the amount of time, which supervisors have to devote to developing staff; the impression received from the Police Focus group was of a service, which was already running at capacity. Sergeants in the group did not have the spare time or resources to devote to training and mentoring probationary constables. This may well have influenced the decision to effectively base the training off the sections, but still put the PDUs on the street in the community. There are as always issues about the use of resources but if the time impact of supporting probationers in other forces such as

⁵⁴ Training Matters' report published by HMIC

County were fully costed it may be that this decision would be justified.

Consideration in light of existing research

6.6 If we have established that the training strategy and design of the trainee course is a key part of the organisations change process we can apply Lewin's⁵⁵ three phase model for change, In this case the unfreezing process has been started for good or ill by the decision to close the County Training Centre training school.

6.7 The organisation and particularly the training functions which are part of the service delivery arm of the service are currently in the second" moving" phase. In this phase it is not the trainees who need to change, as they come in new to the organisation, but the change process needs to be in the Hearts and minds of those carrying out the training, but must then move on if training is to be a change driver in the organisation. It is important that the members of watches receiving the newly trained firefighters are part of the change process otherwise the entrenched cultures against change and particularly groupthink could undermine the positive work of the new strategy.

Once a new training scheme is established this needs to be linked effectively to the Firefighter development programme and these new programmes need to be "stabilised and institutionalised" at Lewin's third phase the refreezing.

6.8 It has been the intention of central government through t the DCLG to implement a programme of transformational leadership, this has been shown by Department for Communities and Local Governments issuing of a consultation paper Leadership in the

⁵⁵ Senior B, Flemming, J.(2006) Organisational Change, Third Ed, Prentice Hall. pp349-350

Fire Service⁵⁶ however previous work in County⁵⁷ has established that the transformational leadership⁵⁸ model County may not be appropriate for the leadership of the day to day work of the service where a transactional approach has been shown to be more effective. However in an area of change such as the establishment and implementation of a new training programme the model of Transformational leadership model is appropriate. In order for this model to be effective at all levels a cohesive strategy required, using this strategy the senior players involved as well as those in the role of change agents can use this to effect the change in the organisation and capture the hearts and minds of the rest of the organisation to line up behind new processes and change itself.

- 6.9 Taken for County Fire and Rescue Service the training and development strategy could not be defined as emergent as defined by Mintzberg⁵⁹ as the impetus for the strategy was not organisational learning, but rather the hiatus caused by the sudden closure of the training school. However, taking the Fire Service as a whole and also including academia and the Fire Service college the learning leading to the development of a new training development strategy has occurred. The problem with this is the disconnect between the learning and the authority to act. In the current situation the authority lies at Brigade level, but the learning is only effectively captured at a national level. It is a recommendation of this paper that learning from experience of previous situation be more explicitly linked into the development of training programmes for the future, and that National learning is more clearly fed into brigade thinking. The

⁵⁶ Leadership and Development in the Fire and Rescue Service - Summary of responses to the Consultation Paper http://www.communities.gov.uk/embedded_object.asp?id=1505691 accessed 18/06/07

⁵⁷ Fisher (2006) – Leadership and Learning in County Fire and Rescue Service, submitted for year 2 of MBA at University of Brighton 23/01/06

⁵⁸ Yukl (2005) Leadership in Organisations, 3rd Ed, Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, USA. pp 262-267

⁵⁹ Mintzberg (2000) The Rise and fall of strategic Planning) Prentice Hall, London

closure of the training school as broken the inertia of an institutional training course and centre. Going forward emergent strategy will be more possible and more necessary. In the current situation it would be wrong to mask the lack of organisational strategy as emergent strategy, when in reality the reaction of the training and development team is metaphorical fire fighting, just dealing with a problem as it occurs. What is needed is strategy as metaphorical Community Fire Safety, to prevent these situations occurring in the first place.

Examination of findings / compared to hypothesis

“County Fire and Rescue Service is in need of a training strategy, would the model adopted by County Police give the service a strategy fit for the modernised Fire Service”?

6.10 As discussed earlier the Davies⁶⁰ model for strategy can be used to consider the position of County Fire And Rescue Service, not having full control of policy since this is heavily influenced by directive central government and national bodies and neither having full control of finance, because of the need to always justify the share of an every more pressurised County Council budget. To some extent this is also true of County Police, in fact there is more direction from the Home Office for the Police than from DCLG for the Fire Service. So County Police have been successful in their strategy to deliver Learning, if strategy is taken as defined by Davies⁶¹. However the risk to this strategy is that the funding stream, which has allowed this to occur, is vulnerable.

6.11 County Fire and Rescue could adopt a near identical strategy for training, there is no shortage of willing institutions waiting to get

⁶⁰ Davies, Warnock, Understanding Strategy, Journal: Strategy & Leadership
Year: Oct 2000 Volume: 28 Issue: 5 Page: 25 - 30

⁶¹ Davies, Warnock, Understanding Strategy, Journal: Strategy & Leadership
Year: Oct 2000 Volume: 28 Issue: 5 Page: 25 - 30

involved in vocational training, but this would not deliver the Firefighters that are required by the service to meet the post 9/11 agenda for a modern service. This is because the nature of the job is far more practical in nature, that is hands on training is required. The Police Service requires practicality, but this is in dealing with people and situations. The Fire Service needs the type of practicality which is hands on.

6.12 What would be of benefit to the Fire Service is some of the underpinning principles, which underlie the Police approach. The training, which encourages responsibility, taking control of ones, own development, and an ethos of professionalism. What was identified as lacking in the newer recruits was a sense of discipline, it is anticipated that this new professionalism will replace the positive aspects of the militaristic model.

6.13 So in answer to the hypothesis, the County Police Strategy does deliver effective Police Officers, with some concerns raised by the Focus groups, but nothing, which could not be overcome. This strategy if directly lifted and using a Fire Syllabus would not be directly appropriate. However many of the principles would be appropriate particularly the closer relationship between the training and the workplace, and training and the community.

Recommendations for future research

6.14 The County Police and University of Seaside partnership is at present not been fully reviewed and the findings of this work provide some information, but do not in any way provide the depth of review that will be necessary. This was accepted both by the Chief Inspector Training and those actually running the programme.

- 6.14 A full review of the Police Training will be required and periodic review as these Police Officers progress through the early as of their career.
- 6.15 Some research has been carried out by County Fire and Rescue Service into training strategies the Risktec report and draft training strategies being part of this. In order to complete the project of writing a full training and development strategy further work will be required in putting together a recruits or trainee programme but also in considering the continuing aspects of learning and development not considered by this study. This will need to incorporate the Firefighter Development programme and programmes for all five of the management levels in the service as well as programmes and strategies for Fire control and non-uniformed staff.
- 6.16 There has already been some work looking into training and its effect on issues of equality and bullying notable Baigent ⁶²this has focused on one area or the negative organisational Culture, which exists in the Fire Service. There is scope for further research into other aspects of organisational Culture and its effect on the Modernisation Agenda such as openness to change and organisational Culture.
- 6.17 There is also a more general lack of comprehensive or academic research in the Fire Service. If the service is to have a voice in policy it will need to have a research focus which gives it the ability to direct its own destiny, this was noted at an international Fire Conference "There is a serious danger that fire policy will be developed on the basis of work carried out in the context of the market place rather than being underpinned by research which has been subjected to full process of academic

⁶² Baigent, D., with Hill, R., Ling, T., Skinner, D., Rolph, C and Watson, A. – Sunrise an New Dawn in Training, APU Fitting-in, 2003

rigour and peer review"⁶³ so in many ways the recommendations for future research is that there should be future research and that this should be thorough and subject to peer review. As the IPDS project rolls out this should become the case since Management academic courses will form part of these IPDS programmes for those at Station Manager and above as well as the courses run at the Fire Service College being linked to academic institutions.

⁶³Professor D Drysdale, European Vice-Chair, International Association of Fire Safety Sciences and D T Davis, Chair of the Executive Committee, Institution of Fire Engineers (Fire Engineers Journal 61, 10, 6-7). Taken from Fitting –in accessed 19/06/07



7. Summary and conclusions

- 7.1 This study has clearly demonstrated the need for a training strategy. The assumption in the hypothesis that there was no real strategy has been confirmed.
- 7.2 The Police model doesn't fit well because of the difference in the job one being more academic, and the other being more practical. The benefits of the Police system are that it is family friendly, based in the community and embraces rather than resists the change and modernisation agenda.
- 7.3 There is scope to develop an initial training element of a training strategy which picks up some of the best points of the Police course and synthesises this with best practice in training and what's best of Fire Service traditional approach to make a training programme which is fit for the modern Fire Service.
- 7.4 What has emerged from the interviews with the Chief Fire Officer is a potential new model. The analyses carried out in the surveys and focus groups would suggest that this is a workable model, and that it also has a good fit with the nationally driven modernisation agenda. However there are important lessons to be learnt from the research conducted, that will need to be applied to ensure that this potential model is successfully delivered and received. This learning forms the basis of the recommendations that follow.

Recommendations:

7.5 One of the main interviews for this paper was with the Chief Fire Officer. During the course of the interview he discussed an emerging proposal for delivering basic training for new recruits. Although not a strategy in itself it does provide a potential central plank of a new training strategy. This section describes in more detail that proposal, and discusses whether the findings of the rest of the research support the plan. It also makes recommendations about steps that should be taken to ensure the success of the proposal, and explains what further work would need to be done to produce a complete training strategy around this proposal, specifically learning the lessons from the Police model.

The Chief's proposal

7.6 The Chief's proposal was to take a redundant fire station, and design a short initial training course that gave Fire Fighters basic competences to do the job. Instructors would be seconded directly from operational watches. This would be useful because it would not only develop the recruits, but also bring about change in the pool of watch officers. Being taken out their own comfort zone and being put into a training environment would enable them to appreciate the need for modernisation, and help them to own the process of change. This should not cause any contractual difficulties because the Watch Officer job description includes a requirement for them to be involved in staff development. Also the contract state that Officers should be prepared to serve anywhere in County, so they should be flexible to travel as required.

7.7 The availability of a redundant fire station would be part of reallocation of service based on the integrated risk management plan, or risk modelling that is being carried out across the

brigade. This is highly controversial, highly contentious, and can not be done quickly. This is mostly to do with Public relations and possible industrial relation repercussions. Although the Chief did have particular site in mind, the process is lengthy and does not solve the problem of what to do about training the next intake of recruits.

- 7.8 So for the moment the obvious solution would be to be design a non-location specific training programme, that would be ideally suited to a large redundant fire station, but could be tailored to be delivered in a variety of available premises. Short term solutions for hosting the course might include the use of retained stations, which are generally not used during the day(art from responding to incidents); location at another facility such as xxxxxx or xxxxx (but this would incur additional cost to the Service); or co-locate with a whole-time station (but this might not reap the full benefits to change of organisational culture). Using a variety of locations for different elements of the training might in itself reap benefits as it mobilizes the recruits and enables them to become familiar with the community and geography of the area in which they will be working. This should engender an attitude of working cross county, rather than at a particular station, and bring in the service culture from the beginning.

“Designing a course, not an institution”

Does the research support this model?

- 7.9 The conclusion of the research in this paper was a checklist of eight tests for a new successful strategy. The new proposal should match, or be able to be designed to match these criteria.
- 7.10 Include elements of military discipline and respect (or professionalism). The new model should emphasise individual

professionalism rather than taking its cues from group behaviour. The strength of this is that if a trainee finds themselves in a situation where they are the only person upholding organisational values, they should have the confidence to see this through. To do this the values will need to be embedded in the course. This is about having trainers who know that they are also change agents, and that their job is more than training, it is also to have an impact for change in the organisation. To make this work it is a recommendation that only substantive watch officers be used in this role, as it is important that they have been recognised in rank, and carry the weight of corporate responsibility, seeing themselves as a full part of the management chain.

7.11 Include properly costed models to ensure adequate resources.

This study was not intended to produce detailed figures, but useful learning from the Police experience is that set up and running costs are often accounted for differently, and the whole picture must be taken into account to ensure that the model is viable. Sustainability is a crucial factor in the success of this model.

7.12 Be closely related to the reality and experience of the work environment.

The new model clearly meets this demand. It will be based in a real fire station, run by real Watch officers, with real fire appliances (compared to the out of date models often used at the old training school). A key recommendation would be to ensure that any new location doesn't suffer obsolescence of equipment as did the old training school. The key to this is the resilience argument, in that the training system will be used to maintain a working appliance, it can be crewed by qualified fire fighters if it is needed to be deployed in an extreme emergency.

- 7.13 Make a positive impact on the organisational culture. The new model will produce the people that the Service is looking before, because it will move away from 'chalk and talk' and 'rote learning'. By supporting the development programme it will help station personnel realise that they are key to the development of staff. The rotation of Watch Officers onto the training station from operational stations will keep the experiences that they have to share live and real, and reduce the likelihood of instructors becoming stale and institutionalised. However, there is a risk that requirements of the IPDS system will require training instructors to be cert Ed qualified, and this could limit the number of available instructors (currently only one in the brigade). The recommendation is that rotation of serving officers is a key element of this strategy, and attempts should be made to ensure that it is realised, either through negotiation of the requirement, or through increased enrolment onto the cert Ed course for serving Watch Officers.
- 7.14 Deliver fire fighters who can think their way through problems, rather than just reproduce a drilled response. Leading on from changes that were in the tail end of the old courses, the assessment for the new courses should be much more scenario based. It is a recommendation of this paper that the academic work be more group and project based than was previously the case. The lecture and exam system is far removed from the reality of the work, and so is not always helpful. The new courses should include a range of learning systems to ensure that there is accessibility for people with different learning styles⁶⁴
- 7.15 Provide the skill set to meet the modernisation agenda. The change of emphasis onto more group work, encouraging confidence and communication skills will produce Fire Fighters

⁶⁴ Honey P, Mumford A. Manual of Learning Styles. Maidenhead: Honey; 1992.

who are able to meet the requirements of modernisation for work in the community. So they should be confident enough to deal with individual members of the public, but also to lead and present on community safety issues to the public, or to represent the service in community partnerships.

7.16 Be delivered in more manageable chunks to avoid 'academic overload' It is a proposal of this paper that a more manageable way to deliver the content of future courses might be to give the technical information in forms other than lectures, for example e-learning. This will allow the shortened course to concentrate more on building up practical skills. The technical knowledge will also be spread into the development phase (the two year probation) as much of it is not safety critical in order to be able to ride a fire engine.

7.17 Have a system of validation that is practical and fits with the ways of working. In designing the new system for validation, it is recommended that the whole course fit in better with the overall development programme, which is well liked by those serving in the brigade. This is validated by compliance with EdExcel guidelines. The process of validation should distract from the focus of the strategy, which should be quality. If the detail of the validation becomes problematic with EdExcel for any reason then the Brigade should seek to either go elsewhere, or to self validate to the National Occupational Standards.

Other Recommendations

7.18 In the face of increasing uncertainty about the structure of the Brigade in the context of Regionalisation, it will be important to build a model that is sufficiently flexible to be moved or delivered using a variety of locations and instructors. A model that works like a franchised package, rather than one that is tied

to any specific location or personality would be most flexible, and provide most cost efficient. This would be particularly attractive if it could be externally validated, and then the Brigade could sell the validation with the facilitation of the course.

7.18 Subject specialists, such as the Arson Task Force should be utilized as visiting speakers. This will link the specialists into the wider organisation more effectively, and will also mean that up to date best practice is what is taught to new recruits. Watch Officers in command of the course will also benefit from this up to date learning and be able to disseminate to their home stations.

7.19 An element of the course should incorporate interagency working, encouraging cooperation with blue light services, particularly in scenario working. Recruits should be thinking bigger than the brigade and about linking into the emergency services community. The potential for shared learning between the Police and Fire Service has been demonstrated by this study, and there is an untapped potential to link Police Officers in the PDUs with Probationary Fire Fighters. The reality of the civil contingencies Act means that interagency co-operation, and familiarity with other ways of operating and command will become increasingly necessary.

Further work needed to develop the strategy

7.20 Initial training course should not be taken in isolation. It must be linked in with the Fire Fighter development programme, and the development programmes for every level of the service. A successful development and training strategy should be a catalyst for change at all levels of the organisation.

7.21 The recommendations described above will be taken forward in the development of the new training strategy, and specifically in the

design of the new Fire Fighter initial development course that will be running from September 2007. The model for a training course described by the Chief Fire Officer in the interview recorded in this paper, will be developed, in accordance with the recommendations above, to deliver the new training.

Annex 1 Fire Service PESTEL Analysis

	Local	Organisational	Regional	National
Political	Fire safety inspection only, no training	Structure changes	Partnership Working Amalgamation and merger, regional control cooperation	The, national change of the modernisation / agenda National standards joined up working
Economic	Prevention (targets)	Redundancies, pension Costs, Restructuring, Recruitment Moratorium on		Pensions deficit, National Procurement Council tax Capping Empty properties
Social	skill sets, single status, gender	, Vocational skills gap,	Diversity, Recruitment of Ethnic minorities. Gender	Skills of population, Health Deprivation Demographics Education Levels (of population) with one
Techno-Logical	E learning,	IT, tablet PCs, Home working, 24 hour services	Regional Control centres. Compatible IT systems MODAS	Gershon, Firebuy
Environmental		Maxicabs Green Fleet Foam Biofuels	Congestion Charging, Home working	Value for Money Carbon Footprint, Environmental obligations- Green promotion
Legal		Regulatory Reform Order. Local cases – industrial tribunals		Regulatory Reform Order

Annex 2 Police Service Pestel Analysis

Political	Priority Projects - effect on working relationships		Regionalisation/ Amalgamation= less jobs less hierarchy Performance Indicators	PCSOs (mobile Scarecrows) CPS Direct Civilian investigators Civil aim custody officers Fit for purpose
Economic	Terrorism	Sickness Levels Staff review Pensions 2010 Cash drain to anti terror	London Weighting (staff loss to Met) Regional Helicopter	Capping New Pension Scheme Police pay 3% Funding cuts
Social	Terrorism/Crawley Seaside	Stress Responsibility Wok Life Balance Shift Review	Training (loss of Ashford)	Partnership working Diversity Licensing Homophobia terrorism Sexual offences Hate crime Licensing
Technological	APNR Command and Control operating systems			Airwave Interoperability Computerisation of DVLA
Environ-mental	Recycling Smoking	Carbon footprint reduction Diesel cars		
Legal	Terrorism	Training at Seaside	FPN??	Pace Changes Sex Offender Register CPS Direct Firearms data base

Annex 3 Survey Results – Fire Training Course SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Experience knowledge The Instructors, Equipment in relation to reasonable numbers varied services trainees</p> <p>The Training Staff. Philosophy and values of the training delivery. Continuity of input. Centre Accreditation and the Final Qualification. Development (Individual & Team). Morale. Reputation. Final knowledge base.</p> <p>Experience of instructors Keeness of students. Practical work</p>	<p>Timescales, Lack of finance Senior Management refusal to listen and put too many trainees on the course, thereby causing equipment issues.</p> <p>Time to mark papers and provide support to weaker students. Space within the site for expansion.</p> <p>Staff training Management backing of Assessment Decisions.</p> <p>Cost. Resource requirements. Time. Lack of time.</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p>At the time the opportunities for expansion and new markets were very good</p> <p>External agencies. Other Fire & Rescue Services. Industry. Geographical within Southeast Region. Innovation. Staff development opportunities. Improved skill base and resilience.</p> <p>To develop their capabilities. Satisfaction. Teamwork.</p>	<p>Staff leaving and no opportunity to train new staff. Political environment Finance</p> <p>Economy - Local, Regional & National. Sustainability of Training Staff. Competitors. Strategic Decisions.</p>

Annex 4 Fire Survey Responses

What do you expect/ did you expect, the training to deliver (Initial Trainee training or Management Training)?

I expected the training to deliver all the basic skills and knowledge required to become a firefighter.
Initial Trainee training

The Training (focusing on Initial TFF Training) was designed to provide students with the core skills, Necessary for them to participate effectively, as a member of a team, in both hostile and extreme Environments. Many content requirements were included as a direct result of Health & Safety, Equal Opportunities, etc. or due to the necessity of the individuals role, i.e. the need to be competent In the use of Breathing Apparatus.

To train initial trainees to a level of competence practically to enable them to pass an assessment
To become firefighters

Has/does the programme deliver these expectations?

Mostly, time and finance restrictions cause limitations to what can be delivered
Yes

The final TFF Course design was directly linked to IPDS and the specific role-maps, therefore, In essence, the criteria met expectations. This course also allowed a period of 2 weeks for the trainee's To apply their skills within realistic simulated incidents, something which previously had never been Included, therefore students had, theoretically, only acquired their skills!

What are the three best things about the programme?

1. Instructor commitment to students
Comprehensive
The available resources - facilities and trainer skills/experience.
Small groups to teach
2. Middle manager support
Based on Competence
The course content.
Mostly practical
3. Trainee enthusiasm
Practical
The teamwork - working with the same course/squad for a period of 14 weeks.
Students enjoy the subject

What are the three worst things about the programme?

1. time limitations
Audit trail
The paperwork - We were attempting to achieve OCN accreditation, therefore, paperwork completion was lengthy.
Repetitive for the teacher
2. Budget restraints
Linked to OCN
The difficulty(s) involved when deeming an individual 'Not Yet Competent' - Politics and Paperwork.
Lack of time, course is to short
3. RED tape
Assessments
The rigidity of the program.
No other

Is the level of qualifications required of participants sufficient for them to be successful in the programme?

just, additional tutoring can be given to help students

Yes

Possibly - Those individuals who did find the course difficult may well have less initial qualifications - Training was not privy to this information. Selection Test - A noticeable difference was made with reference to fitness level reduction, due to lowering of the appropriate Acceptance Tests and lack of enforcement.

Yes although lack of strength can be a problem

How would you rate the ability of the trainees compared to the past, are they more or less academically able, practical etc

How would you rate the ability of the trainees compared to the past, are they more or less academically able, practical etc

Less academically able, some had poor or no previous input of physics or chemistry.

Less academically able same level of practical ability

No appreciable difference over the 3 year period I was exposed to TFF Training. Student abilities range dramatically.

No real difference, but the course now requires more technical work than was previously taught so a comparison is difficult

In your opinion- Are the people on the programme the right people for the training- are they the right people for the services needs?

We are becoming a little to concerned about peoples interpersonal skills at the expense of their physical capability

In most cases right for the service yes but it was difficult to remove someone who was not able

If the individuals passed the Selection Process, whether these individuals are the right people or not; my opinion is negligible.

In my opinion; most of the time.

Annex 5 Police Course SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Inclusively Self directed study Training in the community Higher education certificated Attitudinal and behavioural qualifications / certification flexibility People, Experience, practically relevant. Job specific.</p> <p>Delivers all that previous training achieved plus community awareness and confidence in role. Staff both in campus based teams and in Prof Dev Units across County. Ability of staff to use skills and standards frameworks to support learning and assessment. The 'can-do' attitude of police The learner focused approach of police</p> <p>For the student officers to be trained within the community which they will be posted. Flexibility Skilled trainers Learning followed by practical application in real but controlled environments. Community focus and Placements Local base rather than regional as in the past Self motivation and responsibility encouraged. Regular, generally even numbers on course No further initial training once released to Independent Patrol.</p>	<p>financial, cross management working,</p> <p>Unable to fully assess knowledge base Unable to track students work during periods of self study communication between the three sites communication between the university and the (PDU) police station Leadership, valuing of training by staff.</p> <p>Funding basis is not entirely secure. Communications are not always as good as needed. Administration has sometimes been weak. Tension between local planning and national policy changes. Took some time to get enough critical mass on board, both in police force and in university.</p> <p>Students' experiences vary across the campuses and PDU offices. This is being addressed with meetings and cross division discussions. Need for consistent workplace exposure over wide area. Financial commitment in terms of staffing of all areas National direction which can contradict course local aims</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p>community involvement, wider knowledge base.</p> <p>More rounded officers from differing back grounds that would have been unable to join previously due to period expected to be away from home greater involvement with community a qualification at the end of the course Technical advancement, resources</p> <p>Possibility of sharing funding costs with some HEFCE funding. Possibility of revising some modules to be 'open' and shared with other organisations rather than 'closed' for only this employer. The police staff are now experienced enough to move to a more franchised model when the initial 3yr contract is renegotiated. The course could be delivered much more through use of e-learning and blends and less face to face.</p> <p>For student officers to progress to independent patrol and have a broad understanding of the police structure so that they can make career choices. Link to other courses / communities through University Expansion of Community placement to enhance recruiting, community contacts, Independent Advisory Groups etc. Spread good practice locally and nationally Develop assessment procedures to meet needs of NOS.</p>	<p>Staff from previous training having less knowledge. Full degree course not being available to all students who wish to continue studies beyond the foundation certificate. political - Home office deciding that all forces will do the same training Funding running out Finance</p> <p>Funding crisis from police cuts. Change of national policy that drives police training into one model. Dramatic change in local recruitment requirements. Loss of quality within partnership or course delivery.</p> <p>Possible financial issues for funding for the 2nd year of student officer progression. Financial constraints on Force and Divisions National Directions becoming more intrusive Slipping of support and development as personnel change. Need to recruit good training and assessment staff. The change culture as management changes.</p>

Annex 6 police Survey responses

What do you expect/ did you expect, the training to deliver (Initial Trainee training or Management Training)?

I expect our training to deliver a high standard of new police recruit to the community
A good initial grounding for the new student officers at the start of their career.
This should provide the basis on which to police their community with confidence
Basic training comprising of: learning to learn communication Statement of Values
law - simple to complex as course progresses policy and procedure diversity and citizenship
first aid staff safety
The training delivers a basic portfolio of skills and abilities to function competently
In the job role, as well as adequate opportunities to practice these skills in a safe environment.

Initial training to lead police student officers to stage of Independent Patrol.
To do this they need to complete the appropriate National Occupational Standards
As part of the level 1 HE Foundation Certificate.
Our training is intended to give Police Officers a broad understanding of many aspects of
Policing within a local community environment. They can then take this 'academic' knowledge
And apply this within a practical application.
The training is designed to prepare probationary constables to Independent Patrol standard
where they were capable of attending incidents unsupervised and dealing with them correctly And
Professionally. It incorporates diversity, communication and law aspects to enable this.

Has/does the programme deliver these expectations?

One year in the results are very positive. I think we will have to wait several years before
the full effect is felt in the community
The expectation was for the course to deliver a rounded Police officer whose knowledge
is at least that of those trained under the old system. Early indications show that new
student officers knowledge is better than those trained under the old system.
yes
Yes, though additional practical exercises would benefit the course.

Yes, there has been a high level of successful completion and much less drop-out than in
previous training approach. We have some initial research data demonstrating that the
first cohort of officers are performing very well during the first months of Independent Patrol.
Probably could share this with you if you want?

All initial feedback shows that the programme is delivering is meeting the aims of the course.
Officers have a broad understanding of specific issues and able to deal professionally with
Members of the public.
Our first 2 cohorts have now achieved Independent Patrol and the feedback has been almost
Universally positive. On a recent survey of supervisors on a 1-4 scale (where 4 is complete
agreement with a positive statement) the average over the questions asked was well over
3. Personally I am happy that a good standard is being produced.

What are the three best things about the programme?

1

Modular
Flexible
Foundation Certificate - i.e. something to show for all your hard work
Graduated development of subject material
Successful integration of workplace and campus based learning and assessment.
Community based
Academic learning linked to practical application in blocks

2.

County based
Self directed- Onus on the student to learn
A leaning towards autonomous learning rather than didactic
Context and example driven
Perspective on policing in communities.
Recognised certificate

3.

Student centred
Modular to allow the student time to practice what they have just learned.
individual learning plans and appreciation of individual learning styles
Practical exercises
Widens participation in HE.
Low drop-out
Link to community throughout to develop true policing skills

What are the three worst things about the programme?

1.

teething problems
Difficult to assess overall knowledge
not long enough to do everything we would like
Short lead times to prepare

It's complicated and resource heavy to run.

Paperwork

Limited time to fully introduce a wide variety of student to the learning environment.

2.

uni V police working practices
Sometimes too much is expected of the student in their work placement
marking assignments is very time consuming
varying student numbers

It hasn't attracted participation from minority and hard to engage communities.

Unavoidable build up of workload through the course as subjects become more challenging

3.

admin

The difference in cultures between University and Police Stations
being split into 3 sites across County

It still has too much emphasis on face to face delivery.

A huge subject area to compress into the time so the course has to select the most important areas.

Is the level of qualifications required of participants sufficient for them to be successful in the programme?

Yes

Yes. This course enables students of little or no experience of further education to succeed with a little support.

yes

Yes

We only ask for the police selection criteria and didn't add any university admission requirements. So far, we've had no problems although some have struggled a little to complete. Many have far exceeded expectations.

Initial qualifications? - Yes

We have no academic requirement other than to pass the national assessment centre. Very few of our applicants fail for academic reasons - the majority who leave do so for personal reasons having found the role isn't for them.

How would you rate the ability of the trainees compared to the past, are they more or less academically able, practical etc

We have the same entry level but at the end of the 43 week initial training they are more academically able and have more practical experience than previous recruits would have
Early indications show that they are better.

The feedback from their divisions suggest that they are more academically able and practically they are more confident because of their knowledge

I would suggest that the I.T skills of applicants have increased; however, the practical ability, common sense thinking and problem solving skills have decreased.

The uni had no previous experience. Police feedback indicates that this is much more successful in developing officers able to work confidently and appropriately. Some feedback compared these people as like officers with a year's experience.

There is a mixture of students, so I am neutral about this.

I feel that they academic standard probably hasn't changed overall, but they now have a chance to use it in an academic environment where in the past they did not. Practically the course seems to provide a more rounded product, better able to adapt and deal with the workload in the real world. Is the level of qualifications required of participants sufficient for them to be successful in the programme?

In your opinion- Are the people on the programme the right people for the training- are they the right people for the services needs?

Overall Yes. Systems are in place for both the individual & the service to find out if they are in the wrong job, both within the 43 weeks before independent patrol and then still further during the rest of their probationary period until 2 years service has been completed when they are confirmed in rank. As far as the course goes most students are coping with the requirements admirably however as far as the service goes it is too soon to tell. Early indications are that they are successful.

Generally, but the recruitment procedure doesn't get it right every time and I'm not involved in that process

50/50

Yes. Any that are really unsuitable are either not recruited or are counselled out during the course.

Generally, yes they are 'right'.

The vast majority are enthusiastic, capable and highly motivated. They represent a wide cross section of society and I believe we have selected good quality candidates who will go on to fulfil a number of roles.

Annex 7 Full Surveymonkey Survey

Available as PDF On Electronic Version

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