Safeguarding and the Volunteer Police Cadets

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Author: Graeme Ironside

Tutor: Dr Pete Lee

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Abstract

Over the past six years the Volunteer Police Cadets [VPC] have doubled their numbers to 15000. Each police force in England and Wales now operates a VPC scheme to enable national coverage. Rapid growth, with limited funding has not allowed for supporting policy and infrastructure to keep pace. Whilst the police have developed expertise and operating procedures to meet their statutory safeguarding responsibilities, operating a uniform youth group in the form of the VPC does not form part of those responsibilities. Falling outside of core policing, the VPC requires different safeguarding arrangements. The aim of this paper is to examine the extent to which the VPC is operating safely from a safeguarding perspective by comparing it with youth sector best practice, and the underlying extent to which police culture could be hindering the ability of the police to improve.

The literature review considers risk philosophy and makes the case for viewing it as a socially constructed phenomenon. The evolution of child protection is reviewed and within it how interdisciplinary specialisation has caused tension between the different agencies, each with their own statutory responsibilities. Culture is promoted as being a barrier to achieving 'trans-discipline and the literature includes research on police failures to understand complexities in relation to community policing roles. This extends into safeguarding complexities around youth organisations such as the power imbalance between child and adult which raises unique risks presented by police officers acting as adult leaders. Organisational behaviour and police culture are also reviewed, along with tools for researching it including Grid Group Cultural Theory [GGCT].

An interpretivist approach is adopted and using mixed method research, surveys of VPC adult leaders were completed and then followed up with semi structured interviews. GGCT is used to consider the findings and move beyond cultural labelling to gain understanding of the dynamics at play and interpret them. Findings reveal that VPC safeguarding is not meeting the UK Youth safe spaces standards. A cultural divide is also apparent between adult leaders and their managers, fitting with the GGCT extreme cases type mapping and a potential barrier to improvement.

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Introduction

Context

This project will research safeguarding risk in relation to the Volunteer Police Cadets [VPC] which was the focus of a workshop held in September 2018 (appendix A). Delegates included VPC coordinators and adult leaders from eleven police forces across England and Wales, along with the national VPC hub team. The workshop was led by the Head of Safeguarding for Girl Guiding and Chair of the National Youth Safeguarding Forum [NYSF] with supporting input from the recently retired Head of Specialist Crime for the Metropolitan Police. The workshop highlighted the media's role in scrutinising and publicising statutory agency safeguarding failures prompting high profile historical reviews. Organisational and People risk factors impacting on VPC safeguarding were also identified and are expanded on below, preceded with background on the media's continuing influence.

Media

Over four decades, researchers have highlighted the influence of the media in shaping government policy on safeguarding and the resulting organisational defensiveness by statutory agencies. Stafford (2012, pp.27-28) claims that the UK media is a main driver of change when considering how UK child protection systems have evolved. She identifies the work of Mathiesen (1997) who introduces the concept of 'viewer society', describing it as 'the many viewing the activities of the few through increased media coverage'. She also quotes Hills (1980) stating 'child abuse makes for good copy' and describing how detailed reporting on trials 'quenches both public conscience and appetite for horror simultaneously, then extended through ritual purification: the inquiry into the failings and execution of the guilty parties'. In doing so it is suggested the media has the power to transform the private into the public, but undermines trust, reputation and legitimacy in the process. Although Hills aligns this descriptor to the plight of social workers nearly forty years ago, it could also be applicable to policing. Recent examples of this analogy include police child protection failings contained within the Laming Report (2003, pp.331-338) and the Bichard Inquiry (2004, pp.98-99).

Considering media influence, together with the workshop findings and experiences of NSYF colleagues, it is recognised that although individual forces hold responsibility

for operating their VPC schemes, a safeguarding failure in one force will not be contained within it. There will be no differentiation. Media scrutiny and amplification will present it as a national failure, leading to a potential crisis as the lack of join up and consistently, inconsistent poor standards across forces are unearthed, as media coverage, public mood and political response move through the stages of crisis (Fink, 2002, pp.20-28) and (BS11200, 2014, p.4). The police service could, in the event of a safeguarding critical incident be unable to respond to it competently, or the subsequent scrutiny, and convert what began as a clear opportunity risk to strengthen public confidence and trust in policing, into a disaster for which the post crisis risk treatment could be termination of the VPC.

Organisational and People Risk

With rapid expansion over six years the VPC appears to lack a clear identity, unsure whether it is a police unit or a uniform youth group. These two factors appear partly responsible for the lack of policy development and associated good practice, heightening risks in many areas, including safeguarding and defined by the workshop lead as *"underpinning everything else"*. Whilst the police have developed safeguarding expertise around meeting their statutory responsibilities under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018, p.55), the workshop established there is no equivalent 'specialism' within policing focussed on VPC safeguarding and either, an unwitting disregard for such need, or at best an assumption that operational police safeguarding procedures provide sufficient coverage. The workshop findings suggest they do not, with demand for improvement being driven from the bottom up by adult leaders.

Compounding this over reliance on operational safeguarding procedures, the workshop re-affirmed that in the order of police-business, 'cadets' are not a priority and consequently receive little management attention. This was also identified in separate workshops with VPC adult leaders, led by Dr Jeffrey DeMarco in 2017, with claims it was viewed as, 'a soft job, not meriting the time or attention of more pressing matters' (DeMarco, Bifulco, Davidson, 2018, p.28). This has similarity with the Laming Inquiry (2003, p.334) where police Child Protection Teams were considered as soft policing and dubbed 'cardigan squads'. As such adult leaders often feel isolated and

unsupported, but by default are *'the'* group within policing, with experience of VPC safeguarding issues. However, the workshop in September 2018 also highlighted that the absence of formal policy and supporting guidance for the adult leader role is seeing leaders having to develop their own responses and workarounds, within and often constricted by their position as police officers and police staff, operating under and vulnerable to associated police regulations and discipline codes. The workshop also highlighted over reliance on police vetting and assumed safeguarding integrity and competency of police officers as adult leaders, and their ability to oversee other volunteers, simply by virtue of their professional role within the police service. These emerging prodromes (Fink, 2002, p.21) raise an underlying concern that 'the police' could essentially be running a youth group in the form of the VPC, whilst only being able to consider safeguarding through the specialist, but limited lens of operational policing procedures, with a culturally driven inability to accept best practice from the wider youth sector to recognise the risks and help mitigate them.

Research Aim and Questions

This research is intended to provide data on VPC safeguarding and associated culture to better understand risks and keep cadets safe. The VPC recently joined the NSYF which shares safeguarding good practice across the youth sector. The current focus is around creating safe spaces (UK Youth, 2018) and situational prevention strategies (Erooga, 2012, p.60). The aim of this research is to learn to what extent the VPC is displaying the characteristics of a safe organisation. To pursue this overarching aim, research questions will focus on:

1. Is VPC safeguarding meeting the standards of the UK Youth Safe Spaces framework (appendix B)?

2. Is police culture hindering the ability of the police to improve VPC safeguarding?

Methodology

The methodology chapter will explain in detail how the research will be conducted. In summary, mixed method research [MMR] will be used to gather quantitative data through a survey questionnaire and inform a qualitative data collection process comprising of semi structured interviews, with participants identified from the survey

population through purposive sampling. The balance of MMR will maximise the strengths and minimise the weaknesses of each research method and fits well with supporting the research approach (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, pp.14-15). The ontological basis on which the research will be conducted will be subjectivist and an epistemological approach that is inductive through interpretivism. Grid group cultural theory [GGCT] (Loyens and Maesschalck, 2014, pp.148-154) will be used as a theoretical lens to enable comparative research between different groups, which for this research includes VPC adult leaders and their standing with the wider police service.

Dissertation Structure

In Chapter 1, a range of literature will be reviewed to develop understanding and identify research themes. Starting with risk philosophy, the review progresses through the evolution of safeguarding and interdisciplinary conflict into organisational defensiveness and prescription. The review then considers research on youth organisations, how it translates into the Police-VPC context and the influence organisational behaviour and culture can play, before concluding with a summary of the findings and the direction they provide. Chapter 2 will set out the methodological rationale for this research as summarised in more detail above under 'Methodology'. Chapter 3 will present the quantitative research findings, while Chapter 4 will present findings on the qualitative data. Analysis of the findings will be presented through discussion in Chapter 5 using an inductive process to consider data against the literature review. Finally, Chapter 6 will present conclusions, along with recommendations on how this research could be developed.

Chapter 1 - Literature Review

This literature review begins with an examination of risk philosophy and the social construction of risk to provide a theoretical basis on which to consider the more practical elements of safeguarding including its evolution, the development of specialisations and resulting interagency tension. This includes the implications for statutory agencies under pressure of media scrutiny and the paradox that by bringing failings to wider public attention, agencies can become more defensive and arguably less effective. This literary backdrop provides a critically informed context for identifying and researching risks around police youth engagement through the VPC and the influence of culture through a justified epistemological approach.

Risk Philosophy

Borodzicz (2005, pp.13-15) summarises several academic approaches to understanding risk in both physical and social sciences. He asserts there has been a shift in approach to understanding risk perception over recent decades, moving from trying to define risk probability numerically to understanding the environment in which it manifests within psychological, cultural and social contexts. He highlights the psychological aspect regarding how the human mind becomes aware of, learns from and deals with the environment, viewed as a real and objective concept which can be studied by quantitative analysis but challenging because risk perception depends as much on context and culture as physical reality. Borodzicz (2005, pp.42-45) asserts cultural theorists view risk as a socially constructed phenomenon, relevant factors include everyday interactions. Influencing the individuals risk perception and responses are four predispositions; hierarchical, individualist, egalitarian and fatalist. Hierarchists are less inclined to accept risk and then only if officially sanctioned, with Borodzicz suggesting such oversimplification of all social life is questionable. This does provide thought on the predispositions of those working in a police environment and relevance to this project's methodological design.

Adams (1995, pp.7-9) compares two reports from the Royal Society to highlight the difficulty in agreeing the nature and meaning of risk. The 1983 report distinguished between objective risk (what experts claim to know about) and perceived risk (lay persons often very different anticipation of future events). The report concluded; 'a

need for better estimates of actual risk based on direct observation of what happens in society'. The 1992 report sought to pursue this with terms of reference to 'bridge the gap between what is stated to be scientific and capable of being measured and the way in which public opinion gauges risks and makes decisions'. It was unsuccessful and at the time of writing Adams considers the gap unbridged.

The Royal Society Report (1992, pp.89-94) asserts, 'risk perception cannot be reduced to a single subjective correlate of a particular mathematical model of risk such as the product of probabilities and consequences, because this imposes unduly restrictive assumptions about what is an essentially human and social phenomenon'. Like Borodzicz, the report highlights an increase in social science investigations of risk perception and makes several powerful claims for consideration, including a challenge to the view that separation can be maintained between objective and subjective or perceived risk. The report declares assessment of risk involves a degree of subjectivity and acknowledges that social, cultural and political processes are involved in the formation of individual attitudes towards risk. It concludes that the public's viewpoint must be considered, 'not as an error but as an essential datum and that judgement is inherent in and indeed essential to all forms of risks assessment'. The report mentions Douglas (1985), (1992, p.111) stating; 'the perceiver of risk is rarely an isolated individual, but a social being who necessarily lives and works, plays and rests, within networks of informal and formal relationships with others'. She concludes, 'these arrangements set constraints upon people's behaviour, provide broad frameworks for the shaping of their attitudes and beliefs'. This suggests that realities over lap and the challenge lies in measuring it as the report identifies.

In the same year as the Royal Society report, Krimsky and Golding published the Social Theories of Risk with contributions from prominent researchers who provide a wide range of literature on the impact of social science on risk theory and in doing so provide context with the realist ontology of risk and quote (Thompson and Wildavsky, 1982) 'Risk, though it has some roots in nature, is inevitably subject to social processes' (Krimsky and Golding, 1992, p.19). In considering whether one is better than the other, Krimsky and Golding (1992, p.4) provide a helpful view that highlights an overlapping inter-dependency stating, 'that science embedded as it is in its cultural context, can still pursue objectivity as an ideal, that rational thinking about risk is not

expressed in one form, and that impulses for expertise and democratic process establish a constructive tension in society'.

Krimsky and Golding (1992, pp.16-18) consider the cognitive theory of risk perception and how people reason in the face of uncertainty and describe the findings from experiments on problem solving undertaken by Kahneman and Tversky, identifying that people use 'discernible rules of judgement called heuristics to simplify the problem', the use of which can cause judgement bias. Types of heuristics identified include 'availability'; the easier it is to recall, possibly because of its seriousness, publicity or the decision makers familiarity with it, all triggers identifiable to decision makers within policing. Further experiments identified the influence of voluntary and involuntary events and a theory that predicts the more a person has direct control and influence over a risk, they are likely to perceive it as less risky.

Steve Rayner (Krimsky and Golding, 1992, pp.85-90) considers cultural theory using 'grid and group' analysis. He asserts that individuals are limited in their interpretation and dealing with organisational parameters by the 'constitutive premises' of that environment. This possibly has synergy with Schein 2004 mentioned by Cockcroft (2012, p.4) in relation to culture characteristics; 'Culture characteristics; within the context of understanding organisations and occupations, refers to a sharing of beliefs or a consensus of values. These shared social artefacts are not considered unique with a particular group's culture but as manifestations of it and represent the variables through which we try to observe and identify the culture. Structural stability is a key element in that their strength lies in their ability to endure through turnover of members. 'Depth' is also important as an abstract concept culture, influencing us unconsciously, and 'breadth', impacting on all areas of organisational life'. Paul Slovic (Krimsky and Golding, 1992, p.119) makes clear how important he views the assumption 'that risk is inherently subjective'. Explaining, human beings have invented the concept 'risk' to help them understand and cope with the uncertainties of life he asserts there is no such thing as real risk or objective risk because the expert's models are themselves 'subjective and assumption-laden and inputs are dependent on judgement'.

Ten years after Borodzicz, Blacker and McConnell (2015, pp.1-2) also identify changes in understanding, with increased awareness of cognitive biases and invisible pressures affecting human decision making. They highlight the scientific result of

functional magnetic resonance imaging showing brain activity during risk decisions and identifying a positive reaction when an optimistic choice is being considered but less so when the choices are unpleasant. This could be an example of science proving subjectivity. They also highlight heuristics as a behavioural bias influenced by what is frequent and familiar to the decision maker (Blacker and McConnell, 2015, p.38). They expand, quoting Herbert Simon believing heuristics was the result of people's 'rationality being bounded by the amount of information, time available to decide and cognitive limitations of their minds' (Blacker and McConnell, 2015, p.49).

Mullins (2012, pp.4-9) asserts the study of organisational behaviour cannot be conducted through one discipline and advocates that a multi-disciplinary perspective is required and breaks it down to; psychology - aligned to the individual and their personality system, sociology - focussing on human behaviour within social structures, and anthropology - focussing on the cultural system; group beliefs, customs, ideas and values. He uses Hellriegel's organisational iceberg to illustrate that organisational life usually comprises of different realities with visible aspects such as customers and physical facilities above the surface and behavioural aspects hidden below applying the analogy that it is often 'not what can be seen that sinks ships'. Mullins appears to support the view that realities overlap. More recently, Marshall, Metters and Pagell (2016, pp.1509-1510) consider culture within operational management and reinforce the importance of anthropological studies to find hidden elements of Hellriegel's iceberg and the need to investigate a range of stakeholders to understand organisational culture. This links back to the 1992 Royal Society report recommendation on the need for direct observation of what happens in society.

Denney (2005, p.13) explores different ways of viewing risk from various theoretical perspectives and acknowledges there are overlapping elements with 'tensions and contradictions' characterising discourses of risk. On cultural theory Denney draws heavily on the work of Mary Douglas (Denney, 2005, pp.23-24) and her grid group indices, described as; 'representing a taxonomy of cultures that assist in understanding of how an individual's experience can impact on the way in which risk is perceived'. Types within grid /group indices, include a hierarchical group showing respect for authority and conforming to dominant norms in society. Using risk to apportion responsibility is raised and described as 'becoming central to the process of accountability and the production of blame trails'. This could be linked to organisational

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defensiveness and will be developed in following sections. Denney confirms the dominance of 'individualist forms of risks assessments' and their attraction in reducing risk to 'unsubstantiated certainty' and providing individuals and organisations with an illusion of security, both pre-requisites to the operation of private and public organisations. The grid group indices could merit further exploration, as the research subjects for this project could be considered as social actors, operating in a hierarchical organisation.

Evolution and Conflict

Hamalainen (2016, pp.735–746) provides comprehensive research on the formation and development of child protection and considers if it was and still is driven wholly by learning for state utility or compassion for the individual. He asserts the child protection system has become a 'vital piece of any modern social order based on welfare state philosophy' and arose not in a void but at the centre of social development and human endeavour. He identifies early thinking around the concept of child protection, its evolution shaped by moral, social, educational, judicial and political drivers and understanding of how important childhood was in determining the later life. However, interdisciplinary specialisation has led to tension between sectors such as education, medical and social. Although not mentioned, law enforcement could justifiably be added.

Gray (2015, pp.50-51) quotes Pinheiro (2006) stating, 'no violence against children is justifiable, and all violence against children is preventable'. Gray identifies the challenge is for society to have services that operationalise that belief. The International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect identifies key components of an effective service including; competent staff with training opportunities to enhance professional development, effective supervision and provision of adequate resources. Gray stresses the need for components to interact effectively and that combining knowledge and skill, with 'touches of brilliance and inspiration', is necessary to create an effective system operating in the best interests of children. Whilst Gray provides a descriptive historical summary, there appears little critique on the reality of effective interaction such as, the difficulty to 'enable' touches of individual brilliance within an organisational setting and whether that is desirable or

a risk in itself which could have relevance within a hierarchical organisation like the police.

Stafford (2012, p.35) highlights the US Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect contend that reporting and response processes evolving from punitive connotations made it easier to report a neighbour for child abuse than it was for the neighbour to call and receive help before it happened. Supporting that assertion, Lord Laming (2003, p.340) whilst critical of police in relation to child protection failings leading to the murder of a child, gives credit for the subsequent 'highly professional and detailed murder investigation'. As we begin to consider the police role in the interdisciplinary spectrum it is reasonable to place it in a punitive context and see why their processes and culture attuned accordingly. Stafford (2012, pp.83-84) considers UK legislative and policy development underpinning child protection systems over the previous decade and claims that safeguarding and child protection does not standalone but is integrated into a wider landscape on children's needs and supporting families. Changes have extended beyond procedural to philosophical. In England, the primary driver of children's services integration is the 'Every Child Matters' [ECM] Change for Children 2004. Measured against five defined outcomes, its driving principle is joined up and co-ordinated pre-emptive intervention by services to improve children's outcomes, rather than responding at the point of crisis.

What ECM couldn't foresee in 2004 and cater for was the expanding range of risk factors. Appleton and Sidebotham (2016, pp.3-8) reviewed child safeguarding policy and development in the UK over twenty-five years and highlight current problems being more complex and wide ranging. Examples include; young people as abusers, child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, radicalisation and threats through social media. They cite Parton posit that with 'greater social awareness of the issues, the challenges around child protection have become more politicised with the narrative of professional blame and system failure becoming more dominant and pervasive'. Peckover and Golding (2017, pp.41-45) report on the complexities of multi-agency working involving domestic violence and safeguarding, they highlight (Hester, 2011) describing the myriad of understanding that professionals from different agencies have and the solutions they bring to bear, being so different that they can be 'conceptualised as taking place on separate planets', with subsequent differences in risk

understanding and the ability of professionals to assess it. This is a small study, across nine local authority areas but does draw references from a wide literature base to support its assertions.

Crawford and L'Hoiry (2017, p.647) studied joint working between police and other safeguarding agencies and reinforce the notion of interagency confusion. They identified that safeguarding cuts across the skills and expertise of diverse organisations, each seeing solutions influenced through their own organisation's priorities, with culture being a barrier to achieving 'trans-discipline'. Again, this research is limited to a small geographical area, but does draw on wider research for support. Hood, Gillespie and Davies (2016, p.493) reinforce this view and the difficulty in developing 'interprofessional expertise' in a system that contains expertise within specialist silos. They reference a wide source of researchers and a general view that 'services organised as separate professional bureaucracies inevitably create institutional and cultural barriers which in child protection may be exacerbated by institutional anxiety about risk'. They explain how this can be compounded for front line practitioners by the ambiguity, unpredictability and the volatility of situations. The VPC doesn't even appear to have been accepted or established into any bureaucracy, let alone progressing towards trans-discipline or interprofessional expertise. The reviewed literature provides possible indications why the police may struggle with viewing and operating the VPC differently to any other police unit.

Defensiveness and Prescription

Lane, Munro and Husemann (2016, pp.615-617) draw from the Munro review to show how a defensive culture manifests into the growth of a compliance culture with professional judgement and autonomy being lost to prescriptive approaches, causing a compliance culture to emerge and act as a barrier to learning and a shield against public 'allegations of failure'. This scenario undermines hope of Gray's aforementioned touches of brilliance and inspiration. Craven and Tooley (2016, p.64) support this view suggesting pressure to achieve 'good' Ofsted ratings can contribute to failures. They cite cases of child sexual exploitation in several cities, with statutory agencies consequently adopting strategic behaviour to protect themselves rather than children. They also highlight Cosgrove and Ramshaw (2015) who raise concerns that Police

Community Support Officers [PCSOs] efforts are restricted by their 'structured position within the hierarchy and organisational environment in which they work'. This could be a restriction and risk for community based VPC adult leaders and perhaps an example of Rayner's previously mentioned 'constitutive premises' theory (Krimsky and Golding, 1992, pp.85-90).

Thomas and Trotman (2017, pp.501-509) highlight difficulties PCSOs in the West Midlands had as school's officers through lack of understanding around their role's complexity which was deemed 'pivotal' in community policing. There is identifiable synergy with VPC adult leaders who provide long term support to challenging young people and a need to understand the complexities of their role. They also mention Lamont et al. (2011) highlighting that nothing was done to replace safer-schools partnership training, with officers left to devise their own working methods. Between the emergence of risks through defensiveness, lack of understanding, insufficient training and prescription in the face of increasing workloads, there is fertile ground for risks through 'workaround' processes to evolve. Huuskonen and Vakkari (2013, p.389) studied social workers using unofficial workaround methods to cope with workloads to meet legal recording standards on clients by cutting and pasting between sibling's records. Although limited in scope, it identified risks to clients and lack of accountability, both transferable to the VPC environment.

Over-reliance on police safeguarding integrity and competence

Research on youth organisations raises further concerns around the suitability of the police to run VPC unchecked. Wurtele (2012, pp.2443-2452) provides a good overview of child sexual abuse in youth service organisations. Although US focused, it details problems that emerge through adult volunteers being in long term roles supporting young people and advocates the importance of clear codes of conduct and boundary violation training. This is not part of police operational safeguarding and a clear area of risk. Brackenridge (2002, p.121) challenges the view that children are safest amongst those they know best and most at risk from outsiders. Moore (2017, p.77) builds on this by providing a young person's perspective in relation to safeguarding within institutional settings and the risk through an intergenerational power imbalance between adults and young people, compounded with their lack of

risk knowledge and how to manage themselves safely, as well as lack of control on what happens to them within an institutional setting. Although only 121 young people participated, they came from diverse areas. The VPC not only has adult leaders, but a high proportion are police officers which could widen any perceived power imbalance and be more readily accepted as such by young people and other VPC adult leaders.

Holland, Tannock and Collicott (2011, pp.408-413) consider 'promoting safeguarding as everybody's business' and adults responding to concerns about the well-being of other people's children. They draw conclusions from The Children's Society report 'A Good Childhood'. Whilst strong in the context of informal childcare, they found less evidence for adult interventions relating to child abuse or when the young person posed a threat to others. Fears around personal safety was one inhibitor, but they also reference Furedi (2008) and 'the breakdown of adult solidarity', particularly in the UK and the US as a relevant factor. This poses the question of whether a non-police adult leader would be prepared to challenge inappropriate behaviour by a police officer VPC leader, and if so at what threshold, especially if 'power imbalance' was an additional factor.

Culture and Organisational Behaviour

Behind these risks and challenges it is necessary to determine the extent to which organisational behaviour and culture is the driving influence or just an abstract cliché on which to conveniently hang some assumptions. In considering organisational culture, Blacker and McConnell (2015, pp.178) assert, if culture is not actively managed it can create a climate where people risks can emerge and manifest into a crisis. The workshop outputs (appendix A.) show this potential with prodromal signs (Fink 2002, p.21) that could be the VPC incubation period (Toft and Reynolds, 2005, p.33). Reiner (2010, p.116) posits 'that officer discretion increases as one moves down the hierarchy' which resonates with the situation of VPC adult leaders seemingly subject to little supervision. Reiner raises a practical aspect of policing culture; 'it is not always possible to play it by the book and the ways and means act is the solution'. It could be that with no VPC safeguarding 'book', the 'ways and means act' is all there is and equates to and further supports the earlier consideration around providing fertile ground for 'workarounds' to evolve. Krimsky and Golding (1992, pp.16-18) add to

concerns with a theory that predicts the more a person has direct control and influence over a risk, they are likely to perceive it as less of one. This is particularly concerning when considered in the context of Doran and Brennan's 1996 offender profile of the 'isolated, over committed and dutiful' member of staff (Erooga, 2012, p.72).

Cockcroft (2012) provides a comprehensive overview of research into police culture. He highlights Schein 2004 (Cockcroft, 2012, p.7) identify three culture levels; artefacts, espoused beliefs and values, and lastly underlying assumptions which are embedded at a deeper level and through their success in practice, change in status from conjecture to reality. Schein goes onto to identify intra-organisational typologies and cultural differences within organisations termed as operator cultures. These may be applicable to the VPC in the context of its status within 'police work'. The work of Martin 2002 (Cockcroft, 2012, pp.8-10) highlights the academic tension around culture, its nature and properties, and that to distinguish between etic and emic stances is possibly an impossible quest and suggests the focus should be on finding a balance between them. On the issue of organisational and occupational culture Cockcroft highlights Paoline (2003) (Cockcroft, 2012, p.12) putting forward the view that whilst organisational culture is driven from the top, occupational culture comes from the bottom up. If accepted, along with the fact there is little informed supervision of the VPC, adult leaders could develop occupational culture which will be unique and possibly clash with other versions of police culture.

Westmarland (2008) (Cockcroft, 2012, p.21) asserts difficulty defining police culture is due to there being many forms and 'police cultures' was a more apt description. Paoline (2003) (Cockcroft, 2012, p.39) asserts the difficulty in defining police culture is due to narrow terms of reference for a role that has expanded to meet societal changes driven by new modernity, along with membership from more diverse backgrounds and no account taken of individuals who do not act uniformly to the culture. Cockcroft (2012, p.98) highlights Flanagan (2008) claiming that whilst there has been a reduction in police discretion, bureaucracy has increased and with it an increasing tendency for officers to be overly bound by rules and policies. This raises the spectre that even if subjectively constructed risks around VPC safeguarding are recognised, it is feasible that the police are unable to respond by overcoming any culturally induced defensiveness as mentioned earlier and highlighting the need for

this research to consider and apply social theory around risk to gain deeper understanding.

Researching Culture

Roelofse (2015, pp.248-260) considers the approach to 'comparative policing' research and categorises it as social science research. He asserts the need to establish grounded constructs as a base for comparisons to be made and that without such consideration and associated understanding, comparative studies will be 'lacking philosophical and theoretical substance'. He introduces the concept of 'reciprocal moral dualism' which he describes as 'the interaction between society, the police organisation and individual officer', and provides a supporting diagram showing society as the component that encompasses the organisation and the individual with porous borders and flow between representing the individual having a dual location, straddled and a mode of transport between organisation and society in a reciprocal way. Roelofse provides a good overview on comparative studies which may have relevance to considering the 'interaction' between VPC adult leaders and management operating a youth group within a police organisation and its place in wider society.

Grid Group Cultural Theory [GGCT] provides such a grounded construct. Hendricks and Hulst (2016, pp.162-173) consider beliefs and practices developed by Dutch police to deal with the macro level public expectations and how cultural tensions reveal themselves at the meso and micro levels. Through a series of case-studies they highlight police officers dealing with operational situations and using cultural versatility in all of them, describing officers 'tap-dancing' their way through the entire grid group typology in a very short period such as when dealing with the actors in a domestic dispute. GGCT appears to have a synergy with the socio-ecological conceptual framework Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016, p.15) discuss within the project methodology section and provides scope for reflexivity between researcher and study population.

Mamadouh (1999, pp.395-405) considers GGCT and makes two main claims; everything humans do or want is culturally biased and it is possible to distinguish a limited number of cultural types. She identifies two dimensions, one of individuation and one of social incorporation. Issues highlighted for consideration include whether

the dimensions of each axis are continuous or dichotomous. Choosing continuous grid and group dimensions are likely to develop predicates, which could suit an inductive approach. She advises that confusion between levels of analysis can weaken the theory, and flexibility can be seen as either an asset or a liability. Another issue is the cultural bias individuals carry which can be fixed or changeable subject to environment. Mamadouh uses the typology maps of Douglas (1978) and (1992), Gross and Rayner (1985) and Thompson (1982) to demonstrate different cultural bias balance/dynamic combinations.

Loyens and Maesschalck (2014, pp.148-154) use GGCT in a practical setting to consider police-public interactions by undertaking comparative research between police and labour inspectors in Belgium. There are drawbacks, such as risk of theoretical rigidity, also identified by Campeau (2015, pp. 682-684) who claims there are limitations with a typology-based conception, consisting of rigidly defined attitudinal-dimensions fitted into static categories and that without a theoretically rooted definition, a critical element is missed regarding how culture is socially embedded. However, GGCT provides a more neutral comparator that gets beyond the traditional approach to police culture research which can be restricted to negative connotations and miss positive aspects.

Themes for Research Analysis

A common theme within the literature is that research and understanding around the psychological, social and cultural influence on risk perspective has only been taken up seriously over the last 30 to 40 years. The shift towards subjectivism during this period described by Borodzicz, Adams and the Royal Society raises the thought the police approach to managing risk has been from an individualist position, based around probability and consequence matrices, assigned numerical values, to be judged as high, medium or low and possibly has not kept pace with or adjusted to more recent research findings which incorporate cultural aspects and their impact on assessing risk. The individualist risk assessment as described by Denney (2005, pp.14-21) and applicable to policing, is being challenged through cultural theory, with Borodzicz and others describing the cultural theorists view of risk as a socially constructed phenomenon. The notion that one ontological belief is better than the other is rejected and on this there is merit in the view previously provided in Krimsky and Sheldon

(1992, p.4) around 'constructive tension'. All forms appear to have value in advancing understanding and with regard to informing this research project, the literature reviewed has indicated that the construct of risk and culture can and should be viewed subjectively through an interpretivist approach.

Crawford and L'Hoiry (2017, p.647) assert that safeguarding cuts across skill and expertise with culture being a barrier to trans-discipline. The literature indicates academic tension around the nature and properties of culture. The traditional view of police culture is shifting, with recognition that it is not fixed but influenced by external societal factors, allied with the increased diversity of individual police actors, their roles and varying responses to situations. Hendricks and Hulst (2016) highlighted how officers shifted their approach over short periods of time when dealing with situations, challenging the traditional view that police culture is organisationally fixed. At a more overt level, the literature provides a picture of festering interagency safeguarding conflict, under continual media scrutiny, manifesting into organisational defensiveness to suppress learning and innovation. Although there appears to be limited research on UK based youth organisations, clear safeguarding risk themes emerge:

- Confusion between statutory agencies in identifying and responding to safeguarding.
- Cultural inflexibility from statutory agencies in being able to adjust and achieve 'trans-discipline'.
- Lack of understanding on the requirements for officers engaged in community-based roles.
- Organisational defensiveness causing a compliance culture and stifling learning.

These themes indicate the types of organisational risk and people risk the police will need to recognise in their quest to develop the VPC as a safe youth organisation and this research project will explore their relevance within the context of the Police / VPC dynamic.

Chapter 2 - Methodology

Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016, p.194) quote Maxwell and Mittapalli (2008) promoting a commonly held view amongst qualitative researchers that 'a researcher's personal context is an inescapable component of all research, whether or not it is explicitly acknowledged'. The methodological approach for this research project therefore seeks to be consistent with the philosophical assumptions that emerge from the literature review and in doing so apply a suitable theoretical model to provide the foundation on which to develop the data. In satisfying this challenge, consideration has been given to both traditional quantitative and qualitative methods, as well as mixed method research [MMR].

Quantitative versus Qualitative

Park and Park (2016, pp.4-6) consider social research and the context of related activity in terms of 'justification' or 'discovery' modes and where these sit within 'single justification logic'. They highlight the strength of quantitative research in survey research methods for identifying and isolating specific variables within the context of clearly defined groups. Critical design factors include questions, scale, testing and adjustment, procedures around sampling and analysis. They conclude however that the 'experimental precision' of quantitative research is complimented by the 'descriptive richness' of qualitative research. Spicker (2018, pp.216-217) researched comparative policy studies and asserts that whilst quantitative methods can arrange and categorise data, it can be dependent on, 'a summary of the cumulative effect of a range of subordinate variables', but overlook the detail within and the use of appropriate empirical methods that require 'a series of assumptions' and links this to the work of Clasen and Siegel (2007) on 'the dependent variable problem'. This accords with the work of Rust et al. (2017, p.1305) who use an example of exploring views on fox hunting to explain the limitations of a questionnaire in understanding and conceptualising, without qualitative research to identify views and themes from which a questionnaire can be constructed. Roelofse (2015, pp.248-260) also considers the approach to comparative research in relation to policing and categorises it as social science research. He stresses the need to establish grounded constructs as a base for comparisons to be made and that without such consideration and associated

understanding, comparative studies will be 'lacking philosophical and theoretical substance'.

Lincoln and Guba (1985, p.251) advise that the developing style of qualitative research designs 'should not be interpreted as a license to engage in undisciplined and haphazard poking around' adding 'a key challenge for discourse analysts is to study discourses in a systematic and rigorous manner that is consistent with its epistemological and theoretical assumptions'. Similarly, Greckhamer (2014, pp.423-425) considers studies on qualitative research and identifies several interrelated challenges around discourse analysis which include performing systematic and rigorous analyses to capture a discourse's functions, reporting discourse analyses transparently, providing appropriate evidence to warrant claims, and representing analysis and results.

Mixed Method Research

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004, pp.14-15) describe the goal of mixed research methods as maximising the strengths and minimising the weaknesses of each single research method and this appears to fit well with supporting the research aims of this project. However, Lund (2012, pp.162–163) identifies a drawback to consider asserting that MMR requires more resources and additional variance on the weighting given to respective data. Essentially, depth of knowledge is diluted across two disciplines rather than focussing on one. Acknowledging a potential gap in MMR analysis, Ostlund (2011, p.369) identifies a lack of research guidance on how to combine both methods and integrate the findings, as well as their sequencing, and like Lund, the weighting or emphasis given to each. Ostlund highlights the value of triangulation to integrate findings and present conclusions effectively using the 'methodological metaphor of triangulation model' (Erzberger and Kelle 2003). Triangulation through MMR is also identified as a strength by Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016, p.84). However, Greckhamer (2014, p.427) cites Anfara et al. (2002) claim that although researchers frequently refer to qualitative techniques such as triangulation, they rarely provide evidence of how they achieved this.

Grafton and Malina (2011, p.61) argue that combining both methods results in a stronger outcome and quote, Salmon (1991) who supports this, viewing the issue not as one of competitiveness, but identifying the best way to understand 'the interaction of variables in a complex environment'. Lund (2012, p.157) suggests MMR provides a potential to answer research questions 'relating to both causal description and causal explanation'. This research project will use MMR methodology.

MMR Rationale

The underpinning rationale(s) for adopting MMR is considered and developed through the work of Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016, pp.81-85) who posit five types; 'triangulation', 'offsetting strengths and weaknesses', 'complimentarity', 'development' and 'social justice' and from which the following rationales are discussed as to their suitability for this research.

'Offsetting strengths and weakness'; Plano Clark and Ivankova, cite Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) contending that mixing the two methods can help to produce more rigorous conclusions. They expand on this with an example of quantitative research methods being used on a large population to generate data that can be generalised and which they identify as a strength but weakened through lack of thick description about specific contexts. Qualitative methods with a smaller group within the population will provide the strength of thick description, albeit limited to a small sample base which is deemed a weakness. Essentially this combination, through compensation of each method's weakness with their respective strengths provides for a better understanding of the research topic and is a sound rationale for this research project.

They also cite (Greene et al., 1989) describing 'complimentarity' rationale as providing more complete conclusions through using both methods to obtain 'complementary results about different facets of a phenomenon'. A key factor for its use relates to addressing different research questions or goals. They posit the 'development' rationale can help provide 'more effective and refined conclusions by taking the results from one method to inform or shape the use of the other method'. With this research project having overarching research questions the development rational appears more

appropriate than complementarity and will take the form of a sequential quantitative to qualitative design (Plano Clark and Ivankova, 2016, p.122) on which they draw from Morse (1991) suggesting this design enables the quantitative data to be considered in greater detail.

Whilst single rationales are accepted, the strengths of MMR on balance appear to provide a sound but challenging route. On this Park and Park (2016, p.6) sum up MMR research with the assertion 'this interplay between descriptive richness and experimental precision can increase the understanding of social phenomena'. These declared rationales appear compatible with social science and behavioural research when considered against the typologies of Bryman 2006 and Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009 (Plano Clark and Ivankova, 2016, pp.88-92).

Theoretical Model – Praxis

MMR combines different research approaches, and in the process different philosophical assumptions, which raises a question around whether different philosophies can logically be mixed (Plano Clark and Ivankova, 2016, pp.207-208). The complexity is apparent when considering the assertions of different scholars and needs careful thought and explanation. Cameron (2011, p.263) asserts the need for MMR students to have 'methodological trilingualism' and in support of this posits a five Ps conceptual framework to provide key elements of a mixed methods starter kit, namely: paradigms, pragmatism, praxis, proficiency and publishing. She draws on the work of Teddlie and Tashakkori (2010) and reinforces their assertion that taking a 'complimentarity' strengths approach to MMR is only possible if each method is kept separate as much as possible to ensure the strength of each is realised. Bazeley (2010, p.432) however considers the issue of data integration in MMR as both acceptable and necessary albeit underdeveloped. Considering these differing views, the timing of integration becomes an important factor and along with sequencing is described by Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016, p.33) as the 'temporal relationship'. In relation to proficiency they assert researchers should not only have competency in both methods, but also with mixing them.

Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016, pp.203-207) provide three examples on how to use theory in MMR; overarching stance for approaching the topic, deductively testing

theory and inductively generating theory. Whilst they contend it is straightforward to identify philosophies covered in MMR, they assert that to identify even a meaningful subset of the social and behavioural theories that have been used in MMR is impossible due to them being discipline specific. In proffering solutions, they posit 'Grand theories' or conceptual theories, which can include socio-ecological theory as a route to providing 'an overall explanation of an organisation to a discipline or body of knowledge' and advocate their socio-ecological conceptual framework as a practical model for use in MMR. Whilst similarities are discernible with Cameron's 5Ps framework and map, this model develops it by considering personal, interpersonal and social contexts influencing and wrapped around the process.

The Lens – Grid Group Cultural Theory

It is not the intention to recite details on the history and range of the GGCT paradigm, but there is a need to qualify how the GGCT lens for this research will be focussed. The research of Mamadouh (1999) and Hendricks and Hulst (2016) informs the approach. The scale of GGCT is acknowledged by Mamadouh (1999, p.396) who identifies 'hard and soft' versions of GGCT and 'all intermediary shades'. Similarly, Hendricks and Hulst (2016) consider cultural plurality in Dutch policing and the scope GGCT provides for 'mixing, modifying and shifting between the extremes.' They work through a soft application process using the grid group typology process they describe as 'a heuristic tool, differentiating between basic cultural ideal types; the general idea of cultural co-existence; and the connected notion of balance shifting' (Hendricks and Hulst, 2016, p.163). They posit that organisational viability is dependent on the 'interplay between different cultures' and how they compensate for each other by asserting that 'cultural blindness of one type needs cultural bias of another type'. The data will be considered through the typology process to identify cultural types, how they co-exist and implications around risk perspective.

Challenges Considerations and Conclusions

In considering the literature, various challenges and issues emerge to be considered and include; discourse reflexivity which can provide for justification of use but needs to be tempered with an awareness around personal bias. To minimise researcher personal bias and ensure questions are valid and reliable, questions will be tested and discussed with police officers and adult leaders not participating in the survey

(Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007, pp.364-367). This will reduce contamination in terms of advance warning to a small sample of the target population otherwise used, as well as inform actual attributes of the questionnaire (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007, pp.358-359).

Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016, p.207) cite Curry and Nunez-Smith (2015) who identify as 'pragmatists' and declare "we use whatever works". There is a need to continually monitor whether this research project's adopted interpretivist philosophical assumption unwittingly drifts into that of pragmatism and reinforces Greckhamer's assertions around evidencing failures. Buchanan and Bryman (2007, p.486) describe the paradigm wars of the 1980s turning into paradigm soup and surveying the literature covered thus far and the models and frameworks within, complexity could easily become an issue, along with the established difficulties around integration of data. Another potential challenge is organisational defensiveness. Craven and Tooley (2016, p.64) identify the 'politicisation' of this issue and how statutory agencies respond. The support and authorisation of the lead Chief Officer for VPC should re-assure respondents and encourage openness.

Chapter 3 – Quantitative Findings

A survey questionnaire (appendix C) was designed to collect ranked (ordinal) data (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill (2007, p.410). Divided into nine themed sections, each of the forty questions offered respondents a choice of six options, with each option assigned a numerical value as shown in Table 1.

Option	Numerical Value
Strongly Agree	1
Agree	2
Neutral	3
Disagree	4
Strongly Disagree	5
Don't Know	6

Table 1.

The question range was designed to inform the research aim by helping to understand if VPC safeguarding is meeting the standards of the UK Youth safe spaces framework and secondly, if police culture is hindering the ability of the police to improve it. Questions were derived from eight elements of the safe spaces framework (appendix B), deemed as the aspirational standard for a safe youth organisation. A final section sought deeper, subjectively derived data through respondents' feelings to help identify signs of underlying cultural factors and inform the qualitative data gathering phase. Thirty-eight respondents, from twenty-two different police forces provided data which was used to complete a data matrix (appendix D, sheets 1-2). The respondents were all VPC adult leaders, comprising of serving police officers across three ranks (PC to Inspector), PCSO's, police staff and a volunteer not employed by the police.

Data presentation

Findings are provided for each section of the questionnaire covering: frequency in the form of a clustered column chart, and proportion in the form of a pie chart (appendix D, sheets 3-42). Table 2. below has been produced from these data to highlight positive indicators (green) and negative indicators (red) along with relevant percentages. To build in mitigation against any personal bias, the neutral survey responses were not counted.

Table 2.

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Policy – See Appendix D, Sheets 3 to 9

Safe Spaces Framework Element	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Percentages
Written Safeguarding Policy	11	15	2	3	3	4	26% No policy 68% Have a policy
Written code of behaviour	15	15	3	1	1	3	13% No code of conduct 79% Have a code of conduct
Designated safeguarding officer	10	10	4	3	4	7	37% No DSO 53% Have a DSO
Senior officer visible and accountable	6	8	9	4	4	7	39% No senior officer 37% Have a senior officer
Written process for handling a safeguarding matter	7	9	8	3	6	5	37% No written process 42% Have a written process
Review safeguarding arrangements	6	13	6	5	3	5	34% No review process 50% Review arrangements
Written whistleblowing policy	1	6	6	6	8	11	66% No policy 18% Have a policy

Staff and Volunteers – See Appendix D, Sheets 10 to 13

Safe Staff	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know	Percentage
Induction for new leaders	6	13	2	11	5	1	45% No induction 50% Have an induction
Visible supervision of leaders	7	14	5	6	6	0	32% No visible supervision 55% Have visible supervision
Regular training for leaders	7	9	3	11	7	1	50% No regular training 42% Have regular training
Support to leaders for their own wellbeing	6	11	5	8	5	3	42% No wellbeing support 45% Provide support

Safe Activities – See Appendix D, Sheets 14 to 18

Safe Staff	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know	Percentage
Written H&S policy	4	14	4	5	0	11	42% No written H&S policy 47% Have a written policy
Ensure activities are properly risk assessed	12	13	8	1	2	2	13% No risk assessment 66% Are properly risk assessed
Liability insurance for activities	15	12	1	1	0	8	24% No liability insurance

							71% Have insurance
Clear policy on parental / guardian consent	13	15	4	1	2	3	16 % No consent policy

74% Have clear policy |
| Parental consent policy regularly reviewed | 7 | 11 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 39% No regular review of consent policy

47% Do review consent policy |

Recording and Storing Information – See Appendix D, Sheet 19

Data protection compliance	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know	Percentage
Compliance with data protection policy and procedure	10	18	2	1	0	7	21% Not complying

74% Complying |

Working with others – See Appendix D, Sheets 20 to 21

Working with Others	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know	Percentage
Force supports information sharing	3	8	10	5	0	12	45% Ineffective information sharing

29% Support information sharing |
| Clear procedures for leaders on working with others to safeguard a child | 5 | 14 | 4 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 37% No clear procedures

50% Have clear procedures |

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Bullying – See Appendix D, Sheets 22 to 24

Bullying	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know	Percentage
Written anti-bullying policy	2	8	6	8	3	11	58% No written bullying policy 29% Have a written policy
Training on preventing and dealing with bullying	1	3	6	15	7	6	74% No training provided 11% Provide training
Clear process to raise a bullying concern or complaint	3	8	5	11	6	5	58% No clear process 29% Have a clear process

Sexual exploitation and grooming – See Appendix D, Sheets 25 to 28

Sexual exploitation and grooming	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know	Percentage
Training for leaders on CSE and grooming	5	8	5	11	5	4	53% No CSE training 34% Have training
Ensure cadets know how to ask for help	5	9	7	10	1	6	45% Do not ensure 37% Do ensure
Force uses cadets to support awareness around CSE and grooming	3	10	8	12	2	3	45% Do not use cadets 34% Use cadets
Guidance provided if a cadet is identified as vulnerable to	5	9	9	10	2	3	39% Do not provide guidance 37% Provide guidance

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CSE and grooming							

Radicalisation and Extremism – See Appendix D, Sheets 29 to 30

Radicalisation and Extremism	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know	Percentage
Awareness training for leaders on radicalisation and extremism	2	10	3	13	8	2	61% Do not provide training 32% Provide training
Guidance is provided on dealing with a cadet identified as vulnerable to radicalisation	1	10	10	10	3	4	45% Do not provide guidance 29% Provide guidance

Personal Feelings – See Appendix D, Sheets 31 to 42

Personal Feelings	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know	Percentage
Feel well supported	5	10	8	10	5	0	39% Don't feel supported 39% Feel well supported
Feel confident around VPC safeguarding	9	16	6	6	1	0	18% Don't feel confident 66% Do feel confident
Feel confident raising a concern with managers	18	15	2	2	1	0	8% Don't feel confident 87% Do feel confident

Feel VPC processes are restricted by police policy and procedure	4	6	7	11	4	6	26% Feel processes are restricted 55% Don't feel processes are restricted
Feel current policy and procedure are appropriate for running VPC	4	12	8	7	5	2	42% Don't feel current policy is appropriate 45% Feel it is appropriate
Feel value of VPC is recognised by wider police service	6	5	5	10	12	0	58% Don't feel value is recognised 29% Feel value is recognised
Feel value is understood by my supervisor	5	10	8	7	8	0	39% Don't feel value is understood by supervisors 39% Do feel it is valued by supervisors
Feel VPC is viewed as worthwhile by other police colleagues	5	8	8	9	8	0	45% Feel colleagues don't view VPC as worthwhile 34% Feel it is viewed as worthwhile by colleagues
Feel I have to make safeguarding decisions without clear guidance	2	12	5	16	3	0	50% Make decisions without clear guidance 37% Have clear guidance
I do a lot of unseen work in my own time	13	12	9	2	2	0	66% Do a lot of unseen work in their own time

							11% Don't
I feel the police could learn from other youth sector organisations	13	16	5	2	1	1	13% Don't feel police could learn from other youth sector organisations

76% Do |
| I feel my cadet unit is operating safely | 10 | 21 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 82% Feel their unit is safe.

0% Feel their unit is not safe |

During the survey period, the VPC Hub team were offering online safeguarding courses for VPC adult leaders and thirty-two forces requested a total of 1681 courses. This activity may have influenced participants responses to training and support related questions. The proportion of survey responses represents 2% of the number of online courses provided to forces. Forty-two forces were asked to circulate the survey and responses were received from adult leaders in twenty-two forces, this equates to a force response rate of 52%. Although no precision of estimate in the confidence level was determined beforehand (Stutely, 2003, p.117), all force co-ordinators were sent the survey to disseminate and give every adult leader the chance to participate. Limiting factors included, one force not disseminating the survey due to a live VPC safeguarding related criminal investigation. Some forces advised the build up to Christmas was an operationally demanding time, compounded by a mandatory requirement for their adult leaders to complete online safeguarding training within a short timeframe. This urgency was prompted as a result of the safeguarding workshop held in September coinciding with the criminal investigation coming to prominence.

Using most similar force groupings (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, 2019) there was representation from a diverse range of forces and within, a mix of respondents. Stutely (2003, p.117) states it is the absolute sample size that is important, not its magnitude relative to the population and that a sample size of just 30 items is often adequate. Survey responses exceeded this number. Strengthening

this, Temel, Erdogan, Selvi and Kaya (2016, p.1393) highlight that a larger sample produces an agreement value that is less in size than the numerical difference between sample sizes. On that basis there are enough data to inform a meaningful assessment on the first research question, as well as inform planning for the second phase interviews in support of and consistent with 'sequential explanatory' MMR methodology. The data matrix has been checked for errors and these findings will now be taken forward in line with the MMR sequential design process.

Chapter 4 - Qualitative Findings

Eleven adult leaders were selected for the semi-structured interview phase using extreme case purposive sampling to identify those that thought their forces were either performing well or poorly, based on the rationale that qualitative data gathered from these candidates will be richer and help answer the research questions more effectively (Saunders Lewis and Thornhill, 2007, p.232). The original qualitative question set was reviewed and modified (appendix E) in light of the quantitative analysis to try and ensure content validity (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007, p.366) as well as alignment between research methodologies. This helped to ensure theoretical soundness and discipline was also maintained between the research design methodology and declared epistemological position (Alavi, Archibald, McMaster, Clearly and Lopez (2018, p.528) and prevent potential drift towards 'undisciplined and haphazard poking around' (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p.251). The question set was expanded following the first interview with participant, respondent [R] 30 and finding there was scope for additional questions to improve the quality of the data, whilst remaining within a reasonable time allowance for the interviews (appendix F).

A thematic analysis of the qualitative data produced was undertaken using the guidance provided on template analysis (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007, p.496) as well as continuance of theoretical and methodological alignment and discipline around 'clarity on process and practice of method' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, pp.78-80). Like Lincoln and Guba (1985) they 'do not subscribe to a naïve realist view of qualitative research, where the researcher can simply give voice to their participants' (Braun and Clark, 2006, p.80) which, in the context of this research would perhaps amount to simply seeking out the most extreme and alarming quotes from respondents for 'effect' and miss the opportunity to gain deeper understanding.

Appendix G. contains details of the data, coding and themes from the analysis process which started with the transcription (verbatim accounts) of all the interviews. This was followed by accuracy checking and data cleaning (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007, p.476) through repeated reading of the transcripts against the recordings and in doing so separating out the content of each transcript in alignment with the interview

question set into smaller data sets. The next phases involved reading each piece of raw text data in detail and assigning codes against each, some data attracted a single code, but most had multiple codes (appendix G, sheet 1).

Each code was then listed, and colour coded to highlight if it was considered to have positive traits (green), negative traits (red) or potentially dual traits (orange) (appendix G, sheet 2). The codes were then grouped into themes (appendix G, sheets 3-11). As an inductive process this was a data driven process, with the meaning of the text being considered within the context of the research questions to identify themes (Braun and Clark, 2006, p.88) and (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007, p.480). Where more than one theme was aligned to a code, the first theme was deemed dominant and counted as the sole prevalence factor, none were double counted. Whilst it is acknowledged further refinement cycles of the data coding and themes could be undertaken, it was considered that the analysis process at this point had identified clear and substantive themes (Braun and Clark, 2006, p.92). Table 3. lists the themes derived from the codes, their prevalence ranking and traits.

Table 3.

Themes	Total number of Codes allocated	Prevalence Ranking	Positive	Negative	Dual
Support and Supervision	135	1	40	93	2
Discretion	96	2	11	36	49
Training	81	3	27	54	0
Interdisciplinary Awareness	78	4	20	58	0
Culture	71	5	37	34	0
Leadership	60	6	1	59	0
Organisational Defensiveness	30	7	2	28	0
Risk Assessment	21	9	13	8	0
Police Dependency	15	8	0	14	1

The headline data at surface level is consistent with the survey findings and reinforces the emerging fact that VPC safeguarding is not meeting the standards of a safe

organisation when considered against the safe spaces framework standards. The most extreme variance was in the leadership theme with only one positive trait out of sixty. Positive traits outweighed negative traits in only two themes; culture and risk assessment. The willingness of all participants to view the VPC as a youth group in the same way as girl guiding or scouts and an openness to learn from them was unanimously held and is reflected in positive traits being the majority for the culture theme. Apart from R5, all were extremely open and forthright in their responses. The data collected from R5 was limited. R5 was relatively young and the only non-police volunteer. The interview recording clearly conveys how shy and reticent she was in answering questions. Whilst this could have affected the nature of the data collection, it may be useful for considering aspects around adult solidarity (Holland, Tannock and Collicott, 2011) and the willingness of non-police volunteers to challenge police officers as mentioned in the literature review.

That aside all themes are apparent through-out all the interviews and across the entire question range. There is a notable trend in that R6 and R8, both community support officers and consistent with their survey responses had more positive views on the level of support they received from their forces and how well connected they felt to it. In support of this, the data table (appendix G, sheet.2) shows no related negative prevalent indicators for them in the bottom left hand quadrant. Their responses appear less cynical than R23, R29 and R30; all long serving police officers who have also performed the adult leader role over many years. This rich data provides scope to compare the positive picture portrayed by R6 and R8 with 'mid-range' participants R11, R13, R24, R32 and R34, through to the less positive and arguably more cynical responses provided by R23, R29 and R30.

In considering the themes and their relationships, overarching candidate themes of subjectivism and hierarchy were assessed as capturing them all meaningfully. Whilst the next logical step would be to absorb both into one 'umbrella' theme of organisational behaviour, it was felt organisational behaviour was acknowledged as being multidisciplinary (Mullins, 2016, pp.4-5). This would be too broad a theme for considering the data in detail and trying to provide meaningful answers to the research questions, as well as distorting the effectiveness of GGCT as a lens to support an inductive approach. This is supported by Braun and Clarke (2006, pp.82-85) who quote Burr (1995) stating 'adopting a constructionist framework does not seek to focus

on motivation or individual psychologies, but instead seeks to theorise the sociocultural contexts and structural conditions that enable the individual accounts that are provided'. Braun and Clark advise there is no right or wrong method, and the flexibility of thematic analysis provides options for determining themes providing consistency is maintained. This is reflected by the fact they offer a pragmatic approach rather than a tightly defined method, the product of which will now be considered in more depth.

Chapter 5 – Discussion of Findings

This discussion phase is primarily concerned with integrating the data effectively (Ostlund, 2011, p.369) to consider against the research themes raised by the literature review. To achieve this, a structured approach has been adopted drawing from the literature itself to firstly, identify qualitative aspects of the survey data and link them through commonality to the themes that emerged from the thematic analysis. The intention is to build understanding of participants subjectively constructed realities and how this informs their interpretation of risk. It is however necessary to get beyond the individual psychological level, to the broader sociological level (Mullins, 2012, p.4) to assess cultural; types, awareness and flexibility and gauge the 'depth' and 'breadth' of cultural characteristics (Cockcroft, 2012, p.5).

GGCT will be used as described in the methodology section for this purpose and in considering the findings becomes an even more appropriate tool. Marmadouh (1999, p.397) expands on the interplay between cultures, using the term 'curvilinearity' to assert that each cultural bias leads to disaster if it is not corrected by the other and identifies individualism and hierarchy as a viable-combination which aligns with the candidate themes (subjectivism and hierarchy) to emerge from the thematic analysis. Hendricks and Hulst (2016, p.164) provide descriptors for individualism which they term as the 'ideal-typical low-grid culture'; 'entrepreneurial, freedom of choice and incorrigibly self-seeking' and for hierarchy which they term as the 'ideal-typical high-grid culture'; 'positional culture, ordered integration, flawed but redeemable and perverse / tolerant'. This will enable controlled comparison across participants responses (sociological level), enable the reviewed literature to be considered from an appropriate perspective and maintain consistency with an inductive approach.

Social and Cultural Influence on Risk Perspective

Support and supervision are the most prevalent theme emerging from the data. Survey data found 55% of respondents claimed to have visible supervision, interview data yielded a negative ratio of 93:40 (Table 3). Focussing on the level of pro-active supervision, R6 moves from a neutral survey response to a positive interview response:

R6: [00:11:18] It's is very much down to the leaders. You know they're the ones that work with the young people every week……Erm, and it's for them to bring up any issues I think rather than being supervised if you like. There's, it's not close supervision. But it's there if we need it if you know what I mean.

No pro-active supervision is conveyed as a positive by R6 who appears to draw comfort from being able to decide if, and when to access it, with little apparent awareness of its wider importance. R23 is consistent between survey (strongly disagree) and interview where he also confirms no pro-active supervision:

R23: [00:30:03] Oh my gosh. Eh, I have to be honest. Not a lot. Not a lot. The co-ordinator unit leader carries all the risk……There's no there's very much a hand- off approach…….and it's really down to the coordinator to either raise concern or deal with it. So, for someone who is motivated and on the right page that's great. If, if there's someone who either isn't that good at their job. Or has got other reasons that they don't particularly want external supervision to get involved they can hide things and sit on it and that that can't be right.

Whilst acknowledging the risk allocation as a negative, R23 finds it a positive for a motivated individual to be left alone. R30 indicates visible supervision in his survey response but provides an interview response which is at variance, albeit with a reason as to why it is a positive:

R30: [00:07:03] xxxx and yyyy at zzzz I feel supported by. I don't think that people on my borough or my managers on the borough really know what it is I do, they like what I do but I really don't think they know what it is. But you could say that's good because they do leave me alone but.

From a GGCT perspective the discretion holder's own perceptions and understanding on what they are required to do and why, appears to influence how they view it and indicates that a high degree of subjectivity is involved. All three participants confirm they are not subject to any pro-active supervision, but each provides their own construct, which can be accommodated within the descriptors for individualism provided by Hendricks and Hulst (2016). R6 appears to overlook the risk and enjoys 'freedom of choice'. R23 through a re-ordering of the anomalies allows a motivated individual to enjoy 'entrepreneurial' opportunity and R30 being 'incorrigibly self-seeking' through sceptical re-interpretation. Considered against the literature this data

supports Reiner (2010, p.116) and his assertion that officer discretion increases as one moves down the hierarchy.

The thematic analysis shows that individual codes invariably attract more than one theme, reinforcing the fact they do not stand alone, they are dynamic, and the interplay is evident. Whilst the theme was about support and supervision, it can be seen in the examples provided that the lack of it appears to attract a high degree of another theme, discretion; afforded to and exercised by individual adult leaders. This can be aligned with individualism, primarily through freedom of choice and being entrepreneurial. The data suggests difficulty in escaping a particular 'typology' as the cultural balance between individualism and hierarchy is so extreme as to appear broken within an organisational context and will now be considered in more depth.

Culture being a barrier to achieving trans-discipline

The literature highlights academic tension around the nature and properties of culture, with Crawford and L'Hoiry (2017, p.647) asserting that safeguarding cuts across skill and expertise, with culture a barrier to trans-discipline. The interview data reveals that VPC management and referral processes are predominantly negative, ratio 58:20 (Table 3) and operate exclusively through rank driven line management, rather than appropriate specialist knowledge. However, in the absence of adequate support and supervision, it is apparent that adult leaders have a high level of discretion and use their peer network for advice, suggesting signs of the 'operator culture' described by Cockcroft (2012, p.7). Participants in both survey (appendix D, sheet 41) and interview (appendix G, sheet 1, row 55) show cultural flexibility with an openness to learn from other youth organisations, and that a non-police officer could be a unit leader (appendix G, sheet 1, row 47). However, this operator level 'cultural flexibility' is clearly bounded within a hierarchical culture suggesting a parallel with Cosgrove and Ramshaw's (2015) assertion that PCSOs are restricted by their structured position within the hierarchal organisational environment and supports Rayner's assertion around 'constitutive premises', (Krimsky and Golding, 1992, pp.85-90) and a sign of Schien's (2004) cultural depth and breadth Cockcroft (2012, p.4). Supporting this assertion, the data provides examples of hierarchical interventions that suggest a lack of understanding on the adult leader role and the value of trans-discipline. Underlying evidence of this can be seen in the data on training and tends to support Hendricks and Hulst (2016, pp.172-173) in their assertion that beliefs and practices developed to

deal with the macro level public expectations can create cultural tensions at the meso and micro levels.

A lack of training provision is apparent with survey data showing only 42% of respondents claiming they had regular training. In interview only R6 claimed her force provided VPC safeguarding training, with 6 respondents claiming no training at all, including R30 and R34:

R30: [00:01:17] That's really interesting isn't it because I came into the role 10 years ago there was no safeguarding training then the only thing I can honestly say I've had is about eight weeks ago I received an e-mail telling me to download an NCALT basic safeguarding training session. I completed the lesson in 30 minutes and there was a test. I can honestly say that's it.

R34: [00:01:24] Erm up to the last. Probably month or so. I just had an input team meeting which we had a guest speaker come in I think he was a football coach who talks about safeguarding because that was a big issue within football. Erm I've done my own kind of safeguarding within cadets and then about a month ago I did the level three safeguarded online training.

In their responses R30 and R34 mentioned recent on-line training which was also mentioned in the interviews with R8, R11, R24, R32 (appendix G, sheet 1, rows 3-6). This online training was a Chief Officer driven national response to the VPC related criminal investigations, with completion a mandatory requirement. Whilst discounted from inclusion in force training data, it provides by default, a live example of the immediate reaction of Chief Officers to an impending safeguarding crisis. There is not so much a shift in balance as described by Hendricks and Hulst (2016, p.164), but an immediate jump across 'the divide' from the hierarchist to the individualist. The nature and timing of which indicates the purpose as being organisationally defensive. Drivers for this can be found in the literature review, with media scrutiny a prominent factor (Stafford, 2012) and a need to defend the organisation causing the situation to shift from no training and high adult leader discretion, to a hierarchical compliance culture, quite probably, the risk perspective being on the need to provide a 'shield against public allegations of failure' as explained by Lane, Munro and Husemann (2016, pp.615-617) and evidenced through the following data.

Organisational Defensiveness

The data provides a cross section of examples demonstrating an organisational defensive culture and includes a partial response from R23 in answer to whether forces seek to learn or defend:

R23: [00:09:37] Eh, the honest answer is no. The force that I was certainly in was massively concerned with reputational impact erm minimizing risk to the organization to the point where they honestly had no interest in the actual genuine welfare of a cadet or a young person……….

The full answer is contained in appendix G (sheet 1, row 12, column Q) and is supported in a response from R30 (appendix G, sheet 1, row 12, column Z) on the same force's management response to the VPC safeguarding criminal investigation in banning cadets from transitioning into adult leader roles within the same borough and partially reproduced here:

R30: [00:06:32)…….If a 19-year-old lad from anywhere in xxxxx approaches me tomorrow and asked to be a staff, I'll take him on as staff, those three that I've just kicked out. If they approached me to be staff, I'll say sorry you can't be staff. How is that enhancing their opportunities in life. And I I, just words fail me they really do.

An example of such organisational defensiveness not even being recognised and perhaps indicating it is culturally embedded is provided by R34 (appendix G, sheet 1, row 17, column AF) describing a situation where a cadet is found to be working in a takeaway linked to radicalising people:

R34: [00:05:42] So I erm. Read the intelligence I created a PVP which is a referral for a vulnerable young person that was sent to our MASH team. Erm and there's a bit of investigation ongoing with that…….. and I was asked to speak to Mum. And erm say that if her son continued to work in the takeaway that he couldn't really come to cadets. Erm, and I've got a meeting with Mum on Thursday to. To explain or to express some of our concerns as to what's going on where he's working.

The action appears to be more concerned with reducing reputational risk to the force than recognising any responsibility to support a young person at risk of being radicalised and actually compounding the risk to both the individual and the force. Survey data showed only 12 participants received training on radicalisation which is a

specific element of the safe spaces framework, indicating this example would possibly not be a unique response. The literature review provides several pieces of research such as Peckover and Golding (2017, pp.41-45) explaining how attempts to effectively co-ordinate the work of all agencies with statutory safeguarding responsibilities have been continually blighted through their different approaches, each seeking slightly different outcomes driven through the different organisational cultures that have evolved to achieve them. The examples provided from the data appear to reinforce this assertion and show the 'depth' of the defensive culture (Cockcroft, 2012, p.5), with any ability to adjust possibly trapped within itself and undermining any prospect of change through learning and enabling police hierarchy to have a better understanding of VPC requirements and provide the necessary leadership.

Lack of understanding on the requirements for community policing roles

Lane, Munro and Husemann (2016, pp.615-617) explain how a defensive culture manifests into the growth of a compliance culture with professional judgement and autonomy being lost to prescriptive approaches, becoming a barrier to learning and a shield against public 'allegations of failure'. The research data however appears to indicate there is not an absolute suppression of learning, as it continues to take place at the adult leader level out of necessity and from which their own practices (expertise) and operator culture (Cockcroft, 2012, p.7) evolves. This perhaps provides hope to Gray's (2015) claims about touches of brilliance and inspiration, albeit restricted within single loop learning rather than the double loop variance required to achieve organisational learning.

The literature review identifies research from Thomas and Trotman (2017, pp.501-509) who find PCSO school liaison officers encountering difficulties due to a lack of understanding around the role's complexity and no training leaving them to devise their own working methods. The interview data (appendix G, sheet 1, rows 9-12) provides responses from R6, R8, R24, R29, R30 and R34 describing informal network support from within the adult leader peer group. R29 (appendix G, sheet 1, row 10, column W) provides a good example where 'protocols' aren't sufficient, and he needs to seek the advice of peers, demonstrating cultural versatility (Hendriks and Hulst, 2016, pp.172-174) in responding and is partially reproduced:

R29: [00:03:45]…..we'll contact the other people as well even though that's not what's in the protocols but because it's something as a parent as an adult would want to know which we should do it because we're treating the kids that are with us as our own kids in a way.

Signs of the situation improving appear remote, with only 29% of survey respondents feeling the value of VPC was recognised by the wider police service (appendix D, sheet 36). Whilst the interview data had four respondents report favourably on this (appendix G, sheet 1, row 39), there were a lot of negative responses. R11 provides a mixed picture within which he provides an example of the low priority afforded to the VPC (appendix G, sheet 1, row 31, column K):

R11: [00:10:36]…..I've also heard horror stories of where cadet units I've met and find out that their storage cupboards have been taken taken away by PCs all their stuff's on the floor, so it can be a horror show.

The interview data on wider police perception shows R24, R32 and R34 describe the wider view of the VPC as a 'soft job', partly described by R24 (appendix G, sheet 1, row 37, column T):

R24: [00:09:26] I think it's generally seen as kind of a bit of a youth club, a bit of a get out for some people to get out do normal shifts………...

Reflection within the literature review suggested the VPC has not found its place within traditional police culture (Reiner 2010, p.119) and whilst adult leaders do their cultural tap dancing (Hendricks and Hulst 2016, pp.170-171) there is no opportunity for it to establish any organisational 'breadth' or 'depth' (Cockcroft, 2012, p.5) possibly because it is operated through a proportionately small number of adult leaders and not seen within the operational theatre.

The qualitative research data shows leadership having the greatest divergence between negative and positive prevalence at a ratio of (60:1). The safe spaces framework requires a visible senior leader for safeguarding, R13 was the only interviewee who could name a senior officer (appendix G, sheet 1, row 36, column N). The absence of positive leadership in the data is stark and suggests a lack of understanding on the requirements for VPC adult leaders, supporting the previously mentioned research by Crawford and L'Hoiry (2017, p.647) showing how community

officers suffered through a lack of understanding on their roles, possibly due to cultural inflexibility preventing the police being able to adjust and achieve 'trans-discipline'. Blacker and McConnell (2015, pp.178) provide a more practical description of 'curvilinearity' (Mamadouh, 1999) asserting that if culture is not actively managed people risks can emerge and manifest into a crisis. Having considered the data with the literature it appears there is no management of culture. Whilst the interview data shows a positive culture prevalence balance of 37:34 (appendix G, sheet 7), much of this is attributed to adult leaders being receptive to learning from other youth sectors, as opposed to cultural flexibility within the police around the VPC, with the largest negative factor at (7) relating to adult leaders feeling their role was considered a low priority by the wider service. Whilst having the least numerical divergence, the actual code types reinforce that a VPC individualist culture, and a police hierarchical culture appear to be operating in silos as described in the literature by Hood, Gillespie and Davies (2016, p.493). This appears to reflect Gross and Gaynor's (1985) 'extreme cases' GGCT type mapping (Mamadouh, 1999, p.399) at fig.1 where there is no scope for interplay to facilitate balance due to complete detachment (silos) and no signs of a bridge, unlike the four boxes GGCT map at fig.2 (Douglas, 1993) showing a border connection between the culture types, this extends to a no borders 'continuous' map option where typologies can interplay even more freely. This could indicate a potential gap in Roelofse's 'reciprocal moral dualism' concept which doesn't appear to take into account internal interaction, or the lack of it within the police organisation and indicated by the research data.
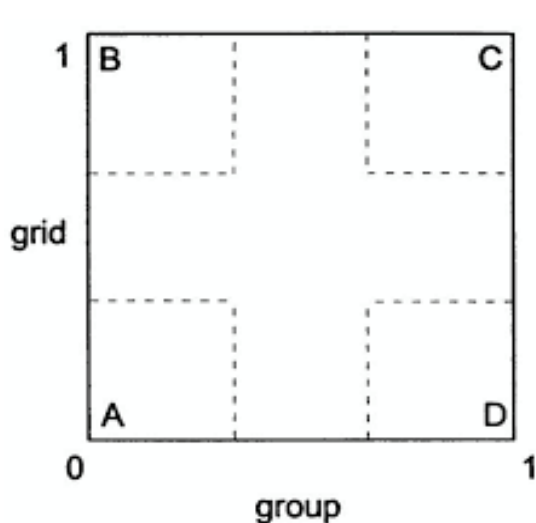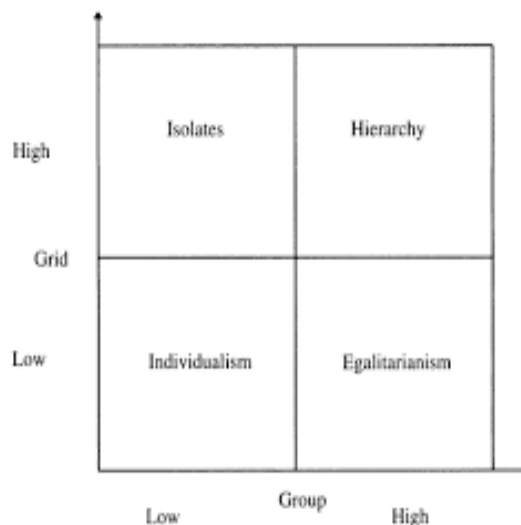

Fig.1 Gross and Gaynor 1985 Extreme Cases GGCT   Fig.2 Douglas 1993 Four Boxes GGCT

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Gray (2015) highlights the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect identify key requirements for an effective service to include opportunities for staff to train and enhance their professional development, effective supervision, provision of adequate resources and an overarching requirement for components to interact effectively. The literature review considers the tension between different sectors within the evolution of child protection systems, with Hamalainen (2016) suggesting interdisciplinary specialisation has led to tension between sectors such as education, medical and social. Peckover and Golding (2017, pp.41-45) describe these agencies as 'working on different planets'. Hood, Gillespie and Davies (2016, p.493) reinforce this by claiming difficulty in developing 'interprofessional expertise is compounded for frontline practitioners by ambiguity, which suggests a lack of leadership. Considering the data with the literature, within the context of the 'extreme cases' type mapping (Mamadouh, 1999, p.399) indicates that it is conceivable that unrecognised 'interagency tension' is now apparent internally within and between the police and the VPC, with the VPC unable to gain acceptance or establish itself into a bureaucracy and preventing effective interaction to bridge the gap and balance cultures.

Chapter 6 - Conclusion

The aim of this research project was to understand the extent to which the VPC is displaying the characteristics of a safe organisation. To pursue this overarching aim, the project sought to answer two questions:

1. Is VPC safeguarding meeting the standards of the UK Youth Safe Spaces framework (appendix B)?

2. Is police culture hindering the ability of the police to improve VPC safeguarding?

Reflecting upon the research carried out, the value of using MMR appears justified, maximising the strengths of each and minimising respective weaknesses. This was apparent in being able to refine the semi-structured interview question set post survey. The rich data from the qualitative research has allowed for a greater understanding of the quantitative data, providing answers relating to not just the causal description, but also causal explanation as put forward by Lund (2012, p.157) and perhaps also a sign that the adopted research method for this project has held to its theoretical commitment and managed to integrate the data reasonably effectively. To build in mitigation against any personal bias the neutral survey responses were not counted as a negative, future research should give greater consideration on their meaning. Using GGCT provided a helpful lens, but it is acknowledged a 'soft' version was employed and limited by taking no account of the Egalitarian and Fatalist cultural typologies.

Adopting a subjectivist approach appears to be endorsed when the data is considered inductively against the literature. Krimsky and Sheldon (1992, p.4) highlight constructive tension between subjective and realist phenomena as a requirement in the make-up and totality of risk. The themes identified from the data and the interplay between them within the 'VPC – Police' context of managing risk reveal what could be viewed as a negative tension. Cognitive theory of risk perception is also evident in the form of the 'availability' heuristic (Krimsky and Golding, 1992, pp.16-18), with respondents appearing comfortable at the lack of supervision and their levels of discretion. The theory predicts the more a person has direct control and influence over a risk, they are likely to perceive it as less risky. It is a reasonable assumption that if

the situation apparent in the data is repeated over an extended period causing increased 'familiarity', which appears to be the case with VPC adult leaders, the gap between perceived and actual risk will widen and is perhaps a reason why 82% of survey respondents believe, that contrary to the wider quantitative data, their units are running safely. Despite this overarching belief, and in answer to the first question, the findings from the quantitative data provide strong evidence that the VPC is failing to meet the standards of the UK Youth Safe Spaces framework (appendix B) and not displaying the characteristics of a safe organisation.

The rich data from the semi-structured interviews brings elements of those failings starkly to life, in particular a lack of supervision and defensive leadership, subsidised by high levels of adult leader discretion, all issues that fall below the waterline on Hellriegel's iceberg (Mullins, 2012, p.9) and indicate that a more sophisticated solution than just a new policy or more training is required. This again supports the value of the MMR methodology and helps understanding in considering the second question. It was evident that police culture could be hindering the ability of the police to improve VPC safeguarding. Considering the data inductively against the literature provided evidence of a complete lack of interplay between hierarchical and individualist cultures, identified by Marmadouh (1999), as well as Blacker and McConnell (2015) as a climate where people risks can emerge and manifest into crisis. There was no indication of either recognition at a senior level, or ability within the current operating cultures to address it and rebalance the cultures as highlighted in Gross and Gaynor's 'extreme cases' GGCT type map. Indeed, the isolation of both hierarchical and individualist cultures in their respective silos strongly suggests true recognition of the need to embrace and embed new disciplines is unlikely and under current arrangements will remain trapped within them. The data provides strong indication that the VPC is in the incubation period of a disaster (Toft and Reynolds, 2005).

Recommendations

In considering where to take this research next, the research population for this project were all VPC adult leaders, it therefore appears necessary to undertake research with senior police leaders and understand the hierarchical culture more clearly. This research has also been used to inform a strategic VPC safeguarding risk assessment, developed in line with the ISO 31000 (2009) risk management process. Together with

the September 2018 workshop, both data collection processes have formed part of the 'communicate' and 'consult' phase to help establish context. The links established with forces through this will be maintained to continue the monitoring and reviewing processes. The analysis and findings from this research are helping to identify and understand the risks, and a national safeguarding board Chaired at Assistant Chief Constable level is being established to oversee evaluation and treatment of those risks. Funding is being sought to enable treatment implementation and sustain a risk management process with national perspective.

The VPC Aims and Principles (appendix H) provide a flexible framework within which Chief Officers can operate their units to meet local needs. This has allowed multiple variations in the way forces run their VPC and the standards employed. Whilst local discretion may be a strength in many aspects, there can only be one standard for safeguarding which has to be the best available in the youth sector and mandated as a national requirement. The terms of reference for the new national safeguarding board must be focussed on ensuring this happens, with a full understanding of the need to provide the leadership necessary to bridge the identified gap between cultures.

(Words 15000)

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Appendices

DEVELOPING A VOLUNTEER POLICE CADET SAFEGUARDING STRATEGY

ADVICE NOTE

INTRODUCTION

This note has been prepared to assist the VPC Programme Team to develop a coherent national safeguarding strategy for forces to adopt as a standard. It is based on:

- Discussions held with 11 forces at the VPC Safeguarding Workshop in London on 26th September 2018.
- A detailed briefing from the lead for safeguarding transformation at the Girl Guides at that event.
- Deliberations with the VPC Programme lead for safeguarding.

It is by no means a comprehensive document but draws on experience from the third sector and other major not for profit organisations. I will set out below the context; some considerations from the workshop and a suggested way forward. From the outset it should be noted that there is already a great deal of work underway, led by VPC force co-ordinators to ensure that vulnerable young people are in as safe an environment as possible. There is a great deal of willingness to improve and a high degree of awareness of the risks involved by those operating at a tactical level.

CONTEXT

The VPC has a stated aim to recruit to its cadet force many young people who could be described as vulnerable or at risk. At present, governance is through a lead force approach, but individual Chief Constables are ultimately responsible for the running of the units in their force areas. It was clear from the briefings provided by the 11 forces represented at the workshop that there are currently a wide range of approaches to safeguarding and whilst some are well advanced in their thinking,

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others recognised the urgent need to enhance their procedures. All agreed that they would benefit from a coherent national approach to this issue.

The profile of child sexual abuse in Britain has been significantly enhanced in recent years by a number of high-profile policing operations, national reports and public enquiries including the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. Indeed, NPCC has recognised the need to improve its response and formed Operation Hydrant to co-ordinate force activity tackling abuse in institutions. The impact of this focus has been felt across society with new sectors such as abuse in football emerging rapidly as news stories break. Other uniformed youth groups such as the Army and Sea Cadets have been scrutinised by investigative journalists and led to those organisations undertaking significant reviews into their past activities. It would be naïve to assume the police cadets will avoid adverse coverage at some point in the future.

The subject of police officers abusing their positions of power to prey on the vulnerable has been well documented in recent years. It has been the subject of reporting by the IPCC in partnership with ACPO in 2012 and by HMIC in 2014 (Integrity Matters) and 2015 (PEEL Legitimacy inspection) as well significant coverage in the media. Any such abuse by an officer of a cadet is likely to become a critical incident attracting a national profile which will impact upon the good work of all cadet units. Furthermore, scrutiny by any external body of the current safeguarding policy and procedures is likely to identify significant inconsistencies when contrasted with other groups operating in this sector. It is imperative that NPCC brings its approach to safeguarding within the VPC into line with those operating in this sphere as soon as practicable and provides a central framework within which forces can operate.

VPC SAFEGUARDING CONSIDERATIONS

The following points are some of the issues that emerged from the discussions with colleagues at the VPC Safeguarding Workshop and will hopefully stimulate further debate at a senior level within the service:

- There is a lack of clarity of role for the officers leading cadet units, are they primarily acting as youth leaders or police officers? There is a perceived conflict of interest between the two roles and a distinction needs to be made between the officer being on duty, in the execution of their duty or indeed acting as a volunteer.
- Information sharing agreements may be required for cadet units to share information with the wider service and GDRP needs further consideration.
- Approaches to vetting are inconsistent and there was a lack of understanding as to what is required with conflicting advice from PSD.
- There is no consistent method to report safeguarding issues disclosed by cadets. Some forces use their standard pro-forma other units have developed their own.
- It is important to recognise that safeguarding vulnerable adults should be included in the overall approach, especially with young leaders who are 18+.
- Levels of training in safeguarding vary across the forces, this is different to that which officers would routinely be expected to undertake and a standard is required.
- There are already examples of peer on peer abuse within VPC and potentially ineffective information sharing with other agencies.
- There are some concerns about the behaviour of 18-year-old youth leaders towards younger cadets.

- This is a high-risk area for the service to be operating in and there is the potential for significant reputational damage to the service if any harm is caused to a young person within a cadet unit.

WAY FORWARD

The following points will assist the VPC to develop a "whole organisation approach" to safeguarding within cadet units. Key components to assist in the creation of a safeguarding culture include:

1. A clear and effective governance structure is required for safeguarding within the VPC. This should include appointment of a national safeguarding co-ordinator who will develop KPIs and maintain national standards and records for a Safeguarding Governance Board. This board should be chaired by a chief officer, preferably with experience in safeguarding or working in the youth sector.
2. This structure should be supported and scrutinised by an independently chaired Safeguarding Reference Group with external subject matter experts as well as internal stakeholder such as a PSD rep. The chair of this group should annually provide an assurance report to NPCC on the progress the service is making. A stakeholder mapping exercise will assist the formation of such a group. Young people should be represented either on this group or through a sub-group.
3. A clear safeguarding strategy should be developed for VPC that covers the core strands of Working Together 2018; Risk Management and Quality Assurance. A project managed approach should be initiated to develop this with the SRO set at least at Superintendent level, preferably with safeguarding experience.
4. Policy, procedures and practice need to be developed nationally and applied consistently across the units. A QA element will be necessary.
5. A strategic risk assessment should be developed listing the threats and mitigation within the VPC context.
6. A Safeguarding Action Plan should be prepared and managed by the Safeguarding Governance Board, addressing issues identified not only in the VPC context but in other sectors as they emerge.
7. A standardised VPC safeguarding reporting process is required, separate to individual force reporting processes. This should be supported by an aide-memoire, flow chart and include PSD if the concern or incident involves VPC leadership. The national safeguarding co-ordinator should be the custodian of this system and ensure organisational learning is shared effectively. Consideration should be given to developing a VPC Safeguarding Filing System to ensure consistency of record keeping and future disclosure.
8. External reporting pathways should be publicised e.g. NSPCC whistleblowing line for professionals or NSPCC Helpline and IOPC for concerned parents who may not trust police to investigate effectively.
9. A clear code of conduct for cadets, their parents and the leaders is required. This should be reinforced by an effective and standardised induction process for both the cadets and their leaders. Social media policy will be an important element of this.
10. Safer Recruitment processes, as used in all other organisations working with young people should be implemented.
11. DBS Vetting processes should be an integral part of safer recruitment and standardised across the VPC.
12. A safeguarding audit should be undertaken at regular intervals and the VPC should be prepared to open itself up to external scrutiny and inspection.

13. A training strategy should document what levels leaders, co-ordinators etc should be trained to. CPD needs to be included to ensure leaders maintain their knowledge and keep abreast of developments in other sectors.
14. Each force should have a designated safeguarding co-ordinator and each unit should have a lead safeguarding officer.
15. The VPC safeguarding policy will need to be linked to those on health and safety; diversity and inclusion; any other relevant issue.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

There is a danger that some in the police service will view themselves as being in a unique position when it comes to the issue of safeguarding within its own organisation. They are not, many other professionals and indeed 'off duty' police officers work with young people in a voluntary capacity and adhere to the procedures and practices of those organisations first and foremost. It also is important not to assume that all those involved in policing have the same degree of awareness of safeguarding matters as those elsewhere in the youth sector and a law enforcement background may skew what should be a youth centred approach.

It is vital that officers and staff leading VPC units get absolute clarity of role, backed up by effective policies and procedures to ensure they are fully empowered to take on this important task. Their colleagues and senior officers also need that clarity of understanding of what their unit leaders are doing for society.

There are many institutions in the UK who have learnt bitter lessons from past failings and developed innovative practice to safeguard the vulnerable which the police service can adopt. I was heartened by the approach taken and the commitment displayed by both the programme team and the force representatives at the workshop and have every confidence in the service to address these issues. The 15-point plan I have outlined above is the basis for a framework which will help the service develop a safeguarding culture within the VPC context and wish you well in this endeavour.

PETER SPINDLER
SENIOR POLICING AND SAFEGUARDING ADVISOR
DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD FOR NVPC CHARITY
27TH SEPTEMBER 2018

Appendix B: Safe Spaces Framework

Safe Spaces Summary of Elements

UKYOUTH

Element 1 - Health and Safety
Your Health and Safety Policy overview, relevant induction information, accident reporting, risk assessments and analysis, general building awareness, First Aid, Fire, COSHH and safety signage

Element 2 - Data Protection
Your Data Protection Policy, subject access requests, securing your data, authorised access, information gathering and data use, retention and destruction procedures, compliance, data audits and GDPR information

Safeguarding

Element 3 - Children and Young People at Risk
The role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO), your safeguarding policy, referral and early help procedures, dealing with allegations, code of behaviour and whistleblowing

Element 4 - Safe Staff and Volunteers
Recruitment & Induction Processes, and Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks

Element 5 - Providing Safe Activities
Risk assessment/ analysis for your activity provision, highlighting the importance of engaging young people in decision making, having the correct systems and insurance in place. Parental consent and using external agencies

Element 6 - Recording and Storing Information
Subject Access Requests, the role of the DSO and Referral processes and agencies. Links to Data Protection (Element Two)

Element 7 - Working with Others
Confidentiality and Information Sharing importance of collaboration and referral processes

Element 8 - Bullying
E-safety and the use of social media, Code of Behaviour, Complaints and Whistleblowing

Element 9 - Child Sexual Exploitation and Grooming
Recognising indicators of Child sexual exploitation and how to refer

Element 10 - Radicalisation & Extremism
Understanding extremism and radicalisation, how to promote positive messaging and escalate concerns

UK Youth Safe Spaces

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Appendix C: Survey Questionnaire

Researcher: Graeme Ironside, Email:
Graeme.Ironside@myport.ac.uk

Supervisor: Dr Peter Lee, Email:
Peter.lee@port.ac.uk

Dear VPC adult leader, I am undertaking personal research into VPC Safeguarding across all forces to learn the extent to which they are meeting elements of the UK Youth Safe Spaces Framework which has been developed from the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services, Keeping it Safe Standards and Sound Systems Accreditation Scheme. This has recently been cross referenced against NSPCC Safeguarding Standards and Advice 2017 to produce the Safe Spaces Framework.

This research has been authorised by Chief Constable Shaun Sawyer of Devon and Cornwall Police who is the national portfolio holder for Volunteer Police Cadets and the survey results will help to inform the action required to make VPC Safeguarding safer.

To help us achieve this, please complete the following survey and return it to graeme.ironside@vpc.police.uk

(This 'police.uk' email address offers greater security for participants)

Your responses will be kept secure and both personal and force data will be anonymized.

Please indicate whether you are a police employee and your role, or a volunteer with previous police experience, or a volunteer with no other police connection or experience:

I am a:

VPC SAFEGUARDING	QUALITY RATING
SAFEGUARDING POLICY	
My force has a written VPC Safeguarding Policy	Choose an item.
My force has a written VPC Code of Behaviour	Choose an item.
My force has a VPC designated safeguarding officer	Choose an item.
My force has a senior officer who is visible and accountable for VPC Safeguarding	Choose an item.
My force has a written process for handling a VPC safeguarding matter	Choose an item.
My force reviews VPC safeguarding arrangements to ensure best practice	Choose an item.
My force has a written VPC whistleblowing policy	Choose an item.
SAFE STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS	

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VPC SAFEGUARDING	QUALITY RATING
My force provides an induction for new VPC leaders	Choose an item.
My force provides visible supervision of VPC leaders	Choose an item.
My force provides regular safeguarding training for VPC leaders	Choose an item.
My force provides support to VPC leaders when needed for their own wellbeing	Choose an item.
PROVIDING SAFE ACTIVITIES	
My force has a written VPC Health and Safety policy	Choose an item.
My force ensures VPC activities for children and young people are properly risk assessed	Choose an item.
My force provides liability insurance to cover VPC activities	Choose an item.
My force has a clear policy on parental / carers / guardian consent for VPC activities	Choose an item.
My force ensures VPC parental / carer / guardian consent is regularly reviewed	Choose an item.
RECORDING AND STORING INFORMATION	
My force ensures the recording and storing of cadet's information conforms to data protection policy and procedures	Choose an item.
WORKING WITH OTHERS	
My force supports effective VPC information sharing with other agencies	Choose an item.
My force has clear procedures for VPC leaders on how to work with others to safeguard a child	Choose an item.
BULLYING	
My force has a written VPC anti-bullying policy	Choose an item.
My force provides training for VPC leaders on how to prevent and deal with bullying	Choose an item.
My force has a clear process for cadets and VPC leaders to raise a bullying concern or complaint	Choose an item.
SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND GROOMING	
My force provides training for VPC leaders on child sexual exploitation and grooming	Choose an item.
My force ensures cadets know how to ask for help about child sexual exploitation and grooming	Choose an item.
My force uses cadets to support awareness around child sexual exploitation and grooming	Choose an item.

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VPC SAFEGUARDING	QUALITY RATING
My force provides guidance to VPC leaders on what to do if a cadet is identified as vulnerable to child sexual exploitation and grooming	Choose an item.
RADICALISATION AND EXTREMISM	
My force provides awareness training for VPC leaders on radicalisation and extremism	Choose an item.
My force provides guidance to VPC leaders on what to do if a cadet is identified as vulnerable to radicalisation	Choose an item.
PERSONAL FEELINGS	
As a VPC adult leader I feel well supported by my force	Choose an item.
As a VPC adult leader I feel confident around VPC safeguarding	Choose an item.
As a VPC adult leader I feel confident raising a VPC safeguarding concern with my managers	Choose an item.
As a VPC adult leader I feel VPC safeguarding processes are restricted by police policy and procedures	Choose an item.
As a VPC adult leader I feel current safeguarding policy and procedures are appropriate for running VPC	Choose an item.
As a VPC adult leader I feel the value of the VPC is recognised by the wider police service	Choose an item.
As a VPC adult leader I feel the value of VPC is understood by my supervisors	Choose an item.
As a VPC adult leader I feel VPC is viewed by police colleagues not involved with the VPC as worthwhile	Choose an item.
As a VPC adult leader I feel I have to make safeguarding decisions about my cadets without clear guidance	Choose an item.
As a VPC adult leader I do a lot of unseen VPC work in my own time	Choose an item.
As a VPC adult leader I feel the police could learn from other youth sector organisations to improve VPC safeguarding	Choose an item.
As a VPC adult leader I feel my cadet unit is operating safely	Choose an item.

Appendix D: Quantitative Data Analysis (Separate Attachment)

UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH

Researcher: Graeme Ironside, Email: up838465@myport.ac.uk

Supervisor: Dr Peter Lee, Email: Peter.lee@port.ac.uk

Research Interview Questions

Study Title: Volunteer Police Cadets and Safeguarding

1. Can you briefly explain your role with the VPC?
2. What safeguarding training have you had for your role as an adult leader?
3. What safeguarding advice or training is available to you as a VPC adult leader?
4. How well prepared do you feel to deal with VPC safeguarding issues?
5. How do you develop your VPC safeguarding knowledge? (Organisation, Peers, Other)
6. Have you had to deal with a safeguarding issue (if yes tell me what you did) (if not what would you do)
7. What did / would you base that decision making on?
8. Is that written anywhere?
9. Who would you go to for help and advice?
10. Did you feel comfortable dealing with it?
11. Do you think others in your unit would know what to do?
12. What oversight and supervision do you see around safeguarding?
13. How well do you feel supported by police managers outside of the VPC?
14. How do you feel the VPC is perceived by others in the police service?
15. How connected do you feel to the wider police organisation?
16. Do you feel the primary purpose of the police risk assessment process is to protect people or the organisation?
17. Do you think it is important that the VPC unit leader is a police officer or PCSO? (Why)
18. How effective do you feel the current safeguarding arrangements are for running VPC units safely?
19. Is that dependant on individuals or process driven; it doesn't matter who the individual is?
20. How comfortable would you be with challenging another leaders behaviour?

21. Do you think VPC safeguarding could be improved by learning from other youth sector organisations?

22. What barriers would there be to this.

23. What are your views on the VPC being considered as a uniform youth group like the Scouts or Girl Guiding?

24. If you could change one thing to improve VPC safeguarding what would it be?

Researcher: Graeme Ironside, Email:
up838465@myport.ac.uk

Supervisor: Dr Peter Lee, Email:
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Research Interview Questions

Study Title: Volunteer Police Cadets and Safeguarding

1. Can you briefly explain your role with the VPC?
    2. What safeguarding training have you had for your role as an adult leader?
    3. What safeguarding advice or training is available to you as a VPC adult leader?
    4. How well prepared do you feel to deal with VPC safeguarding issues?
    5. How do you develop your VPC safeguarding knowledge? (Organisation, Peers, Other)
    6. Does your force share learning following safeguarding incidents?
    7. How does it respond to an incident – view to learn or defend?
    8. Have you had to deal with a safeguarding issue (if yes tell me what you did) (if not what would you do)
    9. What did / would you base that decision making on?
    10. Is that written anywhere?
    11. Who would you go to for help and advice?
    12. Did you feel comfortable dealing with it?
    13. Do you think others in your unit would know what to do?
    14. Do you ever feel constrained by police policy, SOPs when trying to deal with a VPC safeguarding issue?
    15. Do you ever feel you are confronted with a VPC safeguarding issue not covered by force policy leaving you vulnerable?
    16. What oversight and supervision do you see around safeguarding?
    17. To what extent do supervisors pro-actively probe / test standards around safeguarding?

18. How well do you feel supported by police managers outside of the VPC?

19. Who is the VPC designated safeguarding lead for your borough / force

20. How do you feel the VPC is perceived by others in the police service?

21. Why do you think that is?

22. How connected do you feel to the wider police organisation?

23. Do you feel the primary purpose of the police risk assessment process is to protect people or the organisation?

24. Are RA3s considered / approved by anyone with safeguarding experience?

25. When making safeguarding judgements do you rely solely on police and VPC specific policy/guidance, or does it also involve shared practice evolving from the ground up amongst VPC adult leaders and your individual judgment?

26. Do you think it is important that the VPC unit leader is a police officer or PCSO? (Why)

27. How effective do you feel the current safeguarding arrangements are for running VPC units safely?

28. Is that dependant on individuals or process driven where it doesn't matter who the individual is?

29. How comfortable would you be with challenging another leaders behaviour?

30. What about a non-police officer volunteer or a cadet challenging or raising a concern?

31. Do you think VPC safeguarding could be improved by learning from other youth sector organisations?

32. What barriers would there be to this.

33. What are your views on the VPC being considered as a uniform youth group like the Scouts or Girl Guiding?

34. If you could change one thing to improve VPC safeguarding what would it be?

Appendix G: Qualitative Data Coding (Separate Attachment)

Appendix H: VPC Aims and Principles

The Aims of the VPC are:-

*To promote a practical understanding of policing amongst all young people.

*To encourage the spirit of adventure and good citizenship.

*To support local policing priorities through volunteering and give young people a chance to be heard.

* To inspire young people to participate positively in their communities.

Each cadet unit should include:

- Members aged 13-18

- 25% of cadets from a vulnerable background

- Cadets who volunteer 3 hours a month – assisting in community and crime prevention measures

- Cadets that represent the diversity of their service area.

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Ethical opinion form for Faculty of Business and Law (BAL) taught undergraduate and postgraduate students (except MRes)

Instructions to student

The questions starting on the next page of this form should be completed by the student on relevant dissertation / project units requiring the completion of an ethics form, regardless of whether you are collecting primary or secondary data. Refer to the Guidance Notes that accompany this form and the 'Research ethics – issues to consider' checklist, also to be found as an appendix to the Guidance Notes, for help in completing the form. If you are not collecting primary data or data that are identifiable with individuals, then you still need to complete an ethics form, but only need to answer Qs 1-4, then Q11 and as many of the questions between Qs 12-20 as are relevant in your case. The completed form, and any supporting documentation you intend to issue to participants, should then be passed to the supervisor. If your supervisor is satisfied that your application is capable of review, the usual procedure is that he / she will send it to an appointed independent reviewer to decide whether ethical approval can be supported. The reviewer, in conjunction with the supervisor, is responsible for approving the ethical dimension of your project, although you may be asked to amend your documentation to the satisfaction of the reviewer before a favourable ethical opinion can be granted.

No data collection or recruitment of potential participants must be undertaken before a final version of this form has been approved.

A favourable ethical opinion means that, *as long as you conduct the study in the way that has been agreed*, then you have ethical approval. If you subsequently do something other than what has already been agreed, then you no longer have ethical approval and would face the appropriate penalty. If you need to apply for subsequent changes to your project after having been given initial ethical approval, please fill in an 'Amendment' at the end of this form and reapply via your supervisor.

If, following the completion of the review process, your supervisor and, where relevant, any independent reviewer is unwilling to grant you a favourable ethical opinion, you have a right of appeal to BAL Faculty Ethics Committee. If you wish to exercise this right, your supervisor should email the Faculty Ethics Administrator, stating your name, HEMIS no., the relevant unit and course, and briefly stating the grounds for requesting that BAL Faculty Ethics Committee review the decision. Your supervisor should attach your completed ethics form and any supplementary documentation and include any relevant correspondence about the case.

A final signed and dated version of this form must be included in the file of the dissertation you are required to submit electronically. The form MUST be signed and dated by 1) the student, 2) the supervisor and 3) the peer ethics reviewer (unless the University has specifically previously agreed that the supervisor alone can sign off). If the dissertation is submitted without a fully completed, signed and dated ethics form it will be

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deemed to be a fail. Second attempt assessment may be permitted by the Board of Examiners.

1.   What are the objectives of the dissertation / research project?

This project will research safeguarding risk in relation to the Volunteer Police Cadets [VPC]. The Volunteer Police Cadets [VPC] have seen rapid expansion over the last five years but appears to lack a clear identity, unsure whether it is a police unit or a uniform youth group. These two factors appear partly responsible for the lack of clear policy development and associated good practice guidance heightening safeguarding risk.

Whilst the police have developed safeguarding expertise around meeting their statutory responsibilities under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018, pp.56-57), there appears to be no equivalent 'specialism' within policing focussed on VPC safeguarding, coupled with either, an unwitting disregard for such need, or at best an assumption that operational police safeguarding procedures are transferable to provide sufficient coverage. Chief Constable Shaun Sawyer is the national portfolio holder for VPC and is supported by a small 'hub' team who have recently joined the National Youth Safeguarding Forum which comprises of the Heads of Safeguarding for numerous youth groups, including the Scouts and Girl Guides.

The current approach to improving youth organisations safeguarding is around creating safe spaces and situational prevention strategies. This approach highlights clear gaps for VPC safeguarding and raises an underlying concern that police forces could essentially be running a uniform youth group in the form of the VPC, whilst only being able to consider safeguarding through the specialist, but limited lens of operational policing and a culturally driven inability to look to other specialists within the wider youth sector to recognise the totality of risk and help mitigate it. The aim of this research is to learn to what extent VPC safeguarding is meeting the elements of the safe spaces framework and displaying the characteristics of a safe organisation. Secondly, the underlying extent to which police culture could be blocking true recognition of the need and the ability to do so.

2.   Does the research involve *NHS patients, resources or staff*?   **NO**

If YES, it is likely that full ethical review must be obtained from the NHS process before the research can start. Please discuss your proposal with your Supervisor and/or Course Leader and consult the Guidance Notes for this ethics form.

3.   Does the research involve MoD staff?   **NO**

If YES, then ethical review may need to be undertaken by MoD REC. Please discuss your proposal with your Supervisor and/or Course Leader and consult the Guidance Notes for this ethics form.

4.   Do you intend to collect *primary data* from human subjects or data that are identifiable with individuals? (This includes, for example, questionnaires and interviews.) **YES**

If you do not intend to collect such primary data then please go to question 11.

If you do intend to collect such primary data then please respond to ALL the questions from Q5 onwards. If you feel a question does not apply then please respond with 'n/a' (for 'not applicable').

5   How will the primary data contribute to the objectives of the dissertation / research project?

Primary data will be collected from VPC adult leaders through mixed method research (sequential). This population group deal directly with cadets on a regular basis and are identified as being best placed to provide accurate data of operational reality in the running of VPC units which can be reviewed against youth sector best practice. The views of VPC adult leaders on learning and adopting good practice from the youth sector will also provide data to understand any cultural barriers to achieving this at an 'operator' level.

6.   What is/are the *survey population(s)*?

The research will consist of a survey questionnaire followed by semi structured interviews. The intended questionnaire survey population is 200 VPC adult leaders. The intended population for semi structured interviews will 15 VPC adult leaders, identified from the survey population through purposive sampling.

7.   a) How big is the *sample* for each of the survey populations, and b) how was this sample arrived at? (Please answer *both* parts of this question.)

a/ It is anticipated that up to 200 adult leaders will receive the survey questionnaire and from those questionnaires completed and returned 15 VPC adult leaders will be selected for the semi-structured interview stage of the project.

b/ This sample size is large enough to be representative of all police forces within the categorisations of the Home Office Most Similar Force groups. It will generate sufficient data to be meaningful within the capacity of the researcher to conduct and process the interviews within the available time constraints. This number of 200 adult leaders is based on there being 42 police forces in England and Wales currently running VPC schemes with a total of around 600 individual VPC units, each with at least one adult leader. There is a likelihood that not all leaders will receive the survey questionnaire through their force co-ordinator and from those that do, not all of them will complete the survey. An average of 5 returns per force appears to be a reasonable expectation and will add up to around 200.

8.   How will respondents be a) *identified* and b) *recruited*? (Please answer *both* parts of this question.)

a/ Respondents will be VPC adult leaders identified through their own force VPC manager or co-ordinator.

b/ Respondents will be recruited through the VPC managers or co-ordinators each force has in place to manage their VPC schemes. Force VPC managers or co-ordinators will be sent the survey questionnaire and supporting information by the researcher and asked to forward it on to all their VPC adult leaders to consider and if willing to participate liaise with the researcher directly via the contact details provided.

9. What steps are proposed to ensure that the requirements of *informed consent* will be met for those taking part in the research? If an Information Sheet for participants is to be used, please attach it to this form. If not, please explain how you will be able to demonstrate that informed consent has been gained from participants.

An information sheet clearly explaining the issue of consent and a consent form covering both stages of the research project have been prepared for participants. Specific participant invites have also been prepared for each stage. Participants will receive the information sheet, consent form and participant invite specific to their participation role, along with either the survey questionnaire or interview questions as appropriate. The semi-structured interview questions will be provided to the participant at least 24 hours before the interview. Immediately before the commencement of the interview the researcher (myself) will read through the information sheet with the participant and verbally confirm they understand its meaning and have him/her sign the informed consent form at that stage. Permission will be sought from participants to record their interview. Copies of all forms are attached.

10. How will *data* be *collected* from each of the sample groups?

Data will be collected in two stages:

Stage 1 will collect data from an electronic survey questionnaire

Stage 2 will collect data through recorded interviews that will last up to one hour. It is intended to conduct interviews face to face wherever possible. Where time and cost become an issue due to long distance travel interviews will be conducted by phone. All interviews will be digitally recorded using a digital voice recorder such as a Sony ICD-PX370 or equivalent.

11. a) How will *data* be *stored* and b) what will happen to the data at the end of the research? (Please answer *both* parts of this question.)

During the data collection, data analysis and writing-up phases, electronic forms and completed questionnaires will be stored on my Devon and Cornwall Police issued laptop, with BIT locker security and used solely in my role as a member of the VPC Hub Team.

Physical data such as signed consent forms will be stored in a lockable cupboard at my home address to which only I have a key.

Post research the consent forms, recorded interviews and any other records will be stored in accordance with the University of Portsmouth's Research Data Management Policy which in relation to archived data is 10 years from the completion of the research and then subject to review.

12. What measures will be taken to prevent unauthorised persons gaining access to the data, and especially to data that may be attributed to identifiable individuals?

The researcher will be the only person to have full access to the records and resulting identifiable data during the research process. Electronic data is protected by bit lock and password protection and held on a VPC lap top issued by Devon and Cornwall Police.

Physical data such as signed consent forms will be stored in a lockable cupboard at my home address to which only I have a key.

13.   What steps are proposed to safeguard the *anonymity* of the respondents?

Data will be anonymised following return of completed survey questionnaires. Participants being interviewed will be assigned a pseudonym to be used during interviews. For both stages the researcher will create an encrypted list aligning real names and pseudonyms which will be held separately from the rest of the research data. No real names will be attached to any data – only the pseudonym will be appended. No individual will have his or her participation confirmed to anyone else.

14.   Are there any *risks* (physical or other, including reputational) *to respondents* that may result from taking part in this research?   **NO**

       If YES, please specify and state what measures are proposed to deal with these risks.

15.   Are there any *risks* (physical or other, including reputational) *to the researcher or to the University* that may result from conducting this research?   **NO**

       If YES, please specify and state what measures are proposed to manage these risks.

16.   Will any *data* be *obtained from a company or* other *organisation*? **YES**

 For example, information provided by an employer or its employees.

Survey respondents are VPC adult leaders who are either employees of the police force as police officers, community support officers or police staff. Some adult leaders are not employed by the police but undertake the role of VPC adult leader purely as a volunteer. Authority has been granted by Chief Constable Shaun Sawyer of Devon and Cornwall Police in his capacity as National Police Chief Council portfolio lead for VPC.

17.   What steps are proposed to ensure that the requirements of *informed consent* will be met for any organisation in which data will be gathered? How will *confidentiality* be assured for the organisation?

Participants for this research project will be identified by the respective force manager / co-ordinator through the process described at 8a above. Force and participant data will be anonymised following return of completed survey questionnaires. Participants being interviewed, and their forces will be assigned a pseudonym. For both stages I will create an encrypted list aligning real names and pseudonyms which will be held separately from the rest of the research data. No real names or force identifiers will be attached to any data – only the pseudonym will be appended.

18.   Does the organisation have its own ethics procedure relating to the research you intend to carry out?   **NO**

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If YES, the University will require written evidence from the organisation that they have approved the research.

19. Will the proposed research involve any of the following (please put a √ next to 'yes' or 'no'; consult your supervisor if you are unsure):

		YES	NO
• Potentially vulnerable groups (e.g. adults unable to consent, children)?	YES		✓
• Particularly sensitive topics?	YES		✓
• Access to respondents via 'gatekeepers'?	YES	✓	
• Use of deception?	YES		✓
• Access to confidential personal data (names, addresses, etc)?	YES		✓
• Psychological stress, anxiety, etc.?	YES		✓
• Intrusive interventions?	YES		✓

If answers to any of the above are "YES", please explain below how you intend to minimise the associated risks.

Force managers or co-ordinators will be used as a one-way conduit to identify and recruit participants, however participant responses will come to me directly and force managers or co-ordinators will be unaware of who is participating or the content of their responses.

20. Are there any other ethical issues that may arise from the proposed rese arch?

There are no other concerns apparent. To cover the possibility that illegal activities or professional misconduct is disclosed, the Consent Form for Participants and the Information Sheet for Participants will both contain the following statement:

'I understand that in the event of incriminating myself in an illegal activity or professional misconduct, the right to research anonymity will be waived and an appropriate authority informed: The Police in the first instance.'

	Print name	Signature	Date signed
Student	Graeme Ironside		05/12/18

I / we grant a favourable ethical opinion:

	Print name	Signature	Date signed
Supervisor	Peter Lee		05/12/18
Peer reviewer (unless University has agreed that supervisor can sign off)	Sara Hadleigh-Dunn		05/12/18

AMENDMENTS

If you need to make changes please ensure you have permission before recruiting any participants and any primary data collection. If there are major changes, fill in a new form if that will make it easier for everyone. If there are minor changes then fill in the amendments (next page) and get them signed before the primary data collection begins.