

Policing and Crime in Contemporary London

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A developmental agenda?

ABSTRACT

In support of the *Policing European Metropolises Project* and as a starting point for investigating such a complex and challenging subject as policing the global city of London, the article provides an exposition of the current agenda for policing and crime as advanced by the London Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), which assumed responsibility for police governance in January 2012. To justify this focus, the article draws upon distinctions made in urban regime theory about governing arrangements that seek to maintain, develop, reform or transform public policy agendas in the governance of cities. It uses these to question prospects for the MOPAC Policing and Crime Plan for 2013-16 and to provoke questions for further research into the lessons that can be drawn from this case for comparisons of policing in other European metropolises. In this regard, it is argued that the concept of the 'metropolis' implies an understanding of contemporary urban phenomena, such as crime and policing, as social products that have an integral relationship to a 'world urban system' of political, economic and cultural relations.

Keywords: urban governance, London, Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), metropolis, urban regime theory, world urban system



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1. Introduction

Contributors to this special issue of the European Journal of Policing Studies (EJPS) have been asked to consider the analytical value of the concept of the 'metropolis' for understanding contemporary policing in Europe's major cities. In applying this concept to policing in contemporary London this article discusses its relationship to broader arguments about changes to the 'world urban system' which, some argue,

are leading to a 'hollowing out' of nation state sovereignty as the power to govern is transferred upwards to supranational organisations, outwards to corporations and downwards to the 'city states' that are obligatory passage points for the circulation of political, economic and cultural influence within this system. In this regard London is the archetypal metropolis, given its insertion into this system as the principal node in global financial markets, its constitutional-legal status as capital of the UK, its dominant influence over national economic policy and its role in major cultural and sporting events including the Olympic Games held in 2012.

Partly as a consequence of this status, London is a focal point for major political protests, including demonstrations against the foreign and domestic policies of the UK national government, as well as social conflicts arising out of the growing disparities of income and housing in a city which has become a principal site of international finance and real estate speculation. Most notably, in August 2011, London witnessed civil unrest unprecedented for its scale and velocity even in the turbulent history of urban disorders in this city over the past 30 years. It has also experienced a weaponisation of violence against the person with municipal authorities expressing concern over trends in firearms-related and 'knife' crime. The city also has an iconic reputation for organised crime, from the racketeering of the renowned Kray and Richardson 'firms' of the 1960s through to the alleged 'transnational organised crime groups' of the present period. Whether this particular experience is novel or a synecdoche of the problems confronting policing in other European metropolises is a moot point for the kind of comparative urban research for which this special issue is a foundation. Before this comparative research can be undertaken, however, it is necessary to first explore the continued relevance of the metropolis for analyses of urban policing or, as we argue, for the broader problem of 'urban security regimes'.

Having outlined a 'city-state' concept of the metropolis, the article acknowledges arguments that are sceptical about any hollowing out of nation states and which note a resurgence in their sovereign power, particularly in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis and the major bail outs provided by states to a collapsing global banking system. Subsequently, it is also nation states that have been in the vanguard of imposing 'austere' public sector borrowing requirements especially on other states suffering acute sovereign debt crises and which have provoked often violent social protests, notably in the Southern European states of the Eurozone. In turn, this ailing project of economic integration has increased antipathy between the Southern European states subject to austerity and resentful Northern states critical of corruption and feckless government in the South. Allied to the racialised politics of immigration into and around the European Union, this antipathy has been registered in the growing electoral popularity of nationalist parties, in particular their success in the May 2014 election of Members to the European Parliament. It should also be noted that on the Eastern borders of the Union the 'hard power' of inter-national conflict is resurgent in the territorial disputes between Ukrainian nationalists, ethnic Russians and their supporters in Russian President Putin's administration. This conflict provides a particularly visceral example of how disputes over national sovereignty play out on the streets and squares of major cities, such

as Donetsk, Kiev and Sevastopol, in which the police themselves, as symbols of this sovereignty, have been targeted and suborned by both sides.

In this context, arguments over the diminishing significance of nation state power seems exaggerated. Rather, metropolises are located within multiple circuits of power as they coalesce and compete with other cities, with nation state and supranational centres of power and with transnational corporations. These circuits structure the conditions for urban governance in ways that are both enabling for certain policy agendas whilst constraining of others. It is argued here that urban regime theory provides a means of interpreting this complex circuitry and the interplay of the global and the local in the social production of urban policing.

2. Policing European Metropolises?

The concept of the 'metropolis', previously used to describe the 'core' of imperial regimes, specifically their capitals, and their relations with the 'peripheral' centres of power within an empire (King, 1990a), provides a useful, more concrete, idea for thinking about urban policing in the current era of globalisation. It reminds us that cities in European empires were central to the global projection of the political, economic and cultural power of the imperium and that they were, in turn, shaped by the colonial systems of which they were an integral part. As such, the formation of a 'world urban system' of interdependent cities is not particular to the current era of global capitalism, even if increased consciousness of it is, but a product of the imperial governing arrangements through which the core exercised authority over the periphery of an empire to secure trading routes and the extraction of human and natural resources (King, 1990a, 1). Policing was, of course, central to these arrangements in terms of the repression of indigenous peoples and anti-colonial struggles but also in terms of the inter-national export of European legal systems and personnel to the dominions.

Whereas the world urban system forged through colonial projects served the imperial ambitions of nation states, and were constitutive of these nation states, it is argued that European metropolises currently inhabit a transnational state system in which the diminishing significance of nation states as 'power containers' is rivalled by the increasing power of transnational corporations and their predominance in interdependent 'city states', particularly those regarded as 'global cities' (Sassen, 2001; Jessop, 2004; Massey, 2007). Again, policing plays a central role in this as local policing struggles to adapt to security threats whose origins are beyond the national, much less the municipal, sphere of influence (Bowling & Sheptycki, 2012). London can be understood as the paradigmatic example of the metropolis in both its colonial and city-state formations (King, 1990b; Erturk et al., 2011).

Yet, as noted in the introduction, it is important to emphasise the *diminishing* not defunct significance of a national frame of reference for understanding the policing of European metropolises. The European Union's ailing project of economic integration has provoked a resurgence of nationalist politics, both in the wealthy Northern States that have promoted 'austere' public expenditure as a response to

the financial crisis of 2008 and in the Southern States which have been the principal target of this austerity. Social protests against this austerity, often escalating into major instances of civil unrest and violent confrontation with police forces, have been focussed on the major cities and seats of national government in Europe. On the Eastern borders of the EU, the violence between Ukrainian nationals and ethnic Russians confronting police forces in the cities of Donetsk, Kiev and Sevastopol exemplifies the resurgence of conflicts over national sovereignty in which urban police forces have been targeted and enrolled by both sides. In addition, as the bombing of public transport systems in Madrid in 2004 and in London in 2005 demonstrated, European metropolises are targeted as a consequence of the foreign policies adopted by their parent nation states, in this instance the involvement of the British and Spanish states in conflicts in the Middle East, adding a further layer of complexity to the challenges of urban policing in these major cities.

Whilst there is, therefore, an incongruity between the idea of the 'post-national state' and these conflicts, it is clear that national frames of reference cannot adequately capture global pressures on policing nor the social production of new 'internal security fields' such as transnational markets and city-states (Bigo, 2000). In their recent text on *Global Policing*, Bowling and Sheptycki delineate the contours of an emerging 'transnational-state-system' which, they argue, 'is profoundly affecting the jurisdictional sovereignty and functional diversity of policing in a globalised world' (2012, 29). A central dynamic of this system is the deregulation of national border controls on licit markets and the greater mobility of people, goods and services, particularly within regional trading blocs such as the Single European Market and the North American Free Trade Association. Such de-regulation has also enabled a greater mobility of people, goods and services in illicit markets, an argument that has been central to official narratives about the growth of 'transnational organised crime' (Edwards & Gill, 2002). To control illicit flows of people, goods and services whilst enabling the circulation of licit capital, the emergent transnational-state-system produces innovations in policing technologies including networks for cross-border co-operation between police and judicial officials, intelligence sharing systems and mechanisms for fast-tracking the extradition of suspects (Bowling & Sheptycki, 2012, 29-52). Given its unique experiment in producing a supra-national political-economy, with its own borderless internal market, the European Union has been in the vanguard of innovations in transnational policing such as the Schengen Information System and the European Arrest Warrant (ibid., 42-6).

In this context, it is argued that although policing is 'local at all points', in that it is always experienced in particular places and moments (Edwards & Gill, 2002), this experience is constituted by social forces that are not contained within a particular locality, a particular city, but which often have their origins elsewhere. In, for example, the multi-annual programmes for policing and judicial co-operation that support the European Union's objective of creating an Area of Freedom, Security and Justice and which equip security actors with the powers to share intelligence and extradite suspects across national borders. Insofar as local security actors are integrated into these transnational circuits of power, it makes little sense to understand policing as self-contained within localities, particularly metropolises

that are integral to both licit and illicit circuits of global political, economic and cultural relations. Rather, the concept of the metropolis effectively expresses this integration of local governance into circuits of power that operate in a world urban system beyond the municipality as well as the nation state.

The concept of the metropolis is also useful for capturing the asymmetrical qualities of the emerging world urban system and its policing implications. Research on the 'global city' identifies London, along with New York and Tokyo, as a particularly powerful node in a world economy that has been transformed, since the 1960s, by the diminishing power of industrial centres in the Global North, particularly in North America, Western Europe and Japan, the accelerated industrialisation of developing countries in the Global South and the rapid internationalisation of the financial services sector (Sassen, 2001, 3). This restructuring, it is argued, has created a new strategic role for major cities such as London as, 'highly concentrated command points in the organisation of the world economy ... key locations for finance and for specialised service firms, which have replaced manufacturing as the leading economic sectors ... as sites of production of innovations in these leading industries ... and as markets for the products and innovations produced by these leading industries' (Sassen, 2001, 3-4). As a consequence, global cities project their political, economic and cultural power over other localities and regions as well as nation states. The world economy is substantially influenced by these cities and this, in turn, generates major political tensions between their *de facto* powers and the sovereignty of nation states that are beholden to global cities yet responsible for the fortunes of other localities in their national jurisdiction. In this regard nation states are confronted with the dilemma of challenging the global cities in their jurisdiction or else subordinating the interests of less powerful localities. As 'command points' in the world economy, cities such as London exert considerable influence over the fortunes of other cities in their own countries as well as elsewhere (Massey, 2007). A key implication of this is that social order in global cities and the related challenges for policing and security are inextricably related to their strategic role in the world economy and their particular integration into the evolving world urban system (King, 1990a; b). Specifically, global cities are characterised by increasing social polarisation as middle-income households are replaced by expansion at the high-end of super-remunerated employees in financial services and cognate services (accounting, management consultancy, business analytics etc.) and in the low-wage, precarious and casualised employment sectors supporting these services, 'The increase in the numbers of expensive restaurants, luxury housing, luxury hotels, gourmet shops, boutiques, French hand laundries, and special cleaners that ornament the new urban landscape illustrates this trend.' (Sassen, 2001, 9). With the contraction of middle-income households and the accentuation of economic polarisation between the haves and have-nots comes an erosion of social cohesion which, of course, has a direct bearing on policing in these 'command points' (ibid.).

From the perspective of much modern criminological thought, this degree of social polarisation is particularly conducive to civil unrest, a growth in illicit markets to compensate for limited access to stable and well-remunerated employment in the official economy, and to increased criminal predation, particularly amongst the

young (Hamnett, 2003, 207-9). However, and notwithstanding the episodic outburst of major incidents of civil unrest, such as the riots across London and other large English cities in August 2011, the official construction of 'crime and disorder' in these cities suggests a continuing downward trend that is replicated across Western Europe and in North America (Westfelt & Estrada, 2005). Whether this reflects real world conditions of a genuine 'crime drop' or an artefact of official constructs and related reporting and recording practices is an ongoing and fiercely contested debate within social science (Young, 2011). It also reflects the broader point that governance in global cities entails 'regimes' that need to be constituted and reproduced and that social science can play a key part in the governmentality of city authorities (Sassen, 2001, 329-344; Stenson, 1998). Such reproduction can include 'civic boosterism' by authorities keen to represent their cities as stable, ordered and cohesive places that are attractive to inward investment even while the conditions of social polarisation generated by global cities undermines social integration.

To this end policing occupies a particularly significant position in the constitution and reproduction of urban regimes particularly in those metropolises that generate severe social inequalities and allied conflicts and are sites of major national and international protest as a consequence of their strategic role. It is as a consequence of this role, whether in the international trading networks that constituted various European empires or the transnational state system of the present, that commentators identify how major cities with different histories and cultures have undergone parallel economic and social changes (Sassen, 2001, 4; also King, 1990b, 12-32). An implication of this work is that parallel changes generate common patterns of crime and civil unrest and a convergence in the policing response. Conversely, other commentators concerned with the detailed governance of cities in Europe and North America have emphasised the governing arrangements that equip cities with the capacity to resist and adapt to social and economic change in *diverse* ways (Stoker & Mossberger, 1994; Mossberger & Stoker, 2001; Mouleart et al., 2007).

Whereas much of the literature on global cities has emphasised the social and economic determination of their role as 'command points', studies of urban governance have emphasised the political mediation of these forces and opportunities for governing otherwise. Advocates of 'urban regime theory' note the analytical importance of governing arrangements for explaining how particular cities can pursue alternative trajectories. The classic statement of this is Stone's (1989) account of how Atlanta bucked the trend of white flight and the loss of economic investment in cities found elsewhere in the southern states of the United States of America following the gains of the civil rights movement in the 1960s and the consequent electoral power that voters in the African American population were able to exercise. Stone argues this was accomplished through the actors, resources and schemes of co-operation that coalesced around a progressive (redistributive) economic policy agenda in that city. Of course there are limits to the redistributive policy agendas pursued by governing coalitions that seek to enrol rather than challenge corporate power through such co-operative schemes. Although the Atlanta study was ultimately pessimistic about the possibilities for accomplishing the more transformative, 'large purpose', policy goals of social justice agendas, the broader

analytical significance of urban regime theory is its emphasis on constituting and reproducing governing coalitions through the political agency to negotiate the enrolment of actors representing different electoral constituencies as well as those with the economic 'power to' actually deliver governing programmes (see also Mollenkopf, 2010). In this regard, the failure to consolidate any stable regime in conditions where there is no overall control of urban governance is as plausible an outcome as the successful subordination of social justice agendas to the interests of corporate power. Again, policing is a central concern within this broader problematic given the challenges of responding to problems of crime and insecurity in conditions of governing drift. Specifically, urban regime theory provides a suite of middle-range concepts that can inform the investigation of any parallel experiences in the policing of European metropolises and, subsequently, help to build explanations of any significant divergences observed through the Policing European Metropolises Project. In the remainder of the paper, the core concepts of urban regime theory are outlined and then illustrated through reference to the challenges of policing in contemporary London.

3. Policing and Urban Regime Theory

Urban regime theory supports an analytical focus on the governing arrangements that coalesce, reproduce or collapse in particular localities (Stone, 2005). It argues that the struggle over the 'power to' govern entails the formation of coalitions of state organisations with electoral mandates to rule and other corporate and non-governmental organisations that can provide the financial, informational and organisational resources to actually deliver on these mandates. As such, regime theory recognises that governing coalitions inhabit economic as well as political environments that can enable as well as constrain their power to govern. A key contribution of regime theory is to recognise this structural dimension whilst acknowledging the agency of governing coalitions, the acumen, guile and leadership of coalitions which can, in turn, inform a comparative understanding of the uneven adaptation of urban governance to global pressures in the political and economic environment (Mouleart et al., 2007). Governing coalitions are thus forged around policy agendas and through various 'schemes of co-operation' or bargains between the parties interested in a particular policy agenda. An example of a political-economic bargain taken from urban regime analysis in the United States is the offer of tax concessions to 'leverage' corporate investment into a city and to use tax revenues from this investment to fund redistributive social policies (Stone, 2005). If these bargains are sustained, at least over a term of office, they can stabilise into a governing regime, otherwise coalitions may collapse and either be replaced by competing regimes or by a drift into prolonged periods of regime failure. In the extreme, the failure to form and stabilise a regime can result in a governing vacuum in which the delivery of core public services, such as schooling, healthcare and public safety, is degraded for all but those who can access alternative, commercial or voluntary, provision.

Within this analytical focus on the inter-dependencies of state, market and civil society, regime theorists have distinguished four basic types of regime (Stone, 2005). ‘Maintenance regimes’ seek to maintain the status quo of an established policy agenda. Where maintenance regimes encounter crises of rationality and legitimacy¹, however, opportunities for regime change emerge. ‘Developmental regimes’ work with established governing coalitions and their core policy agendas but seek to augment these. Alternatively, ‘progressive regimes’ seek to reform policy agendas and advance alternative core objectives. Finally, it is possible to identify ‘transformative regimes’, which seek to alter the context of major public policy problems as well as advancing alternative core objectives, for example, social justice programmes aimed at reducing the gross social inequalities of wealth and opportunity amongst urban populations which have been identified by some as generators of other social problems such as ill-health, low educational attainment and violence (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009; Dorling & Thomas, 2011).

An initial attempt to apply these analytical distinctions to policing and public safety conceptualises maintenance regimes as those which privilege criminal justice policy agendas (Edwards & Hughes, 2012). What is being maintained is the idea of crime as a problem for specialist modern bureaucracies, ‘the police’, enforcing criminal law and maintaining order in concert with the criminal courts and penal institutions. Whilst they remain predominant, certainly in Europe, the ‘punitive display’ of these regimes has encountered periodic crises of rationality and legitimacy over the past four decades, particularly in those societies where increased investment in state policing and imprisonment resulted in negligible reductions in volume crime and/or in public perceptions of a reduction in such crime (Garland, 2001). The perception has been that ‘nothing works’ (Martinson, 1974) or, more recently, that criminal justice agendas actually generate further crime and civil unrest (Wacquant, 2009). Developmental regimes can be conceptualised as those which seek to maintain this core policy agenda but complement it through innovations in the anticipation and management of groups ‘at risk’ of offending and victimisation. They are characterised by policy agendas that promote reductions in the situational opportunities for commissioning criminal offences, early interventions with individuals and families whose behaviour and lifestyles are believed to be ‘criminogenic’ and prudential inducements to private citizens to take

¹ One means of building explanations for the conditions under which regime change may occur is through reference to the rationality and legitimacy crises encountered by governing authorities in capitalist liberal democracies (Habermas, 1975; Offe, 1984). Here rationality crisis refers to the ‘persistent difficulties’ encountered by these authorities in reconciling increasing demands on public services forced to shoulder the increasing costs of production and welfare with the conditions for further capital accumulation. In the absence of new circuits of accumulation that can maintain social investment, public confidence in the governing capacity of authorities is undermined generating further demands for provision that, if unmet, can escalate into a broader crisis of the legitimacy for these authorities. The contribution of regime theory is to build explanations of how these unevenly experienced crises can be managed, if not reversed, by the political leadership of governing coalitions. As discussed below, the MOPAC 20:20:20 agenda epitomises the attempt to manage ‘public confidence’ in policing in London in conditions of fiscal crisis.

greater responsibility for their own personal security and possessions (O'Malley, 1992; Clarke, 2004).

Another, globally influential, response to the perceived crises of criminal justice has been the 'restorative justice' movement seeking to rehabilitate and reintegrate offenders through non-state conflict resolution, diverting offenders from custody and directly negotiating reparations between victims and offenders (Johnstone, 2011). Policy agendas prioritising restorative justice can be conceptualised as progressing beyond, not simply developing, criminal justice agendas (Braithwaite, 1989). It is possible to detect a further, distinctive, policy agenda that has emerged over the past three decades, particularly in Western European countries, that seeks to replace criminal justice with social justice policy goals. Concepts of 'urban security', 'integral security' and, in the Anglophone world, 'community safety' have been used by transformative regimes to locate crime and civil unrest as problems of social and economic policy (European Journal of Criminology, 2013). They have been used to relate crime and civil unrest to the extension of citizens' entitlements to improved education, training, employment, housing, health, leisure and family support, by improving adult health and safety at work, by targeting corporate and environmental crimes as well as street crimes and by facilitating citizen engagement with government (Croall, 2009; Edwards & Hughes, 2012, 448; Edwards et al., 2013).

The concepts of regime theory are better understood as abstractions aimed at diagnosing the principal orientation of policy responses to crime and civil unrest in cities. In practice, actual urban security regimes are likely to be characterised by admixtures of criminal, restorative and social justice agendas as well as experiments in risk management reflecting the ongoing political competition, premised on the instrumental furtherance of bureaucratic interests as well as ideological motivation, to advance policy agendas and stabilise governing coalitions (Edwards & Hughes, 2005). To reiterate, an outcome of this competition can be the failure to secure a coalition and a coherent policy agenda particularly in turbulent political and economic environments such as the global financial crisis that broke in 2008 and the subsequent prolonged downturn in economic activity characterised by some as the 'Great Recession' (Wessell, 2010). For the purposes of this article, the Great Recession provides the broader temporal frame of reference for understanding the contemporary policing of European metropolises. How are urban political authorities responding to an economic environment constraining public expenditure and their financial 'power to' govern, particularly in wealthier cities of North Western Europe that are attracting significant inward migration of people and other pressures on their critical infrastructure?

4. Policing London: a developmental agenda?

Using the concepts of urban regime theory it can be argued that policing in London can be characterised as part of a developmental regime that the incumbent Mayor, Boris Johnson, has sought to establish since his election to this office in 2008 and more specifically since January 2012 when he assumed responsibility for setting

the strategic direction of policing in the UK capital. This new role for the elected Mayor of London represents a major shift in the structure of policing governance both in the capital and across England and Wales with the establishment of elected Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) for each police service area. The PCCs were introduced as a consequence of the first major piece of legislation on policing passed by the Conservative-Liberal Democratic 'Coalition Government' formed after the UK national election of May 2010. The *Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011* provides for the election of PCCs for four year fixed terms of office and empowers Commissioners with the responsibility for formulating a Police and Crime Plan for their term of office. This plan sets out the strategic priorities that Commissioners have for policing and their use of these to hold chief police officers accountable for their performance. In turn, PCCs are accountable to the electorate in each police service area and are obliged to consult the public about the strategic priorities for policing in their area. In London the role of the PCC is fulfilled by the Mayor. Shortly after assuming this responsibility in January 2012 and establishing the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), Mayor Johnson, established the role of Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime (DMPC) and delegated his responsibilities to his first Deputy, Stephen Greenhalgh, who assumed office in June 2012. This constitutional change shifted political responsibility for policing in London to MOPAC from the Home Secretary of the nationally elected UK government, who previously was responsible for appointing the chief officer, the Commissioner, of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), the main policing body for Greater London. A smaller, separate police force, the City of London Police, serves the financial services district of the capital as well as assuming national responsibility for policing frauds². The MOPAC Police and Crime Plan provides a useful analytical starting point for a regime analysis of contemporary policing in Greater London.

Making London a safer city was a central theme of Mayor Johnson's re-election campaign for his second term of office (2012 – 2016) and in the first annual report of MOPAC he announced that the mission for policing London is to create 'a metropolis considered the greatest and safest big city on earth' (MOPAC, 2013b, 12). To this end, Mayor Johnson introduced the '20:20:20 Challenge' as his 'bold strategic objective' to be realized in three years and by the end of his second term of office in 2016:

² As a separate organisation primarily concerned with policing the financial services district of London including the vulnerability of these services to international threats such as cybercrime, the City of London Police has its own distinctive governing arrangements that operate outside of the powers provided by the *Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011*. The City of London Police has no elected PCC and its chief police officers are accountable to the 'Court of Common Council' of the City of London which is comprised of elected representatives from the City's 25 electoral wards, see: <http://www.cityoflondon.police.uk/about-us/your-right-to-information/Pages/Police-Authority.aspx>, accessed 6th June 2014. The City of London Police has its own Police and Crime Plan for 2014 – 2017. Whilst the predominant focus of this article is on the MOPAC Plan for policing Greater London, issues of policing and crime in the City of London, including issues of currency exchange fraud, have a wider impact on the political-economy of London as a whole.

The policing challenge is to cut seven key, high-volume neighbourhood crimes by 20%, boost public confidence in the police by 20%, and cut costs at the MPS by 20% and save £500 million; and the criminal justice goals to seek swifter justice for victims by reducing delays in the criminal justice system by 20%, achieve surer justice by increasing compliance with community sentences by 20%, and to reduce reoffending by young people leaving custody in London by 20%. (MOPAC, 2013a, 9).

As an agenda-setting statement, the 20:20:20 Challenge encapsulates the strategic dilemma of achieving ambitious targets in the present context of 'austere' reductions in public expenditure. Along with the establishment of PCCs, the decision by the national Coalition Government to pursue an aggressive programme of public expenditure cuts, in particular reductions in the core funding that national government provides local government in the UK, has resulted in the other major structural change in the political and economic environment of policing in London. In keeping with the grand narrative of the Coalition Government, the 20:20:20 agenda argues that substantial reductions in public expenditure can act as a catalyst for more effective governance rather than the more intuitive conclusion that they will result in a serious degradation of governing capacity (Edwards & Hughes, 2012). The presumption here is that previous expenditure was inflated by investment in self-serving 'big government' and that there is plenty of slack in the budgets of public services, including policing, which can be cut into without any deleterious effect on the quality of service provision. On the contrary, austerity compels 'smarter' public services that can deliver more for less. It is in these terms that the 20:20:20 agenda can be characterized as developmental as, for reasons elaborated below, this agenda continues to frame problems of policing and crime in terms of criminal justice whilst augmenting this agenda with allegedly smarter forms of governance and risk management.

Central to this claim is the official construction of crime trends in London and elsewhere in England and Wales, which have registered year-on-year falls during the post-2008 'Great Recession' and despite the substantial post-2010 cutbacks in public expenditure. In welcoming the national figures on reductions in officially recorded crime in July 2013, the head of the UK Coalition Government, Prime Minister Cameron, identified the adoption of 'smarter policing', which makes greater use of information technologies to better monitor and target the geographical and temporal distribution of crime, as a key factor behind this apparent success story³. The much vaunted 'crime drop' is, of course, a broader phenomenon of criminology across Western liberal democracies since the mid-1990s when, according to official registers of crime, the upward trend witnessed for both personal and property crimes from the mid-1950's leveled off (Westfelt & Estrada, 2005) prior to a sustained downward trend (Young, 2011). Given the centrality of this official

³ Gill, M. (2013). 'David Cameron is wrong: falling crime rates are not because of the 'magnificent' police', New Statesman, published first on-line, 9th July 2013 at: <http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2013/07/no-david-cameron-falling-crime-rates-are-not-because-magnificent-police>.

construction to arguments about the benefits of ‘austerity’ for good governance, it is worth exploring the 20:20:20 agenda in greater detail.

The MOPAC Police and Crime Plan was initially formulated through a series of ‘Challenge meetings’ in the Autumn of 2012 during which time the DMPC and other MOPAC officers received expert testimonies on the problems of policing and crime in the capital⁴. The draft Plan was then circulated for public consultation during the first quarter of 2013, involving town hall meetings in each of the 32 boroughs or municipal authorities that constitute local government in Greater London, generating, in turn, a number of often detailed responses, particularly from civil servants and elected councillors in these boroughs⁵. This consultation also involved a survey of 4,222 Londoners conducted in March 2013⁶. An executive summary of headline themes from the public consultation and the response from MOPAC was published in March 2013 along with the final draft Police and Crime Plan for 2013 – 16⁷. This digital archive provides a useful empirical resource for investigating the 20:20:20 agenda and monitoring public debates about its progress throughout Mayor Johnson’s second term of office⁸. At the time of writing, less than a third of the period of the MOPAC Police and Crime Plan had been completed and the renowned limitations of studying the exercise of political power through a focus on decision-making arenas alone needs to be acknowledged⁹. Even so, what is said in the ‘MOPAC arena’ and its associated archive provides a starting-point for a regime analysis and a means of generating better questions for the kind of comparative research aimed at by the Policing European Metropolises Project. Taking each aspect of the 20:20:20 challenge in turn, this archive provides an

⁴ Verbatim minutes of these meetings are published on the MOPAC website at: <http://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/policing-crime/how-we-work/mopac-challenge>, accessed on 30th May 2014.

⁵ Published on the MOPAC website at: <http://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/policing-crime/consultations/police-and-crime-plan-2013-2016>, accessed on 30th May 2014.

⁶ Published on the MOPAC website at: http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/police-crime-plan-poll-summary%281%29_0.pdf, accessed on 30th May 2014.

⁷ MOPAC responses to the public consultation published at: <http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Summary%20of%20Consultation%20Responses.pdf>, Police and Crime Plan published at: <http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/PoliceCrimePlan%202013-16.pdf>

⁸ In addition to verbatim transcripts of the MOPAC Challenge meetings, these meetings are broadcast live over the internet and copies of these ‘webcasts’ are archived for public view at: <http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor-assembly/mayor/webcasts>

⁹ Notably Bachrach and Baratz (1963) argument that studying decision-making arenas can obscure the importance of ‘non-decisions’ or how political actors can mobilise certain issues and interests off the agenda under observation. In turn Luke’s (1974) ‘third face’ of power notes the importance of how actors can self-censor the assertion of causes, problems and interests whose advocacy is unthinkable in particular political contexts. An example of this in the context of policing and the forty year ‘war on drugs’ in the UK is the self-censoring of politicians interested in the decriminalisation of class A narcotics, such as heroin and cocaine, as part of a harm reduction approach to substance misuse. Of course the investigation of differences between what is decided, not decided and what is actually done in practice requires a more ethnographic immersion in particular political contexts to research governance ‘in action’. Having acknowledged these limitations, however, we think the documentary analysis of this digital archive provides a justifiable starting point for a regime analysis of policing in London and an important means of generating better questions for researching the political-economy of urban policing in the city.

insight into the justification of the proposed reductions in crime and expenditure and measures to improve public confidence.

4.1. Crime reduction

The MOPAC Police and Crime Plan prioritises a 20 percent reduction in seven high volume neighbourhood crime types, the 'MOPAC 7' (MOPAC, 2013b, 6):

- Violence with Injury
- Robbery
- Burglary
- Theft of a Motor Vehicle
- Theft From a Motor Vehicle
- Theft From the Person, and;
- Vandalism

At the MOPAC Challenge meeting of 2nd October 2012 at which these priorities were first publicly stated, their selection was justified by the MOPAC Head of Pan-London Policing and Crime Strategy, Siobhan Coldwell:

The crime types that we have selected have been selected because they are fully understood, they are high-volume, have a sizeable impact and are all victim-based offences. (MOPAC, 2012, 2)

In the *Summary of headline themes from the Police and Crime Plan consultation 2013* provided by MOPAC, it was noted that:

Respondents felt that it was important that MOPAC and the MPS work closely with boroughs to ensure that targets are appropriate at a local level, and with partners particularly around wider criminal justice system related targets. Although respondents acknowledged the importance of tackling youth reoffending as set out in the plan, they felt that there should also be a focus on work with adults and young adults (i.e. up to the age of 25 years) to prevent further offending.

Some specific issues were raised that respondents felt should be developed in the plan including violence against women and girls, domestic and sexual violence, hate crime, victim and witness care and satisfaction, anti-social behaviour (particularly involving vulnerable victims), drug dealing, street prostitution, gangs, gun and knife crime, cybercrime and theft of bicycles.

Respondents felt that it was also important to consider more qualitative indications of performance rather than simply 'hard' target measures, and to ensure the quality of data against which targets are measured. Respondents called for some more information including the evidence base for targets and how work towards them will be carried out at a time of decreasing budgets, clarity around police officer numbers included in the plan and the data against which targets will be baselined. Respondents felt that the plan should be reviewed regularly in consultation with the public, and that MOPAC

and the MPS should keep Londoners up to date with progress towards targets in the plan (MOPAC, 2013c, 2).

In their response to these concerns, MOPAC argued:

The targets in the plan have not changed. The Mayor understands the challenges presented by setting targets including the risk that targets create perverse incentives, and that not setting targets in specific priority areas, gives the impression that an area is no longer a priority.

In relation to the crime targets:

- *By setting a target for the 7 priority crime types identified in the plan, the Mayor is signalling his ambition to deliver continued crime reduction in London. He has specifically excluded certain crime types because there is significant under-reporting, or because they are indicators of police activity.*
- *The Mayor has decided against setting interim targets – he has established the outcome he is seeking, but believes the Commissioner is best placed to decide how the target should be achieved. For this reason he also has no intention of setting borough level targets.*
- *There is a clear link between the plan and the priorities identified by Londoners. MOPAC and the MPS regularly consult with Londoners on their crime priorities. MOPAC will regularly publish information that demonstrates progress against key aspects of the plan and will produce an annual report in April/May each year.*
- *On behalf of the Mayor, MOPAC will be working with the MPS to establish a broad performance framework that ensures the Mayor is able to hold the Commissioner to account for delivery across all crime types. Consideration will also be given to user satisfaction, complaints and use of resources in order to gain a rounded view of delivery (MOPAC, 2013c, 2-3).*

In addition to this core agenda of reducing high volume neighbourhood crime, the final draft of the MOPAC Police and Crime Plan identified 'quality of life' issues, in particular 'anti-social behaviour' (ASB), as a priority for the London Crime Reduction Board (LCRB) established by the Mayor to support an evidence-based approach to 'what works' (MOPAC, 2013b, 34). It also prioritises other 'key offences which have a huge impact on victims' but which 'currently attract low reporting rates', particularly 'domestic violence, rape, other serious sexual offences and hate crime' (MOPAC, 2013b, 34). As the intention of the Plan is to increase reporting rates whilst also reducing the incidence of these crime types it is argued it is inappropriate to set definite reduction targets (ibid.). Finally, the Plan identifies five other strategic priorities for problems that are high impact if not high volume:

- Tackling gangs and serious youth violence;
- Counter-terrorism;
- Confronting serious and organised crime;
- Taking business crime seriously; and
- Maintaining public order (MOPAC, 2013b, 34-8).

This significant broadening of the urban policing agenda beyond high volume neighbourhood crime reflects the particular challenges confronting London as a global city integrated into a world urban system within which it projects its substantial political, economic and cultural power but, in part as a consequence of this, imports problems of crime and (in)security. For example, commentary on the transition of London's economy from an industrial city to *the* 'command centre' for global financial services has catalogued the consequences of this for social polarisation in its labour and housing markets, the implications of this for social exclusion, particularly amongst the young, and the relationship of this to patterns of crime and civil unrest (Sassen, 2001, 251-323; Hamnett, 2003, 207-9; Massey, 2007, 71-2).

The relationship between social class composition, (im)mobility in labour and housing markets and patterns of street crime and disorder is a long-standing theme of research into 'policing the working-class city' (Cohen, 1979), which documents the major resistance the Metropolitan Police experienced in the initial decades of its existence from male and female, young and older, residents of working class neighbourhoods. Local newspapers regularly reported pitched battles and violent stand-offs between these residents and Metropolitan Police patrols, invariably in response to police attempts to regulate street-life in these neighbourhoods, particularly alcohol consumption, gambling and prize-fighting. Cohen documents how the disciplinary function of the Metropolitan Police altered after the First World War as the working class itself became fractured into 'respectable', upwardly mobile, residents more inclined to consent to, if not demand, more policing and a 'disrespectful', resistant, residuum of young unemployed or casually employed males. After this time, reports of violent clashes in working class neighbourhoods emphasised the conflict between police patrols and young males, often 'costermonsters' or 'barrow boys' involved in unlicensed street trading. Subsequent research documents the re-composition of this struggle to occupy and regulate street life, in particular its 'racialisation' following various waves of immigration from former territories of the British Empire and the establishment of neighbourhood 'front lines' on which the young, predominantly male, members of migrant communities confronted the Metropolitan Police (Hall et al., 1978; Keith, 1993). From this longer historical perspective, the MOPAC priority of 'tackling gangs and serious youth violence' is but the latest instance of this struggle although there is a vigorous debate over the distinctiveness of contemporary violent street crime in London. Official accounts, in particular the London Crime Reduction Board's 'Anti-Gangs Strategy', argue the distinctive quality of contemporary street violence arises out of its relationship to the burgeoning and lucrative drugs trade, its organised and premeditated qualities, including turf or 'postcode' wars amongst youth gangs, and the lethal weaponisation of conflict amongst gangs and with the MPS (London Crime Reduction Board, 2012). Critics argue that the framing of this problem in terms of 'guns, gangs and knife' ('GGK') crime entails the naïve import of North American policing concepts which may or may not provide an adequate representation of urban policing problems in American cities but certainly misrepresents the more complex organisation and spontaneity of street violence in London and other British cities (Hallsworth & Young, 2008; Hallsworth & Silverman, 2009).

Of particular importance in this critical literature is the argument that ‘gang talk’ foregrounds enforcement strategies whilst abstracting street violence from its social and economic contexts of poverty, diminishing welfare provision and exclusion from legitimate labour markets, thereby obviating social policy responses to urban violence. This argument is relevant to the characterisation of contemporary policing in London as a developmental, rather than progressive or transformative, regime that augments a core policy agenda of criminal justice responses with stratagems for the targeting and management of ‘at risk’ groups, as epitomised by the work of the MPS ‘Trident Gang Command Units’¹⁰.

Significantly ‘gang talk’ represents an important epistemological break with previous official constructions of street violence in London, most notably Lord Scarman’s inquiry into the Brixton disorders of April 1981 and subsequent riots in other English cities that year (Scarman, 1981). In this report, Lord Scarman dedicated an entire chapter to the relevance of ‘Social Policy’ responses to address the social and economic foundations of urban violence (Scarman, 1981, 100-112). Thirty years on and in marked contrast, the major outbreak of rioting in London in August 2011, which unlike previous episodes was not contained within a particular neighbourhood but spread rapidly across the capital, warranted only an inquiry into the ‘rules of engagement’, or the capacity of the police to respond to the scale and scope of the violence (HMIC, 2011). Again, this relatively narrow framing of the problem as one for police and other ‘blue-light’ emergency services rather than of urban governance *per se* is a signature of a developmental regime. Rather, it was left to the independent inquiry launched by the Guardian newspaper and by researchers at the London School of Economics and Political Science to re-frame the August 2011 events as problems of social inequality and conflict. The report of this inquiry, *Reading the Riots* (Guardian/LSE, 2011) entails testimonies from participants in the riots and from other key informants in the affected boroughs which suggest the events of August 2011 were an escalation of the mundane, everyday, animosities between MPS patrol officers and ‘suspect’ street populations. The immediate trigger for the disorders was the failure of the MPS to communicate with the family of Mark Duggan a young male suspected of carrying a firearm and of being involved in the North London street drugs trade whom the MPS had apprehended and fatally shot in a stop and search operation. In the tradition of the Scarman Report, the *Reading the Riots* research explains the rapid escalation of the Duggan incident into city-wide riots in terms of the ignition of a tinder of mundane street conflicts that persist in a context of social and economic policy failures that leave the police as the first, antagonistic, and last means of state intervention in civil unrest. Subsequent public debate over the controversial uses of stop and search powers by the MPS, in part informed by the Duggan case, led to an announcement by Coalition Government Home Secretary, Theresa May, that these powers are to be overhauled, in particular the Police and Criminal Evidence

¹⁰ ‘Met launches major crackdown on gang crime’, Greater London Authority, 8th February 2012, at: <https://www.london.gov.uk/media/mayor-press-releases/2012/02/met-launches-major-crackdown-on-gang-crime>, accessed 6th June 2014.

Act Code of Practice A on what constitutes ‘grounds for reasonable suspicion’¹¹. Whether this will make much of a difference to mundane street conflicts remains to be seen but for the purposes of our argument, the reduction of these conflicts to the interactional dynamics of police-public encounters is more evidence of the developmental rather than progressive or transformative character of the MOPAC regime. This characterisation is further evidenced by the understanding of the other three ‘high impact but low incidence’ priorities in the MOPAC Plan.

These priorities emphasise the import of major threats to urban security in London as a consequence of the City’s particular integration into global circuits of political, economic and cultural power. Although the bombing of the transport system on 7th July 2005 was undertaken by British citizens¹², they had undertaken this action as a protest against UK foreign policy interventions particularly in the Middle East¹³. In response to this action and the subsequent failed bombing attempt on 21st July 2005, the incumbent Prime Minister Tony Blair announced that the ‘rules of the game’ for counter-terrorist policing had changed¹⁴. The subsequent Terrorism Act 2006 extended the period in which suspects of terrorism could be held without charge from 14 to 28 days but more specifically the events of July 2005 provoked an increase in the use of police powers to stop and search suspects with major implications for police-public relations in London. Section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000, which enables Chief Constables to designate geographical areas in which police officers may routinely stop and search vehicles, passengers, pedestrians and any articles carried by these which could be used in connection with terrorism *without any specific grounds for suspicion*, was used to designate the whole of Greater London as an area in which these powers could be used. Critics of this very permissive power, in particular the UK civil liberties organisation ‘Liberty’, argued it has been a key factor in the disproportionate stop and search of black and Asian people which, during the ten years before these powers were repealed and replaced by an amendment to section 47a of the Terrorism Act 2000, failed to produce a single successful apprehension whilst exacerbating tensions between the MPS and black and minority ethnic communities in the city¹⁵. Section

¹¹ Home Office press release, 30th April 2014, at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/stop-and-search-theresa-may-announces-reform-of-police-stop-and-search>, accessed 6th June 2014.

¹² Three of the suicide bombers, Mohammad Sidique Khan, Shehzad Tanweer and Hasib Hussain were residents from the northern English city of Leeds and their fourth accomplice, Germaine Lindsay was from Aylesbury in the southern English county of Buckinghamshire.

¹³ In a video statement taped ahead of the suicide bombing, Mohammad Sidique Khan stated, ‘Your democratically-elected governments continuously perpetuate atrocities against my people all over the world. And your support of them makes you directly responsible, just as I am directly responsible for protecting and avenging my Muslim brothers and sisters. Until we feel security you will be our targets and until you stop the bombing, gassing, imprisonment and torture of my people we will not stop this fight. We are at war and I am a soldier. Now you too will taste the reality of this situation.’

¹⁴ ‘London bombings: the day the anti-terrorism rules changed’, Guardian newspaper, 7th July 2010, at: <http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2010/jul/07/london-bombings-anti-terrorism>, accessed 6th June 2014.

¹⁵ Section 44 Terrorism Act, Liberty briefing note, at: <http://www.liberty-human-rights.org.uk/human-rights/justice-and-fair-trials/stop-and-search/section-44-terrorism-act>, accessed 6th June 2014.

47a now requires stop and search powers to be premised on reasonable suspicion but, as discussed above, such is the controversial use of the 'sus' laws that a major review of what constitutes reasonable suspicion was announced by Home Secretary May in April 2014. Even so, these revised powers will be used within the broader national 'CONTEST' (Counter Terrorism Strategy) published by the UK Coalition Government in July 2011 and led by the MPS¹⁶. CONTEST has four basic objectives, derived from the broader European Union counter-terrorism framework, to:

- *Pursue* suspects to stop terrorist attacks;
- *Prevent* people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism;
- *Protect* the public by strengthening their resilience against terrorist attacks; and
- *Prepare* to mitigate the impact of any terrorist attacks that do occur.

The MOPAC Plan adheres to these objectives which, in our terms, can be characterised as developmental rather than progressive or transformative because they foreground intelligence and enforcement operations augmenting these with investment in crisis management and the targeting of groups 'at risk' of 'radicalisation'. As such, CONTEST frames the problem of terrorism in terms of deviant individuals and outsider groups in need of 'de-radicalisation' and other initiatives to correct this deviance. What is obviated by this frame is any sense of public policy, in this instance the strategic foreign and economic policy interests of the UK Government, as itself an active ingredient in the provocation of political violence.

The MOPAC Plan also depicts the problem of confronting serious and organised crime as one of outsider groups whose activities, particularly in London's vice and narcotics markets, need to be 'disrupted' and whose proceeds need to be sequestered (MOPAC, 2013b: 34). The Plan acknowledges the transnational dimension of these problems and the consequent need for authorities in London to liaise with national policing agencies such as the National Crime Agency and the UK Border Agency. Again, this logic, of disrupting markets, seizing criminal proceeds and reducing organised criminal networks, can be characterised as developmental rather than progressive or transformative. The 'outsider threat' narrative in public policy responses to this problem has attracted substantial criticism for its neglect of the social and economic conditions that enable and constrain the organisation of serious crimes, even whilst these responses have developed beyond enforcement to include more nuanced interventions in the routines and networks of criminal organisations (Edwards & Gill, 2003; Edwards & Levi, 2008; van Duyne & Vander Beken, 2008).

The other strategic objective of the MOPAC Plan, 'taking business crime seriously', represents one of the clearest expressions of London's integration into a world urban system of policing and crime. The London Stock Exchange is the pre-eminent node in global financial markets which both exports as well as imports

¹⁶ HM Government (2011) CONTEST: The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism', at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97994/contest-summary.pdf, accessed 6th June 2014.

major problems of business crime. An exemplar of this is the 'Libor-fixing scandal' in which employees of Barclays Bank colluded with employees in other banks to artificially depress or inflate their returns to the daily London Inter Bank Offered Rate (LIBOR), which is the rate of interest at which banks in London lend to each other, in order to either profit from currency trades or boost their creditworthiness¹⁷. This scandal has been regarded as emblematic of those under-regulated, if not fraudulent, practices of the financial services sector that contributed to the financial crisis of 2008 and the subsequent economic downturn in Europe. Whilst activities on the London Stock Exchange fall directly under the remit of the City of London Police, the reputational damage of businesses as offenders is of relevance to the broader political-economy of London. In relation to such corporate crime, however, the MOPAC Plan is conspicuously silent. It frames the problem of business crime entirely in terms of businesses as victims of fraud, theft or vandalism, rather than as perpetrators of major crimes themselves (MOPAC, 2013b, 35). By contrast, advocates of a more progressive regime would propose a regulatory system aimed at the 'shaming' of corporate criminals until they agree adequate restitution to their victims (Ayres & Braithwaite, 1997). In further contrast, an example of a more transformative approach is the European Union's proposed introduction of a Financial Transactions Tax (FTT) by 1st January 2016. This seeks to transform the conditions in which financial service providers are encouraged to illegally manipulate financial markets for advantage. A key aim of the FTT, nick-named the 'Tobin tax'¹⁸, is to penalise the 'shorting' of currencies, the short-term speculation on currency exchanges that depress a particular currency's value and subsequently inflate the interest that governments using that currency have to pay on loans from the international bond market¹⁹. In turn the FTT proposal has been challenged in the European Court of Justice (ECJ) by the UK Coalition Government on the grounds that it prejudices the economic interests of the City of London. Following the rejection of this challenge by the ECJ as 'premature', Mayor Johnson identified the severity of the threat posed by the FTT to London's economic wellbeing and the ability of the UK, 'to safeguard its financial services sector.'²⁰

In summary, it is tempting to interpret the MOPAC Plan for crime reduction as simply maintaining the status quo of police and criminal justice policies that

¹⁷ 'Time-line: Libor-fixing scandal', BBC news online, 6th February 2013, at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-18671255>, accessed 6th June 2014.

¹⁸ After the Nobel Laureate economist James Tobin, who first proposed the idea of penalising short-term speculation on foreign currency markets.

¹⁹ 'Taxation of the financial sector', European Commission Taxation and Customs Union proposal, at: http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/taxation/other_taxes/financial_sector/index_en.htm, accessed on 6th June 2014.

²⁰ Johnson argued, "This judgement beggars belief. With London's economy buoyant once more and driving the national recovery, the last thing that we need is a barmy tax that will stamp on growth and potentially drive businesses to financial centres outside the EU ... This ruling also raises serious questions about how the UK can safeguard its financial services sector given that we are not in the euro.", in 'Boris warns City under threat after European Court dismisses UK 'Tobin tax' challenge', Daily Telegraph, 30th April 2014, at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/banksandfinance/10797997/Boris-warns-City-under-threat-after-European-Court-dismisses-UK-Tobin-tax-challenge.html#source=refresh>, accessed 6th June 2014.

prioritise street crimes whilst under-regulating, if not insulating, forms of corporate crime. However, some development of this agenda has been compelled by its crises of rationality and legitimacy²¹ as epitomised in the other two dimensions of the MOPAC 20:20:20 agenda: expenditure and public confidence.

4.2. Expenditure

The most obvious crisis in the rationality of maintaining a criminal justice agenda in London is its cost, particularly in the context of austere public expenditure budgets. In introducing the proposed objective of a 20 per cent reduction in expenditure, the DMPC, Stephen Greenhalgh stated:

We know that times are tough and we have to be more efficient than ever before and, therefore, we need to cut costs and see the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) be able to police London with less money to spend (MOPAC, 2012, 2).

Pressed about the realistic character of this objective at the October 2012 Challenge Meeting the chief officer of the MPS, Commissioner Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe noted:

As the Deputy Mayor has already said, to reduce the resources at the same time as expecting more is always a challenge, but I am confident that we can achieve that. We have made a good start and we have already shown some good progress and we do not know what the next four years will hold, but what we can see, even over the last few weeks and months, even though we have had the Jubilee, the Olympics and the Paralympics, performance has still improved. We will start to see a reduction in resources over the next few years, so that will be where the challenge will kick in but I am confident we can do it (MOPAC, 2012, 3).

In response to concerns raised about the impact of budget reductions on public safety in London that were raised during the public consultation about its Plan, MOPAC argued that whilst, 'The grant from the Home Office is reducing ... The cuts being proposed aim to allow MOPAC/MPS to absorb the cuts' (MOPAC, 2013c, 3). More specifically, this response argued that front-line policing would be protected in acknowledgement of public concerns to see a more visible police presence on the streets, officers that are dedicated to particular neighbourhoods, in particular the 'Safer Neighbourhood Teams' (SNTs) and who can maintain high response rates to calls for assistance:

The proposals laid out in the Police and Crime plan are aimed at ensuring police numbers are kept high. No changes have been made to numbers or to the model but the plan is more specific about how MOPAC will ensure it is properly implemented.

²¹ See footnote 1.

It should be noted for clarity, that the additional numbers are full time officers, not specials (MOPAC, 2013c, 4).

The MOPAC Plan states that the 20% reduction of £500m to the overall MPS budget of £2bn per annum, by 2016 whilst increasing front-line officers involved in a 'Local Policing Model' (from 24,000 to 26,000 officers), will be accomplished through savings in 'back office functions'. Three specific dimensions to this are identified:

- Reducing the number of senior officers of ACPO (Association of Chief Police Officers) rank by a third and reducing the number of 'supervisory' officers (all ranks between sergeant and chief superintendent) by 1,000;
- Releasing under-utilised assets, including the sale of 200 of the 497 buildings owned by the MPS involving fewer but better sited neighbourhood police stations offering more efficient 'front counter provision'; and
- Reducing overheads through a 5% reduction in the costs of support services including a £60m reduction to the current £200m spent on IT services (MOPAC, 2013b, 44-6).

A more detailed reading of responses to the public consultation on this Plan, particularly those from borough councils with particularly acute problems of neighbourhood crime, reveals some of the key tensions between the centralisation of agenda-setting and resource allocation by MOPAC and the need for more devolved, neighbourhood-specific, policing. For example the Borough of Southwark criticised the MOPAC Plan for obscuring the diversity of policing and crime problems across London and the need to tailor the allocation of resources accordingly:

Southwark has the highest level of knife crime and youth related crime and robbery is significantly on the increase, against a London wide overall reduction. Bearing in mind that the plan sets the target of a 20% reduction in a basket of crime indicators, including violence with injury and robbery, we feel that there should be a much clearer correlation between these targets and the police numbers. The crime levels in Southwark, combined with its high density and footfall demand a much greater allocation of resources²².

To this end, Southwark and other boroughs re-emphasised the importance of borough-level Community Safety Partnerships, or multi-agency policing arrangements involving the police working in partnership with local government services, health authorities, offender management services and emergency services, which are more cognisant of the concentration of high-volume and high-impact crimes in particular neighbourhoods. The Southwark response criticises the MOPAC Plan for withdrawing effective support for this element of local governance, particularly

²² See the response of Southwark Council to the public consultation about the MOPAC Policing and Crime Plan 2013-2016, at: <http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Southwark%20Council.pdf>, accessed 15th December 2013.

in a context of the multiple pressures on poorer boroughs in London arising out of austerity budgeting and the increased demand for public services generated by labour market and migration patterns in the City:

... it has long been recognised that effective crime reduction is more effective through a strong partnership approach. The changing dynamics for London through the economic recession, migration, immigration and the changes to welfare reform will have a significant impact on crime and anti social behaviour. Community Safety Partnerships will play a crucial role in establishing long term intervention and preventative plans to reduce the impact of the above, ensuring they inform our priorities and goals. Whilst the importance of partnership working is recognised in the overarching priority to, 'Ensure that all of London's public service agencies work together and with communities to prevent crime, seek swift and sure justice for victims, and reduce re-offending.', this does not appear to be ... recognised in the objectives and goals.²³

The Southwark response broadens the policing and crime agenda beyond the relatively narrow preoccupation of the MOPAC Plan with police and criminal justice responses to crime problems in London, defining these primarily as issues of social and economic policy. From this perspective, savings in the 'back office functions' of the MPS and increased investment in visible police patrols are unlikely to reduce the high-volume and high-impact crime problems that are experienced in particular boroughs but masked by the aggregation of crime data at the city-wide level. The obfuscation of this experience by relatively crude indices of offending and victimisation premised on the problematic police recording of those offences reported to them and, in turn, the aggregation of these indices at spatial scales above the neighbourhood is now a well developed theme in social scientific criticism of official crime data. Innovations in neighbourhood household surveys of victimisation in the 1980s, notably the Islington Crime Survey in North London, revealed the dramatic concentration of personal and property crimes in neighbourhoods also characterised by other indices of multiple deprivation (Jones et al., 1986). Secondary data analyses of the British Crime Survey and the Census of Population in the 1990s also revealed the grossly unequal, 'Lorenz curve', distribution of personal and property crime, identifying the concentration of multiple and repeat victimisation in the top decile of high crime neighbourhoods which also scored high on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (Hope, 1996; Trickett et al., 1992). It remains a moot point whether the severity of this unequal distribution of volume crime has altered, even if more recent studies suggest real reductions in the incidence of certain crime types such as household burglary and the theft of and from motor vehicles (Tilley, Tseloni & Farrell, 2011).

These esoteric arguments over the multi-level modelling and measurement of crime at the neighbourhood level now have a major significance beyond the academic research community. The political uses of official crime data by MOPAC and the UK Coalition Government, to suggest that 'smarter policing' has accomplished genuine

²³ Ibid.

reductions in crime in a context of austere public expenditure cuts, provokes a major public controversy over the trustworthiness of intelligence sources about crime and policing in the capital. The stakes are high given broader political-economic arguments about the necessary, damaging or beneficial consequences of austerity for urban governance. Advocates of austerity, including MOPAC, argue 20% cuts to expenditure are a necessary consequence of the unsustainable budgets passed by previous administrations and, more generally, the contradictions between increased expenditure on public administration and economic growth²⁴. It is therefore of high political salience to argue that public sector expenditure and private sector growth can be 're-balanced' without incurring major damage to public services and harm to the most vulnerable communities relying on these services²⁵. In this context, the alleged 'crime drop' in the capital for all but one of the 'MOPAC 7' targets, as registered in the downward trend in MPS recorded crime, is part of an unfolding national political argument about the success of the UK Coalition Government's austerity policy. Declining crime rates, along with increased employment during Mayor Johnson's tenure, are cited to discredit political opponents of austerity and the more profound restructuring of relations between state, market and civil society signalled by this policy. In this context, the recent scandal over crime recording in the MPS represents more than a dispute over whether and how particular reports of crime from the public are registered as it calls into question the confidence the public can have in the raw data being used to monitor and justify the MOPAC agenda²⁶.

4.3. Public confidence

In announcing the target of increasing public confidence in the MPS, Deputy Mayor Greenhalgh stated:

It is not enough just cutting crime, we clearly do want to see the 20% boost in public confidence. I was surprised by this but the Metropolitan Police Service [is] not near the top quartile, it is about 26th out of two forces nationally for public confidence. Clearly

²⁴ This contradiction being the original sense of the 'rationality crisis' of the welfare state in liberal democratic capitalism (Offe, 1984).

²⁵ Therefore, in relation to the analytical interests of this article, that the 'rationality crisis' of urban governance in London can be transcended through innovations in smarter governance.

²⁶ The scandal focussed on the evidence provided by an MPS constable, PC James Patrick, to the UK Parliament's Public Administration Select Committee which undertook an investigation into the trustworthiness of police recorded crime in the 2013-14 Parliamentary Session (House of Commons, 2014). In his deposition to the Select Committee, PC Patrick discussed his year-long secondment to examine the measurement of crime levels within the MPS during which time he observed the routine manipulation of crime statistics to meet performance targets on crime reduction. Such manipulation included the re-categorisation of household burglaries as 'criminal damage' or other types of theft resulting in the 'disappearance of 300 burglaries in a couple of weeks. Even more dramatically, PC Patrick claimed there was a 25% under-reporting of serious sexual offences by the MPS. 'Police fix crime targets to meet targets, MPs told', BBC on-line news, 19th November 2013, at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-25002927>, accessed 6th June 2014.

we would love to see that leap up the table and we have set a very challenging target of 75% (MOPAC, 2012, 2).

In response to the public consultation on this target, MOPAC acknowledged that:

Confidence is measured by the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW). The MPS does not perform well when compared to other forces. The Mayor's aspiration is that Londoners have high confidence in the MPS and this is reflected in this target. Allied to this, the MPS has the lowest victim satisfaction. Londoners deserve better, so the Mayor has put forward several proposals aimed at improving victim satisfaction (MOPAC, 2013c, 3).

In the final draft of the Police and Crime Plan, MOPAC elaborate on their perception of the key drivers behind low public confidence in the MPS and the need for reforms to the status quo. These capture some of the key acts of commission and omission that can undermine public confidence and clarify the significance of various scandals that have challenged the legitimacy of the MPS. However, the treatment of these by MOPAC also helps to further clarify the characterisation of the 20:20:20 agenda as a developmental rather than maintenance, progressive or transformative regime. The Plan identifies four areas of reform:

- Effectiveness in dealing with crime – responding to emergencies; tackling and preventing crime; supporting victims and witnesses; providing a visible presence; and policing public events.
- Engagement with the community – committed to and engaged with the community; listening, understanding and dealing with their concerns; and delivering on their promises.
- Fair treatment – treat people fairly and respectfully; be helpful, friendly and approachable.
- Alleviating local anti-social behaviour – reducing and being seen to address local disorder. (MOPAC, 2013b, 38).

The Plan acknowledges the need to improve public confidence in being able to report crimes to the police and to this end proposes methods to ease the process for reporting offences known for significant under-reporting, such as sexual assaults, hate crime and crimes against business. These include the use of 'smart phone applications' enabling people to report crimes remotely and the use of 'third parties', such as Rape Crisis Centres. The Plan also recognises 'historic failures to record crimes reported the MPS' and proposes more 'robust crime recording practices' in line with recommendations from the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) (MOPAC, 2013b, 39). However, the subsequent report of the Parliamentary Public Administration Select Committee's (PASC) investigation into crime reporting, published in April 2014, criticised the MPS for failing to recognise the institutional conditions for these historic failures:

40. The disparities between different police forces in the 'no-crime rates' for rapes and sexual offences are sufficient in our view to raise serious concerns about the varying approaches taken by police forces to recording and investigating these horrendous crimes. We look forward to the outcome of the research commissioned by the Metropolitan Police examining the force's 'no crime' decisions in respect of sexual offences.

41. The fact that this research is necessary, following the 2008 Independent Police Complaints Commission report into the Sapphire Unit is a damning indictment of police complacency, inertia and lack of leadership.

Consequently, the PASC report recommended a transformation in recording practices:

42. The Home Office must undertake a comprehensive analysis in order to explain the extraordinary disparities in no-crime rates for sexual offences across all police forces. ... This should lead to work to improve the accuracy transparency and reliability of police recorded sexual offences so that a table of no crime rates does not suggest systemic inconsistency in recording practices (House of Commons Public Administration Select Committee, 2014, paras. 40-42).

In his evidence to the PASC inquiry, HM Inspector of Constabulary Tom Winsor commented that performance management cultures were a key factor in crime recording practices:

The fact is in anything that gets measured, once those who are being measured, whose performance are being measured, work out how the system works, there's an incentive, resisted by many, to manipulate the process as to make your own performance look good²⁷.

The MOPAC Plan also identifies a need to improve public confidence through better 'supporting victims and witnesses' particularly those suffering repeat victimisation. It proposes an independent and comprehensive analysis of support services across London, a requirement for the Commissioner of the MPS to target programmes aimed at 'improving the reduction of victimisation in key areas such as anti-social behaviour, hate crime and violence against women and girls' and to 'outline plans to ensure that every frontline police officer including responders are trained on how to respond to reports of under-reported and more complex crime types such as violence against women and girls' (MOPAC, 2013, 40).

Conspicuous by its absence in the MOPAC Plan, however, is reference to the ongoing scandal of the service provided to the family of the murdered teenager Stephen Lawrence and its symbolic importance for the broader politics of ethnicity

²⁷ 'Police crime figures being manipulated admits chief inspector', Guardian on-line, 18th December 2013, at: <http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2013/dec/18/police-crime-figures-manipulation-chief-inspector>, accessed on 6th June 2014.

and policing in London. The 1998 Macpherson inquiry into the investigation of Lawrence's murder, following an attack by a group of white youths in South London in April 1993, criticised the MPS for its 'institutional racism' arguing that the mishandling of the murder investigation by MPS detectives could not be reduced to the actions of individual officers but were part of a culture of discrimination against victims from black and minority ethnic communities in the city. The damage to relationships between the MPS and these communities by this case was reignited following the publication in March 2014 of The Stephen Lawrence Independent Review into possible corruption and the role of undercover policing in the Lawrence case. The barrister Mark Ellison QC was commissioned by Home Secretary Theresa May to undertake this review following revelations in the Guardian newspaper from an undercover MPS officer, Peter Francis, that he had, as part of his role in the MPS 'Special Demonstration Squad' (SDS), been asked by senior officers to find information that could discredit the Lawrence family, Duwayne Brooks (Lawrence's friend and witness to his murder) and the campaign group established to seek justice for the Lawrence family²⁸. As a consequence of the Ellison inquiry, accusations of criminality and misconduct on behalf of the SDS in relation to the Lawrence case have now been included in the remit of the ongoing Operation Herne, established in October 2011 to investigate SDS activities during the 1968 – 2008 period of the SDS's existence, in which it infiltrated and reported on 'groups concerned in violent protest'²⁹. Findings from the Ellison review, described by Prime Minister Cameron as 'profoundly shocking', included 'clear defects' in the disclosure of information from the MPS to the Macpherson Inquiry and reasonable grounds for suspecting that one of the MPS detectives in the original investigation had been in the pay of a renowned criminal and father of one of the prime suspects in Lawrence's murder³⁰. A consequence of these revelations was the announcement in June 2014 that the Independent Police Complaints Commission would launch a new inquiry into police corruption in the Lawrence investigation.

For critics of policing in London, the Lawrence case provides evidence that conflict between the MPS and black and minority ethnic communities in the city is driven by policy decisions as much as the interactional dynamics of police-public encounters on the street or during serious criminal investigations (Lea, 2002). In turn this provokes a more profound set of questions about the institutional basis to these conflicts and the need for more transformative policy responses. In this regard

²⁸ 'Police 'smear' campaign targeted Stephen Lawrence's friends and family', Guardian, 24th June 2013, at: <http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2013/jun/23/stephen-lawrence-undercover-police-smears>, accessed 6th June 2014.

²⁹ Operation Herne is led by Mick Creedon, Chief Constable of Derbyshire Constabulary, at: <http://www.derbyshire.police.uk/About-us/Operation-Herne/Operation-Herne.aspx>, accessed on 6th June 2014.

³⁰ The Stephen Lawrence Independent Review, Home Office, April 2014, at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/stephen-lawrence-independent-review>, accessed 6th June 2014.

the deaths of Ian Tomlinson³¹ and John Charles de Menezes³² can be regarded, along with the scandals of the Lawrence case and the revelations of the Leveson Inquiry³³, as symbols of a broader crisis in public confidence in the MPS that is irreducible to particular events considered in isolation from one another. This point was made forcibly by Home Secretary May in her address to the annual conference of the Police Federation in which she linked these scandals in identifying, 'a time of great difficulty for policing':

In the last few years, we have seen the Leveson Inquiry. The appalling conclusions of the Hillsborough independent panel. The death of Ian Tomlinson and the sacking of PC Harwood. The ongoing inquiry by an independent panel into the murder of Daniel Morgan. The first sacking of a chief constable for gross misconduct in modern times. The investigation of more than ten senior officers for acts of alleged misconduct and corruption ... Allegations of rigged recorded crime statistics. The sacking of PCs Keith Wallis, James Glanville and Gillian Weatherly after 'Plebgate'. Worrying reports by the inspectorate about stop and search and domestic violence. The Herne Review into the conduct of the Metropolitan Police Special Demonstration Squad. The Ellison Review into allegations of corruption during the investigation of the murder of Stephen Lawrence. Further allegations that the police sought to smear Stephen's family. Soon there will be another judge-led public inquiry into policing.³⁴

The Home Secretary acknowledged the serious damage to public confidence in the police and the legitimacy of the British model of 'policing by consent' as a result

³¹ Ian Tomlinson was a newspaper vendor who collapsed and subsequently died after being struck by an MPS officer whilst making his way home from work during a mass demonstration against a summit of the G20 advanced industrial nations in London in April 2009. The incident was recorded on a smart phone by a bystander and demonstrated that Tomlinson was struck without provocation. After three years of dispute over the responsibility of the MPS officer, PC Harwood, for causing Tomlinson's death, Harwood was tried for manslaughter, acquitted by the Jury but then dismissed by the MPS for 'gross misconduct' who then paid Tomlinson's family an undisclosed sum in compensation.

³² John Charles de Menezes was shot and killed by MPS firearms officers in Stockwell tube station on 22nd July 2005 having been mistaken for one of the plotters behind the failed bombing attempt on the London transport system the previous day. In turn this provoked public controversy over the alleged 'shoot to kill' policy adopted by the MPS in their counter terrorist Operation Kratos. "No impunity" for shoot-to-kill', BBC on-line news, at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/4716645.stm>, accessed 6th June 2014.

³³ Lord Justice Leveson was appointed as chair of an inquiry into the role of the press and the police in the phone-hacking scandal that broke in summer 2011 following revelations that investigative reporters employed by the media group *News International* had illegally hacked into the phone messages of the murdered teenager Milly Dowler as well as celebrities and public figures in the UK. Part 2 of the Leveson Inquiry has been postponed until criminal proceedings against these employees, informed by Operation Elveden, have completed including allegations that police officers received improper payments for providing intelligence to journalists. 'Operation Elveden', Guardian on-line news, at: <http://www.theguardian.com/media/operation-elveden>, accessed on 6th June 2014.

³⁴ Home Secretary's Police Federation Speech 2014, 21st May 2014, at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/home-secretarys-police-federation-2014-speech>, accessed on 6th June 2014.

of these scandals and a consequent need for 'the police to change'.³⁵ However, as we have argued throughout this paper, the character of this proposed change in London, as indicated by the MOPAC Plan, represents the development of a core police and criminal justice agenda rather than any progression beyond, much less a transformation of, this agenda.

5. Interpreting the MOPAC Agenda: towards a developmental regime?

This paper has examined the MOPAC Plan for police and crime in London and indicated why it can be identified as a developmental agenda that acknowledges the need to reform core policy objectives of police and criminal justice whilst falling short of the progressive and transformative policy changes identified by other commentaries on policing in the capital. The further development of this analysis, to explain the formation, stabilisation or failure and subsequent replacement of a regime premised on this agenda implies more intensive case study research. This can better access policing governance 'in action', including the 'non-decisions' and 'self-censorship' of policy actors outside of the MOPAC arena. In these terms, regime theory identifies three core questions:

- How are coalitions, typically including both governmental and non-governmental actors, formed around a policy agenda?
- What resources for the pursuit of this agenda are brought to bear by members of the governing coalition? and
- In the absence of a system of command, what are the schemes of co-operation through which the members of the governing coalition align their contribution to the task of governing?

In reflecting on these questions and by way of a conclusion, the Policing European Metropolises Project also provides an opportunity for comparative research to establish whether the theoretical propositions of regime theory hold in comparable European cities and, insofar as they do, the lessons that can be drawn from such comparisons for policing policy change.

Given its status as a 'global city', problems of crime and policing in London need to be understood in terms of the broader political, economic and cultural environment inhabited by MOPAC. These generate certain dilemmas for the strategic direction of policing in the city, in particular the priority that ought to be accorded to neighbourhood problems that, according to findings from the public consultation around the 20:20:20 agenda, preoccupy the Mayor's electorate or the prioritisation of the high impact but (relatively) low volume problems that have less political salience, such as organised crime, terrorism, business crime and major incidents of public disorder. The Policing European Metropolises Project provides an opportunity for investigating the existence and qualities of this dilemma in comparable

³⁵ Ibid.

European cities. What is the convergence between the MOPAC agenda and the policies prioritised in other European cities? What, if any, are the key divergences and is there an institutional dimension to this? For example does the party political character of urban governance noticeably alter the definition of policy agendas³⁶, the resources allocated to priorities for policing and crime, and the enrolment of commercial and non-governmental organisations into governing coalitions³⁷? What bargains are struck between elected leaders, the corporate funding they are reliant upon and the broader electoral coalitions they seek to reproduce? In this way the Policing European Metropolises Project can provide a conceptual framework for comparing policing governance 'in action'.

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³⁶ For an historical overview of party politics and policing agendas in London, prior to the Great Recession and Mayor Johnson's incumbency, see Fletcher and Stenson (2009).

³⁷ In this regard how will attempts to enrol commercial security providers into a developmental regime affect the rationality and legitimacy of the MOPAC agenda? It is too early to know the outcomes of MOPAC's trialling of 'payment by results' schemes, in which commercial and voluntary organisations are contracted to rehabilitate and reintegrate offenders but don't receive payment if their clients reoffend within set periods of time. However, an early and high profile failure of enrolling commercial security into policing responsibilities in London was the inability of G4S, one of the largest commercial security organisations, to deliver on its contract for providing security at the 2012 London Olympic Games, resulting in the costly, emergency, deployment of the military to fulfil these duties (see also, Jones et al., 2009).

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