Sheffield University Policing Research Group: aims and ethos

Policing scholars at the University of Sheffield have recognised the need to create and maintain strong working relationship with our local police force, South Yorkshire Police (SYP) and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), through the creation of the Sheffield University Policing Research Group (SUPRG). This is a new partnership which aims to draw together hitherto ad hoc partnership relations in a co-ordinated and integrated manner, as well as to provide a key link between South Yorkshire policing scholars and practitioners and the regional work of the N8 Policing Research Partnership (N8 PRP).

There is an urgent need for a partnership of this kind, firstly, because of the growing evidence-based policing agenda which is being promoted, for example, by the College of Policing and features amongst its core objectives. This means that there is currently a window of opportunity in terms of the receptiveness of police organisations to the possibilities of research and the ways it can make a meaningful impact on their organisation. Secondly, a locally-focused research partnership between Sheffield University policing scholars and SYP is a necessary and complementary addition to the regional work of the N8 PRP. Whilst the research produced by members of the SUPRG will appraise local policing issues, it will also draw out the implications for policing at the national and international level.

Overall purpose
- Devise and regularly review a research strategy, in accordance with SYP’s police and crime priorities, which will be made available for use by policing scholars across the University and will contribute to the delivery of impactful research.
- Receive and discuss in detail proposals for research made either by SYP or Sheffield University Academics, in accordance with this research strategy, facilitating these research proposals where possible.

Networks
- Further develop and expand existing relationships between Sheffield University academics, representatives from other Universities and HEIs, SYP and the Office of the PCC;
- In the longer-term, we will also look to include partners from a range of other relevant agencies such as the community safety partnership, the Youth Offending Service, HMRC, Trading Standards and relevant third sector organisations.
- Since for South Yorkshire only Sheffield University is formally represented on the N8 Policing Research Partnership, the SUPRG will act as a conduit for information between South Yorkshire policing experts, police and policing practitioners, and the N8 Policing Research Partnership;

Research
- Foster research partnerships between Sheffield University academics and South Yorkshire Police representatives, which produce robust research evidence and provide the scope for the ethical co-production of knowledge and impactful research;
- Research produced through these partnerships will appraise local policing issues whilst also drawing out the implications for policing at the national and international level;

Dissemination and impact
- Show case the high quality research on policing conducted by academics at the University of Sheffield and elsewhere;
- Disseminate and communicate clearly about this high quality research with different South Yorkshire Police audiences and local media, particularly where it is relevant to local debates about policing;
- Contribute towards evidence-based local policing practices through the forming of research partnerships and through knowledge exchange and facilitated forms of knowledge dissemination.