POWER AND ADMINISTRATION IN TWO MIDLAND CITIES, C.1870-1938

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Leicester

Shane Ewen
Centre for Urban History
School of Historical Studies
University of Leicester, 2003
CONTENTS

Acknowledgements iii
List of Figures iv
List of Tables v
List of Appendices vii
List of Abbreviations viii
Abstract ix

1. INTRODUCTION: URBAN HISTORY AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, C.1870-1938 1

Public administration and local government: a conceptual framework
Public administration and local government into the 1990s: the policy network approach
The case studies
Comparing the police and fire services
Industrial development and civic reform in the Midlands
Structure of the thesis

2. CENTRAL-LOCAL RELATIONS AND THE NEGOTIATION OF LEGAL AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES 34

National and onerous services
Local sources of funding
Municipal growth and public probity
Standardising pensions
The localism of firemen's pensions
The local burden of police pensions
Economy in local and national administration

3. STRUCTURE AND BEHAVIOUR IN AN URBAN INSTITUTION: WATCH COMMITTEES AND ORGANISATIONAL RESOURCES 67

Structure and authority
City before party
Composition
Attendance
Experience

4. THE CHIEF OFFICIAL, EXPERTISE AND RELATIONS BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND THE PROFESSIONS 98

The 'Head Constable'
Informing expertise
Ranking expertise
Associating expertise
Departmental co-ordination
Circulating information
Interdependent experts
5. POLICY COMMUNITIES AND WATCH COMMITTEES:
CENTRAL-LOCAL RELATIONS IN PRACTICE

The police policy community 1870-1914
The fire policy community 1870-1914
The police and fire policy communities at war 1914-18
The fire service between the wars
The police and central-local tensions between the wars
The localism of police policy between the wars: the case of policewomen
Interactive policy communities

6. NEGOTIATING RESOURCES ON THE GROUND:
THE RANK-AND-FILE AND OPERATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

Restless firemen
The police: discipline and punish
Police work and skills
Seaman or trader?
Operational (in)dependence

7. INFORMATIONAL RESOURCES AND URBAN NETWORKS

Urban Networks
Criminal statistics
Networks of information, technology and consent in the fire service
Spatial networks
Communicating information
Intergovernmental networks

8. CONCLUSION: CENTRAL-LOCAL RELATIONS AND URBAN 'POLICING'

The interdependence of central-local relations
The preservation of local autonomy
'Policing' the city
Challenges to local autonomy

Appendices
Bibliography
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Funding for this study has come from an Economic and Social Research Council Advanced Research Studentship. I am grateful for their generous financial support.

I would particularly like to thank my supervisor, Professor Richard Rodger, for his advice and incisive critique during the researching and writing process. Thanks also to members (both staff and students) of the Centre for Urban History, Centre for English Local History, and Department of Economic and Social History, particularly the administrative support of Kate Crispin. I would also thank my examiners, Martin Daunton (University of Cambridge) and Dieter Schott (University of Leicester), for their encouraging comments on the thesis and suggestions for future work.

My research has also benefited from helpful discussions (both verbal and virtual) with, among many others, Nick Hayes (Nottingham Trent University), Chris Williams (Open University), Clive Emsley (Open University), Paul Laxton (University of Liverpool), Barry Doyle (University of Teesside), Oliver Westall (Lancaster University), Lydia Dracaki (Panteion University), Pym Kooij (Posthumus Institute) Peter Clark (University of Helsinki), Peter Larkham (University of Central England), Judith Rowbotham (Nottingham Trent University), Phil Darragh (University of Teesside) and Richard Faire. I also acknowledge the financial and intellectual support of the Economic History Society and the European Graduate School for Training in Economic and Social-Historical Research (Ester) for enabling me to participate in the post-graduate seminar on 'Urban History: a Multiform Discipline', at Panteion University in Athens, Greece, in February 2001. I am also grateful to the members of the Cities as International and Transnational Actors for their comments on my research at a recent symposium at the University of Amsterdam in November 2003.

Research for the thesis was made easier by the assistance of the staff at the Birmingham City Archives and Local History Section, Leicestershire Record Office, Public Record Office, British Library, Fire Service College, Association of Chief Police Officers, Institute of Fire Engineers, and University of Leicester Library. I would particularly like to mention the help and interest taken by David Stevens of the British Fire Services Association, and Dave Cross of the West Midlands Police Museum. I am also grateful to the Deputy Chief Constable of Leicestershire Constabulary and the Deputy Chief Fire Officer of West Midlands Fire Service for giving me permission to consult the personnel records of past officers.

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of Simon Littlewood, colleague and friend, who will always be sorely missed.

Most of all, I am indebted to Victoria Farrar for her unwavering support.
**LIST OF FIGURES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Intergovernmental resources</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Structures and relationships in English and Welsh county boroughs, c.1900</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Birmingham Police pension fund contributions, 1860-1930 (%)</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Leicester Police pension fund contributions, 1860-1930 (%)</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Sub-committees on Leicester Watch Committee, 1868-1939</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Sub-committees on Birmingham Watch Committee, 1868-1939: duration of constitution</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Mean experience on Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees, 1867-1939</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>The Tozer family tree</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Recipients of Home Office circulars, 1867-1939</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>The police policy community, c.1880</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>The fire policy community, c.1880</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>The fire policy community, c.1935</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>The police policy community, c.1935</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>Reported fires in Birmingham and Leicester per 1,000 population, 1868-1939</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>Leicester's police and fire stations, c.1890-94</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>Birmingham's police and fire stations, c.1890</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>Position of police boxes in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, c.1930</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Categories of fire brigades in English and Welsh boroughs (%) 1903-1932</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Population growth rates 1811-1951</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Population densities in Birmingham and Leicester 1851-1931</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Index growth rates in police and fire brigade recurrent expenditure 1871-1931</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Recurrent expenditure on police and fire services (£ per 100 inhabitants) 1871-1940</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Rate poundage in Birmingham and Leicester fire brigade and police force (%) 1885-1935</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Net police expenditure defrayed by the rates (£000s) 1874-1932</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Net expenditure in fire brigades' pension funds (£000s) 1900-1940</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Rents and retail price indices in the Midlands 1905-12</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Members on Birmingham and Leicester Town Council and Watch Committee 1871-1931</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>Average length of office for Watch Committee chairmen 1870-1939</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>Party representation on Birmingham and Leicester Town Council and Watch Committee 1900-36</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>Party political resolutions on Leicester Watch Committee 1901-38</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>Occupational profiles of Birmingham Town Council and Watch Committee (%) 1871-1935</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>Occupational profiles of Leicester Town Council and Watch Committee (%) 1871-1935</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>Average number of Watch Committee (WC) meetings 1868-1938</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>Average number of sub-committee (S-C) meetings 1893-1938</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>Average Watch Committee (WC) attendance rates (%) 1868-1938</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>Average sub-committee (S-C) attendance rates (%) 1893-1938</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Annual salaries of chief officials (£) 1890-1930</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Annual conferences of professional organisations in Birmingham and Leicester</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Aggregate number of Home Office police circulars 1867-1939</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Police operational circulars (%) 1867-1939</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Police personnel circulars (%) 1867-1939</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>Police administrative circulars (%) 1867-1939</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Police financial circulars (%) 1867-1939</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF APPENDICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A</td>
<td>Birmingham's boundary extensions, 1838-1931</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B</td>
<td>Leicester's boundary extensions, 1835-1965</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C</td>
<td>Police and fire brigade strengths, 1871-1939</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix D</td>
<td>Real wages in Birmingham and Leicester (average weekly earnings), 1905-26</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix E</td>
<td>The Watch Committee's duties and powers</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix F</td>
<td>Chief officers</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix G</td>
<td>Leicester's police and fire stations, c.1914</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix H</td>
<td>Leicester's police box system, c.1911</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix I</td>
<td>Birmingham's police stations, c.1938</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix J</td>
<td>Birmingham's fire stations, c.1938</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABBREVIATIONS

ACPO: Association of Chief Police Officers
BCA: Birmingham City Archives
BFPC: British Fire Prevention Committee
BFSA: British Fire Service Association
BP: Birmingham Post
BG: Birmingham Gazette
CC: Chief Constable
CCA: Chief Constables Association
CFO: Chief Fire Officer
CM: Committee Minutes
Debs: House of Commons Debates
FBSC: Fire Brigade Sub-Committee Minutes
IFE: Institute of Fire Engineers
HMIC: Her/His Majesty’s Inspectors of Constabulary
HO: Home Office
JSC: Judicial Sub-Committee Minutes
LM: Leicester Mercury
LRO: Leicestershire Record Office
NFBA: National Fire Brigades’ Association
NFBU: National Fire Brigades’ Union
Non-PP: Non-Parliamentary Papers
PFBA: Professional Fire Brigades’ Association
PP: Parliamentary Papers
PRO: Public Record Office
RIC: Royal Irish Constabulary
SC: Sub-Committee
WC: Watch Committee
WC Mins: Watch Committee Minutes
WMPM: West Midlands Police Museum
Municipal government mattered as much in the 1930s as it did in the 1870s. Taking a case study of a prestigious urban institution in Birmingham and Leicester, this thesis explores the role of the Watch Committee in interacting with other local, national and professional institutions in administering urban police and fire services. A melding of approaches prevalent within the disciplines of public administration and urban history facilitates a thematic approach to the nature and practice of administrative power. R. A. W. Rhodes' model of power-dependence, modified and reinforced through recent research into policy networks and communities, allows the modern urban historian to explore the interplay between structure and agency within intergovernmental relations between 1870 and 1938. Through an analysis of legal, financial, organisational, political and informational resources, this thesis argues that neither central nor local government dominated the decision-making or policy implementation processes. Governmental institutions negotiated and interacted amongst themselves through a variety of networks, both locally and centrally initiated, for their access to such resources. Ultimately, powerful and prestigious county boroughs continued to influence national decision-making structures throughout the inter-war years. The Watch Committee was an independent institution and consisted of experienced and expert members. Through its close relationship with the Police and Fire Departments, in particular their chief officials, the urban dimension of 'police' policy remained integral despite increasing central regulation of local services during the period under review.
INTRODUCTION: URBAN HISTORY AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, C.1870-1938

Contemporary and historical research into the meaning and nature of British local government has spanned the twentieth-century. At least until the reforms of the 1970s and 1980s, local government was widely considered to be the backbone of the British political system in administering a variety of public services and providing the electorate with a localised democratic framework through annual elections. This notion of local democracy gave Westminster and Whitehall a provincial representative. Ultimately, the principle and practice of local self-determination meant that local peculiarities could be considered, and groups or individuals held accountable locally for their actions. This widely held autonomy was, however, embedded within the broader structure of 'the national local government system' and the concept of ultra vires, which prevented local authorities from conducting anything beyond their legal powers. Research into local government commonly concerns discovering the ways in which this local self-determination has been underpinned both within societal attitudes and practical frameworks adopted within government.

Urban historians have been less interested in the general questions relating to local self-determination than the means by which this was undertaken. Research into urban political history, particularly that of


3 R. A. W. Rhodes, The National World of Local Government (London, 1986), 3-4. Rhodes defines this system as 'the set of organisations and actors which together define the national role and state of opinion in local government as a whole.' It can, therefore, refer to the role of private enterprise and public interest groups as well as traditional central and local institutions of British government.

British urban elites, spans the past four decades and is an ongoing area of academic interest.\(^5\) Research into the nature, composition and power of those elites that administered the modern city from the council chamber was an early form of social science that borrowed much of its social and quantitative methodologies from the work of political scientists.\(^6\) Research has recently extended beyond the traditional structural approach towards local government and urban elites, having merged the institutional and extra-institutional approaches encompassing urban 'governance.'\(^7\) The Victorian and Edwardian municipality was not merely administered and controlled by the Town Council. Rather, associational culture (expressed through the growth in voluntary and professional associations), trusts and charities, civic ritualism and prevailing social and cultural attitudes, notably the influence of religion, class and gender, contributed to the ways in which the city was governed as a whole.\(^8\)

---


\(^7\) 'Governance' is taken here to refer to the institutions and mechanisms employed in the administration of municipal services, including, but not restricted to, central government and the municipality: R. J. Morris, 'Governance: two centuries of urban growth', in *idem* and R. Trainor (eds.), *Urban Governance: Britain and Beyond Since 1750* (Aldershot, 2000), 1-14; D. Fraser, *Power and Authority in the Victorian City* (Oxford, 1979).

This thesis aims to revise and reassess historical debates about the structure of local government and the relations between central and local institutions in administering public services between 1870 and 1938. Research into the nature and practice of municipal administration is not merely of interest to urban historians. In particular the discipline of public administration has explored the issues relating to municipal and local administration since the early 1900s. Its founding fathers in Britain, notably Sidney and Beatrice Webb, Harold Laski, William Robson, Herman Finer and G. D. H. Cole, are well-known for their own social and political contributions to debates about the British political system during the first-half of the twentieth-century. Meanwhile, the discipline's central journal, Public Administration, dates to the 1920s from whence it has provided critical analyses of various facets of contemporary British public administration. Public administration, therefore, as a discipline with significant influence on wider political debates, has been regularly affected by changes in the British political system including those to the local government system, the growth of the civil service and unelected institutions, the increasing professionalisation of government, and the shift in the 1990s towards corporate governance with its emphasis on 'best value practice' and the delivery of productive and profitable local services.


Reforms to the local government system since the mid-1940s have led commentators to declare the pyrrhic victory of central government for control of locally delivered public services, and to suggest that 'local government's independence has long been a fiction.'\(^{12}\) That this is not a modern phenomenon was evident in the number of polemics published during the first-half of the twentieth-century which identified 'a crisis' in local government through increasing central encroachment into traditionally locally delivered services, and the dependence of local government on the Exchequer for funding service delivery.\(^{13}\) It is within this context that changing contemporary attitudes towards the role and authority of local government within the national system of government have to be considered.\(^{14}\) This thesis identifies public administration as a subject concerned with 'the creation and delivery of public services' and, crucially, 'the structures and people through which that is done.'\(^{15}\)

**PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

Academic interest in central-local government relations and public administration has been widespread since the 1950s. Commentators and academics alike initially considered that central-local relations were solely tempered by legal and financial interactions.\(^{16}\) This rendered local government an agent of central government, and as the main institution responsible for the implementation of minimum standards of service delivery. Central government's dominance was reinforced through a centrist accountability: the growth of local quangos', *Public Administration*, LXXV, 2 (1997), 207-24; S. Goss, *Making Local Governance Work* (Basingstoke, 2001); D. Wilson, 'Unravelling control freakery: redefining central-local government relations', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, V, 3 (2003), 317-46.


\(^{15}\) Dunshire, 'Then and now', 360; Fry, 'More than', 527-40.

discourse that criticised falling standards in fit and able councillors, and identified the provision of statutory and financial legitimacy as the sole precursors for policy formulation.\textsuperscript{17}

The establishment of the Social Science Research Council's Panel on Central-Local Government Relationships in 1978 encouraged the reassessment of this methodological approach. Consensus emerged that studies of central-local relations involved more than 'investigating whether and how central government was controlling local government.' Relations were, rather, characterised by 'complex and subtle linkages.'\textsuperscript{18} Through the application of interorganisational analysis academics, notably but not exclusively R. A. W. Rhodes, argued that central-local relations, or intergovernmental relations as they were re-characterised, involved complex interactions between local, national and 'sub-national' institutions beyond the use of central government's legal and financial powers.\textsuperscript{19} Rhodes applied the power-dependence model to intergovernmental relations and demonstrated that to accept 'central' and 'local' institutions as homogeneous entities regulated solely by legal and financial procedures was misleading as it failed to identify the complexities within British public administration.\textsuperscript{20} The fundamental premise of the power-dependence model was that '... both central departments and local authorities are inter-dependent and no matter how powerful central government

\textsuperscript{17} Griffiths, Central, 49-50; Dame E. Sharp, 'The future of local government', Public Administration, XL (1962), 375-86; N. Boaden, 'Central departments and local authorities: the relationship examined', Political Studies, XVIII, 2 (1970), 175-86; for a contrary, albeit similarly biased, perspective which identified central-local relations as a partnership, Sir H. Banwell, 'The new relations between central and local government', Public Administration, XXXVII (1959), 201-12. Banwell, with extensive experience of municipal administrative law as Deputy Town Clerk of Norwich (1929-32) and Town Clerk of Lincoln (1932-41), was Secretary of the Association of Municipal Corporations (1944-62), the local authority association responsible for municipal government. Sharp was Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Housing and Local Government (1955-66) and an advocate of local government reform.


\textsuperscript{20} Rhodes, Control, 1-2, 98; idem, National, 16-17.
may seem it is always dependent upon local authorities to some degree.\textsuperscript{21} Power-dependence contends that public institutions are dependent on each other for 'resources' (the means by which institutions fulfil pre-determined objectives) and have to interact and negotiate in order to exchange resources and achieve their objectives (Figure 1.1).\textsuperscript{22} Central-local relations, therefore, are a 'game' in which interdependent institutions manoeuvre for advantage and deploy their particular resources 'to maximise influence over outcomes,' usually the creation or modification of policy.\textsuperscript{23}

**Figure 1.1 Intergovernmental Resources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Central Government</th>
<th>Local Government</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal resources</td>
<td>The mandatory and discretionary rights to administer or deliver services by statute or constitutional convention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial resources</td>
<td>The funds raised by a public sector organisation to finance public services through taxation (local and national), service charges and borrowing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political resources</td>
<td>Access to public decision-making structures and (local and national) electoral mandates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informational resources</td>
<td>The possession of data and control over its collection and dissemination; knowledge and expertise; knowledge of policy implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational resources</td>
<td>The possession of people, skills, land, buildings, material and equipment, and its use to influence policy formulation and implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language resources</td>
<td>The local and national interpretations of the meaning of language employed in public administration.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Central-local relations are regulated by 'rules of the game.' These set limits to the level of independence and discretion exercised by both local and national institutions. Thus, the expectation of consultation before the imposition of new central policies has framed local attitudes since Victorian times. Such rules were, as in local self-determination and incorporation, not legally prescribed, yet they evidently influenced central-local relations.\textsuperscript{24} Political support, manifested through local and national elections, further regulated central-local relations. The extension of the parliamentary and municipal franchises in 1867 and 1869 markedly altered the relations between local authorities and

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid, *National*, 16-17.


\textsuperscript{23} Rhodes, *Understanding*, 37.

powerful ratepayers' lobbying groups by widening interest in local taxation and diluting the influence of lower middle-class ratepayers, and ultimately contributed towards the creation of political consent for the system of local taxation and increases in municipal capital expenditure in the purchase of 'trading undertakings', as well as the provision of sewage systems, schools, public parks, museums, and police and fire stations.\(^{25}\)

No single institution has ever monopolised resources. Both central and local institutions promoted legislation between the 1870s and 1930s to create, modify or reinvigorate local powers. Similarly, the availability and circulation of information and professional expertise was traditionally vested in local authorities, although central departments made legitimate claims on national forms of expertise and information collation through their regulation and inspection of the standards of local services.\(^{26}\)

Despite its increasing 'intervention', central government has, however, always lacked knowledge about local delivery and attempts to assert 'control' are 'a bit like trying to control the responses of every individual in the country to the weather.\(^{27}\)

---


\(^{27}\) Goss, *Making*, 5; on the difference between 'control' (achieving purposes) and 'intervention' (acting to control and achieve purposes), Rhodes, *Understanding*, 114, 135, footnote 3.
resources. The model has also been criticised for lacking historical understanding of the development and interaction of central and local government, and the human and regional complexities of policy formulation. Rhodes' response was to acknowledge the heterogeneity of the various institutions and personalities involved in resource exchange processes, and extend power-dependence further into a study of policy-making. The latter was explored through policy networks, defined as 'a cluster or complex of organisations connected to one another by resource dependencies.'

There are different types of policy network involving varying degrees of membership integration and multiple functions. Policy communities, the central network, are formed through regular interactions between the various institutions involved in service administration. They have stable membership and are restricted, but not prevented, from external influence by other communities or institutions with overlapping interests. There is also a high degree of vertical interdependence in the delivery of the service in that policy is not imposed by central government departments, but is the outcome of consultation and co-ordination of resources between interested institutions, including central and local government, professional associations and private pressure groups.

The relationship between power-dependence and history, however, remains an uneasy one. Rhodes employs a narrow interpretation of history and its benefits available for studies of central-local relations. He argues that institutional research has often concentrated extensively on history and law at the expense of theory and quantitative methodology without appreciating that history provides much


more than 'narrative techniques' and descriptions. Few academics have attempted to combine theory and historical empiricism in analyses of central-local relations, and this has ultimately led critics to identify policy networks as little more than theoretical metaphors with power-dependence relegated to solitary footnotes in the historical literature. The biggest obstacle to combining power-dependence and history is the former's inflexibility as a model. By ignoring historical relationships and causality, power-dependence struggles to explain change as opposed to simply reflecting it. This is a similar criticism of the policy networks approach.

Attempts to reinvigorate the relationship between history and public administration have emerged within the revised concept of 'new institutionalism'. This refers to the redefinition of political institutions as 'formal rules, compliance procedures and standard operating practices that structure relationships between individuals in various units of the polity and the economy,' as well as an understanding of 'less formal organisational networks' and resources, including the collection and dissemination of information and knowledge. The purpose of such an approach is to explain historical continuities and changes within policy-making, although it fails to grasp the importance of agency and personality within the institutional policy network. Institutional structures and policy


networks are not fixed and unchanging. Recent research has identified policy networks as 'an interactive relationship between two variables in which each affects the other in a continuing iterative process.'\textsuperscript{40} The variables chosen for analysis were 'structure' and 'agency'.\textsuperscript{41} Policy-making and implementation, therefore, remains a 'game' in which 'agents' (political actors, individuals and institutions) manoeuvre for advantage by negotiating access over intergovernmental resources within existing administrative 'structures' (the law, rules, procedures, constitutional convention and socially acceptable behaviour), which serve as a constraint on unfettered authority. Administrative power, in the context of this thesis, is taken to refer to the interactions and policy outcomes within this institutional framework.

**THE CASE STUDIES**

This thesis seeks to combine power dependence with the 'realistic and subtle sensitivities'\textsuperscript{42} of urban history in a comparative analysis of the municipal administration of police and fire services in Birmingham and Leicester between 1870 and 1938. It is not an urban biography of Birmingham and Leicester, which have been amply provided elsewhere.\textsuperscript{43} Nor is it a study of the history of criminal justice or fire prevention policy.\textsuperscript{44} It is a study of municipal institutions and their role in the administration of key public order services. Although any analysis of either service demands the incorporation of national and professional institutions, this is not a detailed study of central government departments, yet it explores the increasing co-ordinating role of central departments over the municipal 'policing' process during the period.

\textsuperscript{40} Marsh and Smith, 'Understanding', 5.

\textsuperscript{41} For a criticism of Marsh and Smith's thesis, K. Dowding, 'There must be an end to confusion: policy networks, intellectual fatigue, and the need for political science methods courses in British universities', Political Studies, XLIX (2001), 89-105; D. Marsh and M. Smith, 'There is more than one way to do political science: on different ways to study policy networks', Political Studies, XLIX (2001), 528-41.

\textsuperscript{42} G. W. Jones, 'Review of Urban Governance', Urban History, XXXX (2002), 146.


'Policing', as the means adopted for maintaining public order, protecting private property and improving public decency and self-responsibility, was a common objective shared by Victorian urban elites. 45 'Education' was a crucial component of the wider strategy of urban 'policing'. 46 By the 1900s, the education of the public against the inherent 'risks' posed by crime and conflagration was a central feature of municipal administration. Education was also an important means of circulating information and regulating the behaviour of the rank-and-file within police and fire departments.

Adam Smith, in a series of lectures delivered at Glasgow University in the 1760s, declared that 'police', 'justice', 'revenue' and 'arms' formed the four 'great objects' of law, with the practice of 'policing' being a matter for local authorities to regulate the urban environment, maintain public cleanliness and provide security to private property. The risks facing modern urban police forces, therefore, went further than the prevention and detection of crime to include a general 'policing' of public and, if possible, private morality. 47

The Watch Committee was the pivotal municipal institution involved in the administration of both the police and fire services in Birmingham and Leicester between 1870 and 1938. Although initially established in 1835 as the first statutory municipal committee to administer local police forces where they existed 48, by the 1870s the Watch Committee had obtained additional regulatory powers from the Town Council, including responsibility for maintaining the municipal fire brigade, street lighting and, from the 1900s, film censorship, cinema regulation, traffic control and licensing. Consisting of the Mayor as a de facto member and not more than one-third of the Council's elected members, the Watch Committee was one of only two standing committees prevented from co-opting unelected members (the other being the Finance Committee). It sat in secret and its proceedings did not require the approval of the Council, although it could not levy a rate without approval. Notwithstanding this limited control, it produced its own annual estimates and was responsible for examining its own accounts. The Watch Committee, therefore, was a uniquely urban institution. Prestigious and

45 R. J. Morris, 'Externalities, the market, power structure and the urban agenda', Urban History Yearbook (1990), 103-5.
47 A. Smith, Lectures on Justice, Police, Revenue and Arms (London, 1896), 154; Radzinowicz and Hood, Criminal Law, 417-29.
independent, town councillors aspired to become members and were invariably chosen on a bi-partisan consensus of long and distinguished civic service. Its counterpart in the county districts, Standing Joint Committees, exercised fewer powers over the local force, and consisted equally of magistrates and councillors. The Watch Committee of a large and powerful county borough was effectively empowered to decide questions of 'police' policy locally, with the Council unable to make similar decisions before considering prior reports or recommendations.

Although the Watch Committee was the focal point of Victorian and Edwardian 'police' administration, few studies have noted more than the regularity of meetings and devolution of 'day-to-day matters of discipline and deployment' to the Chief Constable. Steedman argues that relations between the Watch Committee and Town Council were 'not really problematic' in most industrial towns during the 1860s and 1870s. The interdependence between committees through cross-membership (Figure 1.2) facilitated an inherently consensual relationship regulated through the Council's co-ordination of financial, administrative and organisational resources. That the Watch Committee was the single municipal authority to enjoy 'a good deal of financial autonomy' and sat in secret without its proceedings reported publicly, ultimately reinforced its local prestige and enabled it to respond to ratepayers' demands for greater scrutiny of the finances and operational decisions of the police and fire departments. This contributed to a longevity of service on the Watch Committee with active members 'who were as much experts in police management and policy as many of the sergeants and above in the force.'

By placing the Watch Committee at the centre of 'police' administration this thesis seeks to explore the structural and behavioural constraints and latitude of its members in holding the departments accountable for their decisions. Through local standing orders and regulations prescribed by either itself or the Town Council, the Watch Committee was 'an evolving body' whose powers, policies and

51 Steedman, Policing, 45.
52 Ibid.
composition altered in response to, or anticipation of, wider political and socio-economic changes throughout the period under study.\textsuperscript{54} The Watch Committee was part of a wider regional and national policy community responsible for decision-making and service delivery that involved varying degrees of input from the departments themselves, invariably represented by the chief officer, central government departments, professional associations, and other interested organisations.\textsuperscript{55}

Locally, therefore, the Watch Committee, despite its unprecedented administrative autonomy, remained subject to the structures and relationships prevalent within English and Welsh county boroughs. Since municipal reform in the mid-1830s, contemporaries such as Harold Laski noted that committees remained responsible for local decision-making and supervision as late as the mid-1930s. Town councils, meanwhile, were 'organs of representation for their committees,' providing the committees' members, rules and conventions, and holding a monthly meeting for debate and scrutiny of their decisions.\textsuperscript{56} Committees administered their respective departments, which were generally responsible for service delivery, through the interactions between the Committee Chairman (CH) and the department's Chief Officer (CO) (Figure 1.2).

The arrowheads in Figure 1.2 demonstrate the flow of authority between committees and their departments. The Chairman, in representing the authority of his Committee, participated in an iterative relationship with the respective Chief Official, as the representative of each Department. The dashed lines linking the committees, which are themselves not exhaustive, reflect the overlapping membership and co-ordination of resources. Councillors were invariably members of three or four committees simultaneously, and used such membership to further their own political careers, yet also to further a particular Committee's interests over another by influencing resource allocation and specific policy outcomes. The Town Clerk, as the Council's 'professional adviser', was responsible for the co-

\textsuperscript{53} Emsley, 'Policing'.
ordination and recording of committee proceedings and provision of free legal advice whenever sought by committee chairmen, yet remained answerable to the Council for his Department’s activities, hence the two-way arrow representing the flow of authority between the Town Council and Town Clerk.  

Figure 1.2 Structures and Relationships in English and Welsh County Boroughs, c.1900

![Diagram of structures and relationships]

Source: Adapted from H. Finer, English Local Government, 3rd ed. (London, 1946), 222.

This thesis differs from existing research into 'police' administration by locating the Watch Committee firmly within the evolving system of municipal government, and exploring the complexities of policy-making through an analysis of the interactions and relations employed between interested institutions. The research is based on the premise that municipal government was not a homogeneous entity between the 1870s and 1930s. Rather, the persistence of the committee and departmental structure, the co-ordinating role performed by the Town Clerk, the financial scrutiny provided by the Finance


Committee and Treasurer's Department, the ceremonial role of the Mayor, and the close working relations between the Committee Chairman and Chief Officer inevitably created a complex and bureaucratic web of interactions and relationships within municipal administration.

COMPARING THE POLICE AND FIRE SERVICES

There has never been a comprehensive comparative analysis of urban police and fire services despite their historic links. This has evidently been influenced by their organisational separation since 1941. The police historically played an important role in crowd control at fires, protecting the public as well as private property. The service helped institutionalise fire protection during a period of extensive urban investment between the second and final quarters of the nineteenth-century, thus protecting the powers of the emerging economic elite, who were the owners of land, labour and capital.

Furthermore, until their abolition in 1941, a large proportion of municipal fire-fighting was conducted by police fire brigades (Table 1.1). These consisted of policemen appointed either wholly or partly on fire-fighting duties under the operational control of a full-time Superintendent and overall authority of the Chief Constable, and funded, where possible, by the annual Exchequer police grant, instituted in 1856 to fund one-quarter of the pay and uniform of local forces. Police brigades were invariably established as a cheaper alternative to full-time independent brigades between the 1830s and 1860s by parsimonious town councillors pressured by ratepayers' groups determined to limit the financial repercussions of municipal investment.

Towns and cities continued to merge their police and fire brigades during the 1920s as a cost-cutting measure to reduce the growing burden of pay and pensions on local rates following the expansion of

60 The relationship between urban and economic investment is expanded in D. Reeder and R. Rodger, 'Industrialisation and the city economy', in Daunton (ed.), Cambridge Urban, 585-92; Daunton, Trusting Leviathan, 270-3.
61 For example in Liverpool, Bristol, Leeds, Nottingham, Norwich and Portsmouth.
the police grant in 1918 and provision of statutory pension entitlements to firemen in 1925.\textsuperscript{62} Thirteen of the 71 largest English and Welsh county boroughs maintained brigades consisting of at least one-fifth policemen in 1932.\textsuperscript{63} Expansion was not, however, at the expense of professionalisation as full-time professional brigades also grew from 12.3 per cent in 1903 to 48.6 per cent in 1932 (Table 1.1). Together the professional and police brigades benefited from an enduring 'municipal culture' that emerged during the second-half of the nineteenth-century and contributed to the decline in voluntary provision of welfare and other local services by the 1920s.\textsuperscript{64}

\textbf{Table 1.1 Categories of Fire Brigades in English and Welsh Boroughs (%), 1903-1932\textsuperscript{65}}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Professional</th>
<th>Police</th>
<th>Retained</th>
<th>Voluntary</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Home Office Return Relative to Fire Brigades and Fires in England and Wales for the Year 1903, P.P. 1906 (2914), XCVIII; Fire, Jun. 1920, 7-12; Royal Commission on Fire Brigades and Fire Prevention, P.P. 1923 (1945) XI, 273; Institute of Fire Engineers Annual Report 1932, 103-36.

Although police brigades remained inexpensive organisations, they were widely criticised within the technical press for inherent weaknesses. Crowds inevitably amassed at fires. Passers-by and neighbours were eager to watch the firemen in action, particularly with the high level of public support enjoyed by the Victorian and Edwardian service\textsuperscript{66}, to help protect lives, or even to plunder the property of any remaining valuables, as was the case with a fire at Birmingham's central reference library in

\textsuperscript{62} Notably in Manchester (1921) and Salford (1911): S. Ewen, 'Central government and the modernisation of the British fire service, 1900-1938', Twentieth Century British History, XIV, 4 (2003), 317-38.

\textsuperscript{63} Annual Report of Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary 1932, P.P. 1933-34 (26), XIV: 27 of the remaining 58 county boroughs also had a proportion of their police force employed on fire brigade duties. Of these Manchester had 45.6 per cent of its police force employed as firemen, whilst Merthyr Tydfil and Norwich employed 89.7 and 93.8 per cent respectively.

\textsuperscript{64} Daunton, 'Payment', 181-96; Morris, 'Structure', 414-9.

\textsuperscript{65} The categories refer to brigades with more than half their personnel serving in a particular capacity. Professional brigades were fully paid and independent; police brigades consisted of serving policemen acting either as full-time or part-time firemen; retained brigades included men with additional full-time occupations, who were paid a retaining fee for attending fires and drills; voluntary brigades consisted solely of volunteers, sometimes paid an annual retaining fee by the borough council or local insurance company. Comprehensive figures do not exist before 1903.

1879. The police played a crucial secondary role in controlling these crowds to protect lives and burning property. A further contradiction in police brigades was that it shifted resources away from traditional beat work. This removed the beat constable as a deterrence against street crime and stretched existing resources to their limit.

Although it was widely accepted that there should be ‘friendly relations’ between policemen and firemen as they were both ‘custodians of the public safety,’ the technical press did not regard policemen as ‘suitable for the multitudinous duties that are required from the ordinary fireman’ such as inspection, engineering and fire prevention work. It was the policeman’s responsibility to ‘keep the ground clear for the firemen to work, free from all outside interference ... as well as to keep a vigilant eye upon the “moveable fixtures” which are generally at the tender mercy of the public at such times.’ Others stressed the importance of dealing with the enduring fire risk, believing it to be ‘an epidemic which should be guarded against in as imperial a manner as small-pox or foot-and-mouth disease’:

For a Police Force to be engaged in extinguishing fires, while wholesale robbery is being carried on, is about equivalent to the commander of a ship calling his engineers and stokers on deck to do seamen’s work, at a time when the safety of his ship depended on every pound of steam he could get being got ... The result in such a case would be the loss of the ship, and the captain who gave such an order would be put down a maniac.

Such scaremongering often had the desired effect, but not before progressive councils were convinced that they could afford full-time protection, and invariably following public complaints at the inadequacy of existing protection.

Police brigades protected both Birmingham and Leicester until the separation of the two departments during the 1870s. Leicester was protected by a Police Brigade between 1836 and 1872 following the constitution of the Police under the aegis of municipal reform during the mid-1830s. The Brigade was merged with that of the local Sun Fire Office following complaints from ratepayers about the lack

---

67 Briggs, History, 111.
68 Fire & Water, Dec. 1887, 153.
69 Ibid.
70 Ibid, 1 Mar. 1893, 10.
71 Leicestershire Record Office [hereafter LRO] L352, Orders and Regulations for the Government of the Leicester Police, Appointed by the Watch Committee (1836), 10.
of organisation or cost-effectiveness of the Police Brigade, as well as concerns at rising insurance premiums. The dismissal of the Police Brigade's Superintendent for theft in 1871 did little to instil public confidence in the existing level of leadership. The decision to appoint a full-time Brigade was framed by the Watch Committee to simplify procedure and to 'prevent the confusion, inconvenience and jealousy, which have sometimes arisen at fires from there being two forces, acting under different officers.' With added pressure from the Inspectors of Constabulary, a national police inspection agency, at the lack of cover for policemen on fire duty, the decision was also evidently a financial and organisational response to pressure exerted jointly by ratepayers and national institutions.

Birmingham Town Council did not establish a Police Brigade until 1874, following decades of protection from the local fire insurance industry. Urban expansion and concurrent population growth between the 1850s and 1870s placed great pressure on private provision of urban amenities. This extended beyond the provision of private fire protection to also include heating, lighting, clean water, healthcare and the expanding transport networks. The decision to municipalise fire protection, however, had little relation to the fulfilment of the 'civic gospel' during Joseph Chamberlain's mayoralty (1873-76) and was a response to a decision in 1873 by the Birmingham United Brigade (BUB), an umbrella organisation of five local insurance companies, to scale-down their workforce and only attend fires in premises insured by one of its members. This followed three years of negotiations between the BUB, Birmingham Town Council and its Watch Committee, which culminated in the latter advising the Council that 'effectual protection of the property of the borough could only be ensured by the Council establishing a brigade of its own.'

Birmingham Police Brigade was in operation for four years before it was widely criticised by the local press for its failure to rescue a family from a burning confectioners in August 1878. The fire was in Digbeth Street, a short distance from the central police station where the firemen and appliances were

---

72 LRO CM42/10, Watch Committee Minutes [hereafter WC Mins], 31 May 1870, 123; 26 Jul. 1870, 128-9; 26 Sep. 1871, 222.
75 R. J. Morris, 'The state, the elite and the market: the 'visible hand' in the British industrial city system', in H. Diederiks et al (eds.), Economic Policy in Europe Since the Late Middle Ages (Leicester, 1992), 177-99.
76 Birmingham City Archives [hereafter BCA] WC Mins, 29 Jul. 1873, 447.
stationed. Attempts to rescue the father, mother, three-month old child, and their servant were hampered by the appearance of 'a large, disorderly and excited crowd,' and certain individuals who attempted to rescue the family themselves by tearing down the shop shutters to force an entrance, which inadvertently fanned the flames. The wooden fire escape caught fire and was virtually destroyed, hindering attempts to rescue the baby who was dropped by an officer from the escape some fifteen-feet to the ground, and later died in hospital from third-degree burns. The husband was the sole person to be rescued; his wife, 'overcome by fright,' passed out from excessive smoke inhalation. The charred bodies of their daughter and servant were found the following morning.\textsuperscript{77}

The local press condemned the incompetence of the Police and the failure of the Chief Constable or Fire Superintendent to attend the fire. The Town Council was also blamed for failing to invest in effective fire protection, preferring instead to lavish money on extravagant improvement schemes in the town centre. Critics particularly singled out the 'redtapeism' created by Chamberlain and his Liberal caucus:

\begin{quote}
Time is wasted and money lavished, and when the occasion arises of testing practically the services of Mr Chamberlain and his obsequious flatterers they prove to be miserable failures ... Our Corporation is so exclusively political that such small matters as the safety of the lives of the people will always be a secondary matter to passing votes of censure on a Conservative Government. And it seems a pity to touch the rates of the borough for any benefit of the inhabitants when they can be so much better employed in the excessive ornamentation of our streets, or the development of gigantic plans for the glorification of some ambitious politician [like Chamberlain].\textsuperscript{78}
\end{quote}

An inquiry by the Coroner found the cause of the fire to be a lit cigarette dropped under the floorboards. More importantly, the Coroner, as an independent judicial expert, personally blamed the Chief Constable for the deaths, by failing to maintain an efficient force and misleading the Watch Committee into believing that the fire escape, which was the only such appliance to protect approximately 400,000 people, was in a good condition. A similar inquiry by the Watch Committee absolved the Chief Constable from any personal blame, yet accepted, under extreme public pressure, that the existing system for protecting against fire was inadequate compared to similar sized towns.\textsuperscript{79}

\textsuperscript{77} Birmingham Mail, Birmingham Daily Gazette, 27 Aug. 1878.
\textsuperscript{78} Birmingham Mail, 28-30 Aug. 1878; Birmingham Gazette, 29-30 Aug. 1878.
\textsuperscript{79} The biggest worry was whether the Brigade could deal with two simultaneous fires: BCA WC Mins, 31 Jan. 1879.
The Home Office and Local Government Board, as the central government departments responsible for 'policing' and local government respectively, also pressured the Town Council to separate the two departments. The Inspector of Constabulary, Colonel Cobbe, declared that an independent brigade with full-time firemen would be 'accustomed to the work of ascent and action at fires', and would work under undivided authority. Whilst refraining from overtly criticising the Chief Constable, Cobbe commented, 'I am sure that the Chief of Police has quite sufficient work to attend to.' The Local Government Board criticised Birmingham's Water Department for failing to maintain a sufficient supply of high pressure water to extinguish fires, and suggested the introduction of zoning to improve access. The decision to separate the police and fire departments, therefore, was influenced by local and national pressures, and a desire by the Liberal Council to re-assert its political legitimacy following a decade of radical municipal reform.

The police and fire services were not linked solely through administrative conventions. Crucially, both services protected the city from either crime (notably property and violent crime) or the fire endemic hazard. They both sought to install order and stability within the potential disorder of the modern industrial city, a common objective which, along with the possession of property and membership of voluntary associations, arguably united mid-Victorian Britain's emerging middle-classes. A *Birmingham Post* investigation into 'the government of Birmingham' between June and September 1910 began with an analysis of the city's Police and Fire Departments before moving onto public utilities, health, education and other local services, indicating the prestige of 'policing' to the locality. Such order would inevitably contribute to a city's reputation as a safe haven for both the urban dweller and businessman. A city deemed safe in both respects was more likely to encourage capital investment than one that was deemed crime ridden or inflammable. It made practical sense for a town council to establish an efficient police force and fire brigade, and also to advertise this fact through the publication of crime rates and financial savings through the rapid extinction of fire. Indeed, such

---

80 Ibid, 1 Nov. 1878, 6 Dec. 1878.
81 This will be explored further below, 27-8.
82 Morris, Class, 321.
externalities were further strengthened by the complementary investment in other areas of urban infrastructure, notably the provision of sewers and clean water during the mid-nineteenth-century drive for improved public health, and the provision of intra-urban transport networks to facilitate easy access within the expanding city, underpinned by the availability of capital, the extension of the local property base in the 1860s and 1870s, and the increasing propensity of local socio-economic elites to participate in the diffusion of a distinctive 'municipal culture.'

Both services, therefore, were widely seen by contemporaries as local in character and part of a tradition of local self-determination. Thus, although the provision of provincial policing was compulsory from 1856, backed by Exchequer funding, the majority of the larger towns and cities had already established forces by this time. Both have been considered as non-profit making services, yet they provided incentives to businesses to invest in the municipality, thus encouraging greater migration and demand for municipal services. The knock-on effect on rateable values enabled greater re-investment in both services, and further reinforced their integral role within infrastructural improvement programmes. The police and fire services were vitally important for towns and cities to protect the wealth accumulated through industrialisation and investment in public utilities and urban infrastructure.

Conflicting attitudes within central government towards the perceived benefits of the police and fire services to local and national society contributed towards differences in their regulation and funding. Owing to the narrow tax base of local government and demands to co-ordinate crime detection on a regional basis, the police was deemed to be a 'national and onerous' service by the 1900s by influential sections of both central and local government, and was subjected to comprehensive and complex legal,

---


financial and administrative regulation from central departments. Paradoxically, the virtual absence of any centrally prescribed regulatory framework for local fire brigades owed much to the perception of the service as one of benefiting the local community alone until the threats posed to munitions production by aerial bombing during the latter stages of the First World War inclined central government to take an active interest.

The police service was, as a consequence of this 'national' perception, subjected to legal and financial controls. The annual Exchequer block grant was doubled to one-half the cost of police wages and uniforms in 1874. This contribution was dependent on each force passing an annual efficiency inspection conducted by the Inspectors of Constabulary, and based on a force's numerical strength and discipline. The grant was designed to sweeten local authorities for a loss of regulatory autonomy to the Home Office before reforms to the structure of local government finance in 1888 weakened departmental control and transferred greater authority to the local authorities to scrutinise their own estimates and accounts.

In stark contrast, the fire service received no such Exchequer funding or Home Office inspection until 1941. Municipalities were expected to fund fire protection through alternative, largely local, sources. Contributions from local insurance companies and expenses incurred from attending fires beyond a municipality's administrative boundaries provided a small, and increasingly declining, proportion of a brigade's income between the 1870s and 1930s. The greater proportion, often exceeding ninety percent of annual recurrent expenditure, was defrayed through local taxation. Furthermore, although the Home Office was content to establish 'enforcement inspectorates' to maintain safety standards for the storage of dangerous chemicals such as nitro-glycerine, it remained ambivalent towards the imposition of minimum standards of fire protection or the annual inspection of the storage of all inflammable

---


materials and the efficiency of local brigades until the mid-1930s.\textsuperscript{89} How these financial and organisational differences were reflected in the deployment of resources and control over administrative autonomy will be explored in this thesis.

**INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND CIVIC REFORM IN THE MIDLANDS**

Despite their different positions within the urban hierarchy, Birmingham and Leicester shared many characteristics in their industrial and administrative experiences between the 1870s and 1930s. These provide a level field for comparative analysis, and in many respects their experiences were typical of general developments within municipal administration in the Midlands. Both were products of industrialisation and urbanisation, dependent in large part on the profitability of manufacturing industry and, for their governance, on local business elites.\textsuperscript{90} The development of the footwear industry during the 1850s transformed Leicester from a small market town dominated by the hosiery trade to a thriving regional centre by the 1900s, acting as a magnet in attracting migrant workers to the semi- and unskilled sectors of the industry. As late as 1891 the footwear and hosiery industries accounted for a combined total of 62.5 per cent of Leicester’s workforce.\textsuperscript{91} The persistence of a diverse range of small manufacturers in Birmingham helped forge harmonious industrial relations between manufacturers and their skilled employees.\textsuperscript{92} The diverse skills and versatility of Birmingham’s metal-working industries enabled the town to adapt quickly to changing economic conditions. Thus, rapid growth during the 1860s and 1870s based on the iron industry continued between the 1880s and 1910s as manufacturers diversified into light engineering, machine tools and mass produced jewellery following rising extraction costs, foreign competition and a decline in locally-mined iron ore.\textsuperscript{93}


\textsuperscript{90} Hennock, *Fit*, 170-6; Jones, 'Recruitment', 65-6; Reeder and Rodger, 'Industrialisation', 554-5.

\textsuperscript{91} B. Lancaster, *Radicalism, Co-operation and Socialism: Leicester Working-Class Politics 1860-1906* (Leicester, 1987), 1-35.

\textsuperscript{92} Briggs, *History*, 4-6.

Table 1.2 Population Growth Rates, 1811-1951

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Birmingham Population, (000s)</th>
<th>Compound Growth Rate (%)</th>
<th>Leicester Population, (000s)</th>
<th>Compound Growth Rate (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1811</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1821</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1831</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1841</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>840</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>922</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>1003</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>1113</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Birmingham and Leicester's industrial bases shifted again during the first four decades of the twentieth-century. Birmingham's diversification into the electrical and motor industries was based on its specialisation in light engineering and electricity. Approximately 5,400 locals were employed in the city's motor industry by 1914 with thousands more employed in subsidiary industries, including almost 4,000 at the Dunlop factory to produce cycle and pneumatic tyres. A further 10,000 workers were employed in cycle manufacturing, exceeding the industry's earlier growth in Coventry. By the end of the 1930s the Austin Motor Works at Longbridge employed approximately 20,000 workers alone. Victorian Leicester's main industrial legacy was a population explosion of 140 per cent between 1871 and 1911 accompanied by high quality durable housing to accommodate the rising numbers of skilled artisans migrating to the town. The footwear and hosiery industries continued to

---


96 Reeder and Rodger, 'Industrialisation', 581.
Industrial expansion and diversification was fuelled by continued population growth throughout the period. Through a combination of improved healthcare, clean water, migration and urban expansion, both Birmingham and Leicester experienced regular compound growth from 1871 despite more rapid growth in the six preceding decades (Table 1.2). Leicester’s growth spurt between 1871 and 1891 was largely based on high and stable labour migration to supply the footwear and hosiery industries. Birmingham’s steady growth between 1871 and 1951 was punctured in 1911 with a compound growth rate of 4.9 per cent following a large boundary extension.

This boundary extension was the culmination of steady industrial and residential overspill since the 1860s and earlier extensions in 1891 and 1909, which added the expanding districts of Balsall Heath, Harborne, Saltley and Quinton (Appendix A). The creation of Greater Birmingham in 1911, through the incorporation of Aston Manor, Handsworth, Erdington, Yardley, King’s Norton and Northfield, trebled the city’s acreage and dispersed its population in numerical terms to reduce its population density from 36 to 18 residents per acre (Table 1.3). It also substantially widened the city’s tax base by incorporating property rated at approximately £1.3 million to an existing rateable value of £2.9 million. The expansion of the City Council’s fringe belt housing programme during the inter-war years spread the city’s population density more thinly. Building on early programmes in suburban development spearheaded by John Nettlefold, the first Chairman of the Housing and Town Planning Committee, the drive for modern housing was fuelled by a modern vision of the city, civic progressivism, industrial fringe development, and a concern at excessive population densities in the existing centre. Thus, by the end of the 1930s, 15 municipal estates with more than 1,000 houses each had been built to the north, east and south of the city.

---

97 Nash and Reeder, Leicester, 2-3, 49.
98 Briggs, History, 135-45.
101 Cherry, Birmingham, 102-9, 112-6. Development was not solely the result of slum clearance, however, with Kingstanding, a low-density planned estate consisting of 30,000 inhabitants by 1932, populated largely by the
Table 1.3 Population Densities in Birmingham and Leicester, 1851-1931

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Birmingham</th>
<th>Leicester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Despite its industrial expansion during the second-half of the nineteenth-century, Leicester remained based around its compact medieval street network.\(^{102}\) This, coupled with rising land values and widespread freehold development, contributed towards relatively high population densities in the town.\(^{103}\) A boundary extension in 1891 incorporated the industrial districts of Belgrave, North Evington, Humberstone and Aylestone, and the middle-class residential suburbs of Knighton and Stoneygate (Appendix B), adding approximately £103,000 to the town’s existing rateable value of £537,000\(^{104}\), yet it was not until the late 1920s that Leicester Council adopted a similarly active approach towards estate planning and ‘decrowding’. Council housing accelerated during the 1930s with the provision of medium-sized estates at Braunstone, Northfields and New Parks in land incorporated in 1935 which, due to their high densities, increased Leicester’s overall density.\(^{105}\)

Birmingham and Leicester also shared similar political characteristics from the 1870s. With the rise in religious non-conformity in both towns, a progressive liberal political agenda emerged, allied closely to skilled and respectable working-classes: H. Meller, *European Cities 1890-1930s: History, Culture and the Built Environment* (Chichester, 2001), 221-70.

---

\(^{102}\) See the general description of the town in *Leicester Trade Protection Society Commercial and General Directory, 2nd ed.* (Leicester, 1875), 9-15.


\(^{104}\) Elliott, *Victorian Leicester*, 148-51.

the entrepreneurial spirit that pervaded both towns. Birmingham’s ‘civic gospel,’ a municipal doctrine based on radical political reform within a religious and socio-economic framework, continued beyond the mayoralty of Joseph Chamberlain and the preaching of local ministers, notably George Dawson, Robert Dale and Charles Vince. Manifested through a variety of programmes, civic reform was funded largely through long-term loans, as with the modernisation of the town centre and municipalisation of public utilities between the 1870s and 1900s. The Corporation Street improvement scheme, which involved extensive slum clearance and the transformation of the central district into a mixed business and civic centre, had its critics, most notably those who believed funds could be better invested in fire protection after the Digbeth fire, but it demonstrated the powers available to municipalities willing to finance large schemes.

The municipalisation of gas in 1874, along with the electricity supply (1899) and tramways (1904), increased municipal debt in the short-term, but was intended to be a profitable venture in the long-term and provide additional revenue to a Council lacking land available for rental, despite high loan charges. Pursuing a national trend of civic indebtedness, by 1909 Birmingham City Council had a total debt of £17.7 million, eighty per cent of which covered ‘reproductive undertakings.’ Much of this debt was, however, secured through issuing stock for public subscription on the London and provincial stock exchanges during periods of low interest with lower loan charges than those offered by


109 Briggs, History, 77-80; Hennock, Fit, 125-30.

110 During the 1910s and 1920s the gas, electricity and tramways departments contributed a combined £100,000 annually towards rate relief: Birmingham Mail, 28 Sep. 1929; Briggs, History, 72-4; 92-9; Hennock, Fit, 117-21.

111 Falkus, ‘Development’, 134. Local authority debt amounted to £656.2 million by 1914, compared to a total national debt of £706 million. By 1932 trading undertakings accounted for roughly one-third, or over £478 million, of total local authority loan indebtedness, and Birmingham had a net loan debt of £42.7 million: J.
the Public Works Loan Commissioners, and repayments invariably spread over sixty years through the bypassing of Treasury regulations by securing local legislation. The decision to purchase the waterworks in 1876 was proposed as a public health initiative and Chamberlain argued that water was a public right rather than a commodity available for purchase. Any profit made from the venture would be reinvested in public health schemes.

Birmingham was not alone in adopting a progressive reform programme during the last quarter of the nineteenth-century. Glasgow, with “a commitment to public service,” had its own “religious-inspired civic gospel” expressed through a citywide network of municipal parks and a new civic headquarters opened in 1888. Academics have shown how other northern and Midland towns had high levels of “civic consciousness” due to a combination of rapid Victorian urbanisation, less entrenched private capital interests, and less dependence on London’s powerful markets. Local peculiarities, however, remained a key influence on the nature and extent of late Victorian civic reform. The remoteness of Cardiff Town Council from the town’s dockyards and the unique position of the Conservative Bute estate as majority landowner and benefactor, for example, removed the incentive for business leaders to participate in municipal affairs and delayed the emergence of civic consciousness until the Edwardian years. English seaside resorts, despite their responsibilities to maximise the comfort of visitors and Mitchell, “Some notes on the financing of capital expenditure of local authorities”, Public Administration, XIII (1935), 153; Birmingham Gazette, 2 Jan. 1930.

112 Private Acts accounted for over half the total capital raised by local authorities between 1890-93 and 1897-1902: Wilson, ‘Finance’, 35-8; H. Page, Local Authority Borrowing (London, 1985), 241-52, 298-314; Daunton, Trusting Leviathan, 279-80; J. Johnson, Loans of Local Authorities, 2nd ed. (London, 1925), 28-34; R. Wright and H. Hobhouse, An Outline of Local Government and Local Finance in England and Wales, 8th ed. (London, 1937), 254-67. County boroughs did not require the Minister of Health’s approval for the issuing of stock until legislation relating to capital borrowing was consolidated in 1933.


rising competition from other resorts, were much slower in municipalising gas and water supplies, and fire protection, yet embraced public transport, electricity, sea defences and promenades, which were less profitable to speculators.\textsuperscript{117}

Leicester also embraced civic consciousness and municipal reform. The growth in Unitarian influence on its Town Council, particularly through the Town Clerks Samuel Stone (1836-72) and John Storey (1874-94), ensured that reform was couched in terms of its moral benefits to society and dissatisfaction with existing amenities provided by private enterprise.\textsuperscript{118} The establishment of a free library in 1862 heralded the beginnings of Leicester's own 'civic gospel' and depended on the benefactions of social and religious elites, notably the Liberal Mayor, Israel Hart.\textsuperscript{119} Water was municipalised in 1878 after decades of criticism levelled at the high prices and poor quality of water provided privately, which had contributed to above average infant mortality rates in the borough by the 1850s.\textsuperscript{120} Public ownership of gas (1878), electricity (1899) and tramways (1901) brought favourable returns despite concerns at the latter's losses for its private contractors during the 1880s. By 1904 much of the track running through Stoneygate and Knighton had been electrified to make public transport quicker and more reliable.\textsuperscript{121} Between 1878 and 1922, moreover, profits of £894,200 made by the Corporation Gasworks were either paid into the Council's sinking fund to redeem loans or used as rate relief.\textsuperscript{122} The provision of large public open spaces in working-class districts, as with Abbey Park (1878) and Spinney Hills Park (1886) to the north and east of the town centre, further reinforced the link between municipal and social reform through the encouragement of respectable leisure.\textsuperscript{123}

\textsuperscript{117} J. Walton, \textit{The English Seaside Resort: A Social History} 1750-1914 (Leicester, 1983), 128-53.

\textsuperscript{118} Elliott, \textit{Victorian Leicester}, 38, 142-6.

\textsuperscript{119} Hart, four times Mayor, donated a building in the East St Margaret's ward for use as a branch library in 1882, which he duly furnished with 1,550 books the following year: A. Newman, 'Sir Israel Hart', \textit{Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society}, XLIX (1973-74), 43-56; Jones, 'Recruitment', 66-7.

\textsuperscript{120} Elliott, \textit{Victorian Leicester}, 124-38.

\textsuperscript{121} \textit{Leicester Mail Yearbook} 1922 (Leicester, 1922), 36-41; Simmons, \textit{Leicester}, 11-12, 57-8.

\textsuperscript{122} \textit{Leicester Mail Yearbook} 1922, 39. A sinking fund referred to any fund set aside for the repayment of debt into which periodical contributions were made. Surpluses were used to redeem future loans, invest in statutory securities or raise further capital for investment: Mitchell, 'Some notes', 162-7.

\textsuperscript{123} Elliott, \textit{Victorian Leicester}, 154-7.
Joseph Chamberlain's death in 1914 has been identified as a watershed in Birmingham's civic development. The alleged dismantling of the 'civic gospel' and its concomitant programmes, through a combination of declining Liberal hegemony and anti-Socialist electoral alliances, is misleading.\textsuperscript{124} Party politics was a major influence on municipal politics during annual elections, yet it was limited in its routine administrative influence through a bi-partisan commitment to civic government and opposition to wholesale central intervention.\textsuperscript{125} Municipal government remained 'important and expanding' during the inter-war years despite the extension of central financial and regulatory controls during the First World War and its aftermath. Investment in public housing, maternity and infant welfare, and an expansion in public fire protection all reinforced the dynamism of municipal government.\textsuperscript{126} In Birmingham civic centre plans, financial support provided to the Symphony Orchestra, provision for a civic airport and War Memorial, extensive council housing, and the construction of central police and fire stations, the latter opened in a lavish ceremony performed by the Duke of Kent and attended by the Lord Mayors of Manchester and Sheffield in December 1935, all reinforced the City Council's commitment to municipal reform and authority during decades of increasing central government encroachment.\textsuperscript{127} Similarly, Leicester City Council's investment in comprehensive education during the 1920s, its commission for Lutyens' War Memorial, its commitment to urban improvement and road expansion during the 1930s, its proposed municipal aerodrome to the south-west of the city, and the construction of new central police and fire stations, the latter praised by Birmingham Watch Committee in 1927 as 'the finest of its kind in the Empire,'

\textsuperscript{124} Gunn, 'Ritual', 237; Cannadine, \textit{Churchill's Shadow}, 128.
reinforced its place as a progressive-minded municipal authority. The endurance of small firms and stable employment in both cities, coupled with a persistent interest from middle-class economic elites in civic affairs, protected the localism of municipal administration.

It is against the background of this civic endeavour that the provision of urban ‘policing’ should be reassessed and the Watch Committee repositioned within administrative power relations. The extension of central government controls and hierarchies within urban ‘policing’ did not simply render municipal government ‘a decentralised outgrowth of central government’ by the late 1930s. ‘Policing’ remained an inherently local service throughout the first four decades of the twentieth-century, and central departments, cautious of incurring the wrath or ‘odium’ of influential and experienced councillors, chief officials and representative associations, did not challenge the authority of large and wealthy county boroughs. These county boroughs devolved their authority from more than statutory directives and were able to influence national ‘police’ policy through a combination of lobbying, consultation and co-operation derived from their considerable local resources and the ‘historic constitutional position’ of the Watch Committee.

STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

This study seeks to reintegrate urban history with political structures, conventions and policy networks prevalent within the power-dependence model. Interactions and the negotiation of resources between municipal and national institutions between the 1870s and 1930s imposed considerable pressures on the administration of municipal police and fire departments. The focus is on the complex interactions, rules and procedures employed within administrative structures and strategies. By

131 Finer, English, 287.
explores the nature and dispersal of intergovernmental resources the study takes a thematic approach towards administrative power and the history of intergovernmental relations.

The constraints and freedoms placed on municipal autonomy by legal and financial resources are examined in Chapter 2 and form the foundations for explorations into the ‘official’ intergovernmental relations between the Town Council, central government departments and Parliament. Central regulation of police funding and administration was an evolutionary process that extended throughout the period under review. Notwithstanding the increasing central encroachment into municipal services, local sources of finance and the presence of administrative discretion ensured that a municipal presence in national decision-making strategies reinforced the localism of police administration into the interwar years. Although the fire service, owing to the absence of Exchequer funds, remained a locally regulated service, this Chapter explores the historic relationship between the service and the insurance industry, and contrasts the rights and funding of pay and occupational pensions within the two services.

Chapters 3 and 4 assess the influence of institutions and ‘experts’ on municipal administration. Chapter 3 extends previous research into urban elites from the Town Council as a homogeneous entity to the Watch Committee as a distinctive, yet interrelated, municipal institution in its own right. The rules governing Watch Committee business constrained its independence from the Council and central government departments, but members’ attitudes towards administrative procedures, expressed through regular meetings, high levels of attendance and extensive experience of ‘police’ administration, ensured that individual interactions and personalities were an enduring influence on power relations. The social and business interests of members provided a wealth of local and technical knowledge which, combined with the Chairman’s civic authority, reinforced the Watch Committee’s prestigious position in the civic life of Birmingham and Leicester. Chapter 4 introduces the expertise of the chief official and explores the growing professionalisation of the Chief Constable and Fire Officer through the spread of occupational associations and their influence as heads of their respective departments. Chief officers were expected to actively demonstrate their technical expertise and earn the trust of their Watch Committee, which remained a constraint on their independence. In order to exert their authority within municipal and national networks chief officials co-ordinated their technical and administrative knowledge with their colleagues and administrative peers.
The full complexity of intergovernmental relations and decision-making is demonstrated in Chapter 5 through a chronological analysis of interactions between institutions interested in 'police' policy-making. Policy community modelling visualises the increasing complexities of policy-making, shifting from fairly horizontal relations between 1870 and 1914 to interactive relational webs by the mid-1930s. The exogenous pressures of wartime 'policing' imposed unprecedented national demands on local administrative practices and, ultimately, threatened the Watch Committee's prestige and autonomy. The response to this threat, through national mobilisation under the Association of Municipal Corporations, restructured central-local relations during the inter-war years as national regulatory pressures created new institutions involved in the standardisation of administrative procedures.

The impact of intergovernmental relations and policy outcomes on the rank-and-file and urban space form the bases of Chapters 6 and 7. The structural weaknesses of industrial relations immediately after the First World War were embedded within the strict organisational regimes maintained jointly by the Watch Committee and Chief Officer. The skills of the constable and fireman expanded during the first four decades of the twentieth-century, yet attempts to exert operational independence were resisted by senior officers through existing rules of inspection and disciplinary procedures. The collection, recording and dissemination of information, moreover, reinforced municipal authority in, and public support for, both services. Municipalities had extensive access to statistical information and local knowledge. Local characteristics, for example in political control or wealth, invariably influenced the comprehensiveness and quality of local services.133 Responses to urban expansion, particularly with suburbanisation during the last quarter of the nineteenth-century and, in the case of Birmingham, the extension of the city's boundaries in 1911, depended on local perceptions of the risks in these added districts, attitudes towards technology, and an inclination to invest capital in protecting the increasingly amorphous urban landscape or initiating urban renewal programmes.134


CENTRAL-LOCAL RELATIONS AND THE NEGOTIATION OF LEGAL AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Financial and legal resources were crucial to municipal administration from the mid nineteenth-century. The former, as 'the most tangible and readily identifiable resource of public interest groups,' referred to the funds raised to finance particular services, and the latter to the mandatory and discretionary legal rights, or authority, of municipalities to deliver services.¹ Sources of income provide a measure of a municipality's 'relative independence' within central-local relations.² Municipal administration was increasingly regulated through a combination of legal obligations influenced from the 1850s by the provision of central government block grants for education (1872), policing (1856 and 1874), poor law reform (1874) and road maintenance (1882 and 1887).³

The provision of statutory powers to municipal authorities depended on the availability of funds to maintain minimum standards. The four main sources of municipal finance, central government grants, local rates, profits from public utilities and estates, and capital borrowing, depended on a range of local and national statutes.⁴ The rate, a locally levied tax on occupiers of land and buildings, was prescribed through legislation ranging from the Municipal Corporations Act, 1835 to its successor Act in 1882, and was reformed during the 1920s as a response to economic depression.⁵ Although it remained an unpopular burden on local ratepayers due to its regressive and inflexible nature, the rate continued to form a large proportion of income for both the police and fire services between the 1870s and 1930s,

---

particularly as local authorities had no powers to raise their own income taxes or impose levies on profits or land values.\(^6\) Between 1878-79 and 1883-84 the rateable contribution to municipal finance 'rose inexorably' by approximately 14 per cent, outstripping growth in rateable values and population, and this trend continued until 1914.\(^7\) This ultimately reinforced the strategy employed by large county boroughs to seek alternative funding for capital-intensive projects, particularly as local expenditure formed an increasing proportion of the national income, assisting in the long-term rise of British capital expenditure.\(^8\)

The growth in local government investment during the second-half of the nineteenth-century has led historians to identify a shift from the laissez-faire Benthamite Liberalism of the early to mid-Victorian period to a discourse of municipal collectivism underpinned by central financial support.\(^9\) This has been seen as a collectivist response to the poor living and working conditions of the urban population, with the municipalisation of public utilities designed to improve public health amenities ('gas and water socialism'), but also as the manifestation of an entrepreneurial culture through the influence of local business interests on the Town Council ('municipal capitalism').\(^10\) This shift was reflected in the increasing level of municipal investment within the urban landscape through profitable public utilities to 'policing' (policing, public health, fire protection, street lighting), and 'education' (museums, art galleries, libraries and open spaces).\(^11\)

---

\(^6\) Millward and Sheard, 'Urban fiscal', 506-7.


Central government's reluctance to supplement rising local government expenditure with increased income or indirect taxes reinforced variations in municipal investment and resource allocation. Likewise, central government departments did not monopolise legal resources either. Predominant urban institutions, extending beyond the municipality to include prominent businesses, employers' associations, debt courts, trusts and voluntary associations, assisted in the provision of a legal system to regulate local economic activity and validate Victorian property rights. Local government's authority was similarly reinforced during the second-half of the nineteenth-century through a combination of local Acts and minimum standards ('constitutional resources') and the allocation of authority reflected in the composition and functions of local authorities. Municipalities promoted local Bills to implement reforms specific to local circumstances; Birmingham and Leicester obtained over thirty Acts between them from the 1870s to the end of the 1930s, many of which granted additional financial powers such as issuing stock for public subscription to purchase public utilities or establishing locally funded pension schemes.

Thus, central departments maintained statutory powers for the publication of special statistical returns, the inspection of certain local services, and the power of action in default, yet lacked authority to restrict the level of local rates or how such money should be raised and spent. Nor did central departments have power to appoint or dismiss local councillors or aldermen, committee chairmen, certain public officials (notwithstanding the chief constable from 1920), or interfere with the choice of local electors. Although local government was 'legally encumbered' on Parliament this did not automatically translate into central domination. Legal resources, or authority, were contingent on the

---

12 Millward and Sheard, 'Urban fiscal', 508, 512.
14 Rhodes, National, 54-8.
17 Waller, Town, 240-2; Rodger, Transformation, 3.
interdependence of urban and national institutions – the ‘visible hand’ – in regulating the industrial city and, in particular, spreading the risk of the rising costs of municipal investment. Furthermore, convention dictated that Britain was administered by a high level of local self-determination not matched in Europe. The pattern of local government established by the end of the nineteenth-century, therefore, remained ‘scarcely changed’ until comprehensive reform in 1974, despite sporadic attempts to either consolidate or overhaul the existing system during the mid-1930s and 1940s.

This chapter will explore the role of legal and financial resources in the administration of police and fire services in Birmingham and Leicester between the 1870s and 1930s. It will question traditional assumptions about central control of resources and the presence of local dependence. Municipal innovation and enterprise in seeking non-central sources of funding and working within existing legal structures to maintain order were pivotal features in the central-local relationship. Although central government maintained a virtual monopoly of statutory controls, this did not automatically denote ‘fundamental inequalities’ between the ‘constitutional superior’ and subordinate local authorities.

Public order and ‘policing’ were unsustainable by the private market, yet this did not dilute municipal pressure on central government to wield its statutory and financial powers at times convenient to the municipality, and consult with central departments and other institutions in either implementing or resisting policy changes.

NATIONAL AND ONEROUS SERVICES

The Royal Commission on Local Taxation, reporting in 1901, officially legitimised the distinction between ‘local’ and ‘national’ public services, creating a political consensus for the ensuing two decades.

---


decades. Those services deemed 'national and onerous', it was agreed, should not be borne entirely by local resources owing to the national benefits they provided. Funds were to be raised according to the local authority’s ability to pay for their administration:

... the presumption is that a service is national when the State insists on its being carried out, and on a certain standard of efficiency being reached.23

This was already established policy, reflected by the provision of the block grants from the mid-1830s, and the centralisation of the prison service in 1877.24 This consensus led G. J. Goschen, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, to overhaul the system of payment of such grants in 1888 to prevent their duplication in the national accounts as both (local) income and (national) expenditure.25 Goschen replaced the block grant system with assigned revenues (with the sole exception of education). Rather than holding the annual Parliamentary vote to distribute local funds, which facilitated the scrutiny of public spending and reinforced the image of equity and fiscal prudence26, the scheme established the Local Taxation Account27 to eradicate Westminster’s control and create a constant flow of money from central government to the localities. This was based on revenue-sharing, with funds drawn from various national taxes and excise duties.28 Goschen believed it would solve the growing fiscal burdens on the state, particularly as the percentage block grants obliged central government to increase its own contributions when expenditure rose locally, yet it essentially maintained a system of 'inflexible and unresponsive' funding for the same services, weakened parliamentary and executive scrutiny of public

23 Final Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation [hereafter Local Taxation 1901], P.P. 1901 (638), XXIV, 12.
25 Report of the Right Hon. G. J. Goschen, President of the Poor Law Board, on the Progressive Increase of Local Taxation, with especial reference to the proportion of local and imperial burdens borne by the different classes of real property in the United Kingdom, as compared with similar burdens in other European countries, P.P. 1893-4 (201), LXXVII.
26 Daunton, Just Taxes, 6.
27 A special account maintained by the Bank of England.
28 R. J. Bennett, Central Grants to Local Authorities (Cambridge, 1982), 49.
spending, and was supplemented by additional grants towards roads, housing, maternity welfare, and treatment of venereal diseases by 1914. 29

Concern at the spiralling costs of municipal government was widespread from the 1870s. A Conservative government was elected in 1874 on a pledge to augment rate relief that was quickly fulfilled with the expansion of the annual police grant in aid of wages and clothing from one-quarter to one-half the total cost. 30 This followed two decades of spiralling police costs to local ratepayers following the introduction of the initial grant in 1856 to tempt local authorities to maintain efficient forces in return for central inspection by the Inspectors of Constabulary. Inspection was a pre-requisite for the award of a certificate of efficiency from the Home Secretary which stipulated that the force in question was efficient in terms of numerical strength and discipline. Certification authorised the payment of the annual grant. 31 The withholding of the certificate was evidently a last resort for successive Home Secretaries, although it was used more extensively during the early 1870s, with 17 borough forces in 1872 and 24 the following year deemed inefficient, out of a total of approximately 165 borough forces. 32 This was a deliberate tool to justify the expansion of the grant in 1874 and the award of greater central regulation. 33 Neither Birmingham nor Leicester failed to pass the efficiency inspection throughout the period, although there were instances where the visiting Inspector would suggest changes to the organisation or discipline of the force to improve its overall efficiency. 34

29 Offer, Property, 201-11; Waller, Town, 265-7; Daunton, Trusting Leviathan, 289-93. The assigned revenues system, whilst falling into disuse by 1914, was not officially abolished until 1929. The history of the system and its relationship to block grants is best covered in: Finer, English, 441-78.

30 Police Act, 1874: 37 & 38 Vict., ch. 58. The grant did not cover any other areas of local police expenditure (such as administrative costs, stations, overheads and travel), and remained at one-half the cost of pay and clothing between 1874 and 1918 at which point it was altered to cover one-half the total net cost of police forces.


33 PRO HO45/19/774, Home Office Memorandum, 27 Apr. 1874.

Despite this perceived concern at the spiralling costs of municipal administration, central government resisted demands for greater state intervention in the fire service, with the Home Secretary\(^{35}\) declaring that any reform 'must necessarily be paid out of the rates.'\(^{36}\) Although the 1874 Budget awarded significant relief to municipalities for police and lunatic charges, the principle that municipalities should improve working-class housing, sanitation and education overwhelmed agitation for fire service reform.\(^{37}\) The dual system of local and national services, therefore, already existed within Treasury policy-making between 1874 and 1901. Despite the presence of central funding, however, poor relief, elementary education and policing comprised 41.3 per cent of expenditure from local rates in England and Wales in 1893-94.\(^{38}\)

Although the assigned revenues system failed to provide a flexible and variable source of hypothecated funding for 'national and onerous' services, it signalled the transfer of financial responsibility from the Home Office to the Watch Committee.\(^{39}\) The 1901 Report, along with successive reports, declared that central financial support for the police was wholly inadequate in view of continued rising costs for maintaining public order. Recommendations that the annual grant should be substantially expanded from one-half of the cost of pay and clothing to one-half of the net cost of police administration with guarantees for efficiency and economy were designed to placate a worried Home Office, which had lost its control over funding allocation under Goschen's reforms.\(^{40}\) Goschen had abolished the statutory duty for municipalities to submit annual expenditure estimates to the central department for its sanction. The accounts were now examined locally.

---

\(^{35}\) Richard Assheton Cross (1874-80).

\(^{36}\) Hansard Debates [hereafter Debs], 28 Apr. 1874, cols.1261-2.

\(^{37}\) P. Smith, Disraelian Conservatism and Social Reform (London, 1967), 198-207.

\(^{38}\) Excluding rates charged for water and gas supplied to private individuals, or for private improvement works: Public Local Rates and Net Expenditure in Relief of the Poor, Elementary Education and Police, P. P. 1896 (156), LXXIII.

\(^{39}\) On the inflexibility of hypothecation -- of earmarking particular sources of finance to particular uses -- and its failure to encourage economy in public spending, Daunton, Just Taxes, 6; S. J. Chapman, Local Government and State Aid (London, 1899), 94-111; G. Garnsey, 'Control of expenditure within government departments', Public Administration, II (1924), 138-41.

\(^{40}\) Local Taxation 1901, 24; Final Report of the Departmental Committee on Local Taxation [hereafter Local Taxation 1914], P. P. 1914 (7315), XL, 41-3.
Between 1857 and 1888 the Home Office had examined estimates annually to ascertain the net costs actually defrayed by local and national contributions. Its main complaint was that assigned revenues undermined its authority over local expenditure at the expense of local authorities and the Treasury, with the latter controlling the dispersal of funds to the Local Taxation Account from 1907. The Inspectors of Constabulary, whilst having delegated authority from the Home Office to ensure that each force was maintained ‘in a state of efficiency in point of numbers and discipline’ from 1856, were unable to control police expenditure. Those forces reaching ‘the minimum standard of efficiency’ could resist pressure to invest in other areas of police administration beyond pay, clothing and pensions, which constrained the Home Office’s administrative dominance and contributed to stagnation in police expenditure during the 1880s and 1890s. Throughout the 1890s and 1900s the Home Office pressured the Treasury to reinstate the direct block grant and, by consequence, reinforce its regulatory powers over local finances. The award to local authorities for ceding autonomy would be the generous extension of the grant.

The Liberal government (1908-15) accepted that the police service, amongst other local services, was under-funded and required additional central support. However, in the 1914 Finance and Revenue Bills Lloyd George was forced to postpone measures to increase Exchequer contributions to the police, poor law, main roads and criminal prosecutions due to the outbreak of hostilities. Inevitably this meant that any reform during the First World War was solely dependent on municipal initiative and that central government had to wait to develop mechanisms for enforcing minimum standards of service delivery. Municipalities adopted varied policies with some, including Birmingham in 1915, granting pay rises to their officers, whilst others, including Leicester, provided terminable allowances or war bonuses in anticipation of reform after the cessation of military activities. It was not until September 1918 that central government reasserted its regulatory control over local finances.

42 At £11 to £12 per head according to Millward and Sheard, ‘Urban fiscal’, 506.
44 Debs, 4 May 1914, cols.68-74; J. Harris, ‘The transition to high politics in English social policy, 1889-1914’, in M. Bentley and J. Stevenson (eds.), High and Low Politics in Modern Britain (Oxford, 1983), 58-79.
45 Chancellor of the Exchequer (1908-15).
46 Debs, 17 Jul. 1914, cols.2294-5.
47 C. Bellamy, Administering Central-Local Relations, 1871-1919 (Manchester, 1988), 60.
introducing an expanded grant of one-half the total net cost of police administration. Funds were also
dependent on Home Office approval of annual estimates and remuneration scales, which were fixed at
the Metropolitan level. This shifted the balance of financial power from the localities back to central
government. Birmingham and Leicester were forced to fix their pay scales at the level suggested by the
Home Secretary according to centrally determined standards of living. The expansion of the grant,
therefore, sweetened municipalities in preparation for normalisation and the extension of the Home
Secretary's regulatory powers.

LOCAL SOURCES OF FUNDING

The fire service, in contrast to the police, was deemed a local service. The perceived benefits of fire
protection were restricted to the local community. National repercussions were deemed to be limited
and central-local conflict over administrative control avoided. That fire loss contributed to a downfall
in national economic output was overlooked until the First World War when munitions factories were
protected by regional area schemes to benefit the war effort. Owing to the localised nature of British
fire protection, there was little standardisation between the 1870s and the inter-war years. Local
authorities, with the exception of London, were not legally compelled to maintain fire brigades, whilst
central funding did not exist. Where brigades were maintained certain minimum standards were
prescribed concerning water supplies for extinguishing fires, the right to force entry into burning
buildings, and the provision of pensions to police firemen, but little else that challenged the
localised and discretionary nature of the service. There were no standards of efficiency or inspection

50 LRO CM42/25, Watch Committee Minutes [hereafter WC Mins], 3 Dec. 1918, 215-16; CM42/26, WC Mins, 19
Oct. 1920, 46, 51. For resistance to imposition from Leicester Watch Committee: Leicester Mercury, 3 Oct. 1918;
52 The government made an annual contribution of £10,000 to the Metropolitan Fire Brigade from 1865 'in the
interest of its own property,' although it considered that this was no different from the way in which property-
owners contributed to their own local brigade through the rates: Debs, 28 Jul. 1899, col. 792; 26 Apr. 1900,
cols.99-100.
53 Public Health Act, 1875: 38 & 39 Vict. 55, Part III, s.66.
54 Public Health (Amendment) Act, 1907: 7 Edw. .53, Part VIII, s.87-90.
55 Police (Pensions) Act, 1893: 56 Vict. 10, s.1, 8 (2).
and little standardisation of appliances, particularly hydrants, stopcocks and hose-couplings, which inevitably created practical difficulties in assisting neighbouring authorities.56

Leading politicians and civil servants defended the absence of central regulation and funding. Edward Troup, Principal Clerk to the Home Office, rejected demands for an annual grant in giving evidence to the Select Committee on Fire Brigades in 1899:

It seems to me that it is more the interest of the people of the district that they should be efficiently protected, and the law enforced, than anybody else’s ... I should myself doubt whether it is a matter in which compulsory power should be used at all. If the inhabitants of a place do not insist on having an efficient fire brigade it is themselves who suffer.57

A Private Member’s Bill was rejected on similar grounds the following year.58 Central resistance to financial reform continued until 1947 on the understanding that the funding of fire protection should be the responsibility of the insurance industry, for which effective fire protection maximised profitability. Less than ten per cent of a municipal brigade’s income, however, derived from insurance contributions. Ninety per cent derived from the local rates in Birmingham and Leicester. Insurance contributions were voluntary and based on the historic relationship between fire-fighting and the insurance industry. The first organised brigades were administered and funded by the companies beginning business following the Great Fire of London in 1666, unlike in North America where organised fire-fighting preceded the introduction of fire insurance.59 Many insurance brigades continued in Britain into the 1870s, as in Birmingham and Leicester, the latter’s Sun Office Brigade protecting customers only, although by the 1900s most county boroughs had severed their links.60 That these companies scaled down their brigades signified growing mistrust in the delivery of local services by private enterprise, growing municipal burdens in public utilities and welfare, and the shift in emphasis towards protecting human life.61

56 Fire, Jun. 1922, 5.
Demands within municipal government for a greater share of the financial burden to be provided by insurance brigades were resisted by the industry’s representative body, the Fire Offices’ Committee (FOC). The FOC refused to accept liability for fire-fighting arrangements, stating in 1900 that ‘we have to take risks as we find them, and ... we have nothing whatever to do with fire extinction or the provision of fire appliances.”62 Models provided by the Australian and New Zealand Fire Boards, which consisted of local authority and insurance representatives, and funded jointly by local, central and insurance sources, were scorned within British government where there was a movement away from voluntary and private service provision towards public control by the 1920s.63

The local companies in Birmingham and Leicester made annual contributions towards the municipal brigade. In Birmingham a contribution of approximately £700 was made in 1898, which only covered 6.3 per cent of the total Brigade costs. In Leicester the County Fire Office contributed just over £3 annually from the end of the 1840s until 1881, and an average of £50 between the 1880s and 1930s.64 By the mid-1920s many insurance contributions had largely fallen into disuse, with experts questioning their purpose:

So far as any principle is concerned, there appears to be no more reason for the Fire Department of an Insurance Company to subsidise fire brigades than for the Marine Department to subsidise lighthouses, or the Burglary Department to subsidise the police. Were the law to enforce such subsidies on a substantial scale, it would probably entail a corresponding increase in the rate of premiums, with the result that the prudent citizen would have to pay more, while any relief in the burden of the ratepayer would be shared by his less prudent neighbour.65

64 LRO L352, Leicester Borough Council Annual Abstract of Accounts [hereafter Leicester Accounts], 1849-1938; BCA MS1303/284, Scale of charges to insurance companies from Birmingham Fire Brigade.
65 Royal Commission, 177.
Birmingham's Chief Fire Officer noted in 1934 that the insurance contribution had remained fixed since 1874 despite the rising value of insured property at risk.66 Despite this, the expanding insurance market, with the emergence of the 'cult of the equity,' culminated in the industry being one of the few commercial growth areas during the 1920s.67 Fire insurance expanded throughout the Edwardian period, with premiums estimated at almost £30 million in 1913, and fire losses totalling £6 million nationally the following year. By 1919 losses had grown to £14 million, averaging £12 million during the early 1920s.68 Whilst much of the growth in premiums can be attributed to expanding American markets it was evident that British businesses and homeowners were increasingly inclined to insure their properties. Demand paved the way for greater competition, with fire insurance remaining the staple service within the industry.69 Despite market growth, the influence of the industry on fire policy was, from the 1870s, limited through a combination of municipal enterprise, a loss of confidence in the speculative market, and the industry's withdrawal from fire protection.

**MUNICIPAL GROWTH AND PUBLIC PROBITY**

The Municipal Corporation Acts of 1835 and 1882 stipulated that ratepayers could inspect the minutes and accounts of their borough, although most municipalities, including Birmingham and Leicester, simply published their annual abstracts and council reports within the local press for mass readership. The lack of uniformity between accounting procedures rendered it difficult to compare all aspects of municipal finance, although most county boroughs adopted similar methods of recording transactions by the 1900s.70 Birmingham and Leicester simply listed the transactions of current and capital services, including net outstanding debt, with a summary balance sheet. The increasing length of the published accounts, rising from less than 100 pages in 1870 to over 400 by 1920, reflected the increasing

---

66 BCA MS1303/287, Memorandum concerning the relationship between Birmingham Fire Brigade and the insurance companies, 11 Dec. 1934.
67 P. Scott, 'Towards the 'cult of the equity'? Insurance companies and the interwar capital market', *Economic History Review*, LV (2002), 78.
68 *Royal Commission*, 156-7; *Insurance Record*, 22 Nov. 1922, 599.
municipal workload, with expanded sections devoted to new responsibilities and capital investment.\(^{71}\)

Similarly the number of pages devoted to Watch Committee finances increased by a fifth in Leicester and a sixth in Birmingham between 1870 and 1940. Expansion facilitated a heightened sense of complexity, rendering accounts the domain of the financial expert, and 'confusing and unintelligible to the ordinary ratepayer.'\(^{72}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Police</th>
<th>Fire Brigades</th>
<th>Police</th>
<th>Fire Brigade</th>
<th>Police</th>
<th>Fire Brigade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>45.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>59.6</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>62.2</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>78.8</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>73.9</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>62.3</td>
<td>43.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>132.7</td>
<td>150.0</td>
<td>151.8</td>
<td>181.7</td>
<td>144.8</td>
<td>142.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>400.0</td>
<td>475.0</td>
<td>333.3</td>
<td>453.9</td>
<td>281.9</td>
<td>378.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>428.8</td>
<td>600.0</td>
<td>814.2</td>
<td>901.6</td>
<td>417.6</td>
<td>699.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Birmingham Council declined to include breakdowns of its Fire Brigade costs until 1900, and it was not until the 1910s that specific administrative costs and overheads were outlined in detail. This lack of transparency was surprising considering the rising costs in protecting the town from fire, although it could be the result of existing conventions and the centralisation of complex financial information jointly within the Watch Committee and Treasurer's Department. The costs of Birmingham and Leicester Fire Brigades grew at similar rates until 1901 whereupon Birmingham grew at a slightly greater rate. Both Brigades experienced heavy investment between 1921 and 1931, Birmingham more than doubling its expenditure and Leicester almost doubling (Table 2.1).\(^{73}\) A similar pattern was discernible in the Police, with 59.1 per cent growth in investment in Birmingham between 1921 and

---

\(^{71}\) This was despite Leicester's accounts taking on smaller page dimensions from 1890.

\(^{72}\) Report on Accounts, 19.

\(^{73}\) Birmingham's annual recurrent expenditure was 'quite small comparatively' to protect a Rateable Value of £6.7 million by 1930, and remained cheaper than the annual cost of maintaining the city's parks: Birmingham Gazette, 2 Jan. 1930.
1931 as compared to 32.5 per cent growth in Leicester. The continued growth of both services throughout the period demonstrated their increased burden on local and/or national sources of funding. Indeed, both Fire Brigades outstripped growth in the Police from 1901, an indication that municipal investment in fire protection became more prominent in the twentieth-century.

Recurrent expenditure, excluding loan charges, continued to rise after 1900 even when investment was expressed per head of the population (Table 2.2). The extension of Birmingham’s boundaries in 1911 had the dual impact of substantially increasing the city’s rateable value and the cost of policing the additional population. Research into the annual average expenditure of county boroughs in English and Welsh regions between 1870 and 1913 demonstrated that although the Midlands accounted for the highest level of recurrent expenditure between 1870 and 1890, by 1912 it had been exceeded by forces in the south and north. 74 Figures for Birmingham, which exceeded those of all three regions, indicate local variations in attitudes towards expenditure and special problems with regard to crime, and Leicester’s low proportionate level of expenditure between 1871 and 1900, at approximately £5 less than the Midlands’ annual average of £12.90, reinforce this. 75

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Police</th>
<th>Fire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>Leicester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871-80</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881-90</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891-00</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901-10</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911-20</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921-30</td>
<td>48.8</td>
<td>32.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931-40</td>
<td>72.8</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: As Table 2.1.

Although the expansion of the police grant in 1918 served as a form of rate relief in Birmingham where rate poundage fell from 16.2 to 8.4 per cent between 1913-14 and 1924-25, the rateable burden increased temporarily in Leicester from 4.7 to 6.3 per cent (Table 2.3). This was mainly due to the

74 R. Millward and S. Sheard, Government Expenditure on Social Overheads and the Infrastructure in England and Wales, 1870-1914 (Manchester University Working Papers in Economic and Social History, 1993), Table 7.
75 Ibid; idem, ‘Urban fiscal’, 512.
inclusion of police pensions in the rateable assessment, but the impact of relative under-investment in preceding decades per head of the population was a contributory factor (Table 2.2). Leicester Fire Brigade maintained a steady rate poundage throughout the period, although Birmingham Fire Brigade experienced varying periods of heavier investment, notably during 1885-86, 1913-14 and, to a lesser extent, 1934-35. Waller notes that the proportion of rateable value actually paid by the occupiers of urban property almost doubled between 1885 and 1910.76 Although the police and fire services did not contribute extensively to this growth, they remained enduring burdens on local rates and central contributions rose disproportionately to rateable incomes, which diluted central government's supreme authority during the first two decades of the twentieth-century.77

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Birmingham Fire Brigade (%)</th>
<th>Birmingham Police (%)</th>
<th>Total (d)</th>
<th>Leicester Fire Brigade (%)</th>
<th>Leicester Police (%)</th>
<th>Total (d)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1885-86</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898-99</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913-14</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924-25</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934-35</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: As Table 2.1.

As local expenditure increased, the central percentage contribution was forced to expand simultaneously. Between 1874-75, when the police grant was initially doubled, and 1911-12 the net police expenditure actually defrayed by the rates more than trebled in Birmingham and in more than sixty county boroughs (Table 2.4). In Leicester the net expenditure increased more than four times during the same period. Between 1911-12 and 1931-32 the police grant was extended to half the total annual cost, while the net expenditure defrayed by the rates almost trebled in Leicester and other county boroughs, and quadrupled in Birmingham. Local contributions to police expenditure outstripped the central contribution before 1918, and continued to make a significant contribution to local costs during the inter-war years.

76 Waller, Town, 257.
77 The inflexibility of the local taxation and central grant systems are discussed in Daunton, 'Urban Britain', 47-8.
78 Includes contagious diseases in animals until 1924.
Table 2.4 Net Police Expenditure Defrayed by the Rates (£000s), 1874-1932

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Birmingham</th>
<th>Leicester</th>
<th>County Borough Mean</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1874-75</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911-12</td>
<td>74.2</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931-32</td>
<td>282.8</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Return Showing for each County in Great Britain for 1875, 1876, 1877, 1878, and 1879, the Expenditure on the Police, P.P. 1882 (19), LIV; HMIC Annual Report 1912, P.P. 1913 (76), LII; HMIC Annual Report 1931-32, P.P. 1932-33 (46), XV.

Although there were minor differences in the ways Birmingham and Leicester funded their services, they both received substantial local support. The Home Office recognised that although central government was providing an increasing percentage of local income, municipalities themselves were matching the grant. In particular, municipalities had to fund expenses not covered by the annual grant, even after 1918. These included some administrative costs, recreational facilities, subscriptions to professional associations, travel expenses and depreciation. It also included many extra duties, notably inspecting food and drugs, probation work, fire-fighting, and destroying diseased animals.

The police remained a locally delivered service, funded equally by central and local sources, with central government forced to negotiate funding policy with localities. Similarly the fire service, though a less expensive burden, demanded a variety of sources to reduce its rateable burden. Funding, therefore, relied upon the interdependence of central, local and private interests.

STANDARDISING PENSIONS

The local and national status of the fire and police services respectively was further cemented by the provision of pensions. The level of central-local interaction over occupational pensions influenced the nature of administrative power within policy formulation and implementation. The police service was

---

79 Birmingham funded its Police Force through the Borough Rate and its Fire Brigade through the Improvement Rate until 1920 at which point the two funds were combined. Leicester funded its Police Force through a Watch Rate between 1835 and 1892 before transferring it to the Borough Rate. Its Fire Brigade was funded through the Borough Fund.

80 For example Birmingham and Leicester Police were entitled to reclaim subscription costs for the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and their voluntary Dogs' Home. They were not allowed to reclaim costs for the Birmingham Police Refuge or subscriptions to the St John's Ambulance Association.

81 PRO HO45/11930, Home Office Memorandum on Supplementary Government Grants in Aid of Police Expenditure, Jun. 1921.
centrally regulated from 1890, with the fire service locally regulated until 1925. Municipalities were increasingly responsible for covering spiralling police pension deficiencies during the early twentieth-century. Modifications to central funding in response to Treasury demands for economy within local expenditure during the 1920s challenged assumptions about central government’s role in providing adequate long-term remuneration for public servants. The traditional perspective on police pensions, that central government controlled the funding and allocation of pension rights from 1890, presents a generalised portrait which fails to identify complex local practices.82

The civil service and the armed forces were the first public sector organisations to receive state pensions, the former being awarded a generous non-contributory scheme in 1859. Compulsory contributory schemes were extended to other public sector employees, including teachers, Poor Law officials and policemen, by the 1890s after decades of central-local conflict over the source of income for such schemes.83 This policy was assisted by the diffusion of pensions within large private enterprises by the 1870s. The majority of railway companies, for example, maintained private schemes where their employees contributed a proportion of their weekly earnings, which was matched by the employers. Membership was compulsory and payments based on length of service, with the funds deposited in fixed interest securities. Collieries, banks, the Post Office, and the Gas, Light and Coke Company maintained similar schemes.84 Victorian critics, including many of the smaller and less wealthy municipalities, bemoaned the impact of compulsory pensions on individual attitudes towards thrift and self-help backed by the threat of the workhouse, yet the diffusion of schemes by right suggested that central government and the more dominant municipalities had, by the 1890s, agreed on a consultative and co-operative strategy towards superannuation for certain public sector workers.85

The award of police pension rights in 1890 was not the culmination of a linear process, but followed delayed negotiations between those ‘actors’ in favour of compulsory pensions (the rank-and-file, chief constables and the Inspectors of Constabulary), those opposed (watch committees), and those

---

83 P. Thane, Old Age in English History (Oxford, 2000), 236-42.
85 Hannah, Inventing Retirement, 9-10.
Concern at the rise in recruitment and retention problems during the 1870s was related to poor working conditions and remuneration. Indeed, municipalities were beginning to recognise the benefits of offering financial incentives to attract a better class of recruit, including Home Office-approved ‘progressive scales of pay’ and a merit class to reward ‘good conduct’. The persistence of higher real wages in other skilled industries (Appendix D) before national scales were imposed in 1918, however, and the retention of arbitrary and discretionary pensions before 1890, contributed to low retention rates and a general lack of experience amongst the rank-and-file.

Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees resisted parliamentary and professional pressures to establish a standardised pension scheme funded by national and local taxation during the 1870s and 1880s. They defended their right to make discretionary payments to reward ‘meritorious, vigilant and thoroughly efficient service’ rather than those ‘who simply do their duty mechanically.’ Leicester’s Town Clerk, John Storey, criticised proposals entitling policemen to retire after twenty-five years’ service as this meant they could potentially retire on full pension at the age of 48. The rank-and-file, meanwhile, defended their claims to full pension entitlements, with individual constables lamenting the use of arbitrary decisions and Watch Committee discrimination:

---

86 For example, HMIC Annual Report 1873-74, P.P. 1875 (18), XXXVI, 116.
87 The former in Leicester and the latter in Birmingham: HMIC Annual Report 1869, P.P. 1870 (27), XXXVI, 16, 18, 34.
90 Police Superannuation, 189-94.
91 LRO L352, Report of Town Clerk on Police Bill (Leicester, 1883), 14-17.
I think all slight offences committed by the police constables, which they have been punished for before the same Committee ... should not again be brought up against them. A man may have become a good officer, and perhaps he has gone six or seven years without any mark of any kind whatever, and that should not be brought up against him; that has been the feeling of the Birmingham Police; they feel themselves injured by these charges being repeatedly brought against them when once they have redeemed their character as it were; everything is brought up against a man within 12 months; if he commits a breach of discipline within 12 months, the defaulters' book is read over against him. 92

Birmingham's Chief Constable complained at the extent of ratepayer opposition, declaring that the Watch Committee '... treat it as their money and not as the policemen's money, but as if they were doling it out of the ratepayer's pocket.' 93

It was not until the structure of local government finance was reformed in the late 1880s that municipal attitudes softened. By proposing that central government contribute towards local pensions through the assigned revenues system, Goschen obtained parliamentary and municipal approval that central government could support wider reform of occupational pensions. 94 The Police (Pensions) Act, 1890, compelled municipalities to establish uniform pension funds. 95 Police contributions were set at two-and-a-half per cent of weekly earnings and local rates made liable to meet any deficiencies. Policemen were eligible for retirement after twenty-five years' service on two-thirds pay. Officers incapacitated from duty after fifteen years also had full pension entitlements, with earlier periods left entirely to municipal discretion. Widows and children were also entitled to pensions, albeit at a lower rate. Municipalities were authorised to fix their pensions within narrow limits and were encouraged to set a minimum retiring age. 96 Both Leicester and Birmingham Watch Committees adopted the maximum scales following consultation, which demonstrated that although the Watch Committees retained a

---

92 This quote was attributable to Birmingham Constable Edward Green, who appeared before the Select Committee on Police Superannuation as a representative of Birmingham's lower ranks: Police Superannuation, 121.
93 Ibid, 50-55, 189-194.
95 53 & 54 Vict., ch.45.
96 The age limit was not less than fifty years nor more than fifty-five for constables and sergeants, and not more than sixty for all higher ranks.
modicum of flexibility over certain aspects of policy, this was evidently tightly regulated by central government. This initiative was funded by Goschen’s Customs and Excise grant from 1890. This was a fixed annual national tax of £300,000 towards pensions, half of which was distributed to the Metropolitan Police and the other half shared amongst provincial forces. Each force was to receive an amount equal to the deductions made for pensions from their pay, which was designed to reduce the rateable burden of local funds. Any surplus was divided in proportion to the amounts paid out of the fund with promises of a surtax on beer and spirits to raise the central contribution. This contributed to the decision by Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees to adopt the maximum scale and welcome the payment of the grant through the Local Taxation Account, again undermining Home Office control over the distribution of funds. Although they had lost their existing powers over the allocation of discretionary pensions, the limitations placed on the Home Office in controlling the dispersal of funds locally, mirroring the level of accountability through the police grant, restricted centralisation. Police pensions had been standardised but not centralised.

THE LOCALISM OF FIREMEN’S PENSIONS

Professional firemen responded to the provision of compulsory police pensions with similar demands from the 1890s. This was stirred by the Home Office’s decision to extend police pensions to members of police brigades in 1893. Birmingham Watch Committee resisted demands from its Chief Constable, who sought similar authority vested in Chief Constables in Leeds, Liverpool, Salford and Sheffield, to amalgamate its Police and Fire Brigade, deeming the scheme ‘notoriously excessive’ and

---

98 Which also provided financial support for technical education.
99 William Farr, Registrar General, noted that Hull, Leeds, Leicester and Sheffield, amongst others, had insufficient funds to pay an annual mean pension of £37 in 1874. Others, including Brighton, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Portsmouth, had sufficient reserves to contribute providing mean pensions for one or two years only. Birmingham recorded a surplus of £656 in 1874 which, whilst a healthier balance than many other municipal funds, was steadily declining: Police Superannuation, xii, 33-8.
100 This included 3d on a barrel of beer and 6d per gallon of spirits: Memorandum in Explanation of the Police Bill, P.P. 1890 (6065), LIX; Local Taxation 1901, 6-7.
101 Police (Pensions) Act, 1893: 56 Vict. 10, s.1, 2, 8 (2).
undermining reforms initiated since their separation in 1878.102 A separate Fire Brigade pension fund was instead established and funded by the insurance companies' annual contribution, expenses received for salvage work and a weekly contribution from firemen. A lower scale than the Police was adopted due to the absence of central funds.103

In Leicester the Council's financial parsimony predominated until 1908. The Council rejected suggestions for a fully-funded scheme, leaving the firemen to maintain their own self-funding scheme or join a friendly society, despite the Watch Committee Chairman's assertion that it was 'not beyond the wit, or ... the will' of the Council 'to find some way in which the scheme could be founded on a satisfactory basis.'104 After prolonged pressure and the adoption of healthier schemes elsewhere, including the provision of national old age non-contributory pensions in 1908, the Council agreed to establish a separate fund under local legislation in 1908.105 With the financial approval of the Borough Treasurer, the Council stipulated that the firemen contribute two-and-a-half per cent of their earnings and the Council itself transferred fifteen per cent from the current account.106 This restricted the additional burden on the rates and encouraged firemen to seek membership of friendly societies to supplement their life insurance.

Pensions were finally standardised in 1925 following a Private Member's Bill with Home Office compliance.107 It was also the first legislative recognition that the service deserved national status. Legislation was less of an admission that the fire service was a national institution worthy of equal

102 BCA Fire Brigade Sub-Committee Minutes [hereafter FBSC Mins], 19 May 1892.
104 Leicester Daily Mercury, 6 Feb. 1900. The Chairman, George Royce, was a boot and shoe manufacturer with 32 years' experience on the Watch Committee, 16 of which as Chairman.
106 LRO L352, Leicester Accounts, 1908-9, xiii.
107 15 & 16 Geo. 5, ch. 47. The Bill was promoted by Sir Vivian Henderson, Conservative MP and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Home Office. Henderson was a popular figure within the fire service community, serving as the first non-fire officer President of the Professional Fire Brigades' Association in 1932, and chaired the Fire Service Commission in 1939, a Home Office body empowered to co-ordinate mutual assistance schemes during the Second World War; Debs, 16 Dec. 1924, col.814; 25 Feb. 1925, col.1949.
billing to that of the police, particularly in light of Treasury cuts in local expenditure. Rather it
recognised that most provincial brigades had fairly generous schemes already established, with
Birkenhead and Glasgow the notable exceptions.\textsuperscript{108} It also distinguished firemen from other local
authority employees who had received a less generous pension scheme in 1919, whilst accepting that
they had as much right to a pension as other manual public sector workers.\textsuperscript{109} It was, therefore, a
means to standardise pensions in all British brigades, so as to prevent any disparities emerging, which
threatened to create recruitment and retention problems. Firemen's wages had maintained parity with
the police since 1919. In Birmingham any pay rise for the police was immediately proceeded by a
similar rise for the fire brigade.\textsuperscript{110} Both forces also received similar annual leave from 1911.\textsuperscript{111}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Year} & \textbf{Birmingham} & \textbf{Leicester} \\
\hline
1900-01 & 1.3 & 0.0 \\
1910-11 & 1.6 & -0.1 \\
1920-21 & 3.3 & -0.3 \\
1930-31 & 13.2 & -0.6 \\
1939-40 & 17.2 & -2.1 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Net Expenditure in Fire Brigades' Pension Funds (£000s), 1900-1940}
\end{table}

Source: As Table 2.1.

Those 'cheese-paring municipalities' refusing to superannuate their firemen were ultimately forced to
establish parity between their policemen and firemen.\textsuperscript{112} A number of 'liberal' authorities adopted the
police scale in the 1890s and 1900s through local legislation, such as Newcastle-upon-Tyne (1892),
Cardiff (1894), Birmingham (1896), Derby (1901) and Leicester (1908).\textsuperscript{113} Leicester and Birmingham
City Councils also made legislative changes shortly after the passing of the Police Pensions Act, 1921,
which extended the benefits in line with other schemes maintained by railway companies and postal

\textsuperscript{108} Middlebrook Report, 32-6.
\textsuperscript{112} Fire, Oct. 1920, 93; Jun. 1923, 21-22; Dec. 1924, 123-24; May 1925, 205; Aug. 1925, 61; Feb. 1926, 165.
\textsuperscript{113} Newcastle-upon-Tyne Improvement Act 1892, Part XII; Cardiff Corporation Act 1894, Part XIII; Derby Corporation Act 1901, Part XIII; Fire & Water, 30 Jul. 1913, 70, 28 Jun. 1911, 23.
workers. Birmingham maintained a healthy, solvent fund between 1900 and 1940 (Table 2.5) despite granting pensions of over £6,000 in 1928 alone. Although Leicester’s fund was dependent on contributions from the firemen and Council only, the Brigade’s small numerical strength (Appendix C) meant that its deficiency, whilst rising from approximately £100 in 1910-11 to almost £600 in 1930-31 (Table 2.5), was amply supported by additional rateable contributions. The fund’s long-term solvency was only really threatened by the end of the 1930s as an increasing proportion of the Brigade’s experienced firemen, including its Chief Officer, retired after more than twenty-five years’ experience.

THE LOCAL BURDEN OF POLICE PENSIONS

Despite central financial support since 1890 Birmingham and Leicester’s police pension funds were heavily dependent on rateable contributions, particularly from the 1910s. The Customs and Excise grant was an inflexible means for responding to the increasing experience and professionalism of Edwardian police forces, and failed to increase in line with revenues. In 1895-96, for example, the grant covered 39.9 and 47.9 per cent of Birmingham and Leicester’s funds respectively. By 1910-11 the respective figures had fallen to 29.8 and 25.9 per cent. A decade later the corresponding figures had more than halved to 10.1 and 12.6 per cent (Figures 2.1 and 2.2). Rateable contributions, on the other hand, increased in Birmingham from 19.6 per cent in 1905-6 to 28.9 per cent in 1910-11, reaching 61.8 per cent in 1920-21. In Leicester, rateable contributions increased from 32.2 per cent in 1905-6 to 46.1 per cent in 1910-11, reaching 62.0 per cent in 1920-21.


115 BCA WC Mins, 14 Nov. 1928, 83. The Finance Committee still criticised the Watch Committee in 1930 for not placing the fund on ‘an actuarially sound basis,’ and predicted a deficiency of £15,990 by 1958: Birmingham Post, 7 Mar. 1930.
Figure 2.1 Birmingham Police Pension Fund Contributions, 1860-1930 (%)

Source: As Table 2.1.

Figure 2.2 Leicester Police Pension Fund Contributions, 1860-1930 (%)

Source: As Table 2.1.
Although the grant increased by ten per cent between 1890 and 1910, exceeding concurrent growth in national retail prices by 2.7 per cent, it failed to guarantee the big increase in both forces' pension rolls. Rising food and coal prices between 1905 and 1912 placed extra strain on local funds, with demands from policemen for pay rises and a weekly rest day to maintain their standard of living. Birmingham and Leicester remained cheaper places to live than London, yet they were comparable with other Midland cities (Table 2.6). This added pressure on both Watch Committees to maintain their maximum pension scales in order to prevent losing policemen to neighbouring forces or other local skilled occupations. Thus, Birmingham's pension expenses rose by 47 per cent between 1895 and 1910, and a further 79 per cent from 1915 to 1930, whilst Leicester's expenses similarly increased by 57 and 76 per cent respectively. Only twenty out of seventy English and Welsh county boroughs did not have a deficiency payable by the rates by 1911. Of those that did, the mean deficiency was £2,021. Thirteen county boroughs exceeded the mean, with Birmingham's deficiency more than double at £4,253, and Leicester's at £2,280.

| Table 2.6 Rents and Retail Price Indices in the Midlands, 1905-12 (London = 100) |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| **Rents (including rates)**     | **Retail prices**               |
| Birmingham                      | 61                              | 97                     |
| Cardiff                         | 66                              | 101                    |
| Coventry                        | 52                              | 97                     |
| Derby                           | 52                              | 98                     |
| Leicester                       | 55                              | 99                     |
| Nottingham                      | 60                              | 100                    |

Source: Board of Trade Enquiry, 1912.

117 Report of an Enquiry by the Board of Trade into Working-Class Rents and Retail Prices, P.P. 1913 (6955), LXVI.
119 The other deficient funds exceeding £2,021 were Liverpool (£18,028), Manchester (£10,278), Bristol (£6,795), Leeds (£6,754), Hull (£4,742), Portsmouth (£4,598), Salford (£4,271), Sheffield (£3,355) Nottingham (£3,278), Brighton (£2,992) and Plymouth (£2,401): HMIC Annual Report 1912, P.P. 1913 (76), LII.
Following protracted complaints from Leicester’s Treasurer at the increasing burden of pensions, the Borough Magistrates were pressured to transfer larger shares of the fines they imposed to the Police.\textsuperscript{120} Although the average charge of police pensions in all English and Welsh county boroughs was greater than in Leicester, at 17.5 and 15.7 per cent in 1901-2 respectively, that Leicester’s charge continued to rise, reaching 19.7 per cent of the Force’s total remuneration in 1911-12, demonstrated the increasing local burden.\textsuperscript{121} By 1918-19 the rateable burden was at its peak in terms of growth. Birmingham, for example, witnessed a fifty per cent increase in its rateable contributions towards the fund’s deficiency between 1915 and 1920 alone (Figure 2.1), whilst Leicester’s burden increased by 63 per cent in the first two decades of the century (Figure 2.2).

Central government expressed little public concern with the increasing burden until the 1920s when the Home Office’s Auditor warned of increasing local resistance to continue meeting the rising deficiencies.\textsuperscript{122} The merging of the two police grants in 1918 created one percentage block grant, yet the proportion payable to pensions remained fixed at £300,000 annually in proportion to locally approved expenditure in 1913-14. This failed to respond to the increased burden created by both short-term and long-term factors, such as better health and the rise in police widows and orphans during the First World War. The funds continued to be administered separately in Birmingham and Leicester, with the Treasurer responsible for regulating pension costs and the Watch Committees for probing their own accounts, subject to the annual audit.\textsuperscript{123} Legislation in 1921 raised the right to retire from twenty-five to thirty years’ experience for all policemen joining after 1919 only, which inevitably meant that

\textsuperscript{120} On similar complaints from Birmingham’s Finance Committee and Treasurer, Birmingham Gazette, 15 Mar. 1933.

\textsuperscript{121} LRO L352, Leicester Accounts 1907-8, viii.

\textsuperscript{122} Second Interim Report of the Committee on National Expenditure [hereafter National Expenditure 1922], P.P. 1922 (1582), IX, 70-4.

\textsuperscript{123} The annual pensions grant was merely subtracted from the total grant of half the net expenditure of police authorities, along with a variable grant covering pay and clothing, amounting to £1.63 million for all provincial forces in 1928. Although, therefore, the grant was paid in one lump sum from 1918, it still consisted of its constituent parts passing through the Local Taxation Account until reform in 1929 consolidated the grant under one annually-voted sum: Statement of Government Grants to Local Authorities, P.P. 1928 (3157), XIX; PRO HO158/27, Home Office Circular, 489,450/69, 28 Mar. 1930.
the rates continued to cover the spiralling deficiencies. Later moves to extend the minimum retiring age to fifty and raise the weekly contribution from policemen were resisted by the Police Federation, the rank-and-file’s national representative organisation.

ECONOMY IN LOCAL AND NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Academics have interpreted the inter-war years as a period of increasing central regulation of local finances. Policies were increasingly framed around issues of economy to slow the spiralling growth of local expenditure, which more than doubled between 1914 and 1921, and reduce pressures on the national budget from the annual percentage grants. The Conservative government embraced local fiscal reform between 1925 and 1929, with competing strategies proposed by the Treasury and Ministry of Health, the latter responsible for local government. There was consensus within central government departments that the existing system of percentage grants created an unequal central-local relationship, with local authorities often pursuing expensive policies in the knowledge that they would be partially covered by central government. Despite the extension of the Home Office’s financial probity within provincial policing since the extension of the percentage grant in 1918, the Treasury expressed concern at its failure to curb increasing local expenditure by paying ninety per cent of the grant in the same year without questioning actual expenditure at the end of the financial year, or by failing to respond to changes in local need in its allocation of financial resources. Suggestions to replace the grant with a fixed per capita payment were resisted by the Home Office on the grounds that ‘as 85 per cent of the police expenditure is on pay, allowances and pensions, which are almost completely fixed by Regulation or Statute, the adoption of a per capita basis would make little real difference.’


128 Ibid, 129-33; Waller, Town, 263-4; Daunton, Just Taxes, 340.

129 PRO HO45/13353, Observations by Committee on National Expenditure on Home Office Estimates 1922-23; Home Office response to observations, 21 Nov. 1921; types of central grants are defined in Finer, English, 454-8.
Movements to reform the regressive local tax system, through the derating of agricultural, industrial and transport properties in response to a decline in national productivity, reduced local revenues and increased dependence on central grants. The Local Government Act, 1929, merged the poor relief, roads and public health percentage grants into a single formula payment, which provided a sum for each local authority according to necessities. Existing education, housing and police percentage grants, which covered a combined expenditure of over £40 million in 1928, were not reformed as they were deemed satisfactory arrangements for the foreseeable future. These three services had, however, been identified as major sources of local extravagance by the Treasury's Committee on National Expenditure, which reported in 1922. The Committee, chaired by Eric Geddes, recommended a series of cuts in local services to reduce the national burden of local government and return financial authority to central government. The police was criticised for being funded jointly through the Local Taxation Account and an annual Parliamentary Vote. The extension of the grant in 1918 increased the annually voted sum from £109,000 to £6.7 million, yet fixed the funds distributed through the assigned revenues to roughly £2.9 million. Although this gave central government greater regulatory control over the dispersal of nearly three-quarters of the grant, the Committee complained that Exchequer contributions had risen by an unacceptable thirty per cent since 1913.

The change in the grant system in 1918 coincided with a large increase in pay. Along with inflationary pressures and local exploitation of the percentage payments this placed great strain on the system of central support. Conflict ensued between the Treasury and the Home Office, with the Committee declaring that 'there is little that the Home Office can do to control items of local police expenditure

---

130 Baugh, 'Government grants', 220; Daunton, Just Taxes, 340-7.
132 Proposals for Reform in Local Government and in the Financial Relations Between the Exchequer and Local Authorities, P. P. 1928 (3134), XIX.
133 Geddes was Unionist MP for Cambridge (1917-22) where he served as First Lord of Admiralty (1917-18), Minister Without Portfolio (1919), Minister for Transport (1919-21) and Chairman of the Treasury's Committee on National Expenditure (1921-22). A supporter of trade protection, he was a former Chairman of the Dunlop Rubber Co. and Imperial Airways Ltd.
135 National Expenditure 1922, 56.
136 Ibid, 56-8; on local exploitations of police finances, including municipal attempts to offset the rise in pay with a concurrent cut in pension entitlements, Police Review, 15 Mar. 1918, 85; 11 Oct. 1918, 327; 18 Oct. 1918, 333.
beyond an examination of the estimates and claims,’ placing it ‘in a position of comparative incompetence to enforce economies.’\textsuperscript{137} The Home Office meanwhile considered that it had gradually exercised ‘a closer control over every detail of expenditure’ since 1918, employing a senior clerk to spend 75 per cent of his time on police finance, and claiming to have full local support in fixing national pay scales and pensions.\textsuperscript{138} Apart from rejecting proposals to substitute a per capita payment for the percentage grant, the Home Office also resisted attempts to reintroduce differentiated pay scales and implement compulsory ten per cent cuts in authorised force strengths. A compromise of five per cent was eventually reached after the Home Office obtained the compliance of the Association of Municipal Corporations. The Home Office added the warning that ‘any reduction of strength will be at the cost of a corresponding loss in public protection.’\textsuperscript{139}

Aside from the compromise serving as damage-limitation, the Home Office had demonstrated its ability to influence Treasury policy on local finances. Later attempts to extend the block formula grant to policing were resisted by the Home Office and local authorities.\textsuperscript{140} This also reinforced the claim that central government was not a homogeneous entity with shared objectives and policy strategies.\textsuperscript{141} By warning of the potential repercussions to law and order the Home Office frightened the Treasury into backing down during a period of social discontent and rising unemployment. It had also obtained the support of leading local individuals, including Alfred James, who supported rate stabilisation in Birmingham and a five per cent cut as the police contribution towards rate relief.\textsuperscript{142} Leicester Watch

\textsuperscript{137} National Expenditure 1922, 65.

\textsuperscript{138} PRO HO45/11930, Meeting of Committee on Exchequer Grants, 25 Jul. 1922.

\textsuperscript{139} National Expenditure 1922, 67; PRO HO45/13353/426767/8, Home Office Memorandum, not dated; PRO HO45/13353/426767, Observations by the Committee on National Expenditure on Home Office Estimates 1922-23, and Home Office response, 21 Nov. 1921; PRO HO45/13353/426767/A1, Minutes of Meeting of Committee on National Expenditure, 24 Nov. 1921; PRO HO45/13353/426767/11, Memorandum of Interview Between Home Office and Association of Municipal Corporations.

\textsuperscript{140} Schulz, ‘Development’, 142.

\textsuperscript{141} This supports contemporary research: M. Smith, D. Marsh and R. Richards, ‘Central government departments and the policy process’, in R. A. W. Rhodes and P. Dunleavy (eds.), Prime Minister, Cabinet and Core Executive (London, 1995), 38-60; Cronin, State Expansion, 67.

\textsuperscript{142} James was Chairman of Birmingham Watch Committee (1921-23), Lord Mayor (1926-28) and Birmingham’s representative on the Police Council (1921-32) and the Association of Municipal Corporations’ Police Committee (1921-32), serving as Chairman of the latter (1926-29): PRO HO45/22834/400530/19, Minutes of Police Council Meeting [hereafter Police Council Mins], 8 Feb. 1923; HO45/22834/400530/35, Police Council Mins, 5 Mar.
Committee agreed to implement a five per cent cut in its Police for one year only, maintaining a three per cent reduction for the remainder of the decade.\textsuperscript{143} Negotiations over decision-making and implementation, therefore, were complex, often involving the interaction of various central and municipal institutions vying to fulfil pre-determined interests, particularly in view of central government's inability to restrict the level of local rates or direct how money raised should be spent.

There were regular checks on the service throughout the inter-war years, with temporary deductions from pensionable pay continuing throughout the 1920s and restrictions placed on the pay of new recruits.\textsuperscript{144} Further cuts were proposed in 1931 shortly after Britain had abandoned the gold standard in an attempt to foster strict retrenchment throughout local government and reduce the county's growing balance of payments' deficit.\textsuperscript{145} Leicester Watch Committee exploited the Home Office's decision to leave cutbacks to local review\textsuperscript{146}, its Chief Constable declaring that his Force 'is already administered with due regard to efficiency and strict economy.'\textsuperscript{147} Leicester resisted pressure to reduce its strength further and claimed to have implemented numerous economising initiatives during the 1920s. As in Birmingham, these included reorganising the beat system, closing branch stations, employing civilians on clerical duties, substituting automatic traffic signals for traffic constables, and reducing expenditure on uniforms, stationery and refreshments.\textsuperscript{148} Both forces portrayed such reforms as streamlining measures designed to improve their operational efficiency, shifting manpower resources to routine police duties and embracing technological solutions to modern urban problems. Economy extended beyond minimising expenditure to encapsulate local interpretations of 'efficient, remunerative and

\textsuperscript{143} LRO CM42/26, WC Mins, 17 Feb. 1922; 21 Dec. 1922; 30 Jan. 1923.
\textsuperscript{144} Report of the Committee appointed to consider the Temporary Deductions from Police Pay and Allowances and the Rateable Deductions for Pension, P.P. 1924-25 (2444), XV; Report of the Committee on Police Pay of New Entrants, P.P. 1932-33 (4274), XV.
\textsuperscript{146} PRO HO158/27, Circular 588,942/50, 9 Oct. 1931.
\textsuperscript{147} LRO CM42/29, WC Mins, 20 Jan. 1931, 207.
controlled spending' and the effective deployment of resources to maximise service delivery and maintain accountability between local government and the electorate. 149

Municipalities were not pressured to reduce fire brigade costs due to the absence of central funding, although some, including Birmingham and Leicester, did implement cuts in line with those in the police. Pay was subjected to local control, allowances reduced and uniforms not replaced annually. Fewer repairs of appliances were undertaken through sub-contracting, rents on buildings renegotiated and utility costs cut. 150 Leicester Watch Committee agreed to extend fire protection to surrounding quarries and districts subject to an increased charge. 151 The Home Secretary, whilst not interfering directly in brigade finances, did concede that comprehensive reform of the service was impossible in the existing financial climate:

We recognise to the full that the organisation in this country for fire-fighting is inadequate, and that it is imperfect in many particulars, and so we welcome suggestions ... for the improvement of the present organisation. This advance must depend partly upon your own efforts and those of the local authorities, partly upon the State. But, there is also need for a forward movement, through Parliament, to obtain a more perfect organisation of our Fire Service. Unhappily we are living in times in which any form of progress that involves expenditure of public, and even private funds, finds itself faced by overwhelming difficulties. 152

Professional firemen, led by the Chief Officers of Birmingham and Leicester, warned against excessive economies owing to the historic under-investment in the service and the high costs of uncontrolled fire, which had contributed towards a 'fire tax' on property owners through rising insurance premiums. 153

Although much of the language surrounding 'best value practice' and the delivery of productive and cost-effective local services dates to the 1990s, the practice of efficiency and economy is not a recent phenomenon. 154 From the last quarter of the nineteenth-century local government was increasingly regulated on the pretext of obtaining 'efficient' administration. Economy was a byword for

149 Daunton, Trusting Leviathan, 274; Waller, Town, 251.
municipalities in their relations with central departments for controlling recurrent expenditure and social overheads, although not at the expense of high quality service delivery. The maintenance of economy and efficiency, as noted by local politicians such as Thomas Avery, Chairman of Birmingham Finance Committee during the 1860s and 1870s, was a balancing act between policy-making and implementation.\textsuperscript{155} The science of public administration, expressed through experiments in auditing administrative efficiency and awarding greater responsibilities to the professional cadre of municipal experts, influenced the nature and direction of municipal administration and, by implication, central-local relations.\textsuperscript{156}

This balancing act was compounded in negotiations over financial resources through the retention of the police percentage grant and inflexibility of national pensions subventions.\textsuperscript{157} Although this balance extended to municipal fire service policy makers, it did not attain the high degree of complexity that pervaded the national world of local police finance, yet its incorporation of questions concerning the extent of the role of the private market underpinned Exchequer reluctance to introduce national funding. The presence of central police funding, however, did not belie the fact that municipal police and fire services shared characteristics in their access to locally generated financial resources, and influenced national perceptions of local expenditure, which were ultimately dependent on locally collated and audited information.

Reforms to local government finances during the 1880s, 1910s and 1920s shared the burden of local costs more equitably between central and local government. The creation of a fixed formula grant in 1929 to extend Treasury control over local finances, notably in public health and transport, did not affect the police and fire services, which remained subject to existing financial arrangements. That local expenditure continued to rise during the 1930s, with the provision of new responsibilities to local authorities in housing, welfare, public transport and civil defence, indicated that the balance between

\textsuperscript{155} Avery was a staunch advocate of public auditing and 'sound financial administration': A. Briggs, \textit{Victorian Cities} (London, 1968), 215-6; \textit{Report of the Select Committee on Local Taxation}, P.P. 1870 (353), VIII, 257-64; on national debates about 'fiscal constitutionalism' and remunerative spending, Daunton, \textit{Trusting Leviathan}, 98-103.


\textsuperscript{157} For criticisms of the 'inept' police grant system, Waller, 267-8.
local and national sources of income was subjected to fluctuations in economic growth, civic investment and other externalities such as the threat of aerial bombardment. In 1936-37 central grants constituted about 27 per cent of local government's revenue, fees, tolls and rents contributed a further 12.8 per cent, trading charges 26 per cent, and rates 34 per cent.\textsuperscript{158} Local sources exceeded national subventions, which ultimately reinforced local authority.

This dual system of central and municipal funding intensified supply-side problems in twentieth-century 'policing.' The assigned revenues system, for example, failed to expand to meet local demands for additional resources. Central government recognised this by 1914, but failed to modernise the system due to its preoccupation with social reform and the expense of modern warfare. Later supply-side pressures during the 1920s forced municipalities to implement economy measures to reduce their burden on the Exchequer. Both central and municipal government fostered such pressures to minimise wastage and maintain administrative influence. Forthcoming chapters will explore further the interplay between central and municipal organisations through their interactions over informational and organisational resources, particularly the relationship between the Watch Committee and the Chief Official. The extent of the Watch Committee's organisational resources was its ability to manage the two departments and their access to decision-making networks.

\textsuperscript{158} Finer, \textit{English}, 386.
STRUCTURE AND BEHAVIOUR IN AN URBAN INSTITUTION: WATCH COMMITTEES AND ORGANISATIONAL RESOURCES

... there are councillors who govern the public life of their own town for a generation and town clerks who can speak with confidence for their councils because as a matter of fact what they advise is done.

E. Rhodes (1930)

A committee is almost always a complicated thing; its history is complicated, and the attitudes of its members arise from divergent series of complex events.

W. J. M. Mackenzie (1953)

'As typically British as is Parliament' is how contemporary scholars identified the committee system of municipal government. With the growth in statutory and discretionary responsibilities during the nineteenth-century municipalities administered local functions through a network of 'small and compact' committees. The principle of constituting standing committees emerged through a combination of local and national directives, often in response to a perceived need and a desire to disperse authority throughout the council. With 'considerable discretion' in their respective policy network, within the budgetary constraints imposed by the Finance Committee, committees exercised extensive powers and have been identified as 'semi-autonomous fiefdoms' ruled by the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Committee Clerk. Committees invariably worked independently, although they had to co-ordinate their resources at times when policy outcomes overlapped, such as between health, housing and public utility committees in discussing urban improvement or town planning.

Notwithstanding this autonomy and flexibility, committees were subject to formal rules and procedures. They acted in relation to a larger body, in this case the Town Council, and were legally

1 E. Rhodes, 'Personality in public administration', Public Administration, VIII (1930), 250.
2 W. J. M. Mackenzie, 'Committees in administration', Public Administration, XXXI (1953), 236.
3 I. Gibbon, 'Types of administrative organization in local government', Public Administration, VI (1928), 205.
appointed institutions with clear responsibilities, which met at pre-determined dates to take decisions for immediate action or approval. Combined with their administrative independence and control over their department, the committee was both 'master and servant.'\(^5\) Within the committee's structural boundaries members were expected to adopt certain standards of behaviour.\(^6\) Paradoxically, members had room for manoeuvre in the behaviour they adopted and their influence over policy negotiations.\(^7\)

Some councillors remained members of a committee for an entire generation, others for a year or two, which provided a strong bond of 'mutual self-interest' and 'collective memory' within local policy networks between senior and less experienced councillors and officials.\(^8\) Behaviour was also reflected in attitudes towards attending meetings as the main formal network through which committee members exerted administrative power.

The role of structure and behaviour within the Watch Committee was as crucial to the administration of police and fire services as the availability of funds and the provision of formal legal powers. Without a clear organisational structure and civic-centred behaviour, services could not be administered cost-effectively. This chapter explores the range of organisational resources deployed by Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees between 1870 and 1938. Attention will focus on their structure and composition, as well as the levels of attendance and experience at meetings. The interdependency of structure and behaviour reinforced the Watch Committee's prestige and authority. As a leading civic institution, the Watch Committee was a combination of 'formal rules, compliance procedures and standard operating practices,' as well as 'less formal organisational networks' which structured the relationships between its members, those of other institutions and the chief officials of the departments they administered.\(^9\)

\(^6\) See, for example, City of Leicester, *Standing Orders of the Leicester City Council* (Leicester, 1956).
\(^7\) On the role of personality, or 'agency', within policy negotiations, D. Marsh and M. Smith, 'Understanding policy networks: towards a dialectical approach', *Political Studies*, II (2000), 5-7.
\(^8\) Moore and Rodger, 'Municipal knowledge', 41-2.
The Watch Committee was a pivotal urban institution. It was the first municipal statutory standing committee. Established in 1835 for the sole purpose of administering a municipality's Police Force it evolved throughout the nineteenth-century to become an irreplaceable local institution. This procedure also formalised the ancient practice of 'watching' property by burgesses and watchmen in Tudor and Stuart England, initially undertaken by the London watch system during the eighteenth-century. The Victorian Watch Committee extended its responsibilities through national statutes and local standing orders. For example, it commonly assumed responsibility for administering the Fire Brigade, invariably through a permanent Fire Brigade Sub-Committee in order to share clerical and accounting resources with the Police. This was instituted in Leicester in 1872 and in Birmingham in 1879. To become a member of the Fire Brigade Sub-Committee one first had to be a member of the Watch Committee. A Councillor with an interest in fire protection had to, therefore, demonstrate an initial interest in policing. The elected members of the Watch Committee, therefore, were expected to be enthusiastic and knowledgeable in maintaining urban order. Although the Committee's structure was altered formally, such rules prescribed individual behaviour in enabling members to join particular sub-committees and create an interdependent relationship between the two departments.

Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees accumulated a variety of inter-related functions between the 1870s and 1930s (Appendix E). The majority of these concerned the regulation and licensing of industrial and working practices, including the storage of dangerous substances, the protection of vulnerable social groups, notably children, street regulation, traffic flow and film censorship. These included dealing with dangerous substances, such as carbide of calcium, celluloid, nitric acid, sulphuric acid, phosphorous, and petroleum: City of Birmingham Fire Brigade, Rules and Regulations, Conditions of...
led to the sub-division of administrative labour, with policies broken into manageable pieces, placed under the responsibility of sub-committees, and centrally co-ordinated by the Watch Committee. Leicester Watch Committee, for example, constituted ten permanent sub-committees between 1900 and 1939 to deal with various issues, ranging from traffic control to cinema inspection. An Emergency Sub-Committee was constituted in 1916 to respond to pressing issues, notably film licensing (Figure 3.1).  

Birmingham Watch Committee had less of a tradition of devolving administrative questions to sub-committees, although it constituted a Judicial Sub-Committee in 1870 to deal with all issues relating to police administration, including appointments, discipline and promotions (Figure 3.2). At first this consisted solely of the Watch Committee's Chairman, Vice-Chairman and one other member, yet by 1890 it had expanded to include the majority of its members and added an additional bureaucratic layer to municipal decision-making. Moreover, its Fire Brigade and Finance Sub-Committees were amalgamated in 1885 to create a larger, permanent authority easier to manage by a smaller clique of members. During the inter-war years Birmingham Watch Committee followed Leicester's example of establishing more *ad hoc* sub-committees to deal with single issues, such as accounts and street collections. As late as 1946 Birmingham's Town Clerk defended devolving powers to sub-committees, believing this helped the 'municipal machine' work 'at reasonable speed.'  

Both Watch Committees devolved additional technical responsibilities to sub-committees between the 1910s and the late 1930s due to an increasing and more complex workload, yet they retained overall control through continuity of membership and regular reports.  

---

15 Leicester Town Council also devolved authority for administering the lighting department to its Watch Committee in 1871. The minutes of these sub-committees are all detailed in the full Watch Committee minutes.  

16 This replaced a Sub-Committee for the Month, which met approximately one week before the Watch Committee to discuss the agenda for the full meeting, approve applicants, recommend promotions and leave of absence, and hear reports against constables: BCA WC Mins, 2 Nov. 1869; 9 Nov. 1869; 8 Mar. 1870, 111.  

17 *Fire*, Nov. 1946, 94.  

18 This pattern conforms to contemporary arguments: H. J. Laski, 'The committee system in local government' in *idem et al* (eds.), *Municipal Progress*, 92.
Figure 3.1 Sub-Committees on Leicester Watch Committee, 1868-1939: Duration of Constitution

Source: Leicestershire Record Office [hereafter LRO] CM42/10-32, Watch Committee Minutes [hereafter WC Mins].
Figure 3.2 Sub-Committees on Birmingham Watch Committee, 1868-1939: Duration of Constitution

Source: Birmingham City Archives [hereafter BCA], WC Mins.
The proliferation of committees and sub-committees, the extension of municipal government into new areas of service provision, and the continued growth and expansion of British cities from the 1890s culminated in complaints that councillors were ‘over-worked’ by the 1910s:

A council ... may direct policy and decide principles, but is an impossible body to give judgement on the multifarious problems falling to the lot of local government authorities to solve in these days. It has neither the time nor the knowledge.19

In 1909 Birmingham City Council met 13 times only, yet there were 274 committee meetings, 887 sub-committee meetings, and a further 460 meetings of other local bodies that had the Council’s patronage, including the Drainage Board, Midland Institute and King Edward’s School.20 Almost two decades later, Walter Lovell, Chairman of Leicester Watch Committee21, bemoaned the spiralling number of sub-committees, rising by 38 per cent alone in the Council between 1922 and 1926.22 The Watch Committee itself constituted 21 sub-committees between 1918 and 1939, with five of them serving permanently throughout (Figure 3.1).23

The structure of committees and sub-committees, however, created an exclusive administrative environment in which councillors defended their integrity and expertise from external criticism. It also enabled them to interact more freely with the chief officials of the police and fire departments, expanding their cumulative expertise and working closely in implementing policy. This had the dual impact of extending their influence over officials in some areas of policy, whilst conceding authority in other, invariably technical, policy networks. Policy emerged through institutional interaction, not only between government departments and local authorities, but also through intra-organisational interaction between the Watch Committee, its sub-committees and chief officials. With the Home Office’s inability to appoint or dismiss councillors or aldermen, or to interfere with the choice of local electors,

19 Etherton, Employment, 390.
21 Lovell, a Conservative confectioner, was Mayor in 1918 and chaired the Watch Committee from 1919 to 1934.
22 Leicester Daily Mercury, 29 Jan. 1926; Leicester Mail Yearbook (Leicester, 1926), 24. The Education Committee alone had 33 sub-committees in 1926.
23 Accounts, Uniform, Emergency, Fire Brigade, and Lighting. The Traffic Sub-Committee also served for two years on an ad hoc basis, and a further seven permanently. The majority were single-issue groups that met once or twice to resolve a technical issue, e.g. those dealing with the detective department, police car, special investigations, policewomen, and police boxes.
behavioural forces were equally crucial to structural constraints and cleavages, creating an interdependent local administrative system.

Other councillors complained during the 1920s of the failure to increase the size of the Town Council and its representatives in proportion to the rise in business, leading inevitably to more meetings, often beginning earlier and lasting longer. George Banton suggested transferring additional operational responsibilities to chief officials to lessen the burgeoning administrative workload, otherwise 'the situation in the municipal sphere is destined to become intolerable' and policy would lack coherence:

The fact has been recognised that the work of the city, owing to its growth and its many activities, is rapidly increasing and the difficulty will have to be faced unless we are prepared to leave more and more of the work in the hands of the permanent officials.

That this quote could refer to the majority of British county boroughs during the 1920s, and even resonated with the experience of urban elites from the 1890s, indicated the common challenges faced in terms of an increasing workload, the withdrawal of traditional business elites from civic service, and the professionalisation of chief officials.

Leicester Town Council was fixed at 64 members from 1905 and had only increased by nine since 1871. Its Watch Committee was streamlined between 1871 and 1901 and during the inter-war years to create a more manageable institution capable of delegating authority to sub-committees without being over-burdened by members with pre-determined business interests (Table 3.1). Birmingham City Council, on the other hand, almost doubled in size following a boundary extension in 1911, and increased by a further third in 1919 owing to expanding responsibilities in health, housing and public transport, amongst others. The Birmingham Watch Committee remained fixed at eight members between 1881 and 1901, and ten between 1911 and 1931. This was general Council policy from 1883, with thirty committees of ten members acting 'just like a board of directors, submitting to their council

24 Banton, a hosiery outfitter, was Chairman of the Leicester Independent Labour Party and Leicester Labour Party, a member of the Trades Council, MP for Leicester East (1922-24) and Mayor (1925). He was a member of the Watch Committee (1926-31).


their annual estimates, an annual report, and further reports when they contemplate any big departure in policy.'²⁷

Table 3.1 Members on Birmingham and Leicester Town Council and Watch Committee, 1871-1931

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Birmingham</th>
<th>Leicester</th>
<th>Birmingham</th>
<th>Leicester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: As Figures 3.1 and 3.2; Leicester Daily Mercury; Birmingham Mail.

Unlike other committees there was no co-option of unelected professionals, although the Chief Constable and Fire Officer would invariably attend a proportion of their meetings to present reports on proposed policy initiatives or to request investment in capital or labour resources. They were also assigned a clerk from the Town Clerk’s Department to take minutes at each meeting. The Council elected members annually, with the exception of the Mayor who was a de facto member, although a great proportion were re-elected. The Watch Committee determined sub-committee membership and was also responsible for electing a Chairman and Vice-Chairman to oversee proceedings. This combination of nationally prescribed and locally determined measures ensured that the Watch Committee was held accountable to the Council and administrative conventions standardised.

The procedure for electing Chairmen differed between Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees. The former, as was Council policy to share patronage, rotated the chair every three to five years on average (Table 3.2). The latter, whilst pursuing a similar course until the 1890s, elected the most experienced member of the Committee between 1901 and 1939.²⁸ Whilst Birmingham’s Fire Brigade and Judicial Sub-Committees demonstrated greater stability in the duration served by their Chairmen in the twentieth-century, rising from 2.1 and 2.6 years respectively to 4.8 years, Leicester Watch


²⁸ This was similar policy adopted in Manchester: E. Simon, A City Council From Within (London, 1926), 93.
Committee (and its Fire Brigade Sub-Committee) had only four different chairmen in 38 years, with an average length of office of 9.5 years. Election was, in all cases, based on nomination and majority voting, with few recorded cases of conflict emerging within the nomination process. 29

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>1870-1900</th>
<th>1901-39</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham Watch Committee</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester Watch Committee</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham Fire Brigade Sub-Committee</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester Fire Brigade Sub-Committee</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham Judicial Sub-Committee</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: As Figures 3.1 and 3.2.

The increasing stability in chairmen from 1901 to 1939 indicated a close working relationship between the Committee and the chief officials. The Chairman was the Watch Committee's public figurehead. His role extended beyond the realm of Committee business into positively representing it to both the Town Council and the ratepayers. This was achieved through a variety of networks, including meetings in the Council chamber, civic functions, private discussions, and publicising or defending policies in the local media. 30 It was essential for the Chairman and Chief Official to demonstrate cooperation within departmental administration, although this was subject to the rules and constraints of public behaviour. 31

The Chairman's responsibility over his 'fiefdom' was vested in maintaining mutual understanding within the Watch Committee, controlling any rivalries based on party or factional loyalties, and encouraging intra-dependency. The Chairman maintained order and decorum in the Committee's meetings, liaised with members of the Town Council, interpreted policies and devolved authority to

29 One case in Leicester in 1934 occurred with Councillors Hill and Minto (both Labour) proposing the election of Taylor (Conservative) as Vice-Chairman, whilst Lovell (Conservative) and Fortey (Labour) proposed Hincks (Liberal). Taylor was elected: Leicestershire Record Office [hereafter LRO] CM42/30, Watch Committee Minutes [WC Mins], 13 Nov. 1934, 310.


sub-committees and chief officials.\textsuperscript{22} He was also responsible for maintaining linkages between the Watch Committee and other committees of the Council, notably the Finance Committee where he sat as a \textit{de facto} member to negotiate the distribution of financial resources. Such horizontal co-ordination was designed to enhance the Watch Committee's productivity, enabling it to pool the resources and skills of its members, and subdivide and co-ordinate duties within an administrative framework.\textsuperscript{33}

**CITY BEFORE PARTY**

There were few cases of either Birmingham or Leicester Watch Committee acting on pre-determined party lines before the Second World War. Policy was invariably framed after consultation with the chief officials and debate within the meetings. Although members were acquainted with one another, they did not necessarily record decisions made outside the formal meeting; rather meetings were held 'not to record a decision but to take one.'\textsuperscript{34} Recent historical research into the nature and practice of municipal decision-making during the first-half of the twentieth-century supports the heterogeneity of administration. Local factors, including personality, geography, wealth, access to information and, in some cases, party control, influenced distinctively localised structures.\textsuperscript{35} The practical working of municipal government was more diverse than has hitherto been accepted.

Scholars have identified the Town Council as subject to political control by the 1920s.\textsuperscript{36} Others stress the limitations of party politics during the inter-war years, identifying Labour's weakness in major


\textsuperscript{33} On the internalisation of municipal power, J. Garrard, \textit{Leadership and Power in Victorian Industrial Towns 1830-80} (Manchester, 1983), 63-84.

\textsuperscript{34} Mackenzie, 'Committees', 239.


WATCH COMMITTEES

provincial cities including Birmingham, Edinburgh, Liverpool and Manchester.\(^{37}\) For example, Birmingham Labour Party had a limited impact in terms of its representation during the inter-war years, never exceeding a third on the Council and a fifth on the Watch Committee.\(^{38}\) This owed much to a unique electoral 'pact' between the Conservatives and Liberal Unionists, which was arguably more than an anti-Socialist alliance. The 'Unionists,' as the pact was labelled, sponsored working-class candidates within inner-city wards including Lozells, and those in the expanding industrial suburbs at Gravelly Hill and Yardley (Appendix A).\(^{39}\) Assisted by a buoyant economy, with the inter-war slump having little impact on local employment structures, there were few opportunities for the Labour Party to challenge its dominance.\(^{40}\) Furthermore, the 'Unionists' retained much of the radicalism of the 1870s, seeking to modify and extend the 'civic gospel' into new schemes, notably the municipal bank, airport, symphony orchestra and civic centre.\(^{41}\)

Birmingham and Leicester experienced declining overall Liberal representation between 1900 and 1936 on both their Town Council and Watch Committee. This trend accelerated in Edwardian Birmingham (Table 3.3). Labour did not achieve major influence on either Watch Committee until 1919, having had no representation on Birmingham Watch Committee before. The Conservatives, mirroring experiences elsewhere\(^ {42}\), benefited from the Liberal decline in national terms, sharing power with Labour in Leicester and, following amalgamation with the Liberal Unionists in 1918, dominating Birmingham politics.\(^ {43}\) Independents had greater representation in Birmingham than Leicester, reflecting widespread factionalism in Birmingham owing to the strong 'Unionist' alliance and weak mainstream opposition.

---


38 Labour did not achieve a majority on the Council until 1946.


40 Davies and Morley, County Boroughs, 220-1.


43 Davies and Morley, County Boroughs, 223.
Table 3.3 Party Representation on Birmingham and Leicester Town Council and Watch Committee (%), 1900-36

| Year | Birmingham Town Council | | Birmingham Watch Committee | | Leicester Town Council | | Leicester Watch Committee |
|------|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
|      | Lib  | Con  | LibU  | Lab  | Ind | Lib  | Con  | LibU  | Lab  | Ind | Lib  | Con  | Lab  | Ind |
| 1900 | 25.9 | 27.8 | 40.7  | 1.9  | 3.7 | 62.5 | 37.5 | -     | -    | -  | 67.7 | 25.8 | 6.5  | -   |
| 1903 | 14.8 | 29.6 | 48.2  | 5.6  | 1.9 | 57.1 | 28.6 | 14.3  | -    | -  | 69.4 | 22.6 | 8.1  | -   |
| 1906 | 15.1 | 30.2 | 47.2  | 5.7  | 1.9 | 25.0 | 50.0 | 25.0  | -    | -  | 65.6 | 17.2 | 17.2 | -   |
| 1909 | 13.0 | 33.3 | 50.0  | 1.9  | 1.9 | 25.0 | 37.5 | 37.5  | -    | -  | 53.1 | 26.6 | 20.3 | -   |
| 1912 | 22.2 | 38.9 | 32.2  | 6.7  | -  | 25.0 | 25.0 | 50.0  | -    | -  | 51.6 | 25.0 | 23.4 | -   |
| 1915 | 20.0 | 71.1 | 8.9   | -    | -  | -    | 100.0| -     | -    | -  | 45.3 | 34.4 | 20.3 | -   |
| 1918 | 14.2 | 55.8 | 22.5  | 7.5  | -  | -    | 80.0 | 20.0  | -    | -  | 42.2 | 35.9 | 21.9 | -   |
| 1921 | 10.1 | 58.0 | 21.0  | 10.9 | -  | -    | 81.8 | 9.1   | 9.1  | -  | 37.5 | 31.3 | 26.6 | 4.7 |
| 1924 | 6.7  | 60.8 | 24.2  | 8.3  | -  | -    | 81.8 | 9.1   | 9.1  | -  | 26.6 | 35.9 | 34.4 | 3.1 |
| 1927 | 5.0  | 59.2 | 27.5  | 8.3  | -  | -    | 72.7 | 18.2  | 9.1  | -  | 25.4 | 31.8 | 42.9 | -   |
| 1930 | 4.1  | 65.3 | 25.6  | 5.0  | -  | -    | 83.3 | 8.3   | 8.3  | -  | 20.3 | 32.8 | 45.3 | 1.6 |
| 1933 | 3.0  | 65.4 | 27.8  | 3.8  | -  | -    | 80.0 | 10.0  | 10.0 | -  | 17.2 | 40.6 | 40.6 | 1.6 |
| 1936 | 2.2  | 79.4 | 16.2  | 2.2  | -  | -    | 75.0 | 16.7  | 8.3  | -  | 12.5 | 43.8 | 43.8 | -   |

Source: Annual election results taken from Birmingham Mail and Leicester Daily Mercury, 1900-1936.
Although the composition of Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees indicated the potential for partisanship, the nature and prestige of their administrative responsibilities were obstacles to party voting. Watch Committee proceedings, with the exception of those affecting the local rate, did not require the Council's approval. They were only compelled to make quarterly reports to Council, yet Birmingham and Leicester, through local conventions, made more regular reports, depending on particular issues. Watch Committee membership was widely regarded to be the pinnacle of a municipal career, with retention of membership creating a high degree of stability in administrative knowledge. 44

The relationship between the Chairman and Chief Official, the mundane technocratic nature of the majority of decisions and the relative absence of politicisation undermined attempts to frame pre-determined voting strategies. Members were increasingly reliant on the Chief Official for his advice and technical knowledge in operational decision-making. 45 Those few issues where voting on party lines occurred concerned pay and working conditions of the rank-and-file, although these were increasingly constrained by fixed national scales during the 1920s. 46 Party politics did not dominate policy discussion and voting. Members voted after consultation with representatives from other parties and chief officials.

The motioning of resolutions reinforced the limitations of partisan politics. Although similar figures are unavailable for Birmingham due to differences in recording conventions, the increasing proportion of resolutions motioned and seconded by representatives from different parties on Leicester Watch Committee demonstrates that bi-partisan voting exceeded partisan voting (Table 3.4). Single party and bi-party motions accounted for approximately fifty per cent each of recorded motions between 1901 and 1921. From 1926 bi-partisan motions accounted for two-thirds and upwards of those recorded, peaking at almost eighty per cent in 1938. The high percentage of Conservative-Labour motions, rising from less than fifteen per cent in 1916 and 1921 to between a third and two thirds in the 1930s indicated the important dynamics of routine Committee business.

44 'Experience' is discussed in more detail below, 92-6.
45 I. Gibbon, 'The official and his authority', Public Administration, IV (1926), 81-94.
Table 3.4 Party Political Resolutions on Leicester Watch Committee (%), 1901-38

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Single Party Motion (%)</th>
<th>Bi-Party Motion (%)</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>67.3</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: LRO CM42/19-32, WC Mins.

The presentation of a united, bi-partisan front was an underlying factor in both Watch Committees' administrative relations and in passing unanimous resolutions on potentially partisan policies, particularly during the inter-war years. For example, a motion was tabled in Birmingham Town Council by three dissident Labour councillors in 1935 demanding the Watch Committee's 'justification for granting special extensions to the higher officers of the [Police] Force after they became of pensionable age.'\(^{47}\) The three councillors, in collusion with the Clydeside MP James Maxton, sought to undermine the Watch Committee's authority by criticising its decision to retain the services of the Chief Constable, Charles Rafter, despite having passed the statutory retirement age for officers of thirty years' service in 1924. The Watch Committee, which included three Labour members\(^{48}\) and an Independent with Labour sympathies\(^{49}\), was unanimous in defending its decision to renew Rafter's contract. This was part of a wider intra-departmental discretionary policy whereby the Watch Committee retained the services of those officers deemed capable of continuing their duties, which included the Assistant Chief Constable, two Chief Superintendents, five of the six Superintendents, and five of the nine Divisional Inspectors who had all exceeded retirement age.

\(^{47}\) Birmingham City Archives [hereafter BCAI] L34.3, City Council Minutes, Feb. 1935; Evening Despatch, 23 Aug. 1935.

\(^{48}\) James Crump, a former tram conductor, was Chairman of the Watch Committee (1937-39) and Lord Mayor (1937-38); George Sawyer, a retired railway worker; and Percy Shurmer, a collector for the Birmingham Co-Operative Society.

\(^{49}\) Mary Wilson was a member of the Watch Committee (1923-37), Judicial Sub-Committee (1923-37), Fire Brigade Sub-Committee (1926-37) and President of the Birmingham Branch of the National Council of Women.
The Watch Committee defended its policy in a 'stormy' Council debate in February 1935. Its Chairman, William Lovsey, spoke of the Committee's disdain for the 'unmanly and unmannerly remarks made and insinuated about one of the finest public servants the city of Birmingham has ever possessed.' A report in the same year praised Rafter's 'extensive knowledge of police administration, both locally and nationally,' contending that the city was 'privileged to have in command of the Force a man of his standing and ability.' An inquiry by the General Purposes Committee found that the Watch Committee always acted in compliance with local standing orders and statutory regulations. That Maxton had asked two questions in Parliament about Rafter's age and his intention to retire, receiving sharp rebuttals from the Home Secretary both times that it was 'purely a matter for the local police authority,' suggested that the relationship between the Watch Committee and the Chief Constable was a powerful obstacle to the diffusion of party politics on the former and that the Home Office deemed Birmingham Watch Committee to be a capable institution for determining local recruitment and retention strategies without heavy-handed regulation.

Expertise, experience and longevity of service, therefore, superseded partisan influences on policy-making. The continuity of membership and the regular interaction of members inculcated both Watch Committees with powerful organisational resources through which they were able to maintain prestigious and influential roles locally and nationally. Committee loyalty overrode ideology and was strengthened by the collective memory and mutual solidarity of its members before the full Council and ratepayers. Furthermore, the Home Secretary recognised that the larger and more powerful county boroughs often had to be accommodated 'on their own terms,' and had no desire to 'cast grit into the cogs of co-operation' between Birmingham and the Home Office.

50 Lovsey, a retired civil servant, was a member of the Watch Committee and Judicial and Fire Brigade Sub-Committees (1927-39) and Chairman of the former (1934-36).
51 BCA L34.3, City Council Minutes, Feb. 1935; Evening Despatch, 23 Aug. 1935.
52 This was a co-ordinating committee comprised of one member from each of the standing committees, the Lord Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chairman of the Drainage Board.
54 Hansard Debates, 21 Feb. 1935, col.537; 20 Jun. 1935, col.562. The Home Secretaries were John Gilmour and John Simon, the latter succeeding Gilmour in June 1935.
55 Finer, English, 287.
The gradual withdrawal of business elites from municipal decision-making has led some historians to identify the separation of business and civic spheres. Furthermore, with a widening of identities between urban and rural elites during the first four decades of the twentieth-century, particularly in the former group's aspirations to create an 'urban squirearchy' based on the latter's traditions of landed wealth, private property and social prestige, historians have identified a decline in traditional municipal authority. Paradoxically, others have argued that this transition enabled working-class men and women to enter municipal politics and that it created a more socially inclusive and participatory approach to municipal administration. Local professionals often filled the vacuum left by the withdrawal of economic elites, in particular solicitors, doctors, surveyors and accountants. In other county boroughs, such as Norwich, the withdrawal of professionals facilitated the re-entry of small middle-class businessmen into civic life, as well as clerical workers and workingmen. Recent research has emphasised the 'adaptation and diversification' within municipal administration, noting the 'considerable shifts in structure, personnel, substance and style' which contributed to a change in the nature and practice of urban governance after 1914.

The perceived withdrawal of social and economic elites from civic life by 1914 requires re-assessment. Previous approaches to late Victorian and early Edwardian urban elites emphasised the physical, economic and political separation of leading businessmen from the urban landscape. For example, Birmingham businessmen settled into the suburbs of Yardley and Small Heath by the 1860s, and moved further away by the 1880s into the exclusive rural districts of Handsworth, Harborne and Moseley as the skilled working-class moved into the inner suburbs. Small Heath changed from a

59 Doyle, 'Elite', 194-8.
60 Trainor, 'Decline', 32.
scattered hamlet into a thriving industrial district between 1860 and 1879, with the opening of the Birmingham Small Arms factory encouraging widespread labour migration. Similarly, Leicester's leading businessmen gradually moved further into the town's suburbs, leaving the central district encompassing New Walk and Highfields for the southern suburbs of Stoneygate, Knighton and Aylestone during the 1860s and 1870s. As the skilled working-class followed suit in the ensuing decades, along with the planned development of an industrial working-class suburb at North Evington, the elites moved yet further away, often settling in neighbouring towns and villages within travelling distance as transport networks improved.

The nature of municipal administration and the categorisation of urban elites evidently varied between the nineteenth and twentieth-centuries. There were, of course, many similarities between the Victorian and inter-war elite: they both utilised their individual expertise to administer municipal services and were accountable to the municipality and ratepayers. They also had to work within formal and informal institutional channels modifying their behaviour in different circumstances and working to a considerable degree through their own efforts and leadership. Urban elites were responsible for forging and maintaining administrative networks and relationships with both local and national institutions, as well as elected and unelected 'actors'. They were a crucial component of broader networks of power relations within 'the national world of local government,' linking institutions together through meetings and the exchange of information and knowledge. They remained pivotal members of intergovernmental relations during the first four decades of the twentieth-century. Their socio-economic backgrounds were of secondary importance in this relationship to the structural and organisational authority of the Watch Committee. Although organisational authority depended on the propensity of elites to work within an increasingly bureaucratic structure the Watch Committee's prestige elevated its members to a position of administrative advantage in policy negotiations.

---


The composition of Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees demonstrated the variety of professional and business skills applied to municipal administration between 1871 and 1935 (Tables 3.5 and 3.6). The absolute decline in the proportion of manufacturers and professionals between 1891 and 1935 conformed to the experience of other county boroughs. Manufacturing interests, however, continued to be represented on both Watch Committees, rising in Birmingham from 13.3 per cent in 1901 to an average of 42.2 per cent between 1911 and 1935. That this growth was accounted for by an expansion in the representation of non-traditional industries reflected Birmingham's economic development and the diversification of its organisational knowledge within the Town Council and Watch Committee. The representation of manufacturing interests on Leicester Watch Committee similarly reflected the diversification of the local economy from its staple industrial base of hosiery and footwear into new industries, such as engineering, and the variety of skills provided within the institution. For political scientists organisational effectiveness is contingent on the relationship between an organisation's structure and its environment. The greater the integration between Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees and their socio-economic environment, the greater the likelihood that they would understand local concerns about urban order and devise specific strategies to tackle such concerns. The organisational resources provided by urban elites, combined with the availability of funds and the legal right to perform specific functions locally, evidently influenced policy.


### Table 3.5 Occupational Profiles of Birmingham Town Council and Watch Committee (%), 1871-1935

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample size</th>
<th>1871-75</th>
<th>1881-85</th>
<th>1891-95</th>
<th>1901-05</th>
<th>1911-15</th>
<th>1921-25</th>
<th>1931-35</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engineers &amp; metal workers</td>
<td>(28.4)</td>
<td>(31.3)</td>
<td>(30.4)</td>
<td>(30.0)</td>
<td>(18.5)</td>
<td>(8.3)</td>
<td>(14.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewellers</td>
<td>(10.5)</td>
<td>(12.5)</td>
<td>(7.1)</td>
<td>(20.0)</td>
<td>(11.1)</td>
<td>(16.7)</td>
<td>(5.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others, e.g. builders, printers, chemicals, unspecified</td>
<td>(25.4)</td>
<td>(18.8)</td>
<td>(26.8)</td>
<td>(10.0)</td>
<td>(14.8)</td>
<td>(8.3)</td>
<td>(17.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Manufacturers</td>
<td>64.2</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>38.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solicitors</td>
<td>(6.0)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
<td>(3.6)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
<td>(3.7)</td>
<td>(8.3)</td>
<td>(5.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical men</td>
<td>(3.0)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
<td>(5.4)</td>
<td>(10.0)</td>
<td>(7.4)</td>
<td>(16.7)</td>
<td>(2.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others, e.g. accountants, surveyors, estate agents</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
<td>(6.3)</td>
<td>(5.4)</td>
<td>(30.0)</td>
<td>(11.1)</td>
<td>(25.0)</td>
<td>(11.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Professionals</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopkeepers &amp; alcohol trade</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale &amp; merchants</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical &amp; trade union officials</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others, e.g. retired, farming</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Figures in brackets are subtotals of the aggregates for the manufacturing and professional categories)


86
### Table 3.6 Occupational Profiles of Leicester Town Council and Watch Committee (%), 1871-1935

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Council</th>
<th>WC</th>
<th>Council</th>
<th>WC</th>
<th>Council</th>
<th>WC</th>
<th>Council</th>
<th>WC</th>
<th>Council</th>
<th>WC</th>
<th>Council</th>
<th>WC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1871-75</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881-85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891-95</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901-05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911-15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921-25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931-35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample size</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hosiery manufacturers</td>
<td>(18.8)</td>
<td>(8.6)</td>
<td>(9.6)</td>
<td>(10.7)</td>
<td>(3.5)</td>
<td>(5.9)</td>
<td>(1.6)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
<td>(1.7)</td>
<td>(4.5)</td>
<td>(4.8)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boot and Shoe Manufacturers</td>
<td>(6.3)</td>
<td>(17.1)</td>
<td>(17.3)</td>
<td>(17.9)</td>
<td>(17.5)</td>
<td>(35.3)</td>
<td>(16.2)</td>
<td>(30.0)</td>
<td>(11.9)</td>
<td>(22.7)</td>
<td>(11.3)</td>
<td>(15.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others, e.g. Elastic Web, Builders</td>
<td>(31.3)</td>
<td>(25.7)</td>
<td>(36.5)</td>
<td>(32.1)</td>
<td>(36.8)</td>
<td>(29.4)</td>
<td>(29.7)</td>
<td>(35.0)</td>
<td>(32.2)</td>
<td>(31.8)</td>
<td>(32.3)</td>
<td>(25.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Manufacturers</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>63.4</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>70.6</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solicitors</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
<td>(7.7)</td>
<td>(3.6)</td>
<td>(3.5)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
<td>(3.3)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
<td>(3.3)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
<td>(4.8)</td>
<td>(5.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical men</td>
<td>(2.1)</td>
<td>(5.7)</td>
<td>(1.9)</td>
<td>(3.6)</td>
<td>(7.0)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
<td>(6.6)</td>
<td>(5.0)</td>
<td>(6.8)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
<td>(1.7)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others, e.g. accountants, surveyors</td>
<td>(4.2)</td>
<td>(5.7)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
<td>(5.3)</td>
<td>(5.9)</td>
<td>(4.9)</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
<td>(8.4)</td>
<td>(13.6)</td>
<td>(9.6)</td>
<td>(15.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Professionals</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopkeepers &amp; alcohol trade</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical &amp; trade union officials</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others, e.g. gentlemen</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Figures in brackets are subtotals of the aggregates for the manufacturing and professional categories)

WATCH COMMITTEES

The diverse skills and specialist expertise of members created interactive communities maintained by the exchange of information on, for example, local market conditions and public order issues. Committee membership did not simply reflect proportionately that of the full Council. Committees demanded 'specialist knowledge' and resources from their members, with engineers and coal merchants dominating the gas committee, and the housing or town planning committees represented by the construction and building trades.  

The differences in the proportion of professional representation between the Council and Watch Committee demonstrated this (Tables 3.5 and 3.6). Professionals peaked on Leicester Council at 18.6 per cent in 1911 before declining to 12.9 per cent by 1931. Professionals on its Watch Committee, by contrast, increased from five per cent in 1901 to a peak of twenty per cent in 1921, before falling to 5.6 per cent a decade later. Birmingham, on the other hand, experienced the greatest proportion of professional representation between 1881 and 1901. As the proportion of solicitors on the Council declined from 1911, so the proportion of professionals on the Watch Committee fell from 26.7 per cent in 1911 to 16.7 per cent in 1921, until there was no representation at all by the 1930s.  

The subtle differences in representation between the Council and Watch Committee indicate that, whilst the latter was dependent on the former for the annual election of its members, it was able to selectively recruit and retain the services of elites with specific knowledge and administrative expertise without seeking the Home Office's approval. With the rise in the proportion of clerical and trade union officials from 1911, both Watch Committees continued to be comprised of individuals with varied urban experiences and attitudes towards urban order. The combination of business and professional elites with working-class clerical and union officials provided representation for most socio-economic groups. Representation, therefore, shifted during the first four decades of the twentieth-century from a community-dominated to a community-centred perspective. That women were granted authority to stand for local election from 1907, obtaining a greater proportion of representation on Birmingham Council and Watch Committee at an earlier date than Leicester, gendered aspects of Watch Committee policy, particularly with the appointment of policewomen and the social welfare role of the police.  

---

69 On professions in Birmingham, Hennock, Fit, 40-9.
The composition of Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees was an important influence on the nature and direction of policy formulation and implementation. Although the elites comprised the Committee, a combination of municipal and national regulations specified the scope and range of its duties, the allocation of its resources and the co-ordination of procedures and relationships with other institutions. This was assisted by the cross-membership of committees by Watch Committee members. By serving on the Watch and Water Committees, for example, members were able to influence the distribution of water supplies to extinguish fires. Others developed an interest in traffic and transport policies during the inter-war years, serving on the Traffic, Town Planning, and Watch Committees to co-ordinate the police responses to rising levels of vehicle ownership and road planning.71

ATTENDANCE

The behaviour of its members also influenced the Watch Committee's prestige and influence. Had the system for administering municipal 'policing' been eroded by the 1930s by increased central regulation, the Watch Committee would have declined in its relevance within the Council. Contemporaries noted that power was dependent on prestige and that municipal government and 'police' administration faced challenges from the legal relationship between the police and the judiciary, Home Office regulations, and increasing professionalisation. Yet they agreed that the Watch Committee remained a prestigious institution that transcended the bounds of partisanship.72 The level of experience and expertise of the members of Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees and their attitudes towards attending meetings reinforced this.

Although the frequency of meetings declined from 1899, both Committees still met, on average, one-and-a-half times every month between 1902 and 1938.73 Birmingham Watch Committee met, on average, 21 times annually before 1914 and nearly 16 times annually during the inter-war years. The

71 Alfred James, for example, was appointed Commissioner for the West Midland Area under the Road Traffic Act, 1930. He was also Chairman of the West Midland Joint Traffic Consultative Committee (1933-34), Chairman of the Airport Committee (1934), Chairman of the Tramways and Omnibus Committee (1929-40), and a prominent member of the Watch Committee and national system of police administration: see Chapter 2, 62.


73 Local standing orders stipulated that standing committees should meet monthly.
average number of Watch Committee meetings in Leicester similarly fell from 24 to 19 meetings annually (Table 3.7). Combined with the high rate of sub-committee meetings, particularly in Birmingham where the Judicial and Fire Brigade Sub-Committees met, on average, more than 15 times annually between 1893 and 1938 (Table 3.8), both Watch Committees continued to hold meetings in high regard as a formal network for negotiating resources and discussing policy. Although aggregates were in decline, meetings were held earlier to enable lengthier discussion of policy, with the average length extending from around thirty minutes in 1900 to over one hour by the end of the 1930s. Contemporaries argued that weekly or fortnightly meetings, particularly during working hours, did not necessarily produce 'better results' than monthly meetings, the latter attracting the interests of 'busy public men' due to the savings in time spent on formal civic work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.7 Average Number of Watch Committee (WC) Meetings, 1868-1938</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham WC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868-1899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902-1938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868-1938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868-1914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918-1938</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: As Figures 3.1 and 3.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.8 Average Number of Sub-Committee (S-C) Meetings, 1893-1938</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham Judicial S-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893-1938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893-1914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917-1938</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BCA Judicial Sub-Committee Minutes; BCA Fire Brigade Sub-Committee Minutes; LRO CM42/16-32, Fire Brigade Sub-Committee Minutes.

Attendance rates remained steady throughout the period, countering assumptions that early twentieth-century elites did not regard civic work as highly as their Victorian counterparts (Table 3.9). That attendance was higher in Birmingham, averaging 85.8 per cent between 1868 and 1938 compared to

74 Birmingham Corporation Annual Diary (Birmingham, 1867-1938); Leicester Corporation Annual Diary (Leicester, 1867-1938); on more general developments in local authority meetings, D. N. Chester, 'Council and committee meetings in county boroughs', Public Administration, XXXII (1954), 429-30.

75 Etherton, 'Employment', 396.
70.3 per cent in Leicester, was due to its smaller membership and higher quorum. The persistence of high attendance indicates that the members of both Watch Committees did not class their work as being of lesser value, nor did they consider that they had little real influence over policy. The interrelatedness of structure and behaviour meant that attitudes towards formal organisational networks, epitomised by committee and sub-committee meetings, influenced the extent of administrative power exercised by civic elites.

Table 3.9 Average Watch Committee (WC) Attendance Rates (%), 1868-1938

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Birmingham WC</th>
<th>Leicester WC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1868-1899</td>
<td>89.6</td>
<td>66.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902-1938</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>73.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868-1938</td>
<td>85.8</td>
<td>70.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868-1914</td>
<td>83.4</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918-1938</td>
<td>80.6</td>
<td>70.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: As Figures 3.1 and 3.2.

Sub-committee attendance demonstrated similar stability, remaining over three-quarters of the membership on Birmingham Judicial and Fire Brigade Sub-Committees, and over two-thirds on Leicester General Purposes and Fire Brigade Sub-Committees, between 1893 and 1938 (Table 3.10). Overlapping membership added to the heavy workload of Committee business and underpinned Committee loyalty, epitomised by the high incidence of cross-party voting. Sub-committees were the administrative creations of a full Committee that dealt with technical issues requiring additional probing than was permitted in a routine Committee meeting. The expertise and prestige of the Judicial and Fire Brigade Sub-Committees, which served for longer periods than many of the other standing committees, meant that both Watch Committees increasingly devolved authority in dealing with technical questions involving co-operation with chief officials. This shared the workload around the Watch Committee’s members and reinforced the Council’s dependence on the committee system.

---

76 Leicester General Purposes Sub-Committee functioned between 1897 and 1919 and was responsible for a range of police functions, including accounts, discipline, promotions and uniforms. It was disbanded in 1919 following the transfer of some police regulations to the Secretary of State. Those functions remaining the responsibility of the Watch Committee, such as accounts and uniforms, were distributed either to sub-committees, such as uniforms, or the Watch Committee itself.

Table 3.10 Average Sub-Committee (S-C) Attendance Rates (%), 1893-1938

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Birmingham Judicial S-C</th>
<th>Birmingham Fire Brigade S-C</th>
<th>Leicester General Purposes S-C</th>
<th>Leicester Fire Brigade S-C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1893-1938</td>
<td>78.8</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>62.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893-1914</td>
<td>84.6</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>63.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917-1938</td>
<td>73.1</td>
<td>77.2</td>
<td>66.1</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: As Table 3.8.

Sub-committees formulated and implemented policy, passed resolutions, maintained 'general control' over the activities of departmental staff, and devised financial estimates. Municipal administration was, by the Edwardian years, complex and reliant upon sub-committees for a variety of responsibilities. The Town Council accepted that committees and sub-committees were invariably 'autonomous and final in their powers,' and depended on the creation of integrated communication networks between their chairmen.78

EXPERIENCE

Surveys of municipal councillors between the 1950s and 1970s demonstrated high levels of administrative experience within this group.79 With the continued dominance of the middle-class in municipal government during the inter-war years a strong administrative and professional ethos emerged with increasing numbers of councillors serving for at least ten years.80 Experience was a quality revered within municipal government. Coterminal with notions of expertise and knowledge, the annual yearbooks of both Councils regularly listed the achievements and experience of their elected members for public viewing.81 Experienced councillors were well-known and popular for their longstanding expertise and service to the community. William Barfoot, Leicester Watch Committee Chairman (1872-74, 1890-95) was remembered for his 'downright hard, honest, useful work done for

---

78 Finer, English, 224-8.
81 See also, Cornish's Birmingham Yearbook 1939-1940 (Birmingham, 1940), 381.
the town he loves so well' over twenty-five years. In 1900 Birmingham City Council commissioned a book of contemporary biographies to celebrate the experience and achievements of its civic dignitaries. William Hart was praised for his commitment to Birmingham's public life for a quarter of a century, Charles Bishop for twenty years, and Samuel Edwards for 'many years.' Long lists of their business and civic careers, associational membership and social interests demonstrated their commitment to the city and its inhabitants. Local periodicals and newspapers also included brief histories of individuals, invariably noting the length of service of the more experienced members.

Membership of Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees was the pinnacle of a municipal career, rather than a stepping-stone towards a higher and more responsible office. Experience provided the committee structure with an important human resource. Combined with a strong local personality experience was an even more powerful resource regularly deployed by both Watch Committees in negotiations over resources with other committees and central government. The impact of local personalities on Watch Committee administration was evident when experienced individuals retired from local politics. Between 1888 and 1891 the level of experience on Leicester Watch Committee fell from a peak of 10.8 years to a trough of 2.9 years (Figure 3.3). This followed the retirement of Thomas Almond, George Anderson and Samuel Wheeler, all former Chairmen, after twenty-five, thirty and 37 years' service respectively. Experience on Birmingham Watch Committee peaked at 15.1 years in 1894 before falling to 8.5 years in 1901 and decelerating to 5.2 years by 1913. The retirement of Henry Clarke, Catalogue of the Leicester Commemoration Exhibition (Leicester, 1897), 109.

Hart, an insurance agent, was Chairman of the Watch Committee (1881-84 and 1895-98) and Judicial Sub-Committee (1888-94). He was a prominent temperance reformer and local Methodist preacher, establishing Free Churches in Erdington and Washwood Heath.

Bishop, a wire worker manufacturer, was Chairman of the Watch Committee (1885-87) and a prominent local Baptist.

Edwards, an auctioneer, was Chairman of the Watch Committee (1888-90), Judicial Sub-Committee (1886-87 and 1898-1900) and Fire Brigade Sub-Committee (1887-88, 1892-94, 1897-1900). An advocate of school reform, he was also Lord Mayor (1900).

W. Pike, Birmingham at the Opening of the 20th Century: Contemporary Biographies (Brighton, 1900), 82-3, 86.

For example, Birmingham Faces and Places, 1 Jul. 1888, 31, 35; 1 Oct. 1888, 87-8; Leicester Mail Yearbook (Leicester, 1922), 52-61.

Rhodes, 'Personality', 250-1.

Almond, a provision merchant, was Chairman of the Watch Committee (1883-85); Anderson, a draper, was Chairman (1878-80); Wheeler, a wholesale grocer, was Chairman (1883-88).
Manton in 1894 following 22 years' service, followed by Charles Bishop in 1910 and Samuel Edwards in 1912, after thirty and 28 years respectively, contributed to this decline.\textsuperscript{90}

\textit{Figure 3.3 Mean Experience on Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees (years), 1867-1939}

Following these troughs the level of experience on both Watch Committees rose steadily, peaking at 15.8 years in Leicester in 1933 and 12.7 years in Birmingham the following year. Watch Committee membership was increasingly deemed to be a career, demanding the time and energy of its members, but also retaining their interest for two decades and longer. Municipal politics continued to attract the attention of leading civic elites throughout the first four decades of the twentieth-century. In its peak year of 1933 more than half of Leicester Watch Committee's members had served for at least ten years, a third of whom for over twenty years. Similarly, two-thirds of Birmingham Watch Committee served for at least ten years in 1934, a fifth of whom for over twenty years.

This stability reinforced the dominant position of the more experienced members over those with a shorter length of service. Those serving for more than ten years used their overwhelming knowledge of administrative procedure and the circumstances of local 'policing' to influence policy-making and implementation. Sub-committees, for instance, always included at least one highly experienced member, including those \textit{ad hoc} committees which met infrequently. Experience and the 'inflexibility

\textsuperscript{90} Manton, a silversmith, was Chairman of the Judicial Sub-Committee (1878-79).
of tradition' undermined partisan voting with experienced members forming close working and personal relationships amongst themselves.\(^91\) Ernest Wilford and Edwin Hincks, for example, were bitter enemies during the annual elections, berating each other in a heated campaign in 1911. Hincks, a former trade unionist and a member of the Leicester Trades Council, remained a staunch Liberal throughout his career, criticising socialism as an 'intellectual delusion.'\(^92\) Wilford, the Chief Whip of the Leicester Labour Party, criticised Hincks and other leading Liberals for recent rate relief policies.\(^93\) The intrusion of party politics was largely restricted to the annual election periods, with Hincks and Wilford forming a close working relationship over three decades, overcoming factionalism with a commonly-shared civic vision of inclusivity and co-ordination.\(^94\)

Those members with less experience could also be bypassed in major decisions by devolving authority to a sub-committee comprised of experienced members. This was a strategy deliberately deployed by Leicester Watch Committee on numerous occasions during the twentieth-century.\(^95\) Birmingham Watch Committee was less likely to pursue a similar strategy, although its leading members used their administrative experience to influence decisions. Experience was used to link the various sub-committees together with few cases of Watch Committee members not serving on several different sub-committees simultaneously. Experience was a linking process between the various sub-committees. The prestige of having an experienced and reputable member on a sub-committee gave it greater prominence and entailed that its proceedings would receive ample coverage during the Watch Committee meetings and within the local press if deemed appropriate.

---

\(^91\) D. Beetham, Bureaucracy, 2nd ed. (Buckingham, 1996), 12.

\(^92\) Leicester Daily Post, 27 Oct. 1911. Hincks was Secretary to the Leicester Charity Organisation Society and a prominent member of the Town Council for over thirty years.

\(^93\) Ibid, 28 Oct. 1911. Wilford, a boot and shoe factor, was Vice-Chairman of the Watch Committee (1928-34) and Chairman from then on until the end of the Second World War. He was Lord Mayor (1932-33) and Chairman of the Health Committee (1921-25).

\(^94\) See Chapter 5, 164-5 for an example of this inclusivity and co-ordination.

\(^95\) Arthur Tollington, for example, chaired Leicester Fire Brigade Sub-Committee between 1900 and 1913 whilst also serving on the Police Accounts Sub-Committee (1897-1901, 1903-21), General Purposes Sub-Committee (1897-1911, 1913-19), Lighting Sub-Committee (1897-1911, 1913-21), Inspection of Public Buildings Sub-Committee (1910-15), Emergency Sub-Committee (1920-21) and various short-lived sub-committees dealing with police pay, public health, police station accounts and vehicle licensing. He was also Lord Mayor (1911-12). See also Chapter 5, 164-5.
Experience and seniority could be an obstacle to new initiatives, but also assisted innovation through extensive knowledge of administrative procedure and working relations. Experienced members claimed authority to represent the Watch Committee publicly. In doing so they claimed administrative expertise and drew upon their experience to fulfil the Watch Committee's interests. Edwin Hincks, for example, made references to his administrative experience and knowledge of local fire-fighting in a speech to the Institute of Fire Engineers in Leicester in 1930. Through his association with the fire service over the previous quarter of a century Hincks was empowered to make various suggestions to the delegates concerning community fire prevention and recruitment strategies. His experience and expertise was reinforced by the Chief Fire Officer, Henry Neale, who publicly proclaimed that 'I doubt if there is any other municipal legislator who has a deeper insight into, or knows more about, our Service.'96 Upon Neale's retirement in 1938, Ernest Wilford declared that they had been associated 'for more than twenty years and we have become the closest and most steadfast of friends.'97 The relationships between the experienced Watch Committee members and their chief officials were invariably close. Although relations could prove to be a barrier to radical change and technological innovation, with faith being maintained in traditional methods and appliances, they also facilitated a closer working relationship and understanding of the administrative and operational issues prevalent within municipal government.

Forthcoming chapters will explore the bureaucracy of the Watch Committee and its relationship with the municipality, central government and chief officials. The Watch Committee exhibited many similarities with other public sector organisations. Although it was not an officially prescribed 'rule of the game,' the Watch Committee maintained its own hierarchical rank system whereby the Chairman and Vice-Chairman co-ordinated its work and, along with other more experienced members, dominated its proceedings. Those with less experience were expected to serve for an unspecified length of time, learning the various administrative procedures before being accepted into the Committee's higher ranks. This meant it had an unspecified, yet highly respected and authoritative, career structure. Owing to the extensive experience within its ranks, the Watch Committee also exhibited continuity in its membership, attendance and, to a lesser extent, composition between the 1870s and 1930s.

96 Institute of Fire Engineers Annual Report 1930, 3-4, 26.
97 Fire, Aug. 1938, 53.
Although the proportion of manufacturers, professionals, clerical workers, manual labourers and women differed over time, the retention of local middle-class elites and civic-minded individuals, with both the administrative skills and commitment necessary to perform civic service, provided evidence of continuity in composition.

The Watch Committee was comprised of a network of interpersonal relations. Although it conducted its work according to prescribed rules and standing orders, the nature of local personality and expertise introduced accusations of arbitrariness or favouritism. Personalities influenced policy to serve predetermined interests so that it was important not to have a single business interest group dominating membership in order to balance social and economic interests in the allocation of resources to protect public and private property. The link between personality and expertise meant that the more prominent members often controlled access to the wealth of knowledge accumulated within the Committee and, in particular, its sub-committees. Although there was no direct correlation between experience and knowledge, experienced individuals had access to such knowledge through their relationships with more knowledgeable members and chief officials.

Membership of the Watch Committee did not automatically denote expertise. Members had to earn their expertise over time through interaction with financial, technical and professional experts. Organisational expertise was therefore contingent on the creation and maintenance of knowledge networks between the various institutions interested in 'police' administration. To obtain access to knowledge and political legitimacy the Watch Committee had to negotiate with other local, national and professional institutions, employing its organisational resources to full effect in order to maintain a leading role within decision-making.
THE CHIEF OFFICIAL, EXPERTISE AND RELATIONS BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND THE PROFESSIONS

The responsibilities and expertise of municipal chief officials have attracted a great deal of scholarly interest since the late 1950s. The chief official, who was an appointed member of municipal government, played an increasingly active role in service administration from the second-half of the nineteenth-century, reflecting a shift from the amateurism of early nineteenth-century local government to a professional and locally prescriptive service. The increasing amount of Victorian social legislation tackling urban disease, criminality, immorality and squalor, and the emergence of the Town Council as a large business enterprise running profitable public utilities, required enforcement through expert inspection and regulation. Medical officers of health, sanitary engineers and surveyors were appointed to regulate the provision of sewers and clean water during the 1850s and 1860s, moving into slum clearance later in the century. The police patrolled urban public spaces, such as parks and alleyways, to deter street crime, rowdy behaviour and prostitution. Nuisance inspectors responded to concerns about acute epidemic disease by regulating the level of dirt and indecency in the urban environment.

Municipal accountants scrutinised the spending policies of individual committees, published and/or audited standardised annual accounts, and encouraged 'economy' in municipal expenditure.

1 O. MacDonagh, 'The nineteenth-century revolution in government: a critical reappraisal', *Historical Journal*, I, 1 (1958), 52-67; see also arguments that municipal intervention was the direct consequence of particular crises, such as fires, cholera outbreaks, or other incidents, B. Luckin, 'Accidents, disasters and cities', *Urban History*, XX (1993), 177-90.


5 G. Martin, 'The technique of financial administration of a local authority', *Public Administration*, XI (1933), 391-7; on the accountancy profession in general, A. M. Carr-Saunders and P. Wilson, *The Professions* (Oxford,
Indeed, the growth in modern 'industrial professions' such as accountancy, surveying, engineering and local government, was largely a response to the intensification of urbanisation during the second-half of the nineteenth-century. Gourvish argues that this process concentrated demand for professional services and created opportunities for specialists within local government. Professionalism and expertise was influenced by a combination of internal and external factors, including industrial growth, urbanisation, the creation of representative associations to promote the standardisation of professional training and the dissemination of esoteric knowledge, and the emergence of a professional society based on expertise and meritocracy. The 'professional ideal' demanded the creation and maintenance of urban networks to transmit knowledge and expertise between these modern professions, the majority of which were based or met in towns and cities.

Although many professions were regulated by national bodies, the production of scientific and professional knowledge and expertise was a powerful local governmental resource. The expert's protean and rational knowledge covered a variety of social welfare and 'policing' functions. Experts were socially-mobile 'authority figures' who derived their power not from their ownership of inherited property or capital, but from their control and dissemination of esoteric and fiduciary knowledge. Many had professional qualifications and were members of representative associations that emphasised...
the importance of training and mutual solidarity. By implication councillors and aldermen were experts in their own right through the level of experience and administrative knowledge earned over decades of civic work. In particular, the provision of permissive legislation allowed councillors to prioritise municipal functions and make informed judgements about the local peculiarities of service delivery. Similarly, central government agencies also demonstrated considerable expertise, particularly in inspecting local services. From 1857 the Inspectors of Constabulary, for example, made annual inspections of local forces, advising the Chief Constable and Watch Committee Chairman of ways in which the force could be materially improved. By the 1910s their annual reports to the Home Secretary commented on the level of perceived criminality within the country and suggested the standardisation of police administrative structures to make the procedure of inspections easier.

Expertise, therefore, was a quality 'possessed by administrators or professionals, generals or specialists' and was restricted to neither central nor municipal government. Closely associated with practical regulation, piecemeal reform and technical knowledge, the expertise of chief officials, however, differed markedly from that of other professional cadres. Chief officials were not responsible to a number of committees, unlike councillors and aldermen, but were largely responsible for administering one department under which they maintained operational authority. Municipal administration was apportioned into two interdependent branches: committees and departments. Not every committee administered a department. One department could serve a number of committees, notably those of the Town Clerk and Treasurer. Similarly, one committee could be served by a number of departments, as in the Birmingham Markets and Fairs Committee, which administered both the Markets' and Weights and Measures’ Departments. This was also the case with the Watch

15 F. Minshull, 'The departmental organisation of the work of local authorities', Public Administration, VII (1929), 297.
Committee, which was jointly served in Birmingham and Leicester by the Police and Fire Departments.\textsuperscript{16}

Departments were established through a combination of municipal and national conventions. Each department was headed by a chief official deemed responsible for a particular function that was ‘of so special or separate a nature’ that it could not ‘be placed in the hands of an existing chief officer.’\textsuperscript{17} In Birmingham and Leicester the Fire Brigade was under the control of the Chief Constable until the separation of the Police and Fire Departments in the 1870s. Watch committees in Birmingham and Leicester, along with those of other county boroughs, had initially deemed that a brigade’s responsibilities were not dissimilar to those of the police, often appointing an officer with experience of fire-fighting to maintain operational control, subject to the Chief Constable’s overall authority. The decision to separate the two Departments coincided with a shift in emphasis towards the role of the fire expert. The emergence of fire prevention and education as separate policy networks during the last quarter of the nineteenth-century underlined the Chief Constable’s inexpert grasp of fire policy.\textsuperscript{18} By the 1900s chief fire officers were expected to be knowledgeable about building design and engineering, combustibility of materials, electrical installations and communication networks. Such technical knowledge advanced the Chief Officer’s social and professional position within policy negotiations and interactions between members of the fire policy community, which also included interactions with the national associations representing the expanding engineering and architectural professions.\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{16} Leicester Watch Committee also maintained responsibility for the Lighting Department.

\textsuperscript{17} Minshull, ‘Departmental’, 298.

\textsuperscript{18} On early forays into fire prevention and education by leading chief officers, J. Braidwood, Fire Prevention and Fire Extinction (London, 1866); E. M. Shaw, Fire Surveys, or A Summary of the Principles to be Observed in Estimating the Risk of Buildings (London, 1872). Braidwood is widely credited with establishing the first municipal and professional brigade in Edinburgh in 1823. He became Chief Officer of the London Fire Engine Establishment, an umbrella organisation protecting London’s insured interests, in 1833, and died at the Tooley Street fire in London in 1861. As early as 1830 he published On the Construction of Fire-Engines and Apparatus, the Training of Firemen, and the Method of Proceeding in Cases of Fire. Shaw, popularly known as ‘The Fire King’, succeeded Braidwood and was the first Chief Officer of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, established in 1865. He was inaugural President of the National Fire Brigades’ Union and retired in 1891.

\textsuperscript{19} On the common challenges facing firemen, engineers, architects and surveyors, H. Holt, Fire Protection in Buildings (London, 1913).
The extension of expert authority and professional legitimacy was assisted by the diffusion of active professional associations during the last quarter of the nineteenth-century. By the 1920s professional associations were an accepted feature of policy-making and expert authority was deemed a major influence on the multi-faceted nature of administrative power relations between and within governmental institutions. The chief official used his technical knowledge to present professional arguments as 'an objective source of authority, autonomous of social status and interest,' in order to raise his status, improve his conditions of work, and obtain access to other non-informational resources, such as financial support, additional prescriptive powers or public legitimacy.

This chapter will explore the expertise of the Chief Constable and Fire Officer in Birmingham and Leicester between the 1870s and 1930s. The responsibilities of the two officials, their relationships with their Watch Committee and its sub-committees, and their membership of professional associations were, by the 1910s, significant influences on policy negotiations and intergovernmental relations. The Chief Constable and Fire Officer were the main experts involved in Watch Committee administration, although they were not the sole influence. The Town Clerk, as the Council's legal adviser, coordinated the various committees and departments (Figure 1.1), advised the Watch Committee on the legal ramifications of policy and linked municipal and national institutions by regularly interacting with central departments. The Treasurer, meanwhile, was the Council's financial adviser, vetting all financial proposals; the Surveyor advised on engineering and design issues within capital development; and the Inspector of Nuisances co-operated with the Chief Constable in administering aspects of criminal justice policy.

Officials used their expertise by controlling the diffusion of information in their relationships with the Watch Committee and other institutions. This gave them advantages over non-experts in technical issues. Such expertise and control over its dissemination developed over time. Indeed the meaning and interpretation of expertise shifted over time from an emerging, yet marginalised, feature of municipal

20 MacLeod, 'Introduction', 5; Gourvish, 'The rise', 23-32.
22 Morris, 'Governance', 10; Perkin, Rise, 3, 6.
24 Minshull, 'Departmental', 297.
administration to one of the fundamental issues within intergovernmental discourse and professional society. The chief official in the 1930s, therefore, was significantly different in his knowledge and expertise to his counterpart in the 1870s.

THE ‘HEAD CONSTABLE’

By the 1900s the Chief Constable was one of England’s most influential municipal chief officials. The police were part of a unique relationship within local government in being accountable to both the municipality and common law. A Chief Constable was increasingly recognised, like all policemen, as being an officer whose ‘authority is original, not delegated, and is exercised at his own discretion by virtue of his office.’ He was not subject to Watch Committee control in the performance of his constitutional police duties, and this position was reinforced after 1918. Such independence did not, however, fully extend into administrative issues. In this context, the Chief Constable was in a similar position to other chief officials in being dependent on the active support of the Watch Committee for his administrative authority.

The Chief Constable was not always a powerful influence on Watch Committee policy. Certainly before the twentieth-century he was regarded as being in a similar legal position to that of the ordinary constable. The position was not legally prescribed under the Municipal Corporations Act, 1835, although the Watch Committee was empowered to appoint and dismiss ‘constables’ and make regulations preventing neglect or abuse. These did not affect the constable’s common law powers, although they reinforced the Watch Committee’s dominance in the professional relationship. The Victorian Chief Constable exercised influence over appointments, promotion, discipline and welfare, yet invariably sought the authority of the Watch Committee in the majority of policy initiatives. Thus, Leicester Watch Committee, following legal advice from the Town Clerk, refused its Chief Constable permission to impose small fines for ‘breach of duty’ in 1883 owing to the absence of any delegating

---

power requiring the Committee's confirmation. When Leicester's policemen were granted Sunday leave by rotation in 1882, the Chief Constable warned that this was subject to the 'satisfaction of the Watch Committee and the public generally.' Expertise did not automatically denote autonomy in administering departments despite the development of the doctrine of constabulary independence. Autonomy was a negotiated position between the Chief Constable and his Watch Committee subject to the former earning the trust of the latter.

The title 'Chief Constable' was itself a twentieth-century construct. Neither Birmingham nor Leicester Watch Committees formally used the title until the 1900s, preferring to use the inferior title of 'Head Constable.' This had clear repercussions on the position of the Chief Constable within municipal government and the embryonic police profession. County forces used the standard term 'Chief Constable,' which, with their superior social status, elevated them to a higher professional status than their borough counterparts. Late Victorian professionalism was not completely immune to traditional ideals of patronage and wealth. Professions were not comprised of equal power relations and the appointment of chief constables was not wholly based on merit.

Nor did the 'Head Constable' maintain the same status as those leading chief officials in the Town Council, namely the Town Clerk, Treasurer, Medical Officer of Health and Surveyor, who acquired considerable departmental powers during the second-half of the nineteenth-century. A similar attitude existed towards the head of the Fire Brigade, who was titled the 'Superintendent,' rather than 'Chief Fire Officer.' This placed him on a similar public level as the 'Lighting Superintendent', 'Markets Superintendent' and 'Police Superintendent'. That there was less prestige associated with these early titles indicated that certain municipal positions were deemed to lack expertise. In order to attain civic status, such officials had to earn the trust of the local community and develop 'a core of

---

29 Leicestershire Record Office [hereafter LRO] CM42/13, Watch Committee Minutes [hereafter WC Mins], 27 Feb. 1883.
30 LRO DE3831/265, Chief Constable's Special Order Book, 24 Oct. 1882, 43.
32 On the diversities of professionalism, Corfield, Power, 213-5.
33 Doyle, 'Changing', 297.
esoteric knowledge' regulated by integrity and strict codes of conduct. Both the Chief Constable and Fire Officer were, however, subordinate to other chief officials and the Watch Committee during the late Victorian period. Furthermore, the variety of titles adopted, with other municipalities using 'Chief Superintendent,' 'Head Officer' and other nomenclature, denoted the absence of uniformity nationally. It was not until 1919 that 'Chief Constable' was nationally adopted, or 1941 in the case of 'Chief Fire Officer', although this was some years after their adoption in Birmingham and Leicester.

The inferiority of the Victorian Chief Constable was most evident in Birmingham. There the Watch Committee, often claiming to act on behalf of local ratepayers, criticised impropriety and excessive interference in the affairs of respectable individuals. George Glossop, for example, was investigated by the Watch Committee following accusations from prominent ratepayers that he had improperly traded with a known fraudster during the 1870s. Upon questioning him, Glossop defended his actions, contending 'if the law won't touch a man you have a right to deal with him. I cannot see the immorality in it. The law said he was no swindler, though certainly I knew he was.' Although Glossop had retired from office, the Watch Committee publicly criticised his morally reprehensible actions, as well as those of a former Chairman, strengthening the degree of legitimacy between the Police, the Council and the ratepayers. The Chief Constable, as the embodiment of late Victorian public order, had undermined the Watch Committee's moral authority and threatened the withdrawal of public support for investment in urban 'policing'. The abuse of authority was a common concern amongst contemporaries, particularly where professionals exploited their 'insider knowledge' to further their own self-interests. Glossop's public vilification was deemed a justifiable reassertion of the Watch Committee's superiority in its departmental relations.

---

34 Gourvish, 'The rise', 16-17.
36 Leicester adopted 'Chief Fire Officer' in 1908 and 'Chief Constable' in 1913; Birmingham adopted 'Chief Constable' in 1882, although it was not used permanently until 1899, and 'Chief Fire Officer' in 1900. For the purposes of simplification, this thesis uses the terms 'Chief Constable' and 'Chief Fire Officer'.
37 Chief Constable (1860-76). The career histories of Birmingham and Leicester Chief Constables are available in Appendix F.
38 Birmingham City Archives [hereafter BCA] WC Mins, 12 Mar. 1878; 31 May 1878.
40 Corfield, Power, 201-3.
The Victorian Chief Constable was also deemed to be subject to operational control. Glossop's replacement, Major Edwin Bond, was a relatively inexperienced police officer, having served for only two years before his appointment in 1876. In August 1881 the Watch Committee received complaints that Bond had conducted a blanket campaign against public drinking and 'improper' music hall performances, which caused prosecutions to soar and threatened working-class social practices. The Watch Committee, in siding with the complainants, demanded a written promise that Bond would report to them before taking any criminal proceedings 'likely to affect a number of ratepayers, or to provoke public comment.' Bond refused to accede to the Committee's request unless instructed by the Home Secretary and the Magistrates, purporting to be Birmingham's 'guardian of public morality and order.' The former refused to intervene in a local and discretionary policy network and the latter, which was comprised of many leading Watch Committee members, refused to support his assertion that he was operationally independent. Bond's refusal to accept that he was the Watch Committee's agent caused consternation, with the Watch Committee demanding his resignation on the grounds that 'it would be detrimental to the interests of the public and to the good government of the town that the conflict of authority should be maintained any longer.'

Bond's immediate apology, in which he agreed to 'acquiesce in the authority of the Watch Committee', was sufficient to withdraw its demand for his resignation. The rapprochement was short-lived. Both the Watch Committee and licensing justices passed a vote of no confidence in him later that year after Bond fabricated evidence during a licensing appeal. Bond was accused of acting favourably towards a public house landlord seeking the renewal of his licence on appeal to Warwickshire County Court after Birmingham Magistrates had rejected the application. Bond refuted allegations that he aided the application and acted improperly, attacking the Magistrates and Watch Committee in the local press. That the presiding Magistrates included Thomas Martineau, a leading member of the Liberal Town Council, and Thomas Avery, the existing Mayor, underlined Bond's precarious position, leading to

---

41 As Cardiff's Chief Constable (1874-76). Bond had, like a significant proportion of Victorian chief constables, served prominently in the Army before entering the police service: Wall, Chief Constables, 238.
42 BCA WC Mins, 23 Aug. 1881, 231-3.
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid.
46 Martineau was Mayor (1884-86).
his resignation shortly afterwards. The 'rules of the game' constrained the autonomy of chief constables and stipulated the behaviour deemed unacceptable to civic elites. Those who did not abide by the rules of reputable and subservient conduct were either excluded from policy negotiations or, as in the case of Bond, removed from the relationship.

The Watch Committee's authority over the Chief Constable was not restricted to Birmingham. Bond's refusal to accept its authority was evidently influenced by his military background and the Watch Committee's adherence to the civic gospel, which depended in no small measure on the explicit loyalty of civic officials and disinterested service to the community. Bond's interpretation of his legal knowledge brought him into direct conflict with the Watch Committee, which obtained the Council's support in replacing him with an unobtrusive and compliant individual, Joseph Farndale, who had previously served in three smaller forces, including Leicester. Farndale, unlike Bond, did not seek to be an independent agent, and was rewarded with greater responsibilities in liaising with other forces and policing a larger acreage for his loyalty during the 1890s.

Victorian Leicester's Chief Constables were subjected to similar levels of operational control. Following a complaint from a ratepayer at the force's failure to prevent a spate of safe robberies in 1885, the Watch Committee ordered its Chief Constable, James Duns, to investigate the neglect of his constables in failing to adequately inspect warehouses at night. The ratepayer suggested appointing an expert, 'independent altogether of the local force,' to investigate the robberies, indicating that Duns and the Detective Department were incapable of solving the case:

---

47 The Watch Committee initially dismissed Bond, but accepted his resignation with six months' salary and the return of his pensionable deductions.
As a ratepayer contributing over £100 per year for my property in the Borough I have a right to expect a supervision of a more perfect kind. Immediately on the discovery of the burglary I should have offered a reward of £50 or £100 but was immediately overruled by the Chief Constable, now I feel it to be so far gone that the responsibility rests with the [Watch] Committee.

Following an emergency meeting in which the Watch Committee questioned Duns and six officers, the force was criticised for failing to 'discover the perpetrators of the robbery.' Although Duns attempted to distance himself from the incident, blaming those beat constables for gross neglect and the Detective Department for failing to investigate the incident effectively, the Watch Committee forced him to withdraw a written request for a pay rise and ordered him to reorganise the force internally, thus reasserting its ultimate administrative and financial authority over his office.

The Chief Constable was a necessary municipal expert by the 1870s. The Watch Committee depended upon his specialised knowledge of the law and its application to social and working practices. It was essential, however, that the Watch Committee maintained faith in the Chief Constable's integrity and expertise, and this was reinforced through public scrutiny to justify municipal expenditure. Chief officials had high standards to uphold, and there was widespread recognition that failure to do so justified terminating their contract as in the case of Major Bond. Institutional power relations were often the product of 'past policy decisions and outcomes' and the behaviour of past chief constables. Bond, for example, 'strategically calculated' to assert his operational autonomy during the 1870s, thus challenging the Watch Committee, which was hesitant to authorise greater freedom, inclusivity and negotiate policy with a paid official. Decisions reflected 'past conflicts' and the values and culture of municipal policy-makers, culminating in the Victorian Chief Constable, whilst expanding in his expertise, remaining precariously subject to Watch Committee control.
The Chief Fire Officer was similarly an influential member of municipal administration by the 1900s. The expansion of regulatory powers into inspection and the enforcement of minimum safety standards empowered the Chief Fire Officer to become an indispensable expert within municipal culture. Municipalities were empowered to make building byelaws from 1858 subject to Home Office confirmation, with the Local Government Board issuing Model Byelaws from 1877.\textsuperscript{56} Brigades inspected licensed cinemas and theatres from 1890 to ensure that exits and gangways were kept clear, fire appliances in working order, and the fireproof curtain lowered at appropriate times.\textsuperscript{57} During the 1920s Leicester's Chief Fire Officer directed firemen on evening duty at the Palace Theatre, Opera House, Theatre Royal and Pavilion Theatre to enforce such regulations. In Birmingham, theatre and cinema staff were lectured on the use of fire appliances, stage properties and decorations tested for their fire-resistance, and buildings checked for their electrical risks. Both Chief Fire Officers reported defects and advised their Fire Brigade Sub-Committee on the issuing of annual licences.\textsuperscript{58} Both Fire Brigades were also empowered to inspect building plans to ensure that adequate means of exit were provided and inflammable substances stored according to nationally prescribed safety standards.\textsuperscript{59} Birmingham Fire Brigade made additional inspections of hospitals, council schools and public libraries, adopting strict local regulations on the design of buildings exceeding two storeys in height following various fatal fires in buildings storing inflammable substances with inadequate means of escape.\textsuperscript{60}

Such duties were not statutorily the responsibility of the Chief Fire Officer. The Explosives Act, 1875, established the position of Chief Inspector of Explosives, an expert accountable to the Home Office for

\textsuperscript{57} Public Health Amendment Act 1890: 53 & 54 Vict., c.59, s.36; Cinematograph Act, 1909: 9 Edw. 7, c.30; Celluloid and Cinematograph Film Act, 1922: 12 & 13 Geo. 5, c.35; LRO 10D58/173, Leicester Fire Brigade General Order Book, 14 Nov. 1914, 14.
\textsuperscript{58} LRO L352.2, Annual Fire Brigade Report 1925, 12; BCA MS1303/38, Annual Fire Brigade Report 1922, 72; Annual Fire Brigade Report 1929, 15-18; Annual Fire Brigade Report 1935, 11-12.
\textsuperscript{59} Factory and Workshop Act, 1901: 1 Edw. 7, c.22, s.14, 15; Petroleum (Consolidation) Act, 1928: 18 & 19 Geo. 5 c.32; Public Health Act, 1936: 26 Geo. 5 & 1 Edw. 8 c.49, s.60, 287; City of Birmingham Fire Brigade, \textit{Rules and Regulations, Conditions of Service, and Hints on Life Saving} (Birmingham, 1903), 36-8.
the manufacture, storage and transportation of explosive materials. It did not stipulate who should enforce such regulations locally.\(^{61}\) Both Birmingham and Leicester Town Councils appointed Explosives Inspectors, the latter merging the position with that of an Inspector under the provisions of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts. The Cinematograph Act, 1909, meanwhile, directed a ‘constable or any officer appointed for the purpose’ to enforce the safe storage of celluloid\(^{62}\), yet this responsibility was given to the Chief Fire Officer through local Standing Orders. Furthermore, the Public Health Act, 1936, empowered local authorities to force manufacturers to install fire exits in their business premises. That the majority of enforcement and inspection duties were delegated automatically to the Chief Fire Officer demonstrated both Councils’ faith in the office by the 1900s.

The Council and, by implication, the Watch Committee depended on their Chief Fire Officer for the regulation of public and private property, the improvement and maintenance of working conditions, and the protection of industrial fire risks. This empowered the Chief Fire Officer to influence the issuing of licences to factories and places of entertainment, the approval of building plans and the education of the general public against the risks of modern urban society.

Chief fire officers had to earn these responsibilities and the trust of the Watch Committee and local businesses by demonstrating competence in fighting fires and inspecting hydrants. John Johnson, Leicester’s first full-time Chief Fire Officer, was directed to attend all fires, prepare a code of conduct and test the town’s hydrants daily. He was also ordered to attend all the Fire Brigade Sub-Committee’s meetings and make reports on every reported fire.\(^{63}\) Through his knowledge of the local geography and fire risks, having served as Chief Officer of the local Sun Office Fire Brigade until it was disbanded in 1871, Johnson used his reports to make informed comment on the nature and location of the town’s fire risks and the measures to adopt in response. For example, in 1872 he claimed to have personally inspected over 900 hydrants in order to ascertain the level of water supply through the town, urging the water company to replace its old hydrants with boxed models for added protection from vandalism. He also accumulated statistical data on the incidence and nature of local fires to raise public awareness of the threats posed by the town’s rapid expansion into the suburban districts of Belgrave, Humberstone

---


\(^{62}\) 9 Edw. 7 c.30, s.4.

\(^{63}\) LRO CM42/9, WC Mins, 15 Mar. 1864, 50; 12 Apr. 1864, 54; 21 May 1867, 256; CM42/10, WC Mins, 31 May 1870, 123; 26 Jul. 1870, 128-9.
and Knighton, exploiting public anxieties in the late 1870s to pressure the Council to purchase a steam
engine and hose reel to improve response rates and public legitimacy in these industrial and residential
catchment areas. The Council obliged, although not until a ‘considerable fire’ had kept the Brigade
busy for many hours in Spinney Hill Road in 1881, in the planned industrial suburb of North Evington,
outside the town’s eastern boundary.64

Johnson also initiated a voluntary scheme in 1874 whereby local businessmen deposited a spare set of
keys to their premises at the nearby station to facilitate ease of access in case of fire. He also
convinced the Chief Constable, Joseph Farndale, of the expediency in training constables to use
appliances at fires.65 That these duties were continued by his successors indicated the growing
importance of co-ordinating the resources of the Police and Fire Brigade. It also demonstrated how a
Chief Fire Officer could earn the respect of his Watch Committee through his application of technical
knowledge and common-sense. This elevated Johnson to a strong bargaining position with his
employers.

In Birmingham, the appointment of Alfred Tozer as the first Chief Officer of the independent Brigade
also underlined the precarious position he held until he could obtain the support of the Watch
Committee. Unlike Leicester, the Birmingham Police and Fire Departments were initially hostile
towards each other. The Chief Constable, Major Bond, had complained of the loss of responsibility to
a social inferior. He also reacted badly to criticism levelled at him and his men that they had
maintained an inadequate level of fire cover between 1874 and 1879. Tozer, through his superior
knowledge of fire protection, immediately introduced organisational reforms, augmented daily training
and drill exercise, and negotiated for the provision of a central fire station to centralise authority.
Professionalism, therefore, was contingent on ‘practical experience and know-how,’ and was cultivated
through the systematisation of training and education within the service.66 Within a year Tozer was
able to boast that the adoption of the telegraph and a call-bells system had improved turn-out rates to

64 LRO CM42/11, WC Mins, Fire Brigade Annual Report 1873, 60-2; Fire Brigade Annual Report 1874, 161-3;
CM42/12, WC Mins, 10 Jul. 1877; 19 Mar. 1878; CM42/13, WC Mins, 16 Mar. 1880; 15 Apr. 1880; 12 Apr.
1881.
65 LRO CM42/11, WC Mins, 11 Aug. 1874, 176.
66 Corfield, Power, 212; Garrard and Parrott, ‘Craft’, 151.
between fifty and eighty seconds in the daytime. Tozer had altered internal power relationships and established an important agenda-setting role for himself.

If the Chief Fire Officer was deemed to be failing to demonstrate competency or expertise in firefighting his authority was likely to be curtailed as it depended on the Watch Committee’s support. A fire in a timber yard in Wimbledon Street, Leicester, in May 1889 underlined the Chief Officer’s precarious position. Quickly spreading to the factories of Smith Faire & Company and Faire Brothers, two leading boot and shoe manufacturers within the town, the fire caused ‘extensive’ damage estimated at £18,000. The directors of the companies included Samuel Faire, a prominent Conservative Councillor, local benefactor and future President of the Leicestershire Private Fire Brigades’ Association. Faire lobbied the Town Council to investigate the Brigade and the ‘flagrant … bungling’ of its Chief Officer, William Swanton, during the fire, exploiting his position as a leading employer and ratepayer to argue that Leicester could not expect to attract investment whilst Swanton remained in charge of its fire protection owing to rising insurance premiums:

We wish to say in the strongest terms that a more scandalous and disgusting piece of mismanagement we have rarely heard of, and that it is a disgrace to the town ... that nothing has been done within the last few years to put an end to the unenviable position which Leicester undoubtedly has among fire insurance companies who appear to be well nigh panic stricken.

A Watch Committee investigation found that although Swanton quickly responded with his men he had failed to summons the town’s new steam engine immediately. Upon its arrival he misdirected it into the wrong end of the street so that it was prevented from being operated by fire hose lying in the street. Further complaints that Swanton was ‘not sufficiently accessible or vigilant in taking observation in various positions’ were upheld, the Committee criticising him for failing to direct his men appropriately, an expected skill of all municipal officials.

Despite his defence that he had warned the companies the previous year to install a thick iron door to prevent the rapid spread of fire, Swanton was dismissed. The Watch Committee was also criticised in a

---

67 BCA MS 1303/38, Fire Brigade Annual Report 1879, 7-8.
68 A friendly society for private fire brigades, established in 1901, that also held drill competitions and parades.
69 LRO CM41/15, WC Mins, 4 Apr. 1889.
70 LRO CM1/13, Borough Council Minutes, 28 May 1889, 169-73; Leicester Daily Mercury, 24 May 1889.
heated Council debate for its lack of supervision, with many members forced to resign.\textsuperscript{71} Swanton was publicly identified as the personal embodiment of an unprofessional Fire Brigade. He had failed to eliminate waste and extravagance in its administration, and did not represent best value within a locally-funded service. Furthermore he failed to demonstrate an expert grasp of professional practice and leadership. Firemen relied on clearly defined channels of communication and accountability, yet these had not been sustained. His incompetence was reflected in his inability to withstand external scrutiny and renegotiate his position as a Council employee.\textsuperscript{72} He had also undermined the Council's negotiations to extend its boundaries into the industrial suburb of Humberstone, which bordered Wimbledon Street, by raising questions about its competence in providing efficient services and protecting life and property.

Expertise and experience were key features of successful chief fire officers. Swanton's replacement, William Ely, had previously served as both Chief Officer and Engineer at Chester, arriving with a sound reputation for his leadership qualities and technical knowledge. Ely used his experience to reassert his Department's influence on decision-making by extending the standard of fire protection into suburban districts, entering into agreements to protect neighbouring parishes and obtaining up-to-date appliances to improve turn-out rates, including a second steam engine in 1891 to enable the Brigade to attend simultaneous fires.\textsuperscript{73} Such reforms legitimised the Council's boundary extension in the same year, with Ely extending the hydrant network to provide constant water for extinguishing fires, the telegraphic connection of police and fire stations to improve inter-departmental communication, and the expansion of the Brigade's numerical strength.\textsuperscript{74}

'Expert knowledge', combined with the increased responsibilities and priorities of Victorian municipal government, assisted in the professionalisation of public services. Knowledge was socially constructed

\textsuperscript{71} Leicester Daily Mercury, 24 May 1889.


\textsuperscript{73} LRO CM42/16, WC Mins, 1 Dec. 1891, 30-2.

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid.
and could not be objectively produced by disinterested organisations or individuals. Chief officials and other professionals exploited their position as 'purveyors of specialist knowledge' to strengthen their authority and improve their salary and fringe benefits. They argued that their knowledge was specialised to the extent that it was 'beyond the common sense of the layman'. Expertise was, however, contingent on existing and past administrative relationships between chief officials and civic elites. The rise of 'bureaucratic authority' and the heavy burden of municipal work, which accelerated during the last quarter of the nineteenth-century, ultimately contributed to the separation of policy-making and operational administration during the first two decades of the twentieth-century as chief officials earned their Watch Committee's trust. In return for their commitment and political neutrality, they accumulated unprecedented administrative and operational responsibilities.

RANKING EXPERTISE

Additional responsibilities brought financial rewards, although the Chief Fire Officer was not regarded in the same league as the Chief Constable financially until the 1930s. Both officials rose through the salary rank system between 1890 and 1930, yet remained middle-ranking officials compared to the better paid legal, financial and judicial officials, and those responsible for capital-intensive utilities (Table 4.1). In 1890 the Chief Fire Officer was ranked alongside the Recorder, Chief Inspector of Nuisances, Lighting Superintendent and Inspector of Weights and Measures. His prestige had materially improved by 1914, receiving similar pay to the Clerk of the Peace, Chief Librarian and, in Leicester, the Chief Inspector of Nuisances. By 1930, however, his salary had raised him to a comparable level with the Chief Constable. The Chief Constable, meanwhile, remained a middle-ranking official throughout the period, receiving parity with the Borough Treasurer and a little less than

76 Perkin, Rise, 3; Corfield, Power, 201.
79 This comparison does not include allowances for uniform, travel and heating.
the Medical Officer of Health in Birmingham during the 1890s. By 1914 the prestige had not progressed at all in Birmingham, with the position comparable to that of Curator of the Art Gallery, and it was not until 1930 that the salary had been raised to more acceptable levels. In Leicester, where the Chief Constable was paid substantially less than in Birmingham until standardisation in 1918, the position had been raised above that of Coroner, Curator and Tramway's Manager by 1914, although it remained a middle-ranking position by 1930.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Birmingham</th>
<th>Leicester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1890</td>
<td>1914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town Clerk</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk to the Justices</td>
<td>2400</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas Engineer</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveyor</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>1400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Officer of Health</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>1300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tramway's Manager</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coroner</td>
<td>1230</td>
<td>1300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Constable</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curator</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk of the Peace</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Fire Officer</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Librarian</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Markets' Superintendent</td>
<td>500f</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Surgeon</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recorder</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Insp. of Nuisances</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting Superintendent</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insp. of Weights and Measures</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Salary for 1924.
† Salary for 1935.
‡ Salary for 1927.
§ Paid as fees on 254 inquests.
¶ Included £150 rent allowance.
f Birmingham's Markets' Superintendent was also responsible for inspection under the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts and weights and measures.

The Chief Constable and Fire Officer were expected to project an image of public decency, self-respect, discipline and integrity on behalf of the entire force. Failure to do so reflected badly on the rank-and-file and the Watch Committee. Public consent was underpinned by the development of a professional ethos amongst chief officers during the last quarter of the nineteenth-century, with the publication of annual reports and statistical returns contributory factors in making them accountable for their activities. Joseph Farndale, for example, was able to justify the expansion in Birmingham's Detective Department during the 1890s by publishing the arrest rates of plain-clothed officers deployed at night to detect street crime.\(^{80}\) James Duns, meanwhile, commented in his annual reports on the level of perceived crime within Leicester during the 1880s, criticising shopkeepers for encouraging petty larceny by 'exposing goods for sale outside their premises,' and warning against the rising level of intemperance within the town, which he attributed to the high rate of labour migration.\(^{81}\) Such comments demonstrated the growing expertise of chief officials and challenged Watch Committee authority by increasing their access to political resources through tacit public support.

The diffusion of expertise throughout municipal services was assisted in the movement of officers through an unofficial urban rank system of forces. Chief officers were often more loyal to their profession than their respective municipality, having greater physical mobility than councillors in moving through the system of local government. This assisted the transfer of knowledge and best practice, assisting in the creation of a professional and legitimate cadre.\(^{82}\) Serving in Leicester was a high-ranking and prestigious position, although it could also prove to be a stepping-stone to a larger force. This was evidently the attitude of Major James Hall-Dalwood, a qualified barrister and former officer in the Royal Irish Constabulary, who left Leicester in 1913 for the position of Sheffield Chief Constable after five years' service.\(^{83}\) Similarly, Joseph Farndale followed a linear career path, leaving Middlesbrough in 1869 to become Chesterfield Chief Constable, before progressing to Leicester, where he spent a decade honing his skills in an expanding industrial town before his appointment as

\(^{80}\) WMPM 1991.2128, Annual Police Report 1895, 6
\(^{81}\) LRO L352, Annual Police Report 1885, 3, 6; Annual Police Report 1887, 4-5
\(^{83}\) LRO CM42/21, WC Mins, 8 Jul. 1907, 303; CM42/23, WC Mins, 14 Jan. 1913, 293-4.
Birmingham Chief Constable in 1882. Others, notably Thomas Lumley, unsuccessfully applied for higher-ranking posts.

Birmingham was itself the pinnacle of a professional career, attracting reputable officers, including Farndale and Charles Rafter, a District Inspector in the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC), in 1899. Rafter personally recruited Cecil Moriarty, a leading authority on police education, from the RIC in 1918 to serve as his Deputy Chief Constable. Although senior appointments were subject to the Home Secretary’s approval from 1919, prestigious watch committees continued to adopt distinctive local recruitment strategies, with Birmingham Watch Committee promoting Moriarty following Rafter’s death in 1935 to reinforce the stability and continuity within internal power relations. Leicester Watch Committee itself made an internal appointment to the position of Chief Constable in 1913, promoting Detective Superintendent Herbert Allen, a local man who had served in Leicester Police his entire career, to foster stability within the force and reinforce Watch Committee authority over the higher ranks following Hall-Dalwood’s departure.

The practice of recruiting chief fire officers was similarly diverse. Leicester Watch Committee preferred to externally recruit experienced officers rather than make internal appointments. Two of its chief officers, George Clamp and William Swanton, were recruited from the Metropolitan Fire Brigade. William Ely, Henry Neal and Francis Winteringham were recruited from smaller county boroughs, Chester, Grimsby and Swansea respectively. John Johnson was the sole local appointment. Birmingham Watch Committee, by contrast, pursued a dynastic approach by appointing members of the Tozer family to senior positions between 1879 and 1940 (Figure 4.1).

84 LRO CM42/10, WC Mins, 29 Aug. 1871, 215-7.
86 Birmingham Post, 20 Sep. 1935; on Birmingham Watch Committee’s autonomy in determining the retirement of senior police officers see Chapter 3 above, 81-2.
87 Allen was born and educated in Leicester. He joined the force as Assistant Clerk in the Detective Department in 1891 at the age of 24.
88 The career histories of Birmingham and Leicester Chief Fire Officers are in Appendix F.
London's first professional Chief Officer, James Braidwood. Following an apprenticeship as a hydraulic engineer, Tozer was appointed Chief Officer of Bristol Police Brigade in 1876.\(^8^9\) That he only served for three years before being headhunted by Birmingham Watch Committee underlined the reputation that his family had developed during preceding decades, but also indicated that his young age and relative inexperience were factors in reinforcing Watch Committee authority and granting an initially low salary.

Morris argues that Victorian urban political and social elites were integrated through family links and intermarriage, and that this was not solely restricted to traditional landed elites such as the marquesses of Bute or the ears of Dartmouth and Dudley in the Black Country.\(^9^0\) The diffusion of scientific and technical expertise, patronage and professional networks could also be assisted by kinship networks. The full-time nature of municipal service meant that an officer's family were invariably indoctrinated into his respective profession from an early age. The children of firemen were invariably born and raised at the fire station where their father was based. This culminated in popular fire-fighting families continuing existing traditions throughout successive generations in particular towns. Southampton Fire Brigade, for example, was led by I. T. Johnson (1884-1901) and his son (1901-18), whose five brothers all served in the service and were later appointed high-ranking officers in the London, West Ham, Gloucester and Ramsgate brigades. The Johnson family was succeeded in Southampton by the Haywards\(^9^1\), who had an extensive history of professional and voluntary fire-fighting in the locality themselves.\(^9^2\) The Brett family, meanwhile, had over 110 years' combined service in Sandwich Fire Brigade by the 1930s. Upon Chief Fire Officer Henry Bond's retirement in 1932, March Urban District Council promoted his son, Deputy Chief Fire Officer Hubert Bond. Henry's four sons had all joined the local Brigade and his daughter had served as watch-room attendant during the First World War. Sons also replaced their fathers as chief fire officers in St Austell, Barking, Whitby, and Rushden, amongst other towns, between the 1910s and 1940s.\(^9^3\)

\(^8^9\) *Fire & Water*, Nov. 1901, 136-8.
\(^9^1\) E. F. Hayward (1918-41) and E. T. Hayward (1941-68).
\(^9^3\) Examples taken from a database of chief fire officers and their career histories, in author's possession.
This was not a tradition restricted to the municipal fire service. Sons also followed their fathers into the police service, including Oswald Cole, Leicester's Chief Constable (1929-55), whose father had earlier served as Oxford Chief Constable, as well as President of the Chief Constables' Association (CCA) in 1908. Cole would later emulate his father, presiding over the CCA in 1943.\textsuperscript{94} Henry Littlejohn, Edinburgh's Medical Officer of Health (1862-1908), who was responsible for the city's urban improvement scheme following the publication of his \textit{Report on the Sanitary Conditions of the City of Edinburgh} in 1865, was succeeded by his son.\textsuperscript{95} Technical expertise could, therefore, be disseminated through kinship and social networks. Although chief officials claimed that expertise was depersonalised and dependent solely on ability and scientific knowledge, social and personal networks played major roles within professional networks and the maintenance of tradition.\textsuperscript{96}

Alfred Tozer exploited his expertise and authority by awarding the higher ranks to family members, creating an integrated kinship network in dominating the prestigious ranks within Birmingham Fire Brigade and other national and colonial brigades (Figure 4.1). His son, also Alfred, was deemed his natural successor 'by birth and training,' following his death in 1906.\textsuperscript{97} Born at Birmingham's central fire station on Upper Priory, Tozer joined the Brigade in 1892. His father quickly promoted him to Second Officer in 1900. The Tozer's reputation for expert leadership and innovation assisted the diffusion of the family's influence at the expense of other firemen. The association of the name 'Tozer' with qualities of expertise, technical skill and efficient leadership allowed such officers to negotiate advantageous positions with the Watch Committee. In return the retention of kinship networks reinforced public consent and civic authority, with Birmingham's Lord Mayor, speaking at the retirement presentation of Second Officer Charles Wright Tozer in 1938, declaring, 'When anyone hears the name of Tozer one thinks of fires, and when one thinks of fires one thinks of the Tozers.'\textsuperscript{98}

\textsuperscript{94} Association of Chief Police Officers [hereafter ACPO], Chief Constables' Association Annual Conference [hereafter CCA Conf], 20 Jun. 1939, 42.
\textsuperscript{96} Larson, 'Production', 57-8; see also comments in \textit{Fire}, Jul. 1936, 68.
\textsuperscript{97} \textit{Birmingham Post}, 6 Jul. 1910.
\textsuperscript{98} \textit{Fire}, Nov. 1938, 148; Dec. 1938, 165.
Figure 4.1 The Tozer Family Tree

Fireman Tozer
(Engineer, Hand-in-Hand Insurance Co, London)

Alfred Tozer
(Fireman, London Fire Engine Establishment, 1833-62, CFO Manchester 1862-92)

Alfred Robert Tozer
(CFO Bristol 1876, CFO Birmingham 1879-1906)

Alfred Robert Tozer (jnr)
(2nd Officer Birmingham 1900, CFO 1906-40)

Charles Wright Tozer
(2nd Officer Birmingham 1906-38)

William Tozer
(CFO West Bromwich 1900-36)

Frederick Tozer
(Station Officer Manchester)

Joseph Tozer
(Actor)

Alfred Robert Tozer
(Visiting Officer 1919, 3rd Officer Birmingham 1926, 2nd Officer 1938)

William Alfred Tozer
(CFO Madras & Rangoon)

Charles Tozer
(CFO Finchley, Deputy Durham)

William Tozer
(AFS messenger, Fireman Durham, Station Officer Bishop Auckland)

ASSOCIATING EXPERTISE

The possession of technical knowledge, as well as full-time service, provided chief officials with their main resource through which they negotiated and sustained their positions within intergovernmental relationships. Central government and watch committees, regardless of their extensive administrative capacity and experience, did not possess sufficient professional knowledge of the work of either departments. It was inevitable that the independence and authority of chief constables and fire officers became key features of municipal administration between the 1900s and 1930s. As the work of both departments became more complex and time-consuming, often in response to the increasing complexity of statutory obligations and municipal regulations, urban expansion and changes in land use, councillors were unable to devote as much time to the minutiae of policy. This enabled chief officials to develop sophisticated and hierarchical work structures through which they exerted their superior technical knowledge, whilst delegating some of their authority to senior officers.

Both the Chief Constable and Fire Officer were assisted in this by the spread of occupational associations between the 1890s and 1920s. Their relationship with the Watch Committee during the last quarter of the nineteenth-century demonstrated that individual expertise carried less weight than a collective voice that defined a profession’s skills, attributes and claims to independent practice.\(^9\) This contributed to the standardisation of service administration and creation of economies of scale, including the attraction of external investment through increased public confidence.\(^10\) Although well-established professions, such as medicine and law, developed outside an interactive organisational culture, modern professions depended on extensive organisational interaction and knowledge transfer.\(^11\) National associations were formed for municipal engineers, surveyors, treasurers and medical officers of health, as well as the National Association of Local Government Officers in 1905, in recognition of the growing depth of scientific and technical expertise demanded from such responsible positions, and the perceived need to introduce a system of professional accreditation for

---


\(^10\) Moore and Rodger, ‘Municipal knowledge’, 22.

white-collar local authority employees.\textsuperscript{102} Such associations met at least annually to discuss common issues, provide professional legitimacy and ‘mutual solidarity’ and camaraderie for their members, and mobilise the profession to respond to central and local challenges to their authority.\textsuperscript{103} Competitive technical periodicals were launched simultaneously to disseminate information and report on related activities.

The spread of associational culture and co-ordination of professional expertise was more than an information-sharing exercise. It enabled chief officials to exert their collective authority and influence policy negotiations. The experience of associations in the police and fire service was, however, markedly different. The latter, owing to the absence of central regulation and legal recognition, developed a tightly integrated network of professional associations from an early stage to provide the opportunity for chief fire officers to share information, provide technical support, and lobby central government to place the service on a national footing. The former was less successful at developing an integrated professional associational culture, leaving it more dependent on Home Office assistance in popularising its appeal during the First World War and its immediate aftermath.

Professional chief fire officers, learning from their close association with the engineering professions, were central in establishing a national associational culture for the service. Through the creation of integrated networks they shared common experiences and mobilised to support or oppose particular national policies. Birmingham and Leicester Fire Brigades were, owing to their highly professionalised status by the 1890s, crucial actors in this process. Alfred Tozer, for example, established the Midland Fire Brigades Association (MFBA) in 1882 to co-ordinate resources between brigades in the West Midlands, attracting 24 members by 1884 to its periodic meetings and drill competitions.\textsuperscript{104} Its amalgamation with other regional associations in 1887 to form the National Fire Brigades Union


\textsuperscript{103} Corfield, \textit{Power}, 205-6.

\textsuperscript{104} \textit{Fire & Water}, Mar. 1884, 1.
(NFBU) created a nationally representative organisation consisting of a district network and Executive Committee in order to maintain a regional dimension to knowledge transfer.105

The establishment of the Professional Fire Brigades Association (PFBA)106 in 1902 provided chief fire officers with a distinctive voice. Unlike the NFBU, which was a nationally representative organisation for fire brigades, the PFBA represented chief officers alone. It also differed from the Chief Constables Association (CCA), which was established in 1893 to represent municipal chief constables only, by seeking to foster inclusivity and homogeneity within the fire service by accepting professional officers from all brigades. In developing a corporate identity and co-ordinating its activities and resources with the NFBU, which was increasingly representative of voluntary and retained brigades during the inter-war years, the PFBA was a major influence behind the introduction of standard pension rights in 1925 and civil defence reform during the early 1930s.

Knowledge transfer, and the access of chief fire officers to informational and organisational resources and networks of power, was reinforced during the inter-war years by the co-operation of the two existing institutions 107 and the Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE) in national policy negotiations. Founded in 1918 by professional chief officers, including those representing Birmingham and Leicester108, the IFE sought to raise professional standards by adopting technical examinations for the officer cadre and pressuring local authorities to only appoint those with registered qualifications. Drawing on the experience of other engineering and architectural professions, which had long-established technical qualifications as a pre-requisite for best practice109, the IFE legitimised the scientific responsibilities of the profession by demanding that all officers be fully-trained engineers with expertise of engineering science and its application to fire protection.110 Through its annual meetings and examinations the IFE popularised fire engineering such that, by the end of the 1930s, the

105 British Fire Services Association, National Fire Brigades Union [hereafter NFBU] Annual Report 1888, 11. This was a common process amongst 'disparate local and provincial bodies' identified during the period 1860-1900: Gourvish, 'The rise', 23.

106 Originally titled the Association of Fire Brigade Officers.

107 The NFBU was renamed the National Fire Brigades Association in 1919 to prevent confusion arising with the Fire Brigades Union, a trade union which claimed to represent the rank-and-file, established in 1913.

108 Along with the chief officers of London Salvage Corps, Birkenhead, Edinburgh and Ilford.

109 Buchanan, 'Institutional', 43.

majority of professional brigades only appointed chief officers with its Graduate Diploma, and a dual system of graduates and non-graduates emerged within professional discourse. Indeed, Henry Neal’s final wish before retiring as Leicester Chief Officer in 1938 was for his successor to be a fellow graduate.

Municipalities were also keen to host the conferences of high profile professional associations to share information and encourage mutual co-ordination between chief officials (Table 4.2). They also provided an opportunity for civic promotion through mayoral receptions, lavish dinners and speeches in prime locations. By promoting themselves as centres of civic expertise, both Watch Committees sought to publicly demonstrate harmonious interdepartmental relations to visiting civic dignitaries. Speaking to the IFE’s annual conference in Leicester in 1930, Ernest Wilford, Watch Committee Vice-Chairman, celebrated the expertise of the professional Chief Fire Officer:

... in Leicester the Fire Brigade is entirely separated from the Police Force, and that is how things should be. Fire fighting is a scientific and technical profession, in which a knowledge of mechanics and chemistry plays a great part; and that being so, there is no room in it for figureheads. We must have practical men at the head of fire brigades, and I hope it will not be long before the Home Office will insist that professional fire brigades shall be commanded by qualified fire officers, and no one else [Hear, hear].

The incoming President’s Council invariably hosted an association’s annual conference. Responsibility for organising events was devolved to either the chief official and Watch Committee Chairman or an ad hoc sub-committee. The high proportion of fire service conferences and meetings held in Birmingham and Leicester indicated that, aside from having suitable facilities for hosting such events, their Watch Committees were at the forefront of fire service reform and the dissemination of expertise, with their chief officials particularly active members within the national community and in providing

---

113 Moore and Rodger, ‘Municipal knowledge’, 49.
114 IFE Annual Report 1930, 33.
115 Leicester Watch Committee appointed a Reception Sub-Committee to organise the social functions for the IFE Conference in 1930, consisting of the Chairman (Alderman Lovell), Vice-Chairman (Alderman Wilford), Alderman Walker and the Chief Fire Officer: LRO CM42/28, WC Mins, 22 May 1930, 301-2.
evidence to parliamentary inquiries into the service during the inter-war years. Although Birmingham hosted fewer conferences than Leicester (Table 4.2), its Chief Fire Officer – as well as the other members of the Tozer family – was actively involved in running associations, and attending conferences with the Chairman of the Fire Brigade Sub-Committee.

### Table 4.2 Annual Conferences of Professional Organisations in Birmingham and Leicester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Conference Hosted</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>National Fire Brigades Union (NFBU) East Midland District</td>
<td>Leicester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>Professional Fire Brigades Association (PFBA)</td>
<td>Leicester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>PFBA</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>NFBU Central Council Annual General Meeting</td>
<td>Leicester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>NFBU North Midland District</td>
<td>Leicester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>PFBA</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>PFBA</td>
<td>Leicester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>Institute of Fire Engineers (IFE)</td>
<td>Leicester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Association of Municipal Corporations Fire Service Conference</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>Chief Constables Association</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>IFE</td>
<td>Leicester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Association of Provincial Policewomen</td>
<td>Leicester</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


---

116 William Ely, for example, was a representative on the NFBU East Midland District (1890) and Professional Fire Brigades’ Association [hereafter PFBA] President (1906); Neal was IFE President (1918-24, 1930), elected Honorary Vice-President (1937) and PFBA President (1921-22) and a member of the International Fire Service Committee (CTIF); see also: Report of the Committee on the Hours, Pay and Conditions of Service of Firemen in Professional Fire Brigades in Great Britain: Minutes of Evidence, P.P. 1920 (710), XVI, 18 Feb. 1920, 38-43; 24 Feb. 1920, 74-6.

117 Charles Wright Tozer (2nd Officer, Birmingham Fire Brigade, 1906-38) was an active member of the NFBU, chairing a number of its committees during the 1920s; William Tozer (Chief Officer of West Bromwich Fire Brigade, 1900-36) was Secretary of the NFBU Midland District for over twenty years.

118 Alfred Tozer (junior) was PFBA President (1915), and Chairman of the PFBA Governing Council (1932-34).

119 Including the PFBA’s Annual Conferences in London (1932), Manchester (1933), Eastbourne (1934), Scarborough (1935) and Blackpool (1937).
In attending conferences, chief officials and councillors acted as civic ambassadors, inspecting the infrastructure and expertise of other municipalities, and negotiating access to additional informational and organisational resources through the dissemination of knowledge. Through the interaction of technical and administrative experts, fire conferences undoubtedly contributed more to national uniformity in standards and administration than centrally prescribed regulation. They also underlined the urban context of fire protection, with conferences hosted either by large towns and cities or seaside resorts where delegates could be accommodated and provided with a busy social itinerary, which invariably included visiting local fire stations and witnessing demonstrations of appliances.

The Chief Constables Association (CCA) was established in 1896 and, unlike the PFBA, did not represent all chief officers. A separate organisation representing county chief constables, the County Chief Constables Club, ensured that the police service did not pursue an integrated and co-ordinated approach to police administration until the Home Office constituted a network of district and national conferences in 1918 to prepare for post-war reform and coordinate policy negotiations with the police authorities. Many of the chief constables representing the larger and more prestigious county borough forces, including Birmingham and Leicester, were initially active members, with the former's Chief Constable, Joseph Famdale, elected President in 1898 and the latter's Chief, Thomas Lumley, in 1901. Following their retirements, in 1899 and 1907 respectively, their replacements, Charles Rafter and John Hall-Dalwood, showed little interest in its proceedings. Between 1900 and 1918 Rafter attended three annual meetings, and he only took an active role from 1918 when he believed that 'the Association began to take a more useful part in public affairs.' Hall-Dalwood's replacement, Herbert Allen, was similarly inactive and Leicester did not become an active member until the appointment of Oswald Cole in 1929.

The CCA's objective to promote the standardisation and professionalisation of working conditions was severely hampered in 1919 when the Home Office transferred its powers to discuss pay and conditions to the Police Council. This shifted its focus during the inter-war years into emerging police policy

---


121 ACPO, CCA Conf, 31 May 1923, 31.

networks, notably the mechanisation of the service, regional co-ordination of police resources, and the growth in road traffic.\textsuperscript{123} Academics have viewed the standardisation of police expertise during the inter-war years as indicative of the loss of local power.\textsuperscript{124} This underestimates the role of the profession in experimenting with new technologies and techniques at the local level before disseminating results. The application of mechanisation, for example, demanded local knowledge of complex machinery and scientific principles, such as the wireless and telegraph, and its diffusion within the urban landscape.\textsuperscript{125} Traffic congestion, illegal parking and street policing demanded knowledge of local traffic conditions and greater co-ordination between the police and road planners, particularly with the introduction of traffic signals to replace point duty.\textsuperscript{126} Chief constables were also, much to the chagrin of the professional fire service associations, expected to improve their knowledge of modern fire-fighting and the combustibility of materials to co-ordinate mutual assistance schemes during both World Wars.\textsuperscript{127}

The modern demands placed on chief constables did not lead to the introduction of specific qualifications, as with chief fire officers, accountants, engineers or architects, although it did contribute to debates within the Home Office about the suitability of establishing a national scheme of training for constables during the 1930s. Although a few forces maintained independent training facilities, such as the Digbeth Police Training School in Birmingham\textsuperscript{128}, this led to little uniformity in the appointment of chief constables and the national dissemination of their expertise before the 1940s.\textsuperscript{129} By the end of the


\textsuperscript{125} PRO HO144/22075, CC Mins, 15 Nov. 1929, 2-3; F. Tarry, 'Mechanization as an aid to police duties', Police Journal, VI, 2 (1933), 210-35.


\textsuperscript{127} This was more pronounced in police brigades, which remained in operation until 1941: PRO HO144/22073, CC Mins, 26 Mar. 1918, 3; HO144/22075, CC Mins, 14 Dec. 1932, 3-4; HO144/22076, CC Mins, 20 Feb. 1935, 8.

\textsuperscript{128} C. Rafter, 'The desirability of establishing a central training depot for recruits', in ACPO, CCA Conf, 30 May 1918, 15-23.

\textsuperscript{129} The CCA amalgamated with the County Chief Constables Club in 1948 to form the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO): ACPO, County Chief Constables Club Minutes, 1 Mar. 1949, 361-74. Discussions to merge the
1930s the dissemination of police knowledge remained in the hands of individual chief constables, such as Cecil Moriarty, the Birmingham Chief Constable, who was a leading authority on police law and administration, regularly publishing textbooks for the training of constables, which marked the beginnings of the codification of police practice.¹³⁰

DEPARTMENTAL CO-ORDINATION

The Chief Constable and Fire Officer were not the sole officials involved in administering municipal police and fire departments. Other officials had varying levels of administrative input in Birmingham and Leicester.¹³¹ The Town Clerk, for example, was responsible for the overall co-ordination and harmonisation of municipal services. Often serving for long periods, the Town Clerk provided legal continuity in shaping local Bills, influencing general Council policy and advising committees of the legal implications of administrative reform, making him 'the most stable and permanent element in English municipal government.'¹³² With a detailed working knowledge of administrative law and a high standard of organisational and communication skills, the Town Clerk served as the Council's mouthpiece to both the public and central government. He was, therefore, 'lawyer, secretary, [and] spokesman' combined, often achieving extensive social prestige and being the best-paid official within both municipalities from 1890 (Table 4.1).¹³³

All legal and administrative questions that either the chief official or Watch Committee in Birmingham and Leicester were unable to resolve were invariably devolved to the Town Clerk to report on. John Storey's public opposition to the introduction of police pensions in the 1880s was vital in co-ordinating opposition to legislation between Leicester Town Council and the Association of Municipal associations in 1921 failed owing to a combination of civic pride and professional jealousy between the urban and rural authorities: ACPO, CCA Conf, 8 Jun. 1921, 16-17.


¹³¹ For example Leicester's Surveyor pressured the Town Council to adopt street fire alarms in 1884: Fire & Water, Apr. 1884, 15.


Corporations. Herbert Pritchard, Leicester Town Clerk (1908-37), worked closely with the Watch Committee throughout his period of office, liaising with the Ministry of Health when seeking a loan to build a new central police station during the early 1930s, exploring the police's right to appeal to dismissal under legislation passed in 1927 and communicating regularly with the Home Office over issues relating to police pay, discipline and regulation. A regular attendee at the Watch Committee's meetings, Pritchard was referred to as 'the axis around which all other departmental service revolves.' Birmingham had similarly influential town clerks, notably Ernest Hiley (1908-16) and Frank Wiltshire (1919-46), who regularly interacted with the Chief Constable and Fire Officer to coordinate resources.

The increasing workload and complexity of municipal administration blurred departmental boundaries and demanded the co-ordination of resources and knowledge. The Chief Constable was the main authority on common and criminal law, the Chief Fire Officer the expert on fire safety and prevention, and the Town Clerk the principal official on administrative law and its application to municipal government. Neither the Chief Constable nor Fire Officer could be expected to grasp the legal and financial complexities of municipal administration. Similarly the Town Clerk was content to leave the majority of operational decisions to the chief officials. There existed, however, shades of grey within administration that demanded an increased level of inter-departmental interaction in order to balance

134 See Chapter 2 above, 51.
135 Pritchard was a practising solicitor, having worked in Chester, Shrewsbury and London, as well as Chief Assistant Solicitor to Birmingham Council.
138 Hiley was appointed Town Clerk following his meritocratic rise through the Council, serving as Assistant Solicitor (1894-99) and Deputy Town Clerk (1902-05). He was also Leicester Town Clerk (1902-08).
139 Wiltshire was assistant solicitor to the Corporations of Southampton, Great Yarmouth and Birmingham (1908-19) before his appointment as Birmingham Town Clerk and Clerk of the Peace in 1919. He was knighted in 1938, and was the first chief official awarded Honorary Freedom of Birmingham in 1947.
140 For example see negotiations conducted by the Town Clerk to transfer police resources upon the extension of the city's boundaries in 1911: BCA JSC Mins, 16 Oct. 1911, 84-5; 4 Dec. 1911, 103-9; BCA FBSC Mins, 1 Dec. 1911; 15 Dec. 1911.
141 L. Green, 'Municipal co-ordination', Public Administration, XXXIII (1955), 333-43; Minshull, 'Departmental', 299.
142 For the distinction between administrative and judicial law, W. A. Robson, Justice and Administrative Law (London, 1928), 1-39.
the municipal books whilst maximising service administration. No committee or department was legally advised except through the medium of the Town Clerk. Thus, the Chief Constable and Fire Officer were, by the 1900s, part of a broader municipal structure, whereby decisions regarding resource allocation in one department often directly impacted those of another. Professionalism, therefore, extended beyond the attributes of particular experts. The municipality was a conduit through which scientific and technical knowledge was disseminated between political and administrative elites. Harmony and tension co-existed, yet departments shared the common objective of maximising service delivery within the expanding urban landscape.

CIRCULATING INFORMATION

Detailed analysis of Home Office circulars further demonstrates the interdependency between the Chief Constable and Town Clerk, particularly during the inter-war years. As a formal means of circulating information between central and local government, these circulars were sent to all local authorities containing either advice or policies relating to police administration. They were not the sole means of communicating policy, but they were perhaps the main formal channel of communication between the centre and locality, particularly by the advent of the First World War, where the number of circulars dealing with wartime issues of (de)mobilisation, the special constabulary, and army reservists caused the aggregate number to spiral (Table 4.3). That the aggregate continued to rise, doubling in the 1920s alone, indicates that the Home Office considered them to be of some use in maintaining communication networks after the War.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>1867-79</th>
<th>1880-89</th>
<th>1890-99</th>
<th>1900-09</th>
<th>1910-19</th>
<th>1920-29</th>
<th>1930-39</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Circulars</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Public Record Office [hereafter PRO], HO158/2-31, Home Office Police Circulars.

143 Minshull, ‘Departmental’, 300.
Circulars assisted in the normalisation of police policy networks and regulation of mutual co-operation, military aid, and statutory duties.\textsuperscript{146} Academics have suggested that the Home Office used circulars to promote greater autonomy within chief constables, demonstrated by the growing majority of circulars addressed directly to chief constables from the 1910s (Figure 4.2).\textsuperscript{147} The expanding workload of councillors and other officials, combined with the complexity and diversity of knowledge accumulation and dissemination, meant that it became common practice to encourage more direct contact between the Home Office and Chief Constable in matters not demanding the Watch Committee’s immediate attention.

\textit{Figure 4.2 Recipients of Home Office Circulars (%), 1867-1939}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{Figure42.png}
\caption{Recipients of Home Office Circulars (%), 1867-1939}
\end{figure}

Source: As Table 4.3.

In-depth analysis provides insight into the influence of the Home Office circular as a network for disseminating central information. The Chief Constable received the majority of operational circulars addressing mutual aid, motor patrols, first aid and mechanisation — including traffic lights, wireless and forensic work — receiving between eighty and ninety per cent of all such circulars between 1900 and 1938 (Table 4.4).


\textsuperscript{147} Keith-Lucas, ‘Independence’, 8-9; Critchley, History, 219. This analysis is based solely on circulars related to police administration, rather than criminal matters, which formed a separate division of Home Office policy: E. Troup, ‘The functions and organization of the Home Office’, Public Administration, IV (1926), 133.
Table 4.4 Police Operational Circulars (%), 1867-1939

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chief Constable</th>
<th>Clerk</th>
<th>Town Council</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1867-79</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880-89</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890-99</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900-09</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910-19</td>
<td>80.8</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-29</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-39</td>
<td>89.6</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: As Table 4.3.

Similarly, the Chief Constable received a large proportion of personnel circulars in the 1930s addressing working conditions and remuneration, although the share received by the Town Clerk and Council during the 1910s and 1920s varied between a fifth and a third (Table 4.5). These included details concerning the emergency provision of special constables, the Police Reserve and post-war pay and allowances.\(^{148}\)

Table 4.5 Police Personnel Circulars (%), 1867-1939

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chief Constable</th>
<th>Clerk</th>
<th>Town Council</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1867-79</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880-89</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890-99</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900-09</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910-19</td>
<td>80.8</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-29</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-39</td>
<td>97.9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: As Table 4.3.

The Chief Constable also received between eighty and ninety per cent of all administrative circulars during the inter-war years (Table 4.6). The majority of these addressed relatively minor policy issues such as processions, journal subscriptions and the Silver Jubilee.\(^{149}\) Those addressed to the Town Clerk


\(^{149}\) Between 1934 and 1936 62 per cent of administrative circulars dealt with either the Silver Jubilee and George V's funeral procession.
concerned more pressing and general matters of policy co-ordination and negotiation, including amendments to the policewomen's regulations and negotiations over the proposed Police College in 1935.  

Table 4.6 Police Administrative Circulars (%), 1867-1939

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Chief Constable</th>
<th>Town Clerk</th>
<th>Town Council</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1867-79</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880-89</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890-99</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900-09</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910-19</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-29</td>
<td>88.6</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-39</td>
<td>96.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: As Table 4.3.

Financial circulars, which covered pay, pensions and wider issues of central funding, were distributed more equitably during the inter-war years between the Chief Constable and Town Council (Table 4.7). Those dealing with general policy networks, including reforms to the annual Exchequer contribution in 1930 and worries about the deficiency of pension funds, were addressed to the Town Clerk. Those requiring immediate implementation, including changes to the procedure of motor insurance and specific expenditure cuts, were addressed to the Chief Constable. That half of all financial circulars sent during the 1930s were addressed equally to the Chief Constable and Town Clerk reinforced the prevalence of inter-departmental co-ordination within municipal administration. The Town Clerk and Chief Constable co-ordinated their respective informational and organisational resources in Birmingham and Leicester during the inter-war years, bringing different attributes to their respective positions and integrating the Police Department within the wider municipal system.

---


Table 4.7 Police Financial Circulars (%), 1867-1939

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chief Constable</th>
<th>Clerk</th>
<th>Town Council</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1867-79</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880-89</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890-99</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900-09</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910-19</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-29</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>47.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-39</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: As Table 4.3.

That the Chief Constable did not receive any circulars before the 1890s reinforces the centrality of the Town Clerk, Watch Committee and Council before the growth of the police profession during the 1890s, through the establishment of the CCA, added an additional pressure to existing intergovernmental relations. The extension of professional interdependency was largely a twentieth-century development and was related to wider influences, including the growth in the professions, the impact of the First World War on administrative conventions, the growth in administrative bureaucracy and municipal workload, and increasing co-operation between the Chief Constable, Watch Committee and Town Clerk.

Paradoxically, the absence of centrally disseminated information reflected the absence of central regulation within the fire service before the late 1930s. The Home Office distributed information widely in both the police and prison services from the 1880s and was also responsible for regulating knowledge transfer concerning fire protection in mines, factories and public places of entertainment.152 It was not until the First World War however, that circulars began to be distributed to municipalities specifically concerning the fire service. Prior to this a few had covered the working conditions of police firemen, although it was not until 1917 that the first circulars were addressed directly to the Chief Fire Officer. The first two concerned the depletion of brigade ranks for war service. Others dealt with broader questions of co-ordination and working conditions.153 The scarcity of fire service

circulare before the 1940s indicated a lack of central co-ordination and reinforced the information sharing networks adopted by the professional associations and leading municipalities from the 1890s and 1900s.

**INTERDEPENDENT EXPERTS**

In 1922, Henry Neal, in a speech at the Professional Fire Brigades Association's annual conference, highlighted many of the changes in the Chief Fire Officer's position since the 1870s:

> Without doubt, a fire brigade officer's position becomes more exacting every year. Many of us can remember the time when men were chosen for an officer's position without very serious consideration being given to their qualifications, but many authorities now realise that it requires men of special ability for the responsible positions.  

Such changes were similarly identifiable within the Chief Constable's position. Firstly, both officials had been awarded far greater responsibilities through a combination of local and national stipulations. Secondly, there was a more complex working relationship with central and municipal institutions, demanding a greater level of intergovernmental co-ordination with professional associations. Thirdly, the Chief Constable and Fire Officer had more extensive professional support through which information and expertise was negotiated and shared. Fourthly, both officials exerted, as a consequence, greater operational independence legitimised through public attitudes towards expertise and a burgeoning workload for Watch Committee members. Although the chief official was less dependent on the Watch Committee, particularly in operational decision-making, there emerged simultaneously a greater level of interdependence between the Home Office, the Watch Committee and chief officials. Information and knowledge was transferred through a combination of local and national networks. Expertise and the control over the dissemination of knowledge were acknowledged as pivotal features of intergovernmental relations.

The move from a fragmented system of municipal administration to a more centrally co-ordinated and standardised structure was the result of increasing professionalisation, the diffusion of expertise and information through local and national networks, the impact of exogenous factors (notably the effect of the First World War on administrative and personnel strategies), and a realignment of the central-local

---

financial relationship within the police policy community in 1918. The challenges this posed the Watch Committee in re-establishing its influence on policy-making during the 1920s are explored in Chapter 5 through an extension of the role of municipal associational culture to consider the mobilisation of police authorities through the local authority associations. Analyses of policy-making demand an exploration of the ‘diffuse, multi-centred and networked’ power relations between interested institutions. The dissemination of scientific knowledge contributed to such interdependent relations. Expertise and the growth in administrative bureaucracy were, therefore, accepted features of twentieth-century ‘police’ administration and ultimately contributed to the emergence of complex policy communities consisting of a combination of municipal, national and professional institutions by the 1930s.

---

POLICY COMMUNITIES AND WATCH COMMITTEES: CENTRAL-LOCAL RELATIONS IN PRACTICE

The control of the Police Force is locally in the hands of the Watch Committee. But it is not a complete control; the Home Office pay half the expenses and therefore have a voice in the matter. None the less the responsibility of the Watch Committee is great and its constant endeavour is to provide for the city an efficient police service.

Alderman John Burman, Chairman Birmingham Watch Committee (1939)

For many years a primitive [fire] service satisfied local requirements, and it is only within comparatively recent times that the increase in the size of towns, coupled with the introduction of mechanical transport and the advance of science, has raised the fire service to a level where complete efficiency can only be obtained by standardisation and by making the conditions of service worthy of the responsible position which the service now holds in relation to the general community.

Report on the Hours, Pay and Conditions of Service of Firemen (1920)

Contemporaries argued between the 1920s and 1940s that the dynamics of the committee structure of municipal government made central-local relations in practice a complex process, particularly in the larger county boroughs. Undoubtedly the committee remained 'the pivot of the system of local government.' Policy was debated within the Council's meetings, but 'each principal committee ... [tended] to go its own way, almost as an independent authority.' This meant that central government had to negotiate policy with a variety of institutions, including the Town Council, committee and chief official. Alderman John Burman's statement in 1939 stressed the complex central-local relationship between the Home Office and Birmingham Watch Committee. Although the financial arrangements for police administration were clearly defined, the precise level of Home Office regulation was unclear.

1 Quoted in C. C. H. Moriarty, Birmingham City Police Centenary (Birmingham, 1939), 6.
2 Report of the Committee on the Hours, Pay and Conditions of Service of Firemen in Professional Fire Brigades in Great Britain [hereafter Middlebrook], P.P. 1920 (710), XVI, 13.
4 Laski, 'Committee', 82.
5 I. Gibbon, 'Some problems of local government', Public Administration, IX (1931), 102.
The extent to which the Home Office had a voice in police control depended on the extent to which the Watch Committee endeavoured to provide an efficient service, a point accepted by the Chief Inspector of Constabulary in 1919.\(^6\) Local control was not complete, yet neither was national control.

By the 1920s, the fire service was similarly defined by more complex central-local relations. The *Report of the Committee into the Hours, Pay and Conditions of Service of Firemen* in 1920, following the example set by the earlier Desborough Committee into working conditions of policemen, noted the important role that the standardisation of appliances and conditions played in raising the overall efficiency of the service.\(^7\) Although mechanisation and other improvements provided a better standard of protection to the general community, contemporaries in both central and municipal government accepted the localised nature of fire service reform and resisted professional demands to place the service on a national footing until the end of the 1930s.\(^8\)

This chapter explores the working relations between central and municipal institutions within 'police' administration, exploring the various legal, organisational and informational resources deployed by both central and municipal government chronologically to influence the decision-making processes of municipal administration. The interaction between the Home Office, as the central department responsible for the co-ordination of police and fire policy, and the Watch Committee highlights a number of similarities in the nature of municipal administration, notably the importance of consultation over policy outcomes. There remained, however, one fundamental difference between the two services between the 1870s and 1930s. The police service was, particularly after 1918, nationally co-ordinated through a tri-partite system involving the Home Office, Watch Committee and the police profession. Paradoxically the fire community remained regulated through municipal and professional co-operation, with the Home Office largely absent from administrative activity until the 1930s.


\(^8\) S. Ewen, ‘Central government and the modernisation of the British fire service, 1900-38’, *Twentieth Century British History*, XIV, 4 (2003), 317-38.
Both services formed their own distinctive policy communities consisting of varying degrees of central, municipal and professional interaction. Membership of such communities was restricted to interested parties with shared service delivery responsibilities. Notwithstanding this relative insulation, both communities regularly interacted with other policy communities and shared overlapping spheres of interest between themselves and the general public. The police policy community, for example, regularly interacted with the road traffic and planning policy community in negotiating the deployment of resources to tackle rising levels of traffic congestion, speeding and vehicle crime during the first four decades of the twentieth-century. Similarly, the fire and water policy communities, represented locally by the fire and water departments, frequently negotiated over the allocation, funding and standardisation of hydrants and water tanks, and the municipal brigade's access to high-pressure water. Such integration invariably compounded the complexity of central-local relations.

Policy community modelling is descriptive and political scientists have suggested combining it with other theoretical models to provide explanations for change within policy-making. Its limitations in failing to explain change within central-local relations are supplemented here through its integration with empirical historical analysis. The typology of policy communities provides the structural framework within which institutions and personalities interacted. This approach reinforces the

---


11 Fire, May 1932, 246-7.

12 Notably game theory or rational choice theory, which both presume that all actors who inhabit a similar policy network or community have an identical set of preferences, have access to complete information and other resources, and are self-servings utilitarians: K. Dowding, 'Model or metaphor? A critical review of the policy network approach', Political Studies, XLIII (1995), 136-58; idem, Power (Buckingham, 1996), 8-16, 65-6; K. Dowding and P. Dunleavy, 'Rational choice and community power structures', Political Studies, XLIII (1995), 265-77; see also, J. Blom-Hansen, 'A "new institutional" perspective on policy networks', Public Administration, LXXV (1997), 669-93.


fluidity of the working relationships within 'police' administration. Policy communities were not in practice a stable collection of networks, but were rather an assembly of flexible and interactive relations, responding to change and the driving forces of national and municipal reform.15

THE POLICE POLICY COMMUNITY 1870-1914

The Watch Committee administered its police force locally, but also influenced national policy between 1870 and 1914. A widely respected institution by the 1870s, the Watch Committee was regularly consulted by the Home Office and Parliament in determining policy.16 Although it was increasingly reliant on Exchequer funds from 1874, central government was similarly dependent on the Watch Committee for its access to local information and expertise, and for cost-effectiveness. Indeed, Birmingham and Leicester had exerted varying levels of influence on national policy between the mid-1830s and the 1860s, with the former agitating for greater resources in combating the Chartist threat in the 1840s, and the latter opposing Palmerston’s proposals to introduce the efficiency inspectorate in 1853 and 1856.17

The main link between the Home Office and Watch Committee were the Inspectors of Constabulary. Established in 1856 to inspect and enforce changes to local police administration, the Inspectors' reports to the Home Secretary determined whether a force would receive the annual certificate of efficiency on which funding was dependent. With three geographical regions (North, South and Midlands) each served by an Inspector, the Home Office hoped to accumulate greater localised knowledge of provincial policing. Through annual reports the Inspectors judged the administrative activity of watch committees and the organisational efficiency of local forces, the latter invariably

---

15 This has been labelled as 'strategic learning' in the political science literature: Hay, 'Structure', 201-2; idem, 'The tangled webs we weave: the discourse, strategy and practice of networking', in Marsh (ed.), Comparing, 41-5; Dowding, 'Model', 145.


measured through the numerical ratio between policemen and population. Following an extension of Leicester’s boundaries in 1891, for example, one such Inspector commented that although the force was ‘efficiently maintained ... the augmentation made on the extension of the borough will not be found to have been sufficient for the requirements of the town.’¹⁸

Between 1869 and 1907 two different Inspectors regulated the Midland region. Colonel Cobbe (1869-91)¹⁹ and C. G. Legge (1892-1907) made judgements on the efficiency of individual forces and the region in general, regularly bemoaning the large number of non-county borough forces, with Legge proposing in 1906 that ‘no municipal authority of less importance than a county borough should maintain a separate police establishment.’²⁰ They also criticised the expansion of police duties into, amongst others, inspecting weights and measures, nuisances and common lodging houses, although they lacked authority to prevent forces increasing their responsibilities if they remained at a satisfactory strength.²¹ The Home Office itself was satisfied during the 1860s and 1870s that the police could perform fire-fighting duties as they were ‘not prejudicial to the due performance of their other duties,’ contradicting the opinion of the Inspectors in advising Leicester Watch Committee to separate its departments in 1870.²²

The large geographical and administrative regions within the remit of the three Inspectors limited their understanding of the minutiae of municipal administration. The reduction to two districts in 1907 compounded the absence of detailed knowledge of individual forces and suggested a lack of central direction of local standards.²³ The process of inspection itself consisted of little more than an inspection of the men on parade and a discussion between the Inspector, the Chief Constable and Watch Committee Chairman.²⁴ Their annual reports provided information, celebrated best practice and made recommendations to change shortcomings, but lacked statutory authority to compel watch

---

¹⁹ Former Chief Constable of the West Riding.
²¹ Ibid 1869, P.P. 1870 (27), XXXVI, 4-5; Ibid 1880-81, P.P. 1882 (106), XXXIII, 7-8, 39.
²² Public Record Office [hereafter PRO] HO45/7490, Home Office note on police fire brigades, May 1864; LRO CM42/10, Watch Committee Minutes [hereafter WC Mins], 14 Jun. 1870, 123.
committees to implement reforms. Through his attendance at the annual inspection, the Watch Committee Chairman was able to influence the Inspector's report on the local force.

By 1880 the police policy community was becoming increasingly complex. Although the structure of relations between interested institutions were largely vertical, many of the relations, particularly between the Watch Committee, Inspectors of Constabulary and Home Office, involved a two-way iterative relationship of power and influence (Figure 5.1). These three institutions were involved in a relationship of power-dependence whereby no single institution dominated the others. The Watch Committee was subject to indirect central regulation through the annual inspection procedure, yet could control the content and style of the information delivered to the Inspectors. The Inspectors themselves depended on the Home Office for their legitimacy and authority, yet influenced the Home Secretary's decisions on granting annual certification. The municipal Chief Constable remained largely isolated from this integrated relationship by the 1880s, subservient to the Watch Committee and rarely consulted by the Home Office over national policy.

The police force, responsible for service delivery, was the public face of this community. It was the force's responsibility to protect the public, local businesses and urban space from the dangers of urban society.25 Paradoxically, the police was rarely deemed responsible for its actions or cost-efficiency in the public eye, with policy feedback aimed specifically at the Town Council during the annual elections. It was important for the Council itself to maintain influence within the policy community through the intermediary of the Watch Committee. This relationship between the Council and consumers (public and private) was a crucial element of the police and fire policy communities between the 1870s and 1930s, legitimising the continued influence of both the ratepayer and the Council/Watch Committee.

Vertical power relations began to shift in favour of the Home Office by the 1890s. Ultimately Watch Committee failure to defeat the introduction of compulsory pensions in 1890 demonstrated the growing authority of the Home Office officials and its agencies over national policy, and their commitment to
establishing minimum standards of service delivery. Although the introduction of the Customs and Excise Grant accelerated the shift of financial control from the Home Office to the Treasury, that the Home Secretary obtained its support to provide additional funds demonstrated the department’s rising stock within Whitehall. Furthermore, leading members of Birmingham Watch Committee gave evidence to the Select Committee on Police Superannuation Funds in 1875, and vociferously opposed any scheme that threatened its autonomy to grant discretionary pensions. Leicester Watch Committee, whilst not providing evidence, was equally vocal in its opposition to standardisation, and urged the Home Office to rethink its proposals. The short-term gains of blocking reform, however, only served to illustrate the individual limitations of watch committees in failing to defeat national policy in the long-term and the determination of the Home Office to augment reform.

Watch Committee failure to influence national police welfare continued in successive decades beyond the consolidation of pensions’ entitlements. By the 1900s professional demands for the award of a weekly rest-day placed additional strains on the administrative process and financial relations. Individual watch committees, including those in Birmingham and Leicester, sought to prevent the introduction of compulsory rights to one day off in seven, offering limited concessions to deputations from their local forces. These included the right to establish recreation societies, attend church and the provision of monthly or fortnightly holidays. Indeed, by receiving deputations from the rank-and-file at its meetings, Leicester Watch Committee took the unprecedented step of inviting a previously marginalised group into the municipal policy-making process.

26 Report from the Select Committee on Police Superannuation Funds, P.P. 1875 (352), XII, 189-94.
27 LRO CM42/13, WC Mins, 4 Jul. 1882.
28 See Chapter 2 above, 49-53, for a fuller discussion of police pensions.
31 LRO CM42/19, WC Mins, 14 Jan. 1901, 248.
POLICY COMMUNITIES

By 1908, however, demands for reform had received the support of the Home Office and powerful Parliamentary factions following protracted pressure from the Inspectors of Constabulary and professional press. A Select Committee established to discuss reform by-passed Watch Committee objections and inevitably culminated in Home Office proposals to introduce a compulsory national weekly-rest day, yet funded locally. Complaints that the scheme would require additional recruitment and expenditure of over £2,000 in Leicester and £10,000 in Birmingham were not heeded. The Home Secretary, Winston Churchill, and Chancellor, David Lloyd George, rejected demands to increase Exchequer funding to implement the proposals, with Churchill insisting that reform 'is a large concession to be granted wholly at the expense of the ... ratepayers and without any deduction from the pay of the men who are to enjoy the benefit of it.' The sole concession awarded, that reform would be phased in over four years, did little to placate furious watch committees who attempted, without success, to delay implementation.

Watch committees had again failed to mobilise their opposition to reform. Although they were unlikely to defeat a Liberal government that embraced social reform to a far greater extent than any previous administration, their inability to challenge central government's increasing intervention in municipal affairs was due to the absence of any collective machinery to provide national representation. Their failure to shield the police from broader social reform, however, resulted in louder and more protracted demands for increased Exchequer support. It also contributed towards their mobilisation through the Association of Municipal Corporations, a local authority association previously interested largely in legal issues affecting municipal administration and dominated by town clerks, proceeding the First World War. If the Home Secretary sought to extend his regulatory

23 Report from the Select Committee on the Police Forces (Weekly Rest-Day), P. P. 1908 (353), IX, 35-9, 45-6.
powers over provincial forces he would be pressured to grant additional financial assistance. Although agreement to increase the annual grant was delayed by the economic pressures of warfare, municipal demands did not recede, and resurfaced in the immediate aftermath to influence the consultative nature of central-local relations during the inter-war years.

THE FIRE POLICY COMMUNITY 1870-1914

Before 1914 there was little central co-ordination of the fire service. Central departments and Parliament regularly reiterated the localised and private nature of fire protection. Successive Home Secretaries and Treasury officials refused to sanction financial assistance or statutory recognition; financial responsibility was considered still to rest jointly with the local community and insurance industry. Central responsibility was further muddled by conflicting claims from the Home Office and Local Government Board as to where overall control would be invested. The former maintained responsibility for regulating explosives, factories and mines, fire extinguishers, and public protection against fire in general. The latter claimed to regulate the provision of fire protection in county and district councils after 1888, yet admitted that its powers to compel authorities to provide minimum standards of cover were inadequate. Elsewhere, the Board of Trade was responsible for fire protection on the railways and in shipping, the Admiralty in dockyards and stores, and the Office of Works in government buildings. Indeed there was little statutory regulation beyond discretionary powers for local authorities to provide a fire brigade and engine out of local rates, assist in extinguishing fires outside the local boundaries in return for a fixed payment, and, from 1875, the

39 See Chapter 2 above, 41-2, 60-1.
40 Report from the Select Committee on Fire Protection, P.P. 1867 (471), X, v-vii; Report of the Select Committee on the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, P.P. 1877 (342), XIV, xxiii; Report from the Select Committee on Fire Brigades, P.P. 1900 (278), VI, xv-xviii.
compulsory provision of fire hydrants and adequate water supplies, and the right to force entry into
burning buildings.\textsuperscript{44}

Where fire protection was not provided by the local authority, as in Cambridge, Carlisle, Coventry and Oxford in 1903, responsibility was widely accepted as resting with local insurance offices or voluntary brigades.\textsuperscript{45} Growing public discontent at the inadequate level of fire cover, coupled with the withdrawal of many local insurance offices from providing skeletal cover, as in Birmingham and Leicester, culminated in demands for greater public provision and a partial parting of company between the industry and the local community (Figure 5.2):

\begin{quote}
Fire protection is a public duty, and not a duty to be put upon the shoulders of private individuals and left to voluntary agents and private munificence, and there should be one system adopted throughout the country.\textsuperscript{46}
\end{quote}

The insurance company's responsibility was 'not to protect the property of individuals from damage by fire, but to indemnify individuals against loss by fire.'\textsuperscript{47} A Private Bill introduced in 1900 to compel the establishment of local brigades with minimum standards of cover, enforced through annual inspection and a block grant, failed owing to the complex network of central departments with varying degrees of responsibility.\textsuperscript{48} The Bill proposed transferring all responsibility to the Local Government Board, but was resisted by an obstructive Home Office. The President of the Board itself raised concerns at the increased workload such a transfer would create, drawing comparisons between the police and fire services:

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{44} Lighting and Watching Act, 1833: 14 Geo. III, c.78, s.44; Town Police Clauses Act, 1847: 10 & 11 Vict., c.34, s.32-33; Poor Law Amendment Act, 1867: 30 & 31 Vict., c.106, s.29; Public Health Act, 1875: 38 & 39 Vict., c.55, s.66; Public Health Amendment Act, 1907: 7 Edw. 7, c.53, s.87.
\textsuperscript{45} Return Relative to Fire Brigades and Fires in England and Wales, for the Year 1903, P. P. 1906 (2914), XCVIII.
\textsuperscript{46} Debs. 12 Apr. 1899, col.882.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid, col.888.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid, cols.876-908.
\end{quote}
I am not clear at all myself that this institution of the fire brigade should be handed over to the Local Government Board. What is the object of these fire brigades? They are to give protection to life and property against fire, and a fire brigade should certainly be an institution under some local authority. So are the local police; they are under the local authority, but they do not fall naturally or necessarily under the control of the Local Government Board; they are under the control of the Home Department.  

Officials representing both the Home Office and Local Government Board regularly reasserted their opposition to central intervention in the service until the threat to munitions production during the First World War. Watch committees preferred to administer their brigades through local regulations, which contributed to the absence of any central department from the policy community during the last quarter of the nineteenth-century. This stemmed from a conflict of interest between the professional and police brigades, with the former claiming to be the most progressive model for fire protection, tensions between the Home Office and Local Government Board, and inconclusive debates about the role of the private market in the provision of organised fire protection.

The localised nature of the service led to watch committees adopting a co-ordinated approach with the professional associations from the 1880s, although this was impermanent and ad hoc at first (Figure 5.2). This was particularly the case with those representing professional brigades. Both Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees encouraged their chief officers to join professional associations, hosting annual meetings to demonstrate their commitment to greater co-ordination within the professional fraternity. This centralised administrative power within the Watch Committee and reinforced its dominant relationship with the Chief Fire Officer between the 1880s and 1890s.


This participatory relationship continued into the twentieth-century. For example, both Watch Committees sent delegations to the International Fire Exhibition at Earl’s Court in 1903. Organised by the British Fire Prevention Committee, a voluntary body which sought to promote uniform standards of fire resistance, the Exhibition comprised a combination of professional and educational exhibits to promote the British service internationally. Papers were given by distinguished speakers on fire prevention, exhibits displayed and visits made to local stations. Processions and civic receptions

encouraged networking, particularly between national and international delegates. Central government sent few delegates, yet seventy-five municipalities were represented, many of which included experienced Watch Committee members (Table 5.1). Birmingham, for example, sent David Brooks, Chairman of the Fire Brigade Sub-Committee, Stephen Middleton, its Vice-Chairman, and the Chief Constable, Chief Fire Officer and Surveyor. Leicester, meanwhile, sent Councillors Samuel Squire and Arthur Tollington, the latter Chairman of the Fire Brigade Sub-Committee (1900-13), along with its Chief Fire Officer.

Table 5.1 Local Authority Delegates at the International Fire Exhibition, Earl’s Court, London, 1903

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Councillors and Others, e.g.</th>
<th>Aldermen</th>
<th>Chief Fire Officer</th>
<th>Chief Constables</th>
<th>Other Firemen</th>
<th>Borough Surveyor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>98</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The exhibition, therefore, was not merely a public relations exercise facilitating the interaction between technical and administrative institutions. By discussing common issues, witnessing demonstrations of modern appliances and encouraging integration between the fire industry, fire-fighters and municipalities, the service shifted from an ad hoc network of disparate groups with few common interests to an interdependent, yet diverse, policy community. This community was mobilised nationally through municipal and professional, rather than central, co-ordination.

This integrated strategy was extended overseas. For example, a deputation from Birmingham Watch Committee attended Berlin’s fire exhibition in June 1902, and also visited Belgian cities to inspect their organisational resources. In seeking to reinforce its international reputation as ‘the best governed city in the world,’ Birmingham built on the progressive image invested in the ‘civic gospel’, with councillors and civic officials, notably John Nettlefold, the Chairman of the Housing and Town Planning Committee, visiting European cities to explore continental approaches towards town planning.

---

52 City of Birmingham, *Report of the Deputation Appointed to Attend the International Congress of Fire Brigades, and Exhibition of Fire Preventing and Life-Saving Appliances at Berlin; and also to Inspect the Fire Brigades at Antwerp and Brussels Respectively* (Birmingham, 1902).
and housing design. The internationalisation of knowledge reinforced Birmingham's position as an international city, accessible to international ideas. Although there were cultural and political differences between countries, including administrative differences over fire protection, Birmingham demonstrated that the absence of central regulation did not hinder the creation of international networks. Leicester also extended its European networks, with its Chief Officer, Henry Neal, attending international meetings during the 1920s and 1930s with the full consent of his Watch Committee. Both municipalities could have resisted temptations to establish contacts abroad, particularly during the inter-war financial climate where the Treasury advocated reduced costs in attending conferences.

That Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees sought to project their civic identities on to an international stage demonstrates the important role that their brigades played in fostering civic pride. A formal naming ceremony for Birmingham's new fire engine in July 1902, bearing the name 'Edward VII', celebrated the coronation. Samuel Edwards, Chairman of the Fire Brigade Sub-Committee, was presented with a framed address marking twenty-five years' service and honoured with the christening of its new engine, 'The Sam Edwards,' in 1910. Civic ritualism, predicated on the dominance of urban Liberalism during the second-half of the nineteenth-century, continued into the twentieth-century in the form of processions, receptions and public funerals, despite the loosening of Liberal hegemony and the professionalisation of municipal services. Leicester Watch Committee held similar ceremonies, engraving a new Leyland petrol-driven engine with the inscription, 'Engine tested

55 On administrative and organisational differences between international fire brigades, G. Falconer, 'The firefighters of Europe', Windsor Magazine, XIII (1901), 499-514.
56 LRO CM42/27, WC Mins, 30 Sep. 1925, 80; CM42/30, WC Mins, 28 Nov. 1934, 320.
58 Midland Express, 3 Jul. 1902.
59 Fire & Water, Jan. 1910, 169.
officially in the presence of the Watch Committee,' in 1922, and other presentations to long serving members. The absence of central regulation meant that the public representation of the fire service was crucial in legitimising the relationship between the Watch Committee and the profession. Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees portrayed their brigades as public institutions protecting local communities. Rather than serving as ambassadors of private capital, the fire service was accepted as a legitimate public concern in both municipalities, which justified its local funding and transferred significant administrative and fiscal authority to the Watch Committee and Town Council respectively.

THE POLICE AND FIRE POLICY COMMUNITIES AT WAR 1914-18

The failure to mobilise opposition to the Weekly Rest-Day Act, 1910, demonstrated that greater municipal co-ordination was essential to reinforce Watch Committee influence within the police policy community. This was accelerated by central initiatives and 'strong external uncertainties' during the First World War as a result of greater central co-ordination of local policing between the Home Office and chief constables. With the vital role played by the police in protecting national sovereignty, through the surveillance of deviant social and ethnic groups, the policing of billeting, industrial espionage, sexual immorality, and the provision of air-raid protection, it was deemed politically sensitive to disclose policy widely amongst municipal institutions. This created greater vertical co-ordination between the Home Office and chief constables, notably through the expansion in circulars addressed to the latter, although watch committees continued to influence wartime policing by overseeing responsibility for mobilisation, the special constabulary and working conditions. The Home Office also improved the flow of information between centre and locality through the creation of the War Duties Division, which co-ordinated wartime policing between the police and the Competent

---

61 LRO CM42/26, WC Mins, 26 Sep. 1922, 205.
64 For example, PRO HO158/16, Home Office Circulars 264,016, 10 Sep. 1914; 382,237/2, 31 Mar. 1916.
POLICY COMMUNITIES

Military Authority, an agency designated to enforce the emergency Defence of the Realm Regulations.66

Although the police obtained additional operational autonomy in regulating licensing hours, blackouts and making arrests without warrant67, watch committees maintained significant administrative authority in other regulations.68 Birmingham Watch Committee, for instance, co-operated with its Chief Constable in establishing a regional air-raid warning scheme in 1916. With the city assisting in the war effort through extensive munitions production, the Watch Committee and Lord Mayor, Neville Chamberlain, organised a series of conferences between neighbouring authorities to discuss the practical implications of lighting restrictions, signal communication, anti-aircraft fire and searchlight protection throughout the region. The Home Office had been criticised locally for failing to warn local authorities of an approaching Zeppelin in February 1916, which bombed Dudley, Walsall, Wednesbury and Tipton, causing slight damage. Chamberlain sought to secure greater regional co-ordination and information-sharing networks, urging the Home Office to provide early warnings of aerial attack, and exploited the City Council’s dominant regional position to secure the complicity of surrounding districts in protecting the region.69 Leicester Watch Committee pursued a similar co-ordinated strategy with its Chief Constable, publishing regulations for lighting restrictions and aerial attack.70 Both Watch Committees also pursued well-publicised recruitment programmes for special constables to replace those officers on active service.71 This tri-partite power relationship between watch committees, chief constables and the Home Office was, therefore, reinforced during wartime.

68 The Mayor, for example, had authority to prohibit any meeting or procession where it threatened to ‘give rise to grave disorder’: Regulation (9A) as to Prohibiting Holding of Meeting or Procession, 3 Oct. 1916: Ibid, 32.
71 Briggs, Birmingham, 207-8; LRO CM42/24, WC Mins, 11 Aug. 1914, 194-5; 1 Sep. 1914, 201; Police Review, 1 Apr. 1915, 159; BCA JSC Mins, 1 Jan. 1917.
For the first time the fire service was co-ordinated nationally, reinforced by central departments, including the Home Office, Ministry of Munitions and War Office, who co-operated over the threat posed by aerial attack. This included conducting experiments to extinguish bomb-related fires and electrical explosions. In 1916 the Ministry of Munitions established a Fire Protection Advisory Committee to advise on the protection of munitions factories, appointing a Fire Adviser to share his expertise on fire protection between departments. The British Fire Prevention Committee consulted with the Ministries of War and Munitions in circulating over thirty different fire warnings and 120,000 air-raid warnings. It also established a temporary Fire Survey Service, which conducted regular safety inspections of buildings responsible for wartime production.

Such was the concern with the lack of wartime co-ordination that in Autumn 1917 the Home Office introduced a co-operative scheme in Greater London compelling neighbouring authorities to provide assistance during incendiary attacks where the resources of the ‘home’ brigade were stretched to breaking-point. The London Order was used with success during later air-raids and was duly extended to other industrial regions, including the West Midlands and south-west in 1918. Birmingham Watch Committee played a key role in organising meetings between interested authorities in the West Midlands, and the city’s Chief Officer, as the Area’s Mobilisation Officer, co-ordinated the scheme regionally and communicated policy to the Home Office.

Regional co-operation was not new. Leicester and Norwich, for example, maintained mutual assistance schemes to protect neighbouring districts and collieries from the early 1900s. By 1915 Leicester Fire

---

72 Report of the Departmental Committee on Electric Mains Explosions, P.P. 1914 (7481), XXIX; Report of the Committee Appointed by the Secretary of State to Conduct Experiments to Test the Value of Dry Powder Fire Extinguishers, P.P. 1916 (8250), IX.
Brigade protected 80 surrounding districts within a radius of 12 miles, subject to an annual retaining fee. Assistance extended during the 1920s to the nearby satellite towns of Coalville, Lutterworth, Sileby and Syston. Co-ordination of resources was assisted by the diffusion of modern communications technologies and motor traction, with the cost of protection proving the only major obstacle to the extension of schemes throughout the country. By the 1930s even smaller brigades provided regional assistance, with Rugby attending out-district fires within six miles of its market place. The wartime impetus for central co-ordination of fire protection, therefore, inherited a tradition of locally-driven schemes, which enabled watch committees to draw on a wealth of practical information from within the existing policy community, rather than rely on the Home Office’s blank sheet.

Although central regulation of the police and fire services extended into previously discretionary policies between 1914 and 1918, many of these schemes either ended following the Armistice or were transferred to other institutions. The police lost operational control over air-raid precautions and chief constables were officially relieved of their operational control of police brigades in 1937 owing to the impossibility ‘to give much, if any, time to attendance at fires’ during emergencies. Those wartime duties remaining a police responsibility, including naturalisation, licensing and drugs, remained marginal issues during the inter-war years and were themselves subject to increased central inspection and enforcement. The Fire Brigade Area Orders were disbanded, although county boroughs were encouraged to continue providing mutual assistance to the surrounding unprotected districts. Birmingham Watch Committee argued in 1923 that the city’s fire risks demanded the Brigade’s complete attention, ‘especially in view of the drastic financial economies necessary since 1914,’ and rejected requests for assistance during the inter-war years. Although the Home Office sought to

---

79 Fire, Jul. 1937, 56.
80 PRO HO158/20, Home Office Circular 672,792/17, 30 Apr. 1937.
81 The Aliens Division, for example, employed an Inspectorate and 150 Immigration Officers in the 1920s.
82 BCA WC Mins, 5 Dec. 1923, 3; BCA Fire Brigade Sub-Committee Minutes [hereafter FBSC Mins], 18 Feb. 1930, 36; 29 Apr. 1930, 68; 6 Oct. 1932, 113; Fire, Sep. 1926, 63.
influence local protection strategies, watch committees remained independent and subject to local financial, administrative and geographical constraints.

THE FIRE SERVICE BETWEEN THE WARS

Despite facing departmental resistance to ceding additional powers, by the 1920s the Home Office was the main department responsible for national fire protection. This was later combined with its responsibilities for air-raid precautions, following the creation of a Fire Reserve in 1925 and the establishment of an ARP Department responsible for civil defence in 1935, and the regulation of explosives, petroleum, celluloid and other dangerous substances. By the 1930s the Home Office was a large, complex and bureaucratic Ministry with a broad remit in industrial welfare and domestic policy. That it was an attractive department to aspiring politicians and civil servants by the twentieth-century demonstrated its rising stock within Whitehall.

Notwithstanding the increased intervention of the Home Office within national policy, largely through its pressure on local authorities to co-ordinate brigade resources to protect entire regions, the municipal and professional agenda in the policy community continued to overlap during the 1920s (Figure 5.3). The localised policy community was not diluted by central regulation despite the provision of three separate inquiries into the service during the inter-war years. The first, reporting in 1920, explored the working conditions of firemen in relation to the police. Although its main recommendation, to establish pay parity with the police, was not adopted as official government policy, the majority of professional municipal brigades had adopted the scale by the 1930s. Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees had themselves maintained pay parity since the First World War (Appendix D), although they both welcomed movements to improve other conditions on the premise that reform was locally initiated.

83 PRO HO45/15071, Home Office Memoranda: Minutes of Inter-Departmental Conference, 26 May 1919.
84 PRO CAB120, A. Dixon, The Emergency Fire Services in the War of 1939-45 (unpublished manuscript), 42-5.
86 Notably in North Derbyshire and Norfolk during the early 1930s: PRO HO187/137-8, Papers relating to the North Derbyshire and North Norfolk Fire Brigade Schemes; Ewen, ‘Central government’, 330-1.
87 Middlebrook, P.P. 1920 (710), XVI, 12-13; Fire, Jun. 1930, 5.
The second inquiry, reporting in 1923, recommended that all local authorities should establish brigades, be required to extend police pension rights to firemen, and provide systematic training and motorised fire appliances. It also made tentative suggestions in support of greater regional co-ordination of
resources.\textsuperscript{89} Central government failed to implement any of the recommendations, with successive Home Secretaries\textsuperscript{90} blaming the existing financial climate, the density of the report and a lack of Parliamentary time.\textsuperscript{91} Leicester’s Chief Fire Officer found little in the report which affected his Brigade and stressed his belief that the ‘control and management of fire brigades is best left in the hands of local authorities.’\textsuperscript{92} Birmingham Fire Brigade implemented few changes beyond educating against fire risks in hospitals and encouraging local businesses to install sprinklers.\textsuperscript{93}

The localised policy community continued to thrive throughout the succeeding decade despite co-ordinated professional demands for national reform.\textsuperscript{94} Municipalities and other local authorities were linked through a combination of improved communications, motorisation, expertise and the provision of uniform educational standards. Indeed, the Home Office did not embrace comprehensive organisational reform until the threat of incendiary bombing became a major policy issue during the mid-1930s, which underlined the community’s marginal position within the national political environment with action only taken ‘when the issue flares up.’\textsuperscript{95}

A Home Office Departmental Committee conducted the third inquiry in 1935 to investigate the adequacy of fire protection during wartime.\textsuperscript{96} The Committee’s recommendations were effectively a fait accompli following a decade of agitation from the professional associations. It also followed awareness within the Home Office that the system of national fire protection, particularly in rural districts, was wholly inadequate to deal with fires in peacetime, notwithstanding wartime, conditions.\textsuperscript{97} Indeed, as early as 1926 Arthur Dixon, the Home Office Permanent Under-Secretary of State\textsuperscript{98}, linked

\textsuperscript{89} Royal Commission, 218-35.

\textsuperscript{90} Arthur Henderson (1924) and William Joynson-Hicks (1924-29).

\textsuperscript{91} Debts, 13 Mar. 1924, col.2531; 12 Feb. 1925, col.333.

\textsuperscript{92} Fire, Oct. 1923, 114.

\textsuperscript{93} BCA FBSC Mins, 17 Jul. 1923; 23 Oct. 1923; BCA MS1303/26, Annual Fire Brigade Report 1923, 5.

\textsuperscript{94} Fire, May 1921, 179-80; Aug. 1923, 69.

\textsuperscript{95} Dowding, ‘Model’, 145.

\textsuperscript{96} Report of the Departmental Committee on Fire Brigade Services [hereafter Riverdale], P.P. 1935-6 (5224), X.


\textsuperscript{98} Arthur L. Dixon was appointed Private Secretary to the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State in 1908, and Private Secretary to the Permanent Under-Secretary of State in 1910, before his promotion to Under-Secretary of State. He was also appointed Principal Assistant Under-Secretary of State for both the Police and Fire Divisions of
reform with the dangers posed by ‘specially serious fires, such as those arising from air-raids,’ urging greater regional co-ordination to create a balanced system of peacetime and wartime protection.99

The Departmental Committee’s recommendations were immediately enforced with the creation of a separate Home Office Fire Department to co-ordinate resources with the ARP Department and local authorities.100 Legislation in 1938 compelled local authorities to establish brigades and granted the Home Secretary ‘much wider powers in fire brigade matters than he had ever possessed before,’ accepting that ‘an efficient wartime organisation can be built up only on a proper and efficient system for normal times of peace.’101 Such organisation, Dixon reiterated, would be implemented regionally, replacing the small units of administration where protection was, in places, woefully inadequate for combating one or two simultaneous outbreaks, not to mention the potentially destructive incidence of ten or twenty fires in ‘a typical town.’102 In conjunction with the Fire Service Commission, a national wartime administrative body, and Regional Fire Service Boards, comprehensive organisational reform was implemented.103 Many of these reforms had little impact on Birmingham and Leicester beyond compelling Birmingham Fire Brigade to provide mutual assistance to neighbouring authorities and anti-gas training, install decontamination facilities, and establish the Auxiliary Fire Service to provide operational support.104 It was not until the creation of the National Fire Service in 1941 that administrative control of the brigades transferred to Regional Fire Boards, with the Home Secretary105 accepting that ‘fire-fighting, in substance, had become a military operation, and certainly for the period

the Home Office in the 1930s, and served on various royal commissions and select committees dealing with related policy networks during the inter-war years.

99 Fire, Nov. 1926, 131.
100 Dixon, Emergency Fire, 33-8. Between 1920 and 1936 fire brigades were centrally administered within the Home Office Police Division.
103 PRO HO45/18237, Fire brigade regional schemes.
105 Herbert Morrison (1940-45).
of the war, had ceased to be a municipal one," although this was a temporary measure with Watch Committee control re-established in 1947 subject to central inspection.106

THE POLICE AND CENTRAL-LOCAL TENSIONS BETWEEN THE WARS

In anticipation of increased central intervention in the police policy community after the First World War, watch committees developed a collective voice through their own national network of meetings, correspondence, resolutions and deputations. Watch committees obtained greater financial assistance, subject to an extension of the Home Secretary's regulatory powers over the 'government, mutual aid, pay, allowances, pensions, clothing, expenses and conditions of service of all police forces within England and Wales.'107 Such powers were themselves subject to 'consultation' with local representative institutions, notably the Association of Municipal Corporations (AMC) and County Councils' Association (CCA) through mediation with the Home Secretary on the Police Council.108 This created far greater interaction, interdependence and complexity between interested institutions during the inter-war years, with the AMC obtaining major concessions over pay, pensions and discipline following negotiations with the Home Secretary.109

Debates about increasing centralisation were fuelled by the publication of the Desborough Committee's report on the police in 1919 and agitation from the Inspectors of Constabulary for additional powers of enforcement.110 The former suggested that nationalising the police would assist the dissemination of information on offences, standardise pay and conditions, and facilitate regional co-ordination of resources between larger police units.111 The latter similarly welcomed increased uniformity in operational and administrative procedures, suggesting that the police should 'decentralise for action, [and] centralise for instruction, criticism and record.'112 This shift towards greater central control did

107 Police Act, 1919: 9 & 10 Geo. 5, c.46, s.4 (1).
108 Ibid, s.4 (2).
109 Finer, English, 13.
not, however, undermine administrative authority in Birmingham and Leicester. Although watch committees were challenged to demonstrate their continued relevance within decision-making during the inter-war years, they mobilised and interacted nationally under the guise of the AMC, which, before the 1910s, had proven to be a marginal institution within the policy community.

The Home Office, whilst doubting whether a central department could manage the police as effectively as 'some of the big boroughs,' sought to distinguish between the legal and administrative authority of the constable, exploiting the judgement of the Fisher v. Oldham Corporation legal case in 1930 to support its assertion.\(^{113}\) A tradesman sought damages from Oldham Corporation for wrongful arrest, rather than from the police force directly. In his ruling Justice McCardie declared that the police 'were not acting as the servants or agents' of the Watch Committee, but were 'fulfilling their duties as public servants and officers of the Crown.'\(^{114}\) McCardie, however, overlooked the Watch Committee's powers enshrined in the County and Borough Police Act, 1856, and successive statutes, including powers over licensing, byelaws and traffic control.\(^{115}\) His ruling, coupled with a variety of statements from leading Home Office officials, contributed to a growing belief that constables were fundamentally different to other municipal workers in terms of operational authority.\(^{116}\) Policemen, as with other municipal employees, had distinctive skills relevant to their occupation only. Firemen were hardly subject to Watch Committee operational control, having far greater knowledge of the chemistry of fire and building design. Teachers, meanwhile, received national pay scales, yet control of the profession remained local.\(^{117}\)


\(^{114}\) Justice of the Peace, XCIV, 5 Jul. 1930, 132-5.

\(^{115}\) County and Borough Police Act, 1856: 19 & 20 Vict., c.69, s.7; Public Health Amendment Act, 1907: 7 Edw. 7, c.53, s.78-86; PRO HO45/10400/180472, Leicester Bye-Laws under the Public Health Act, 1907; PRO HO45/10093/139045, Leicester Bye-Laws, 1890-1906; PRO HO45/10559/168509, Birmingham Bye-Laws under the Public Health Act, 1907; PRO HO45/10692/229367, Birmingham Bye-Laws: Lights on Vehicles, 1912-14.


\(^{117}\) Police Review, 20 Aug. 1920, 393.
Undoubtedly there existed a legal quagmire in the relationship between the police and the Watch Committee during the inter-war years, although there remained a common acceptance that the latter was an enduring administrative influence on appointments, promotions and discipline:

> When a difficult situation arises the local authority, the Chief of Police, the Magistrates and the Home Office must work together: and the Home Office has no more essential duty than in consultation with the others to prepare beforehand for consistent and united action [author's italics].

The police policy community consisted of varying degrees of influence from a range of institutions depending on the specific policy network. This culminated in interdependent intergovernmental relationships (Figure 5.4). Policy outcomes were the result of the interaction between all 'players' in the policy community, rather than simply the outcomes intended by the Home Office, and the 'non-executant' nature of British government meant that local government remained directly responsible for service delivery. Watch committees were actively involved in national negotiations having mobilised their resources to pursue common interests. This was spearheaded by the AMC's Police Committee from 1920, which was formed in response to the Desborough Report's support for greater central co-ordination of local resources and the amalgamation of smaller non-county borough forces.

---


Figure 5.4 The Police Policy Community c.1935

KEY:

- Networks of Power
- Impermanent Networks of Power
- Policy Feedback
Although watch committees were less able to influence the annual reports of the Inspectors of Constabulary, who adopted an increasingly aloof approach towards local administration during the 1920s, they influenced national negotiations through their membership of the Police Committee and successfully challenged proposals to fully transfer the powers of appointment, discipline and promotion to chief constables through a strategy of lobbying the Home Secretary directly or through intermediaries. Birmingham Watch Committee criticised the Desborough Report for making general assumptions about police forces and obtained Neville Chamberlain’s support to pressure the Home Secretary into watering down the proposed reform programme. Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees sent representatives to the Police Committee’s meetings to challenge the erosion of municipal powers, and took an active interest in the integrated approach towards national police policy through the Police Council, established in 1919. Comprised of representatives from local authorities, police forces and the Home Office, the Council met to discuss pressing national interests, and the Police Committee was a key influence, doubling its representation in 1923.

The interaction between the Home Office and Leicester Watch Committee during the latter’s inquiry into the administration of the police force by its Chief Constable in December 1934 reinforced the interdependent relationship between the two institutions. Leicester’s Detective Superintendent, Joseph Boon, had been accused by the Chief Constable, Oswald Cole, of bullying staff in the Detective and Uniform Departments and disobeying his orders. Boon, a well-respected officer with nearly thirty years’ experience in Leicester Police, vehemently denied the accusations to a special Investigations Sub-Committee established by the Watch Committee. The Sub-Committee, which consisted of a cross-section of the three main political parties on the Council, ruled in favour of Boon and criticised Cole for failing ‘to sustain the complaints he had registered.’ His ‘unfair prejudice’ towards Boon was,

---

124 The members were Ernest Wilford, Chairman of the Watch Committee (Labour), William Hincks (Liberal), Sydney Taylor, Deputy Chairman of the Watch Committee (Conservative), and George Parbury (Labour).
apparently, the result of ‘personal [ill-] feeling between the two men, accentuated by Cole’s appointment in 1929 as an outsider to Leicester.\textsuperscript{125}

The Watch Committee ordered Cole to apologise publicly to Boon. This seriously undermined his authority as Chief Constable, rendering his control over the Detective Department untenable whilst Boon remained in charge. Although it had apparently achieved closure with the undermining of Cole’s accusations, the Sub-Committee requested the Home Secretary, John Gilmour, to send an Inspector of Constabulary to investigate the proceedings further. Gilmour reluctantly agreed. The inquiry generated extensive local excitement, with the press bemoaning the intense secrecy in the proceedings, labelling it the ‘hush hush Leicester police inquiry.‘\textsuperscript{126} The Inspector’s report, received in February 1935, vindicated Cole’s operational control of the force, yet admitted that he had allowed the Detective Department ‘to assume an undue degree of independence ... aggravated by the attitude of the Superintendent in direct charge of the Department.‘\textsuperscript{127} The report also criticised the Sub-Committee for instituting the inquiry and urged the parties concerned to foster ‘better understanding’ in dealing with internal matters of discipline and promotion, stressing the Chief Constable’s authority in this. In so doing, Gilmour accepted that the Sub-Committee had a right to explore accusations of impropriety. He also stressed its unique position in supervising the force’s administration and maintaining the ‘integrity of the force,’ in that it was in ‘intimate daily contact with the operations of the force,’ unlike the remote Home Office.\textsuperscript{128}

This inquiry demonstrated the complex relationships within the police policy community. The Home Office only intervened on the request of the Sub-Committee, which considered that the Home Office’s ultimate authority would justify its inquiry. That the Home Secretary concluded that the details of the inquiry remained a local responsibility indicated that the Leicester Watch Committee was considered to be the ultimate authority on local disciplinary matters. Indeed, Home Office policy throughout the inter-war years varied between individual cases, but was evidently framed by two principles: to rationalise the number of police forces in the country and to standardise many of the existing police

\textsuperscript{125} LRO CM42/30, WC Mins, 1 May 1934, 242; \textit{Leicester Daily Mercury}, 13 May 1935.
\textsuperscript{126} \textit{Leicester Daily Mercury}, 7 Dec. 1934.
\textsuperscript{127} LRO CM42/31, WC Mins, 25 Feb. 1935, 32.
\textsuperscript{128} Ibid; 5 Mar. 1935, 32-4; the localism of police inspection and efficiency is discussed in Waller, \textit{Town}, 267-8.
practices. Notable cases involving St Helens, Canterbury, Congleton and Chepping Wycombe, where watch committees were criticised for failing to administer their force satisfactorily, contrasted to other cases, such as in Leicester and Birmingham, where they were deemed to be the ultimate authority on local administration. The difficulty facing central government was, as noted by the Chief Inspector of Constabulary in 1919, in differentiating between these two distinct tiers:

The difficulty is that there are Watch Committees and Watch Committees. For instance I think the Watch Committee of an enlightened, well-governed town is as good a police administrative body as you can have. Any reduction of the powers of local authorities is very jealously viewed nowadays. The tendency of government has been to enlarge the functions of local authorities, and any attempt to reduce them would meet with very large opposition.

The Home Office depended on the information provided by the Inspectors of Constabulary in drawing conclusions about specific local arrangements and accepted the Watch Committee's authority in the larger county boroughs. The emergence of a policy supporting regional co-ordination within the detection and information-sharing policy networks, combined with the national and municipal acceptance of the constable's legal independence, did not radically undermine the administrative authority of Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees, and served to reinforce the authority of local government by proposing the creation of larger units – based on the legal and administrative authority of the county boroughs – capable of co-ordinating service delivery economically and effectively.

129 In 1882 no new borough was allowed to establish a separate force unless its population exceeded 20,000; in 1888 English and Welsh boroughs with populations under 10,000 were merged with their surrounding county force; the Desborough Committee proposed in 1919 to limit independent forces to county boroughs with a population of 100,000 only, although this was not implemented; in 1932 the Home Office and Inspectors of Constabulary proposed a 75,000 population ceiling for separate forces, although the Select Committee on the Amalgamation of Police Forces settled on 30,000; all non-county borough forces were abolished in 1946: J. Anderson, 'Our police system', in ACPO, CCA Conf 1923, 13-15; S. Stevenson, 'Reflections on the attempt to rationalize the distribution of police in England and Wales, 1942-1974', Twentieth Century British History, VI, 1 (1995), 56-9; Finer, English, 129-32.


131 Desborough Mins, 79-80; Police Review, 8 Feb. 1918, 45; 8 Feb. 1918, 85; 23 Apr. 1920, 199.

132 This was a common assumption amongst contemporaries: W. A. Robson, 'The central domination of local government', Political Quarterly, IV (1933), 85-104; idem, The Government and Misgovernment of London (London, 1939), 327-32; A. Dixon, 'Some aspects of co-operation within the police service', in ACPO, CCA Conf 1936, 51-60; G. D. H. Cole, 'The future of local government', Political Quarterly, XII (1941), 405-18; see also
The appointment of policewomen during the 1920s and 1930s reinforced the influence of watch committees within the police policy community. The experiences of Birmingham and Leicester contrasted widely, with decisions based on local circumstances rather than centrally prescribed regulations. Central government refused to compel the appointment of policewomen, insisting that although reform was desirable such decisions should remain discretionary. Indeed, when the Home Office released regulations prescribing the working conditions of policewomen in 1931 they were extensively based on the rules framed locally by watch committees, notably in Birmingham and Liverpool, over the preceding decade. Birmingham Watch Committee was an early convert to their appointment, establishing a Women’s Police Department in June 1917 to provide a social welfare service, which was comprised of 17 policewomen by 1935 with a Woman Enquiry Officer attached to the Detective Department. Leicester, on the other hand, vehemently refused to employ policewomen throughout the 1920s, the Watch Committee and its Chief Constable consistently taking the view that policewomen were no substitute for policemen.

Women were involved in ‘policing’ the majority of county borough forces from the 1890s. Often employed as matrons, they were responsible for dealing with female and juvenile prisoners in custody, performing strip searches, taking statements, and providing meals and medical care. Leicester Watch Committee, however, resisted appointing full-time matrons until 1913 despite concerns at the spread of prostitution to public spaces, such as Victoria Park, and the rise in disorderly female behaviour.

---

135 J. Jones, History of the Corporation of Birmingham Vol. V Part II (Birmingham, 1940), 357-8; Police Powers, 91.
Women were first involved in patrol work during the First World War following pressure from the Women Police Volunteers, a voluntary organisation established in 1914 to promote policewomen as a replacement for the wartime shortages of policemen and concerns at female immorality. Birmingham Watch Committee employed women to patrol the city’s parks and open spaces during the war, stressing their important socialising function by assisting women and children ‘in distress, out of work, or in bad company.’ By 1918 the Watch Committee had instituted a hostel where women were temporarily housed and administered by a committee comprising female councillors and the wives of local elites. These included Mrs Harrison Barrow, the wife of a philanthropist, and Cecilia Mitchell and Mary Wilson, both Watch Committee members. In its first year of service, the hostel received 126 young women, with 67 per cent brought by policewomen and only 15 per cent by policemen. Policemen had quickly withdrawn from sensitive duties and policewomen actively intervened in cases of cruelty mediated through their co-operation with non-governmental organisations such as the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and the Medical Women’s Federation.

Leicester Watch Committee did not employ women during the First World War and maintained opposed to their appointment throughout the 1920s despite pressure from local interest groups, including the National Council of Women, the Leicester Women’s Liberal Association and the Adult School Union, as well as female councillors. Following prolonged pressure between 1918 and 1921, the Watch Committee voted against employing policewomen, contending that women were not physically fit for patrol duty and would be a greater financial burden than the police matron.

140 BCA WC Mins, 4 Oct. 1922, 5; 7 Feb. 1923, 6.
141 Ibid, 7 May 1919, 49-50.
144 LRO CM42/26, WC Mins, 1 Feb. 1921, 73; 15 Feb. 1921, 77-8.
Opposition remained entrenched throughout the decade, with the Chief Constable sharing the Watch Committee's suspicions about the potential benefits of policewomen:

I ... assert emphatically that two experienced policemen in plain clothes would be more efficient and useful than a score of Women Police, and further that the employment of women for patrol work would involve a waste of public money and be ineffective in securing the object aimed at. 145

Pressure intensified with the appointment of Emily Fortey as the Watch Committee's first female member in 1928. Fortey was qualified in chemistry, sanitary inspection and midwifery, and an advocate of health and educational reform. 146 As a founder member of the Leicester Health Society (1906), the Child Welfare Exhibition (1917) and the Women's Halcyon Club (1918), Fortey used her extensive social networks through membership of these and the National Council of Women to obtain a prominent position in the local Labour Party and knowledge of local issues, including the appointment of policewomen and female probation workers. Following her election to the Council in 1923, Fortey formed a close alliance with Ernest Wilford, the Labour Chief Whip and Watch Committee Vice-Chairman, to agitate for social reform within the police. An active councillor, Fortey was regularly praised for her commitment to social reform. 147

Fortey identified the appointment of policewomen as 'a burning question among women,' particularly if they were to finally achieve political and social equality. 148 Although women were actively involved on the Health, Education and Child Welfare Committees, either through election or co-option, the absence of female representation on the Housing and Watch Committees created male bastions of power that overlooked gender-sensitive policies. 149 Drawing on the expertise of national figures, notably the Chief Inspector of Constabulary, Fortey influenced the policewomen policy network through internal pressure and consultation. 150 A Sub-Committee was established in 1929 to 'consider and report upon the advisability of a small detachment of women police,' following informal

145 LRO CM42/27, WC Mins, 3 Feb. 1926.
147 In 1928 alone Fortey was praised for achieving an 86 per cent attendance rate at all Council, Committee and Sub-Committee meetings, despite being called to a total of 294 meetings: Leicester Mail, 12 Oct. 1929, 9; Howes, Leicester, 247.
148 E. Fortey, 'Women's work as citizens', in Howes, Leicester, 256.
149 Ibid, 250-6.
negotiations conducted by Fortey and Wilford. It took only two meetings, which included interviewing
the new Chief Constable and a deputation from the National Council of Women, before it unanimously
recommended the Watch Committee 'to accept the principle of women police in Leicester.' The Watch
Committee, in maintaining the tradition of supporting the policies of its sub-committees, appointed one
full-time policewoman with pay parity to policemen.\(^{151}\) That the Sub-Committee consisted of Fortey
and four local manufacturers demonstrated that attitudes towards female employment had softened.
With a high proportion of female manufacturing workers in the midlands throughout the first-half of
the twentieth-century, women were increasingly accepted into traditionally male-dominated
occupations.\(^{152}\)

Although Fortey had exerted considerable influence over the policy network within the Watch
Committee, her influence was finite. A proposal to appoint additional policewomen in 1932 was
rejected by the Chief Constable and Watch Committee.\(^{153}\) By the end of the 1930s, however, collective
attitudes had softened, with the Watch Committee appointing three officers and hosting the Annual
Conference of Provincial Policewomen in 1937.\(^{154}\) Birmingham Watch Committee’s receptiveness
towards policewomen, on the other hand, was influenced by earlier and prolonged pressure from a
number of female elites, including Cecilia Mitchell and Mary Wilson, the former appointed in 1918,
and the latter in 1923.\(^{155}\) Women served on the Watch Committee, therefore, throughout the inter-war
years, and used their networks to further pressure for reform, with Wilson presiding over the
Birmingham Branch of the National Council of Women and working actively within community
welfare organisations and the Newton Street and Shaftesbury House hostels. Drawing on her family's

\(^{151}\) LRO CM42/28, WC Mins, 16 Apr. 1929, 70; 7 May 1929, 83; 26 Jun. 1929, 107; 27 Sep. 1929, 154-5.
\(^{152}\) D. Reeder and R. Rodger, 'Industrialisation and the city economy', in M. Daunton (ed.), The Cambridge Urban
\(^{154}\) LRO CM42/29, WC Mins, 5 Dec. 1933, 173; Daily Mirror, 23 Jul. 1937; LRO 10D58/198, Annual Police
Report 1937, 15-16.
\(^{155}\) Wilson, who was elected Councillor in 1919, replaced Mitchell on the Watch Committee in 1923. Wilson
served from 1923-37 and was succeeded by Gertrude Clarke upon her retirement in November 1937. Wilson was
also a member of the Fire Brigade Sub-Committee from 1926-37. Mitchell was a member of the Judicial Sub-
Committee from 1919-22, and Wilson from 1923-37; on the influence of women on local civic life: P. Bartley,
'Moral regeneration: women and the civic gospel in Birmingham, 1870-1914', Midland History, XXV (2000),
143-61.
reputation for civic service, Wilson successfully negotiated the widespread acceptance within the Watch Committee and the Police Department that policewomen performed an important social welfare role, dealing with cases of indecent exposure, sexual assault, carnal knowledge, attempted suicide, obscene language and shoplifting. This culminated in the Royal Commission on Police Powers and Procedure, reporting in 1929, praising Birmingham Watch Committee for appointing policewomen and using it as an example to other local authorities as a form of 'best practice'. Although they remained a peripheral element of modern policing, the retention of specifically localised policy networks demonstrated the importance of interaction between urban elites, public institutions and pressure groups. The Home Office's refusal to compel their appointment demonstrated awareness that local circumstances influenced the demand and supply of non-traditional forms of policing.

**INTERACTIVE POLICY COMMUNITIES**

The police and fire policy communities demanded the interaction of central, local and professional institutions in negotiating access to resources and influencing policy outcomes. Central government did not maintain a monopoly of all available resources and was dependent on the Watch Committee and professional associations for policy-making and implementation. Indeed, the relative absence of central intervention within the fire service until the inter-war years created a locally and professionally-centred policy community. Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees regularly interacted with professional associations within a closer relational framework. This created a closed-community, which was inevitably more hostile to central intervention than the police during the 1920s. The fire policy community demanded legal recognition and Exchequer funding without central control. The provision of prescribed regulations and co-ordinated resources was the consequence of the Watch Committee's interactions with its Chief Fire Officer.

The police policy community, on the other hand, was more complex. It involved the frequent interaction of central, local and professional institutions before the First World War. Central regulation was prescribed through Exchequer funding, yet remained subject to the consent and co-operation of

---

156 Her father, J. E. Wilson, a local cycle manufacturer, was a member of the Watch Committee, Fire Brigade and Finance Sub-Committee, and Judicial Sub-Committee from 1911-13.

watch committees and professional associations. The level of central co-ordination depended on the perceptions and expertise of the Inspectors of Constabulary and other advisory institutions. The Home Office did not actively seek to dominate Watch Committee administration and was reluctant to increase its financial responsibilities in 1918. National regulations were formed to provide a general framework within which provincial forces were administered, rather than force watch committees to pursue immutable strategies in all policy networks. Although police pay was fixed according to national standards, watch committees and their representative institutions actively supported central regulation of this policy network. Paradoxically, Leicester Watch Committee vehemently defended its right to discretion in administering the policewomen policy network during the 1910s and 1920s.

The impact of the First World War on intergovernmental relations was extensive, but it was impermanent. Central regulation of working practices and social behaviour, with the establishment of the Ministries of Labour, Munitions and Reconstruction, was more far-reaching from 1916 and witnessed an expansion in the interactions between central government and local 'experts' who were directly responsible for service delivery. That municipal authority, expressed through the expansion of the local authority associations, was reasserted during the 1920s demonstrated central government's persistent dependence on the municipality for service administration and delivery, as well as the heightened complexity in intergovernmental relations. The co-ordination of services between central and local government, and also between the various departments and officials within the municipality, meant that each organisation had to ensure that they considered the activities and objectives of others in order to maximise their own 'goal attainment.' Policy communities heralded the co-ordination of resources between 'interlocking' organisations and, as the authority and interests of individual organisations shifted over time, consisted of flexible and adaptable relationships.

Relations within the police policy community, for example, were tempered by flexibility and the co-ordination of resources to a greater extent than hostility between the Chief Constable and his Watch

Committee. Relations were, however, never truly harmonious. Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees, as in St Helens, Oldham and other high-profile cases, jealously guarded their existing powers throughout the inter-war years, and mobilised against excessive central interference through the Police Committee and Police Council. Yet the development of such interactive communities facilitated greater negotiation and manoeuvrability between local, national and professional institutions in seeking middle ground. How policy was implemented on the ground would influence national and public perceptions of the discipline and efficiency of the service. Furthermore, the influence of the rank-and-file within the policy communities was reflected in the adoption of a discretionary approach towards service delivery and its ability to mobilise in negotiations with more powerful institutions.

161 The failure of the power networks/communities model to explore policy implementation is discussed in K. Dowding, 'There must be end to confusion: policy networks, intellectual fatigue, and the need for political science methods courses in British universities', Political Studies, XLIX (2001), 89-105.
NEGOTIATING RESOURCES ON THE GROUND: THE RANK-AND-FILE AND OPERATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

... any police officer connected with the Leicester force, quite regardless of his rank, length of service, or any other consideration, who fails to report for duty in the ordinary course of his service, without the express knowledge and sanction or approval of the chief constable, will be forthwith dismissed. Any police officer, of any rank, dismissed from the force under the conditions aforesaid described, will under no circumstances be permitted to rejoin the Leicester Police force, and his dismissal will result in the loss of all service counting towards his pension and of all payments he has contributed to the pension fund.

Leicester Chief Constable's Special Order Book, June 1919

On 1 August 1919 a national police strike was called. A total of 107 Birmingham policemen and a handful of prison officers were dismissed by the Watch Committee for their participation in the strike action. No Leicester policemen joined the strike, fearing the potential repercussions from its Watch Committee's threat to instantly dismiss them and forfeit any pension entitlements. Indeed, only 2,364 policemen from seven forces participated in the action, comprising 7.4 per cent of the aggregate national strength. Only approximately 10 per cent of Birmingham's force refused to work, and the strike only really disrupted law and order in Liverpool where more than half the force went on strike and clashed with the military.

---

3 B. Beazley, Peelers to Panders (Leicester, 2001), 119.
4 Those seven forces were the Metropolitan Police, City of London, Liverpool, Birmingham, Birkenhead, Bootle and Wallasey: H.M. Inspectors of Constabulary [hereafter HMIC] Annual Report 1918-19, P.P. 1920 (91), XXII, 3-4.
The strike was called in response to proposals embodied in the Police Bill to forbid any policeman from joining a trade union, specifically the National Union of Police and Prison Officers (NUPPO). Instead, a Police Federation, with a centrally imposed no-strike policy, was established to represent the rank-and-file in all pay negotiations with the Home Secretary, with local branches to enter direct negotiations with the Watch Committee. This was softened with significant improvements to wages, conditions and pensions. Police pay had fallen significantly behind the standard of living of skilled workers during the First World War, relegating policemen to a similar rate as manual workers (Appendix D). A constable in a typical county borough force could expect to earn on average between 26 and 35 shillings per week in 1914, and between 42 and 52 shillings in 1918, yet real wages had not kept pace with the rising cost of living.

NUPPO, serving as the first 'national' representative organisation for the service, agitated for official recognition from its inception in 1913. However, unlike the acceptance of national union representation for other public sector workers by government departments, including the Postmen's Federation, the National Union of Teachers and the Civil Service Association, NUPPO was excluded from policy negotiations by a stubborn Home Office:

It is impossible to allow a union or association to be established in an organised and disciplined force ... where ready obedience to the orders of a superior officer is a condition of service accepted by all who join the force, and is essential to its existence.

Unlike in private industry and the civil service, where national collective bargaining and conciliation had been accepted strategies by the majority of union leaders (with the exception of the syndicalists), employers' associations, and central government since the 1880s, local authorities resisted demands to conduct wage negotiations nationally. This was despite pressure from the National Association of

---

6 Police Act, 1919: 9 & 10 Geo. 5, ch.46, s.2.
8 Figures calculated from: Desborough Part I, 20.
Local Government Officers (NALGO), established in 1905 to raise the status of white-collar local authority employees and negotiate the provision of national pay and pension schemes, those unions representing public utilities, and intermittent strikes by local authority employees, as in Leeds in 1913. Before 1918 police demands for improved pay and working conditions were purely local issues involving the petitioning of the Watch Committee by the rank-and-file, often through the Chief Constable. Pensions were standardised in 1890, yet pay remained an unregulated policy network with wide regional variations owing to different standards of living. These arrangements caused the Desborough Committee to criticise those forces that poached the better recruits from less wealthy authorities, and led it to propose the standardisation of pensionable pay between municipal and county authorities. Similar demands for national remuneration, pension rights and professional accreditation for NALGO's members were also initially rejected, and it took central government intervention in 1918 to agree a minimum pension scheme for white-collar local authority employees.

The coalition government and watch committees collaborated to resist NUPPO's demands for recognition, and standardised wages to reduce retention difficulties and undermine public support. The Home Secretary, Edward Shortt, who had prior experience in administering conflict as Irish Secretary, was adamant that the strike was different to normal industrial disputes in that it amounted to 'a definite act of mutiny on the part of those who have broken their oaths and who are setting aside their duty to their fellow citizens and attempting to defy the authority of Parliament.' As such the police action in Shortt's view did not warrant a conciliatory compromise. Both Birmingham and


11 Clegg, History, 91-2; Fraser, History, 142; A. Spoor, White-Collar Union: Sixty Years of NALGO (London, 1967).

12 Desborough Part I, 6-7.

13 Report of the Departmental Committee on the Superannuation of Persons Employed by Local Authorities in England and Wales, P.P. 1919 (329), XXIV.

14 Shortt, Liberal MP for Newcastle West, was a barrister-at-law, Chief Secretary for Ireland (1918-19) and Home Secretary (1919-22). Historians suggest that Shortt was appointed as George Cave's replacement to 'keep the Union in check': Reynolds and Judge, Night, 95.

Leicester Watch Committees acted promptly to implement the Desborough Committee's financial recommendations by adopting backdated pay scales, improving pension entitlements, providing rent and uniform allowances, and establishing their own Representative Committees. These Representative Committees, in conjunction with the proposed three-tier Police Federation, recognised that local forces could no longer set their own scales of pay and conditions, yet accepted that disputes could be discussed and settled more quickly locally. Leicester's Representative Committee, established in January 1919, consisted of representatives from each rank and sought to obtain material improvements through negotiations with the Watch Committee. Birmingham, on the other hand, established its Representative Committee as early as October 1918, consisting of six inspectors, 12 sergeants and 24 constables, to create 'a more organised and systematic method' of dealing with pay negotiations, which was 'entirely independent and unassociated with any outside body,' notably NUPPO.

A Leicester branch of NUPPO, established in March 1919, failed to attract widespread support from within the Force and pursued a negotiating strategy with the Watch Committee. That the branch's leaders, George Keen, Daniel Choyce and John Gabbitas, all retired as leading officers during the 1930s and 1940s – Superintendent, Inspector and Deputy Chief Constable respectively – indicates not only their compliance, but crucially that the Watch Committee's threats to pursue heavy-handed tactics towards its activities did not materialise. The same officers were also prominent members of the Representative Committee, demonstrating an integrated strategy towards negotiations between the various institutions in Leicester.

---

17 The Police Federation was to be comprised of separate boards representing constables, sergeants and inspectors, which would negotiate working conditions and pay for their own ranks: Judge, Force, 21.
20 Beazley, Peelers, 118-9.
The decision to strike in Birmingham followed assurances from the local Trades Council, presided over by Frank Spiers, for active support, including sympathetic industrial action. The local branch of NUPPO, established in 1918 under the secretaryship of Sergeant Edward Taylor, claimed a membership of over ninety per cent of the force. Drawing on the experience of other campaigns, the branch sought to cement industrial relations through publicly identifying capitalism as the common enemy of the city's workers, claiming that 'full and frank recognition' was necessary 'not as an offensive measure, but as a defensive measure.' Although Charles Rafter, the Chief Constable, did not consider the branch to be as militant as it proclaimed, he was concerned at the exploitation of its activities by the Trades Council, led by Spiers and J. W. Kneeshaw, a Labour member of the City Council, who were conspiring to 'organise a strike of all trades, in which the police would take part, so that it may assume the form of a revolution.'

Taylor's call to strike was delayed until 21:30 on 1 August. This restricted the number of daytime officers that could participate and was preceded by a scathing attack on the strike in the local evening press. These circumstances meant that the momentum of the 'national' call was lost and public sympathy undermined. The 1 August was also a payday, and the majority of the daytime force had returned home with their £10 backdated pay. The failure of the wider trade union movement, including the Trades Union Congress, to support the strike, however, resulted from the lack of internal support from the police itself. Earlier improvements to pay and working conditions, press animosity and the threat of instant dismissal by a strict Watch Committee deterred the majority of the city's policemen from participation. Despite NUPPO's claims to have 300 strikers in Birmingham, the Watch Committee and press agreed that the figure of 112 was more likely. Furthermore, the

---


22 A respected officer with 24 years' experience.


25 Reynolds and Judge, Night, 181-2.

26 Ibid, 183.
Representative Committee achieved early successes, obtaining the reinstatement of the weekly rest day which had been cancelled during the war, improvements to the uniform, and assurances that the Watch Committee would seriously consider changes to the duty system along with the extension of annual leave and allowances once peacetime conditions had stabilised. 27

On 2 August a ‘routine’ Judicial Sub-Committee meeting recommended the dismissal of the strikers, which was duly ratified by the Watch Committee in an emergency meeting. By the following week the majority of the dismissed strikers had conceded defeat, with Taylor declaring ‘We all want to go back and there need be no question of our loyalty in the future. We admit defeat ... We are not mutineers or criminals and I am convinced that we shall all be better policemen for our recent experience.’ 28 The Watch Committee did not share this opinion, refusing to receive a deputation from both the Trades Council and the dismissed men to discuss reinstatement on the grounds that it was not ‘in the interests of Police discipline’ nor ‘fair to the men who remained loyal.’ 29

The doomed police strike failed owing to the strikers’ lack of access to resources. NUPPO’s failure to co-ordinate the strike nationally, along with the reluctance of thousands of policemen to participate in the action, reflected an absence of organisational resources. The decision to improve pay and working conditions was not the result of protracted negotiations with NUPPO. Rather, it was a deliberate central-municipal ploy to undermine the strike’s impact and the level of public support. Central and municipal government, therefore, deployed their organisational resources effectively to both award and threaten policemen simultaneously, whilst adopting threatening language to undermine the strikers’ political legitimacy. 30 The lack of communication between forces, with the press confusing matters in Birmingham through a deliberate policy of misrepresenting the strike in London and Merseyside, and the absence of active trade union support further undermined the success of the Birmingham strike. The existence of harmonious trade union relations in Leicester, with the Boot and Shoe Operatives and Leicester Hosiery Union obtaining successful collective agreements with local employers’ associations

28 Reynolds and Judge, Night, 182-5.
30 The interdependency between the Home Office and local authorities in regulating the police service both during and after the strike is alluded to in B. Weinberger, Keeping the Peace? Policing Strikes in Britain 1906-1926 (Oxford, 1991), 167-9.
by 1914, meant that the Trades Council's support was not forthcoming. Furthermore, the dependence of policemen on central and municipal government for their legal authority and pay hindered success. The threat posed by the loss of livelihood and the central-municipal consensus in favour of banning NUPPO were insurmountable obstacles to the majority of Birmingham's serving officers and the whole of Leicester Police.

Although labour power was in itself a valuable resource, the withdrawal of which had the potential to disrupt local law and order, it was insufficient to obtain widespread support for the strike action. The attraction of a career in the police service with a regular income, allowances and guaranteed pension, created strong demand for the limited number of vacancies available. Birmingham, for example, had 1,180 applications between November 1918 and June 1919, enrolling merely five per cent of these. Moreover, between 1919 and 1927 Birmingham's Deputy Chief Constable noted that only 39 per cent of applicants were examined and 3.4 per cent of those were appointed.

RESTLESS FIREMEN

There was no national fire strike in 1919. There were, however, similarities in the challenges facing the police and fire services. Proposals for a sailor's strike in July 1918 attracted sympathy from those brigades protecting port towns and comprised predominantly of ex-seamen, and the police strike involved members of affected police brigades, notably on Merseyside. Unrest had simmered in the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, with the Municipal Employees Association (MEA) enrolling Metropolitan firemen in 1905 and agitating for improved working conditions for its members. The formation of the National Union of Corporation Workers in 1907 created a rival organisation with a firemen's branch poaching the MEA's members. By December 1913 the branch was recorded as having 1,100 members,

---

32 Desborough Mins, 5 Jun. 1919, 460.
34 The National Union of Sailors and Firemen predominantly represented these firemen until the service was professionalised in the late 1930s.
35 V. Bailey, 'The early history of the Fire Brigades Union', in idem (ed.), Forged in Fire: The History of the Fire Brigades Union (London, 1992), 10-11. The MEA was merged with other public unions to form the National Amalgamated Workers' Union in 1919.
36 A forerunner of the National Union of Public Employees.
the majority of whom were Metropolitan firemen. In November 1919 the branch was merged with a smaller provincial Firemen’s Trade Union, a friendly society serving private brigades, and renamed the Fire Brigades Union (FBU).

There was widespread municipal opposition to firemen receiving union representation. Professional brigades, notably those in Birmingham and Leicester, rejected their firemen’s pleas to join the FBU, establishing similar Representative Committees to those of the police. Birmingham Watch Committee regularly rejected pressure from both the FBU and the Amalgamated Society of Gas, Municipal and General Workers for improvements to firemen’s working conditions, specifically refusing to substitute the eight-hour shift system for continuous duty, although it did later accede to demands for pay and holiday leave parity with the police in 1919, and had instituted a fifteen-minute lunch break and relaxed attitudes towards smoking and other social activities by 1921.

Sympathetic councillors used stories of firemen dying on duty as evidence that the financial rewards were insufficient, warning that this could lead to difficulties in retention. This was recognised by Birmingham’s Chief Officer following nine resignations and one death in May and August 1915 alone. A Station Officer was killed in 1916 by a falling tank, leaving a widow and three orphans. Two further firemen died in a gas explosion at Nechells Gas Works in 1919. Although widows and orphans were protected somewhat by the Brigade’s independent pension scheme and its membership of

---

38 Bailey, ‘Early’, 17.
39 There was similar agitation for recognition in Stoke-on-Trent, Luton and Croydon, all with professional brigades, during the late 1920s: Blackstone, History, 378; BCA WC Mins, 4 May 1920, 40; BCA MS1303/44, Birmingham Fire Brigade General Orders [hereafter General Orders], 26 Aug. 1921, 92; 5 Dec. 1921, 95; LRO CM42/26, WC Mins, 3 Sep. 1920, 28; 24 Nov. 1920, 54; Fire, Dec. 1920, 121.
the contributory funds organised by professional associations, critics continued to lament the absence of national support for a highly dangerous occupation:

A policeman knows when he will finish duty. A fireman does not. The fireman's recreation consists of a walk up and down the Priory [the main road adjacent to Birmingham's central fire station]. A policeman is not fetched out of bed in the night. A fireman is, often after a hard day's work. The policeman has his own private home, and is not, like the fireman, always under the supervision of his department. On the whole ... the policeman's life is more desirable.

Hardening its attitude towards unionism after the police strike, Birmingham refused to recognise the FBU until 1940 when it had obtained the concession that there would be 'no use of the strike as a weapon.' Leicester Watch Committee similarly resisted attempted union infiltration, rejecting a request from the National Amalgamated Workers Union in 1920 to use the firemen's mess room for its meetings.

There was no fire strike in 1919 for a number of reasons. Central government's intransigent attitude towards the police strikers was an obvious deterrent. Birmingham Watch Committee's threat to instantly dismiss strikers was evidently more than just hot air following its actions in the police strike.

The diversity of the service's local organisation further compromised common action. The FBU itself was relatively weak, especially as other public sector unions continued to claim to represent firemen during the inter-war years, and largely excluded from the policy community until organisational standardisation in 1941. Professional organisations with national influence during the inter-war years, notably the Professional Fire Brigades Association and the National Fire Brigades Association, adopted 'no strike' policies following consultation with councillors, many of whom were honorary members through their close connections with the service. The intense discipline of fire brigades, with a much higher level of operational control than the police and a strong naval and military background, diluted the inclination towards strike action. Furthermore, public approbation of the

---

45 LRO CM42/26, WC Mins, 3 Sep. 1920, 28.
fireman was always contingent on loyal and heroic service to the community, and firemen were reluctant to compromise this.  48

This chapter explores the role that the rank-and-file played in the delivery of public ordering services, identifying the various skills and resources utilised in negotiating a degree of operational autonomy. Whilst both policemen and firemen exhibited levels of autonomy in making operational decisions, they were ultimately dependent for this on their senior officers and Watch Committee. The main strategies employed by such institutions in restricting operational decision-making within the rank-and-file were obstacles to the spread of co-ordinated trade unionism or collective bargaining within both services during the first two decades of the twentieth-century. The relative insularity of both services to wider industrial movements, the important role played by the police in controlling strikes from the 1910s49, the strict disciplinary control and the sheer demand for limited vacancies were key factors in the failure of trade unionism to mobilise widespread support. By exploring these factors over a period straddling four decades either side of 1900 it is intended to demonstrate continuity within the strategies employed by municipal authorities in maintaining operational control over the rank-and-file.

THE POLICE: DISCIPLINE AND PUNISH

The main resource involved in the administration of the police and fire services, and a fundamental obstacle to the success of the police strike, was strict discipline. The perceived and real threat of disciplinary action was a powerful counter to the rank-and-file’s independence. The extent of operational autonomy was constrained by rules and procedures installed by the Watch Committee and Chief Constable, through which they sought to control the known ‘rules of the game’ by demanding unwavering loyalty, obedience, fitness and self-regulation.50 Discipline was considered to be the

50 Orders and Regulations for the Government of the Leicester Police, appointed by the Watch Committee, under the provision of the Municipal Corporation Reform Act (Leicester, 1836); LRO DE5491/307, Major J. Hall-Dalwood, Bye-Laws, Rules and Regulations of the Borough of Leicester, Compiled for the Use of the Police (Leicester, 1911); BCA Bham Corp Docs B/1, Rules, Orders and Regulations of the Watch Committee of the Borough of Birmingham, for the Guidance of the Officers and Constables of the Police (Birmingham, 1843);
central feature of police 'government,' affecting 'the personal conduct of the individual and his relations with other members of the force, reward, promotion, offences, and punishment.' Discipline affected the daily lives of the rank-and-file and caused consternation amongst the Inspectors of Constabulary at the level of responsibility vested in watch committees. Complaints that watch committees restricted the level of discretion operated by chief constables in such matters were, however, part of a wider strategy employed by the Home Office during the 1920s in questioning the competence of non-county borough administration, rather than those county boroughs with populations over 100,000 who were deemed effective repositories of local power. Indeed, Home Office disciplinary policy from the 1910s favoured allowing chief constables to hear and determine all cases, with watch committees hearing appeals from offenders or providing appropriate co-ordination. These were strategies adopted in Birmingham and Leicester and both Watch Committees co-operated closely with their Chief Constables in determining the nature and punishment of disciplinary offences and in applying standard procedures.

By the 1910s neither Watch Committee had little direct influence on daily disciplinary and personnel operations. Both had deliberately withdrawn from internal administration and delegated substantial authority to their Chief Constables. They were uninterested in the idiosyncrasies of daily policing beyond ratifying the Chief Constable's punishments at their meetings. By withdrawing, the Chief Inspector of Constabulary noted, this reinforced, rather than undermined, the Watch Committee's supreme administrative authority:


51 HMIC Annual Report 1918-19, P.P. 1920 (91), XXII, 5.

52 This was part of wider policy shared by central government and academics during the 1930s in preferring larger units of local government based around either the conurbations or larger county boroughs, which were deemed more cost-effective and less resistant to central advice and regulation that non-county boroughs and district councils: W. A. Robson, 'The central domination of local government', Political Quarterly, IV (1933), 85-104; G. D. H. Cole, 'The future of local government', Political Quarterly, XII (1941), 405-18.

53 HMIC Annual Report 1919-20, P.P. 1921 (39), XVI, 3-4.
In matters of discipline and interior economy it may rightly be expected that executive Heads of Forces should cover that particular ground; but in matters of administrative policy, particularly relating to higher questions of a co-operative character, it seems advisable that Police Authorities should be more often directly represented and concerned as a whole.  

When officers were called before the Committee, often on the Chief Constable’s recommendation, the issue was deemed sufficiently important to warrant its attention. Impersonality reinforced civic authority. Unlike in smaller non-county boroughs, the Watch Committees’ members rarely interacted with the rank-and-file on a social or professional basis. Constables first attended their meetings after passing their probationary period and only with the Chief Constable’s approval. At the initial meeting constables swore their oath of allegiance to the force and the municipality. They rarely attended individually. Officers could, therefore, spend the majority of their careers without interacting with the Watch Committee beyond attending ceremonial functions, such as church parades and police band performances, or at the annual inspection.

The Watch Committee remained an overarching deterrent against improper behaviour throughout the inter-war years. With the power to fine and impose extra duties passing to the Chief Constable, the Watch Committee retained the authority to dismiss officers or over-turn the Chief Constable’s punishment. The latter was rare, with few officers daring to challenge the Chief Constable’s authority or face the daunting prospect of appearing before their social superiors in a Committee meeting room whose attention was focused on the individual officer. With the majority of Watch Committee members also serving as magistrates, officers were aware of their subordinate position within internal power relationships.
By the 1920s officers were more likely to come to the Watch Committee's attention for exceptional duty, notably through life saving, winning team competitions or long service. The Watch Committee preferred to reward respectable behaviour and educational attainment, rather than punish routine rule breaking. Birmingham Watch Committee awarded legal textbooks as prizes to officers achieving the highest marks in the annual promotion examinations as an incentive to others. Officers demonstrating zeal or efficiency were rewarded with pay increases. Presentations and commendations were an ideal public relations exercise that provided the Committee Chairman and Mayor the opportunity to make public speeches to civic dignitaries and the local press. Officers below the rank of Superintendent were themselves forbidden to talk with journalists, with the exception of the Charge Sergeant who supplied basic information on incidents. By linking itself directly with exceptional behaviour, the Watch Committee controlled the dissemination of information to the public and its subsequent reputation for efficient administration.

'Drinking on duty' was the main recorded offence within both Birmingham and Leicester Police between 1860 and 1939, though less so in Leicester during the 1930s (Table 6.1), and was the main reason for dismissal in both forces. Local councillors and officials bemoaned the inability of policemen to resist the temptations of having a quick drink in the cold and dark alleyways or public houses on their beats, often on the misjudged assumption that they would not be caught by their patrol inspector. Both Watch Committees took steps to eradicate intemperance, passing resolutions threatening strict punishment, revoking the licences of publicans caught serving constables, and

---

61 BCA WC Mins, 1 Feb. 1933, 25.
62 For example: LRO DE3831/270, Special Orders, 12 Oct. 1920, 357.
63 The Chairman and other civic dignitaries regularly attended the annual police sports day and other functions where they presented prizes and made flamboyant speeches praising the harmonious relationships between the police and municipality: BCA L42.2, Birmingham City Police E Division Athletic Club, Programme of the Annual Aquatic Sports (Birmingham, 1922); BCA LF42.2, Birmingham Police Sports; BCA WC Mins, 1 Aug. 1934, 64.
directing their chief constables to warn of the repercussions for drinking on duty. A spate of drink-related offences in Leicester in the 1890s, for example, led the Chief Constable to warn that 'the next man reported [for drinking on duty] without any regard to his length of service will most certainly go before the Watch Committee and most probably be dismissed from the service.'

The decline in drink-related offences during the inter-war years was less the consequence of increased temperance and more a reflection of increases in other offences, notably neglect and insubordination (Table 6.1), and the emergence of career-minded policemen. Neglect was linked with drunkenness in that it influenced inattention to duty, yet both forces adopted arbitrary definitions of the term 'neglect' and used it for any offence not neatly categorised. Such offences included failing to implement orders or attend crime scenes, allowing suspects to escape and improperly patrolling the beat. Constables were also punished for neglecting to attend or report fires on their beat.

Insubordination had been a persistent problem from the 1890s, particularly in Birmingham where it regularly exceeded twenty per cent. This long-term consistency led senior officers to bemoan the lack of respect from constables, blaming the influence of unionisation and the spread of social welfare within the service on such attitudes. In return, constables complained that particular officers singled them out for unfair treatment. Inspectors Choyce and Carson, for example, regularly complained of the attitude of Leicester's PC Bates, claiming that he was unreliable, rude and 'absolutely worthless as a Police Officer,' yet Inspectors Clarke and Faulkner found him 'most attentive, zealous and efficient in the performance of his duties.' PC Green, meanwhile, complained to Leicester Watch Committee twice that Inspector Shepherdson maintained a vendetta against him during the early 1930s. The influence of personalities within internal organisational and disciplinary relations could cloud the

---

influence of impartial and rational structural regulations. Thus, the human element in internal power
relations had far-reaching consequences for the access of individual constables to political resources.

Punctuality was also becoming a problem in Birmingham Police, accounting for 34.6 per cent of
'other' offences between 1920 and 1929 and an indication that the continued expansion of the city
boundaries and the growth in traffic congestion adversely affected time keeping. From 1900 any
constable more than one minute late for duty in Leicester was immediately fined one day’s pay by the
Chief Constable. Persistent latecomers were forced to resign. The majority of these offences could
be sufficiently addressed internally without resorting to external judgement from the Watch
Committee. This relationship suited both the Watch Committee and Chief Constable, the latter eager to
extend his responsibilities and exert authority over the rank-and-file.

Constables were given the opportunity to explain their actions for every misdemeanour and often
obtained the benefit of the doubt from senior officers. More often this was the case in Birmingham
than in Leicester. Both forces used verbal punishments, cautioning or reprimanding constables for
minor offences, although in Leicester cautions declined during the 1930s in favour of more draconian
measures (Table 6.2). The Watch Committee Chairman often reprimanded those constables brought to
his attention. Reprimands warned constables against their future conduct and reinforced the
Committee’s dominance within the intra-local relationship as well as the Chairman’s social and
administrative superiority. The recording of admonishments in the Watch Committee’s minute book
suggests that the public disciplining of constables by urban elites was an important tool for
demonstrating the accountability of the police to the Watch Committee amid claims that the constable
was operationally independent, accountable solely to the law.

[hereafter Defaulters].
73 LRO CM42/19, WC Mins, 16 Oct. 1900, 227.
75 LRO CM42/20, WC Mins, 2 Dec. 1902, 78; CM42/21, 15 May 1906, 160; CM42/22, WC Mins, 11 May 1909,
1923, 251; CM42/30, WC Mins, 15 May 1934, 248.
Politics (London, 1982), 106.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Absent from duty</th>
<th>Drinking on duty</th>
<th>Neglect of duty</th>
<th>Insubordination or insolence</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>Leicester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860-69</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870-79</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>62.7</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880-89</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>29.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890-99</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900-09</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910-19</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-29</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-39</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>34.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dismissal was a constant threat in both forces though used infrequently in Birmingham until the 1890s (Table 6.2). Both forces preferred ‘asking’ constables to resign. This meant that pensionable contributions were returned to the officer with less of a social stigma attached. Being ‘asked to resign’ was, however, more of an obligation than a request. Dismissal was a last resort, the culmination of a number of offences, or the inevitable consequence of a major breach of discipline, notably theft, violence and improper sexual activity. Violence, both verbal and physical, towards the public was particularly frowned upon with both Watch Committees keen to maintain public consent for their forces. Evidence given by respected members of the public in disciplinary cases was often accepted at face value. Most constables were dismissed for undermining the strict moral code with cases of bigamy, prostitution, indecent exposure and infidelity all receiving such punishment. Constables could not marry without the Chief Constable’s consent and senior officers investigated the suitability of prospective wives.

Financial punishments, which included pay cuts, reduced rank (a predominantly financial punishment) and fines were prevalent in both forces. The average fine of one day’s pay was deemed both a sufficient punishment and a deterrent against further offences. Both Watch Committees devolved authority for imposing small fines to their Chief Constable by the 1900s, retaining the power to impose larger fines of a week’s wages or more. This virtually absolved the Watch Committee of all responsibility for minor fines.


Constables had no right to appeal a financial punishment until 1943.
### Table 6.2 Police Punishments in Birmingham and Leicester (%), 1860-1939

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Dismissed or Asked to Resign</th>
<th>Cautioned or Reprimanded</th>
<th>Explained or Not Proven</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860-69</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870-79</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880-89</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890-99</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900-09</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910-19</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>35.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-29</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-39</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>86.3</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: As Table 6.1.
Chief constables in Birmingham and Leicester, notably Charles Rafter, Cecil Moriarty and Oswald Cole, continued to hold strict attitudes towards discipline into the inter-war years, with the latter preferring to impose blanket fines of one or two days' pay. Probationers had to be moulded into respectable constables from their appointment with rigorous physical and mental training. Moriarty borrowed many of the physical training techniques of the Fire Brigade and advocated the extension of drill and gymnastics into training to create 'order, regularity and efficient obedience.'\textsuperscript{81} Discipline was the foundation of every constable's career, augmented by integrity, 'a reasonable educational standard,' and 'sound physique.'\textsuperscript{82} The real and perceived threat of punishment, whether verbal, financial or instant dismissal, was a powerful organisational resource utilised by the Chief Constable, with the supreme consent and co-operation of the Watch Committee, in maintaining operational control over the rank-and-file, and deterring against the effective mobilisation of both forces in the aftermath of the First World War.

**POLICE WORK AND SKILLS**

The beat was 'the cornerstone' of urban policing between the 1870s and 1930s.\textsuperscript{83} Despite reforms to the nature of police practice, including the introduction of new technologies and motorisation,\textsuperscript{84} and widespread complaints at the monotony of routine beat work, English and Welsh borough constables with less than ten years' experience still spent over eighty per cent of their career walking the beat during the 1940s. Those with more than ten years' experience also spent approximately half their working lives on similar duties.\textsuperscript{85} The nature of modern beat policing gave the constable unprecedented access to operational resources, notably the ability to adopt discretion in dealing with public order offences and misdemeanours.\textsuperscript{86} Constables were expected to have an extensive theoretical and working knowledge of the law, and an understanding of the specifically local characteristics of its


\textsuperscript{82} LRO 10D58/192, Leicester Annual Police Report 1929, 6.


\textsuperscript{84} F. Tarry, 'Mechanization as an aid to police duties', \textit{Police Journal}, VI, 2 (1933), 210-35.


\textsuperscript{86} For example: LRO DE3831/268, Special Orders, 14 Sep. 1907, 25-6.
The interpretation of legal knowledge was pivotal in both cities by the 1900s, particularly with the expanded scope of police work and the necessity for new recruits to absorb information relating to new laws and regulatory mechanisms. Training for beat patrol was a central component for all probationary constables in Birmingham and Leicester, who were attached to an experienced officer to obtain experience of 'the actual work ... on the beat.'

Birmingham's Police Training School at Digbeth, opened in 1913, emphasised the combination of physical and mental education necessary to prepare constables for the rigours of modern police work. The success of the school influenced nearby forces, including Leicester, to establish weekly classes during the 1920s to intensively train new recruits, including those from neighbouring forces.

The beat reinforced the police presence in the city and underlined the operational authority of senior officers. Patrol inspectors, sergeants and superintendents regularly rendezvoused with constables at fixed meeting points to impart orders or receive reports. This was reinforced through the provision of a network of branch stations, police boxes and other fixed meeting points to facilitate ease of contact and extend the force's disciplinary authority into the various districts of the expanded city.

Senior officers were also provided with bicycles and tram allowances, in Leicester and Birmingham respectively, to allow them to maintain surveillance of constables in the suburbs from the 1910s. Failure to meet a senior officer at the designated time and meeting point was a serious offence and few excuses were accepted. This limited the constable's operational autonomy and flexibility, who complained that he often had to make his meeting point at the expense of the quality of his work.

---

87 Moriarty, 'Making', 5-6.
88 Ibid.
90 LRO DE3831/271, Special Orders, 2 May 1921, 47.
91 See Chapter 7, 225-38.
93 Klein, Invisible, 92-5.
Policemen were, therefore, 'service deliverers', with municipal and central government responsible for 'steering rather than rowing'. Service delivery was a diverse, multi-faceted process that demanded a high level of legal and administrative knowledge and a propensity for operational decision-making within a narrow framework of autonomy delineated by senior officers and governmental institutions.

The skills, resources and attitudes of the rank-and-file influenced 'operational' decision-making, yet such decisions overlapped with wider 'policy' questions. The institutions responsible for policy-making could influence 'operational matters' through various interactive strategies designed to create a responsive and malleable force. Recent research has sought to put 'people back into networks,' yet the structures of policy formulation and implementation within modern policing evidently placed restrictions on the level of constabulary independence. The process of regular surveillance, both on and off beat duty, and a selective recruitment process empowered senior officers and the Watch Committee to reinforce their operational control over the rank-and-file.

Indeed, the skills and resources brought to the service by new recruits varied over time. One such strategy adopted involved recruiting from particular social groups; another enforced age and physical limits. The average age for recruits fell during the period, from 24-25 in the last quarter of the nineteenth-century to 23 in Birmingham and to 21 in Leicester during the inter-war years (Table 6.3). Similarly, the average height of new recruits rose from between 5'8" and 5'10" in the 1860s and 1870s to between 5'10" and 6'0" between the 1900s and 1930s. New recruits were getting younger, taller and fitter, following trends that insisted on demanding physical characteristics. Younger recruits were deemed more malleable and susceptible to training as well as having a longer career life. Fitter recruits were more suited to the physical rigours of beat duty. Birmingham’s Chief Constable, mirroring the experience in the Metropolitan Police, also preferred to recruit from outside the city on the assumption

---

98 Moriarty, 'Making', 4.
that outsiders were less corruptible to existing social and business relations, including trade union membership, and had the propensity to display fair and courteous conduct towards local ratepayers and civic elites. 99 Leicester Police did not actively discourage local applications, although high industrial wages and low unemployment restricted the proportion of locally recruited constables to periods of local depression, as in the early 1900s.

| Table 6.3 Average Age and Height of Police Recruits, 1860-1939 |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                                | 1860-79         | 1880-99         | 1900-19         | 1920-39         |
| Age    | Height | Age    | Height | Age    | Height | Age    | Height |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| **Birmingham**                  |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| 25    | 5'8"   | 24    | 5'10"  | 23    | 5'10"  | 23    | -     |
| **Leicester**                   |                 |                 |                 |                 |
| 25    | 5'10"  | 25    | 5'10"  | 24    | -      | 21    | 6'0"  |


The majority of recruits had existing employment histories. Apart from former police officers in other forces who accounted for a declining proportion between 1850 and 1939 (Table 6.4), all recruits had experienced prior employment. Shpayer-Makov claims that police work 'demanded no special skill or work experience,' although it is evident that authorities had preferred skills, which shifted between the two periods but remained committed to physical fitness and youthfulness. 100 From 1850 to 1899 both forces preferred to recruit policemen from the disparate group of unskilled labourers. A large proportion of applicants simply listed their previous trade as 'labourer' on the application form. This category consisted of a large proportion of agricultural workers, who were deemed to be hard-working, mentally and physically strong, and amenable to strict discipline. 101 Birmingham and Leicester recruited 36.7 and 21.6 per cent of their recruits respectively from this category between 1850 and 1899. Leicester, however, appointed similar proportions of skilled industrial workers (23.0 per cent) and former soldiers (16.3 per cent). Though it was not a requirement for a Victorian policeman to have military experience, Leicester was not unique in actively recruiting former soldiers, and recruited a further 19.4 per cent during the first four decades of the twentieth-century. The police was an attractive career for former soldiers accustomed to the strict discipline of a hierarchical organisation and served

99 Ibid, 3; Shpayer-Makov, 'Portrait', 140-1.

100 Shpayer-Makov, 'Portrait', 142.

to reinforce the authoritarian hierarchical structure and the relationship of servility between the rank-and-file and senior officers. 102

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade</th>
<th>Birmingham</th>
<th>Leicester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1850-99</td>
<td>1900-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourers</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled Industrial</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Trades</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railway &amp; Transport</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coal / Metal Trades</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building &amp; Decorating</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerks / Administrative</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Work</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policeman</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant Sea Service</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>1310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Size of Force</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>1222</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: As Table 6.3.

Between 1860 and 1939 over 21 per cent of recruits to Leicester Police were skilled industrial workers; in Birmingham the figure was over 16 per cent. 104 Birmingham Police recruited electroplaters, engravers, watchmakers, glasscutters, gunsmiths, thimble makers and jewellers, reflecting the city's diverse manufacturing base. Leicester too recruited from its established industrial base with a high proportion of framework knitters, elastic weavers and boot and shoe makers from 1850 to 1899, and with the recruitment of platelayers, engineers and mechanics reflecting the diversification of the local economy during the first four decades of the twentieth-century. Policing offered job security, with improved real wage rates by the 1920s (Appendix D) and a guaranteed pension and was attractive to

102 Ibid, 272-3.

103 Although similar data exists for other urban forces the presence of high levels of unaccounted data, ranging between 14.1 and 48.1 per cent, precludes from comparative analysis: Ibid, 269-86; Emsley, English Police, 194-5, 262-8.

104 Artisans were poorly represented in the Metropolitan Police, which was more heavily reliant on 'traditional trades' such as butchers, bakers, blacksmiths and masons, than any other city: Shpayer-Makov, 'Portrait', 145-6.
skilled tradesmen, particularly during periods of depression. The attractions of a career in the police were noted by other industrial workers, with both forces attracting a steady proportion, ranging between five and twelve per cent, of recruits from 'traditional trades,' the coal and metal trades, and the railways and transport industries.

In recruiting from a diverse industrial and socio-economic base, both forces consisted of policemen with a range of transferable skills. In the twentieth-century the number of 'labourers' declined and were gradually replaced by white-collar clerks attracted by the job security and promotion prospects. This indicated a shift in emphasis partly as a consequence of an increasing burden of administrative work and, consequently, demands for higher levels of educational attainment. Recruitment of clerks increased appreciably from 4.4 to 16.3 per cent in Birmingham and from 1.1 to 17.5 per cent in Leicester. Such skills were shaped by the institutional procedures and rigours of inspection and surveillance. The institutionalisation of individuals enabled skills to be selectively directed towards specific duties, including beat patrol, administrative work or detection. Although the skills and characteristics of police recruits altered over time, that they remained subject to similar normative strategies indicated continuity between senior officers and Watch Committee members in operational and disciplinary relations.

SEAMAN OR TRADER?

If Birmingham and Leicester Police shared common assumptions about the necessary skills for conducting a successful career, their Fire Brigades could not have held more contrasting perspectives. Birmingham, along with the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, deemed ex-seamen to be the most suitable candidates, its Chief Officer declaring in 1920 that sailors 'are more apt to the discipline and confinement of the service.' Between 1880 and 1920 approximately half of all new firemen were recruited from the Royal Navy because it was felt that the institutional controls and disciplinary procedures prevalent within the two services overlapped.

---

105 Between 1890 and 1910 the percentage of clerks within the Metropolitan Police increased by nearly 300 per cent: Shpayer-Makov, 'Portrait', 143-4; BCA WC Mins, 28 Nov. 1934; 10 May 1935; 3 Mar. 1937; 28 Jul. 1937; 2 Mar. 1939.

106 *Fire & Water*, Sep. 1893, 105; *Report of the Committee on the Hours, Pay, and Conditions of Service of Firemen in Professional Fire Brigades in Great Britain, Minutes of Evidence* [hereafter Middlebrook Mins], 18
The other half of Birmingham's recruits had experience as tradesmen, representing both the 'skilled industrial' and 'traditional trades' categories, including engineers, motor mechanics, bricklayers, stokers, blacksmiths, butchers and grocers. By interacting with highly disciplined and motivated former sailors, such workers were expected to adapt their behaviour to their new organisational environment and normalise their approach towards discipline and service. John Bentley, for example, was a qualified wireless engineer. He commenced his own jobbing business in 1928, but was forced to change his career 'owing to trade depression,' becoming a fire engine driver in 1934.107 William Poulson, a self-employed motor mechanic from Dudley, was appointed Brigade Mechanic in 1935.108 Others joined the Brigade to improve their financial and social position, including Alfred Biddle, a warehouseman from Dudley, Arthur Bromwich, a municipal tram driver, and Albert Coombs, a railway labourer from Nuneaton.109 The diverse knowledge-base of recruits underpinned discourses of efficient fire protection, yet this was regulated by the recruitment of a significant proportion of men readily trained in the harsh conditions of service who reinforced the existing administrative and operational authority of the Watch Committee and Chief Fire Officer through unwavering obedience.

Leicester Fire Brigade did not share Birmingham's proclivity towards seamen. Its chief officers preferred to recruit locally skilled industrial workers between the ages of 21 and 25 from 1912 onwards.110 Such a strategy did not limit the number of applications, since there were 109 applications for six positions in 1909 alone and the Brigade maintained a list of candidates for future vacancies.111 Demand for limited vacancies did not necessarily challenge the security or authority of the skilled
career fireman. Joiners, masons, roofers and plumbers, for example, were used to ladder and roof work, and engineers understood the design of modern buildings. 112 The creation of complex structures demanded a high level of scientific and engineering knowledge from the fireman who was expected to confine the outbreak, protect contiguous property, prevent the loss of life, centralise the fire and concentrate resources on its epicentre. 113 Technical and practical knowledge, as well as discipline and courage, were skills that could not be drilled into recruits. The provision of drill and training in both Birmingham and Leicester from the 1890s enabled recruits to channel their existing skills into specific areas of fire prevention, yet senior officers expected recruits to have the requisite skills on their appointment. 114 This rendered it difficult for senior officers to dispense with the services of those with specialist knowledge, such as of hydraulics or mechanics, who invariably undertook routine maintenance work. 115

Discipline was pivotal to a fire brigade’s work. Leading firemen deemed that discipline should encapsulate 'obedience, responsibility, restraint, control, self-effacement, and even sacrifice in the individual, and good order, rule, and well directed effort in the collective body.' 116 Individual sacrifice and teamwork were central to the working of a professional fire brigade. Firemen were not individuals. They were, rather, components of a machine. If a component failed during an incident the consequences, as in Leicester’s Wimbledon Street fire in 1889, could be far-reaching. 117 The individuality of police work contributed to the Digbeth fire disaster of 1878 with the Police Brigade’s failure to mobilise effectively as a team in rescuing the trapped family. 118 This was further compounded by the absence of clearly delineated channels of orders and discipline, which were pivotal co-ordinating features of modern fire-fighting. Unlike policemen, firemen rarely worked or lived alone, with single firemen living in barracks attached to the fire station. They socialised together, joined brigade recreation societies, and were expected to trust each other implicitly. Firemen were

112 Fire & Water, Apr. 1901, 27.
114 BCA MS1303/38, Annual Fire Brigade Report 1903, 6-7; LRO CM42/15, WC Mins, 15 Jan. 1889.
116 Fire, Dec. 1923, 152.
117 See Chapter 4, 112-3.
118 See Chapter 1, 18-19.
products of their environment and the structural constraints rigidly enforced on their individuality. Strict discipline was accepted as an inevitable consequence of the organisational nature of fire-fighting, and the rank-and-file rarely challenged the orders of senior officers in the operation of their duties.

The majority of disciplinary offences in both Brigades were dealt with internally. Birmingham's Chief Officer dealt with over ninety per cent of all reported cases between 1880 and 1939.\(^\text{119}\) Birmingham Fire Brigade experienced similar types of offences as the Police, albeit with different emphases. 'Drinking on duty', for example, was never a major concern and accounted for a declining proportion of offences between 1880 and 1929 from 7.1 to 0.4 per cent (Table 6.5). To deter others, however, the Chief Officer made examples of those caught incapacitated through drink. Fireman Edwards, for example, was fined four days' pay with one months' leave stopped in March 1889; Fireman Taylor was severely reprimanded and reduced in rank; and Fireman Smith 'ordered to resign' whilst drunk and in charge of a district station in 1891.\(^\text{120}\) Neglect accounted for a growing proportion of offences, peaking at 65.5 per cent in the 1930s. Insubordination, although accounting for between 16.5 and 19.7 per cent of offences from 1890 to 1919, was never a major concern owing to the great emphasis placed on loyalty and respect to senior officers. Those deemed insubordinate were invariably treated strictly, with dismissal a recurring threat.

\[\text{Table 6.5 Birmingham Fire Brigade Offences (%), 1880-1939}\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Absent From Duty</th>
<th>Drinking on Duty</th>
<th>Neglect of Duty</th>
<th>Insubordination or Insolence</th>
<th>Late / 'Missing the Machine'</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1880-89</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890-99</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>58.4</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900-09</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910-19</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-29</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-39</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BCA MS1303/76, Birmingham Fire Brigade Defaulters' Book.

Punctuality was a serious problem in Birmingham. 'Missing the machine', which referred to firemen who failed to attend a fire call with the engine, accounted for 42.8 per cent of all offences throughout

\(^{119}\) The few cases that were reported to the Fire Brigade Sub-Committee for action concerned 'serious' offences.

\(^{120}\) BCA MS1303/41, General Orders, 27 Mar. 1889, 14; 15 Apr. 1891, 31; 25 Sep. 1891, 35.
the period (Table 6.5). Birmingham Fire Brigade set high standards for responding to fire alarms, regularly testing the response rates of its engines and men, and altering the environment in which firemen lived and worked to maximise turn-out times. Stations were designed with the firemen's accommodation and mess rooms located either adjacent or above the engine room, the latter connected by sliding poles during the 1900s. Strategically located electric bells sounded alarms that demanded an immediate response, and strict rules governed a fireman's absence from the station.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial</th>
<th>Dismissed or Asked to Resign</th>
<th>Cautioned or Reprimanded</th>
<th>Explained or Not Proven</th>
<th>Leave Stopped</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1880-89</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890-99</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900-09</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910-19</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-29</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-39</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source and Sample: As Table 6.5.

This emphasis on punctuality inevitably meant that firemen were punished for minor infringements. Upon its inception, Birmingham Fire Brigade punished those who 'missed the machine' with cautions or stopping leave. Such admonishments remained important sanctions between 1880 and 1939 (Table 6.6). Fireman Bellhouse was reported 37 times between 1879 and 1904, 64.9 per cent of which were for either 'missing the machine' or lateness. Fireman Jones was reported thirty times between 1879 and 1885, 56.7 per cent of which were for similar offences. Chief Officer Tozer complained in 1880 that 37 reports had been made that year for poor punctuality and warned that future cases would result

121 BCA MS1303/27, Annual Fire Brigade Report 1926, 7.
122 Fire & Water, Apr. 1904, 27; May 1912, 47.
123 LRO 10D58/173, Leicester Fire Brigade General Order Book, 3 Jul. 1911, 3; 5 Aug. 1914, 12; Middlebrook Mins, 18 Feb. 1920, 42.
in an automatic fine. By the 1890s a more elaborate system of reprimands, fines and extra duty had been implemented to deter latecomers.

Although similar detailed evidence does not exist for Leicester Fire Brigade, a similar proportion of disciplinary offences were addressed internally. The infrequent reporting of cases to the Fire Brigade Sub-Committee reflected a similar relationship as that between the Watch Committee and Chief Constable in the former's withdrawal from disciplinary procedures. For example, in September 1920 Chief Officer Neal reported that he had suspended Fireman Webb for spreading a false report accusing him of receiving a personal payment for attending a fire outside the city boundaries. The Sub-Committee accepted Neal's report after questioning Webb and asked him to resign. In April 1921 Firemen Martin and Solomon were reprimanded by the Chairman for failing to discover a fire whilst on salvage duty. In January 1931 Fireman Wales was reported for failing to respond to an early morning fire call. The Second Officer complained that he had had 'been compelled to reprimand [Wales] for neglect' on several occasions. The Sub-Committee severely cautioned Wales, fined him two shillings per week and directed the Chief Officer to supervise his attendance.

The Fire Brigade Sub-Committee, through the influence of the Watch Committee, preferred to interact with the rank-and-file by celebrating exemplary conduct or long service. Birmingham and Leicester instituted schemes for awarding good conduct chevrons or stripes and incremental pay increases to reward 'exceptional' officers with 'a clear record for good conduct.' The wearing of chevrons on the left sleeve of a fireman's uniform was a public demonstration of the expectations held by senior officers and the Sub-Committee. Medals were awarded by both the Sub-Committee and professional

125 BCA MS1303/40, General Orders, 24 Aug. 1880, 71; 13 Dec. 1880, 78.
126 BCA MS1303/41, General Orders, 9 Apr. 1888, 8; BCA MS1303/76, FB Defaulters.
127 LRO 10D58/172, FBSC Mins, 3 Sep. 1920, 73.
128 LRO CM42/26, FBSC Mins, 27 Apr. 1921, 94-5. Martin was later asked to resign for gross insubordination, and Solomon dismissed for an irregularity: LRO 10D58/172, FBSC Mins, 31 Oct. 1923, 120; 25 Nov. 1925, 162.
associations to those who had completed long service.\textsuperscript{131} Public consent and legitimacy was further reinforced with the award of gratuities to individual firemen for rendering first-aid assistance, stopping runaway horses and rescuing people from fires.\textsuperscript{132} The public was keen to celebrate the exemplary conduct of its public servants wherever possible, and firemen were often placed on a pedestal above all others. Bravery and gallantry were qualities revered within Victorian and Edwardian consciousness, and such activities were reported on in the local press or minute books as a reflection of the high quality of local services. The municipal fire brigade was a standard-bearer of civic pride. Locally funded, it proved to be an organisation resilient to overt criticism and dedicated to selfless service, as well as the manifestation of a progressive municipal culture.

If constables were subject to steady regulatory control during the operation of their duties, firemen were subject to permanent surveillance. There was little scope for discretion owing to the collective nature of fire-fighting and the high standards of civility and trust expected in their service to the community. Discipline was deemed to be ‘an asset’ in the modern fire service and was a major obstacle to the spread of unionism throughout provincial brigades.\textsuperscript{133} Attitudes towards the skills and resources possessed by firemen differed between the two cities, yet the characteristics of discipline, obedience, loyalty and comradeship linked both together. Regardless of their previous employment skills, firemen were also increasingly expected from the 1900s to be knowledgeable about building construction and aware of the dangers posed by chemicals and electricity.\textsuperscript{134} The role of the fireman, therefore, demanded a similar inclination to learn a range of technical skills as to expectations for constables to be increasingly aware of their interpretation of legal and administrative knowledge. The balance between knowledge and discipline influenced the maintenance of unequal power relationships between the rank-and-file and senior officers. Although the rank-and-file had access to a range of informational resources, not least the skills inherited from previous occupations and their labour power,

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{131} This often consisted of twenty years or longer: MS1303/39, Annual Fire Brigade Report 1911, 7; NFBU Annual Report 1924, 40.
\textsuperscript{132} BCA MS1303/38, Annual Fire Brigade Report 1889, 6; Annual Fire Brigade Report 1895, 8; Annual Fire Brigade Report 1902, 4; Annual Fire Brigade Report 1904, 8; BCA MS1303/76, Defaulters’ Book 1879-1917; LRO CM 42/26, WC Mins, 12 Apr. 1922, 175.
\textsuperscript{134} City of Birmingham Fire Brigade, Rules and Regulations, Conditions of Service and Hints on Life Saving (Birmingham, 1903), 12, 36-8.
\end{footnotesize}
the organisational characteristics of both services constrained their autonomy and reinforced their subservience to dominant structures of authority and disciplinary control.

OPERATIONAL (IN)DEPENDENCE

Policemen and firemen shared many common characteristics. Both were subject to strict disciplinary codes and rigorous training and were increasingly expected to have more than a general knowledge in the application of the law and science to their duties. By the 1930s they were qualified in, amongst other areas, criminal law, local government and fire engineering. The fireman and policeman were also the handymen of the general public, responsible for a variety of duties other than fighting fires or preventing and detecting crime. The fireman, for example, helped at road traffic accidents, performed first-aid, cleaned chemical spillages and rescued trapped animals. In 1909 Birmingham Police made 34,921 inspections of licensed premises; 1,760 inspections of theatres and music halls; removed 3,703 stray dogs from the streets; returned 1,545 lost children to their parents; reported on 4,829 insecure premises; licensed 971 premises for the storage of explosives; and deposited 5,147 items in the lost property office. During the inter-war years constables increasingly regulated traffic flow and illegal parking.

Where the fireman and policeman differed was in the field of operational independence. The doctrine of constabulary independence, promoted by the Home Office from the 1920s, legitimised an expansion in the level of discretion within the prevention and detection of crime. The permanence of a hierarchical structure, however, restricted a constable's practical autonomy. The beat constable in particular was subject to the control of senior officers. Meanwhile, interaction and policy negotiation between the Watch Committee and Chief Constable extended into the regulation of the rank-and-file with the former remaining a pivotal, yet aloof, member of service delivery.

The fireman had very little operational autonomy owing to the unique teamwork skills demanded for fire-fighting. Paradoxically this restricted the Fire Brigade Sub-Committee's control over operational

policy. The fireman was subject to control and regulation from the Chief Fire Officer or a designated senior officer. Whilst the Fire Brigade Sub-Committee was available to reinforce hierarchical autonomy, as the Watch Committee did with the Police in both cities, it was rarely called upon due to the intensity of internal disciplinary control.

The rise in industrial activity preceding and immediately following the First World War was inextricably linked with frustrations in both services at the lack of operational independence. The failure of firemen to mobilise and strike in 1918 owed much to the strict disciplinary regulations maintained by senior officers which, coupled with entrenched Watch Committee opposition to unionism, restricted the growth of the FBU before the Second World War and led, ultimately, to the emergence of militant unionism during the 1950s.¹³⁸ That NUPPO managed to mobilise support in 1918, however disjointed, indicated the greater level of operational autonomy practiced by constables. Its failure to mobilise collective support nationally, or even locally in the case of Birmingham, however, reflected the precarious nature of the doctrine of constabulary independence before it obtained official support in the 1920s and 1930s. Notwithstanding this, the abolishment of NUPPO in 1919 restricted constabulary discretion to the institutional constraints and interactions of the police policy community during the inter-war years.

Central and local government were loath to allow policemen to establish and join a trade union not least due to the important role that the police and the special constabulary played in controlling pickets and allowing voluntary labour to enter and leave the factory or coalmine after 1918. The reassertion of governmental control over the service during the early 1920s, obtained in return for improved wages and national representation through the Police Federation, was underlined in the assistance provided by provincial forces during the ‘General Strike’ in 1926. Despite the Home Office devising a centrally initiated scheme of mutual assistance during emergencies, Birmingham Police voluntarily loaned a contingent of men to Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Constabulary to police their coalfields, without seeking Home Office sanction. Such men had the same legal powers of arrest whether based in their home district or otherwise. Leicester’s Chief Constable, meanwhile, was pleased to comment in his annual report that, with the exception of the deployment of men to perform strike duties at

Leicestershire's coalfields, "... the General Strike passed off without a single incident requiring police action."\textsuperscript{139}

Such co-ordination of local industrial disputes was an important feature of inter-war policing. Chief constables, in particular, were responsive to Home Office directives to bring strikes under control. Although this has been identified as further evidence of the dislocation of local authorities from the decision-making process and the triumph of the doctrine of constabulary independence\textsuperscript{140}, that the Home Office could expect the support, both tacit and explicit, of both Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees in dealing with industrial protest, particularly within the police service itself, served to underline the interdependency of operational decision-making. This interdependency was, as shall be explored in Chapter 7, further reinforced in the creation and modification of urban networks to extend control over the rank-and-file's use of space and respond to changes in land use.

The frustrations shared by policemen and firemen alike in the immediate aftermath of the First World War contributed to an improvement in pay and working conditions, yet served to reinforce the determination of senior officers and the Watch Committee to maintain close surveillance over their appointment, discipline and responsibilities. The latter's gradual withdrawal from disciplinary regulations, which was largely complete by the 1920s, was not the consequence of industrial unrest, but was rather a practical response to the increasing burden of 'police' administration since the last quarter of the nineteenth-century. Yet the Watch Committee remained an overarching deterrent against excessive rule-breaking and, certainly in the larger and more prestigious county boroughs, continued to exert an enduring influence over internal power relationships.


\textsuperscript{140} Weinberger, \textit{Keeping}, 211-4.
INFORMATIONAL RESOURCES AND URBAN NETWORKS

Urban networks were created in the nineteenth-century to assist the circulation and regulation of political and economic resources within the urban system. For example, the structure of businesses and creation of new markets influenced the circulation of capital, credit and profits. Furthermore, central government’s desire to collect and disseminate information on certain groups, activities and processes within urban society necessitated the construction of networks based around regulatory institutions, such as town councils, poor law workhouses and boards of guardians. Information was a central resource in the creation of ‘the regulatory state’ and surveillance of civil society. Beginning in the 1830s and 1840s, the accumulation of information was incorporated within the structure of municipal government to create ‘knowledgeable communities’. Such knowledge was created, modified and disseminated through locally determined networks, including meetings, the recording of minutes and the circulation of reports and statistical returns within the local press.

Municipal knowledge created an environment to pursue ‘local solutions to local problems, locally identified’. Networks of local information enabled municipalities to pursue distinctive administrative strategies which, whilst responding to central policy directives, involved independent interpretation and

implementation. The collection and dissemination of statistics, including annual criminal and fire returns, was part of a wider civic process involving the collation of statistical information on a variety of services, beginning with public health reform during the 1840s and extended into the valuation of land and property, the publication of infant mortality rates, and housing completions by the end of the nineteenth-century.

Information was a local resource, and the Home Office depended on the municipality for its access to such data in the police and fire services. Victorian and Edwardian statisticians attempted to measure a variety of socio-economic aspects of urban development, heavily influenced by national developments with the census and civil registration during the first-half of the nineteenth-century. This was evident in the provinces with the establishment of local statistical societies from the second-half of the eighteenth-century, including the Birmingham Educational Statistical Society (1838), and the Manchester and Liverpool Statistical Societies (1833 and 1838 respectively). Provincial scientific and statistical culture was, therefore, widespread by the 1830s and 1840s, and the increasing sophistication and specialisation of science contributed to the rise in statistical interest and pressures for social reform.

Networks were central to urban development between the last quarter of the nineteenth-century and the late 1930s. Urban expansion demanded the regulation of socio-economic practices and dispersal of information. Networks were shaped by technological change, with the creation of cheap and efficient

---


communication systems during the mid-nineteenth-century assisting both inter- and intra-urban communications. Crucially, networks and the institutions responsible for their maintenance were not homogeneous entities, but were a combination of complex interactions and relationships. For example, the railway, canals and penny post linked industrial cities together, facilitating an ease of access to information not experienced before the 1830s and 1840s, whilst similarly merging economic and political resources. Furthermore, the diffusion of tramway lines and the telegraph from the 1870s extended municipal regulation within expanding districts, linking the centre with its suburbs through ‘urban pathways’, and enabling industrial investment on the cheaper outlying land without restricting access to transport routes and markets. If technology encouraged economic growth it also facilitated the development of regulatory networks to maintain economic power, demonstrating the interdependency of economic and political practices.

This chapter will explore the networks through which information on urban public order was collated, circulated and regulated in Birmingham and Leicester. In particular the interaction between national and municipal sources of information will be explored through the creation, expansion and modification of spatial networks and the collection and diffusion of statistical data. It is not a study of criminal justice or fire prevention policy. Numerous studies have assessed the role of statistics in reflecting the nature of criminal activity within a local and national context, and this chapter does not intend to continue this trend. Rather, statistics are analysed as a resource reflecting the politics of municipal administration and the increasing expertise of chief officials in exploiting them.

INFORMATION AND NETWORKS

URBAN NETWORKS

Urban networks were manifested through a variety of forms. In the political context, they were linkages between and within governmental institutions and at another level reflected central-local dialogues. They were also structures demonstrating the circulation of administrative and operational power throughout the urban landscape. Urban networks were institutional and extra-institutional in character and were evidently influenced by political, economic and socio-cultural factors, including class and religion. The close relationship between the Town Council and non-conformist chapel in both Birmingham and Leicester during the last quarter of the nineteenth-century, for example, culminated in the framing of municipal strategies in terms of their moral benefits and financial rewards to urban society.

Urban networks were the conduits through which municipal and national institutional relationships were negotiated. As a linking process between governmental institutions and the public, networks could be spatial or non-spatial, and discretionary or prescriptive. They could also be locally initiated or centrally determined. Consequently networks were multi-functional and dependent on individual interpretation. The construction of spatial networks, notably police and fire stations, was received differently by the professions and different sections of society. The collation and publication of rising annual crime and fire statistics, moreover, could be interpreted as a failure of civic leadership, administrative mismanagement, or a demand for additional resources and their effective deployment.

The municipal and national institutions responsible for the administration of the police and fire services exploited available networks to fulfil a variety of purposes. Networks established and reinforced

---

17 Networks have also been referred to as 'connections' between municipalities across national and international boundaries: P-Y. Saunier, 'Taking up the bet on connections: a municipal contribution', Contemporary European History, XI, 4 (2002), 512.
authority, as in the provision of stations in previously unprotected districts. Yet they also challenged
the existing authority of municipal and national institutions. Chief officers used their annual reports
and statistical compilations to challenge the Watch Committee’s authority as the leading administrative
expert and demand additional resources to protect hitherto under-protected districts. Nevertheless,
urban networks were, first and foremost, negotiating mechanisms through which institutions interacted
in discussing and formulating policy, both nationally and locally.

Urban networks, the utilisation of new technologies, and the collation and circulation of information
were crucial to both the police and fire services between the 1870s and 1938. Watch committees
desired to ‘police’ the environment to improve public safety and attract investment by objectively
demonstrating the reduced ‘risks’ of crime and conflagration, and thus benefit the protection of
property values. Leicester Chamber of Commerce, for example, boasted in 1911 of its town’s ‘most
up-to-date’ Fire Brigade, stressing the financial savings to investors following a ten per cent loss in
value of the town’s insured property from fire damage in 1909. 18 Indeed, the Council regularly
circulated its annual crime and fire statistics within the local and technical press to parade the
effectiveness and progressivism of municipal services to businesses and ratepayers, to justify a rateable
increase, and seek electoral or professional legitimacy. The publication of the annual monetary fire
loss was designed to attract or retain investment and boost a municipality’s profile. Birmingham City
Council, for example, boasted in 1902 that, since its Brigade had been made independent from the
Police in 1879, only 2.7 per cent of the city’s rateable value had been destroyed by fire. By 1905 the
level of fire damage had fallen further to 1.4 per cent. 19 The reduction in Leicester’s fire loss from 5.6
per cent in 1903 to 2.2 per cent in 1922 was associated with the establishment of a street fire alarm
system in 1911 and the provision of underground water tanks. One result was a rise in the number of
calls alongside an improved response rate. 20 Information on the Police and Fire Brigade, including the
location of stations, fire alarms, and contact telephone numbers, were also published in local trade
directories and municipal diaries as quick-reference guides for the protection of local property. 21 Self-

18 Leicester Chamber of Commerce Year Book (Leicester, 1911), 36.
19 Fire & Water, Dec. 1902, 156; Feb. 1906, 185.
20 Leicester’s fire loss peaked at 17.2 per cent in 1912: Fire & Water, May 1913, 36; May 1914, 43.
21 Each station had different telephone numbers and there was no uniform emergency number before the ‘999’
system was adopted in London in 1937. For examples: Post Office Official Directory for Birmingham
publicity, therefore, was a marketing strategy adopted by civic elites to maintain economic advantage and it was quickly seized upon that an orderly town was a profitable town.\(^{22}\)

Professional associations also used annual losses as a demand for central co-ordination and additional financial support. Fire loss cost the country approximately £100,000 a week during the early 1930s with cheap, unregulated construction and working practices the main cause of such loss. Pressure for Exchequer funding, manifested through such networks as formal meetings, resolutions and deputations to central departments, were based on such locally collated knowledge, and annual fire loss figures were exploited to obtain concessions for reform.\(^{23}\) Owing to the randomness of fire from year to year due to the high proportion of fires caused by human error\(^{24}\) and defective construction\(^{25}\), figures were accentuated during bad years to demonstrate the overwhelming need to educate the public against irresponsible behaviour, to warn against the ubiquitous fire risk in the home as well as the workplace, and to demand greater national support for the professional associations and local brigades.\(^{26}\) The deployment of information and its expert analysis facilitated the creation and modification of fluid networks that linked the various interested institutions together within their respective policy communities. Thus, networks were subject to adaptation through structural and behavioural pressures with the collection and dissemination of information at their heart.

\(^{22}\) Daunton, 'Introduction', 13-14; Reeder and Rodger, 'Industrialisation', 572-7.

\(^{23}\) For example, Professional Fire Brigades Association Annual Report 1934, 14-15.

\(^{24}\) Fires caused deliberately or accidentally through human activity, including dropped lights, candles, children playing with matches, smoking and carelessness, clothing on fire and incendiariism.

\(^{25}\) This category relates to all those fires caused through faults in building design and malfunction, including defective flues.

\(^{26}\) Fire, Aug. 1929, 67-8; Feb. 1930, 199-200; Dec. 1931, 153.
Criminologists and historians have long debated the accuracy of criminal statistics as an indicator of the level of crime in modern Britain. Emphasis is invariably given to changes in the criminal justice system, local policing and the networks created to circulate statistics. Notwithstanding concerns about their historical accuracy, criminal statistics remain an important source for modern historians. The traditional approach, exemplified by Gatrell, argues that statistics reflected the general condition of crime within society, and identifies long cycles of violent crime and theft. Revisionists question their historical accuracy, particularly with local variations in police interpretation of the law, such as in regulating vagrancy and supervising 'habitual criminals' between 1869 and 1871, or in responding to rising levels of traffic congestion and related crime in the inter-war years.

Contemporaries suggested that criminal statistics should be studied in their social context and used as a benchmark for social and moral improvement within the endemic 'criminal class,' particularly in improving access to education, employment and respectable leisure. Modern historians argue that

---


access to resources influenced the nature of prosecutions and the production of criminal statistics.\textsuperscript{31} The discrepancy between recorded and actual crime throughout the period suggested more than an "immense breadth of undiscovered depredation."\textsuperscript{32} Rather, changes to the legal definition of crime, police interpretation and attitudes towards prosecution from both police and public rendered the annual Judicial Returns susceptible to exogenous supply-led pressures in their collation and circulation from their inception in 1857.\textsuperscript{33} The influence of central bureaucracy and social policy in framing unofficial quotas for "offences known to the police" and indictable prosecutions by the 1920s indicated the increasing regulation of police authorities by the Treasury, Home Office and Inspectors of Constabulary.\textsuperscript{34}

Earlier analyses suggested that the Judicial Returns "have little to tell us about crime and criminals," but rather more about the politics of local policing, or the responses of employers towards workplace theft.\textsuperscript{35} Studies demonstrated the local peculiarities of crime and responses towards the recording and dissemination of statistics.\textsuperscript{36} This culminated in contemporary civil servants questioning the reliability of local recording strategies.\textsuperscript{37} Socio-economic factors, such as the stability in Birmingham and Leicester's industrial base between the 1870s and 1920s, and low unemployment in the 1930s, evidently influenced the nature and reporting of crime. The standard of living and local attitudes towards public disorder also had a pronounced impact on the level of non-indictable crime, particularly

32 Radzinowicz and Hood, Criminal Law, 105-6.
33 The Home Office published the annual aggregates within four main sections: indictable committals, commitments to prison, summary committals, and offences known to the police. Historians focus on the latter, "the most comprehensive account" of the state of crime, referring to "the number of offences annually reported to the police," along with "the number of apprehensions effected by the police as a result of these reports." W. Morrison, "The interpretation of criminal statistics", Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, LX, 1 (1897), 1-2; Gatrell and Hadden, "Criminal statistics", 343-5.
37 Judicial Statistics for the Year 1894, P.P. 1896 (8072), XCIV, 33-5.
drunkenness and vagrancy. Indeed, a common denominator shared by large county boroughs was that crimes against property 'generally prevail most in urban districts and tend to increase as the population becomes denser.'

This latter assertion was discernible in Birmingham and Leicester, where recorded crimes against property, encompassing categories II and III of the annual returns showed that the proportion of property-related offences never fell below 81.1 per cent in Birmingham, or 86.3 per cent in Leicester, between 1871 and 1931 (Table 7.1). Of these, the greater proportion referred to 'simple larceny', those property offences amounting to five shillings or less. Birmingham's Chief Constable continued to warn of the need to safeguard private property during the 1930s, contending that property crime accounted for roughly ninety per cent of all locally known offences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Birmingham</th>
<th>Leicester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>94.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>86.8</td>
<td>96.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>88.6</td>
<td>86.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>91.6</td>
<td>96.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>88.8</td>
<td>92.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>85.2</td>
<td>97.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>95.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Judicial Statistics of England and Wales, P.P. 1872 (600), LXV; P.P. 1882 (3333), LXXV; P.P. 1892 (6734), LXXXIX; P.P. 1903 (1441), LXXXIII; P.P. 1912-13 (6602), CX; Judicial Statistics of England and Wales for the Year 1921, Non-Parliamentary Papers 1923, 85; P.P. 1932-33 (4360), XXV.


Judicial Statistics for the Year 1893, P.P. 1895 (7725), CVIII, 88-92; Judicial Statistics for the Year 1898, P.P. 1900 (8072), XCIV, 32.

The six categories of indictable offences, originating in 1857 were: offences against the person (Class I), offences against property with violence (Class II), offences against property without violence (Class III), malicious injuries to property (Class IV), forgery and offences against the currency (Class V), other offences, mainly suicide (Class VI). For the purposes of analysis, Class IV has been excluded owing to their exceptional nature (arson, riot, etc.) and scarce incidence in the local returns.

Despite the prominence of property-related crime, regional variations in recording strategies raised questions concerning the politics of information and the influence of local peculiarities. Sindall has questioned the legitimacy of the criminal statistics in informing on the nature of urban social change, contending that statistics are useful for exploring Victorian attitudes towards crime and society, 'not as a reflection of a phenomenon but as a phenomenon in themselves.'

Their value lies in forming the basis of the picture of crime which powerful influences in nineteenth-century society thought confronted them. They were as influential in the nineteenth-century as television pictures of isolated incidents are in the twentieth in creating an image of that unseen but threatening world that surrounds every individual.

Recent research has extended urban analyses of perceptions towards, and official responses to, crime, identifying distinct local variations in both processes. Levels of recorded crime reflected more than national supply-led influences. In flagging the experience of late Victorian and Edwardian Liverpool as regularly recording one of the highest levels of indictable and non-indictable crime rates of all county boroughs, Taylor identified the central policy role adopted by the city's chief constables in deliberately recording high crime rates to legitimise demands for additional resources. This culminated in Liverpool having the highest ratio of policemen to population outside London. Taylor stressed the role of the expert in controlling the collation, interpretation and dissemination of statistical information as evidence of increasing Home Office interference in setting both the policy agenda and the levels of recorded crime rates during the inter-war years. This fails to appreciate the interactive working relationship between the Chief Constable and his Watch Committee in recording and reporting annual criminal returns, demands for public accountability and the unique urban experience of Liverpool, with its high proportion of unskilled migrant labour, or other county boroughs.

43 Ibid; see also, R. Sindall, Street Violence in the Nineteenth Century: Media Panic or Real Danger? (Leicester, 1990), 16-28; T. Williamson, 'Policing a myth, managing an illusion: Victorian and contemporary crime recording', in Rowbotham and Stevenson (eds.), Behaving Badly, 47-62.
45 Taylor, 'Politics', 11-12.
Aggregate levels of recorded crime for all English and Welsh county boroughs indicate the dangers of basing generalised conclusions on national data (Table 7.2). Birmingham, for example, exceeded the county borough mean for both indictable and non-indictable crimes from 1871 to 1911, before significantly falling below the mean for indictable crimes between 1921 and 1931. Leicester, meanwhile, fluctuated either side of the county borough trend and remained below the mean for non-indictable offences from 1881. Taylor contends that the decade after 1919 witnessed a rise in recorded provincial crime of approximately 65 per cent. Both county boroughs fit this trend for indictable crimes, although non-indictable crime continued a gradual decline. If, therefore, the Home Office sought to control local information networks by setting national targets, it failed to pressure local forces to follow the national trend uniformly, and exerted no influence over the 'dark figure' of unreported or unrecorded crime.

Table 7.2 Reported Crime in Birmingham and Leicester, per 1,000 of Urban Population, 1871-1931

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1871</th>
<th>1881</th>
<th>1891</th>
<th>1901</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>1931</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indictable</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Borough Mean</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Indictable</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Borough Mean</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The mean is based on the results of 76 county boroughs: as Table 7.1.

b Offences tried before a jury in the superior courts of assize or quarter sessions.

c Non-indictable offences were the least serious offences and were invariably dealt with by local magistrates on summary jurisdiction. These included drunkenness, vagrancy, prostitution and soliciting, offences against the Education, Vaccination and Sunday Trading Acts, offences against local byelaws, dangerous animals, failure to licence hackney carriages, and other misdemeanours. Offences of intermediate gravity could be tried as either indictable or non-indictable crimes and depended on the ruling of the magistrates.

Source: As Table 7.1.

46 Ibid, 19.

On the 'dark figure' of criminal statistics: K. Bottomley and K. Pease, Crime and Punishment: Interpreting the Data (Milton Keynes, 1986), 33-47; C. Coleman and J. Moynihan, Understanding Crime Data: Haunted by the Dark Figure (Buckingham, 1999), 2-32.
'Simple larceny' was the main contributor to the increase in recorded indictable offences. In Leicester offences against property without violence doubled between 1918 and 1929, from 356 to 682, increasing further to 1,012 by 1931, 915 of which were 'simple larcenies.' By 1938 this amounted to 1,244 offences, or 74 per cent of all indictable crimes. Offences against property without violence demonstrated similar patterns in Birmingham, increasing by 61.1 per cent between 1920 and 1930, and a further 35.7 per cent between 1930 and 1936, peaking at 4,059 offences.48 'Simple larcenies' were easy to record and required few police resources to tackle, ranging between 51.3 and 69.1 per cent of all indictable crimes in Birmingham from 1915 to 1934.49

Such a rise did not reflect a crime wave in either county borough with violent crime and burglary in decline in Birmingham from the mid-1880s (recorded offences against property with violence fell from an average of 1,182 between 1874 and 1883 to 203 between 1884 and 1893) due to a procedural change of not recording every reported offence. In Leicester, recorded violent crime (crimes against the person and against property with violence) rose from six per cent in 1913 to 23.5 per cent a decade later, peaking at 31.8 per cent in 1936. This reflected a change in strategy adopted by its Chief Constable, Herbert Allen, who from his appointment in 1913 adopted a broader interpretation of house-breaking to include more than forced entry.50 Chief constables exploited such statistics to demand additional police resources, notably manpower, from their Watch Committee. Similarly, the Watch Committee used information to demand additional Exchequer funding, notably during the decade preceding the expansion of the grant in 1918.

The Judicial Returns, therefore, reflected contemporary attitudes towards the types of crime deemed threatening to urban order and private property. They also reflected local strategies towards reporting and recording practices, with the Inspectors of Constabulary noting in 1912 the 'great diversities of practice' among provincial forces in terms of 'disciplinary organisation, internal economy, methods of

49 Figures calculated from J. Jones, History of the Corporation of Birmingham Vol. V Part II (Birmingham, 1940), 371.
50 This followed many years experience working in Leicester's Detective Department, honing his skills in investigating house-breaking.
correspondence and record keeping," urging 'closer uniformity' to simplify 'the dealings of one force with another and save labour in exchanging information.'\textsuperscript{51} Criminal statistics were central to understanding the role of information within the central-local decision-making process, reflecting municipal attitudes towards the conventions of recording and disseminating data, particularly within the administration of the licensing laws and other non-indictable offences, which local councillors could influence through their positions as magistrates:

The returns of prosecutions for drunkenness are too often taken as a measure of the vice of intemperance, whereas they are more nearly a measure of the action of the police and of the standard of public decorum adopted in the particular locality, the standard by which the person who has departed from sobriety is judged to be within or without the line defining drunkenness as an offence against the law.\textsuperscript{52}

Police strategies towards drunkenness varied according to local peculiarities and changes in public attitudes. A clampdown by Birmingham Police in 1876 by appointing five inspectors solely to implement the licensing laws was over-ruled by the Watch Committee following public criticism. By the mid-1880s it was reported that the increase in drunkenness from 2,507 offences in 1883 to 3,190 in 1884 was due to greater deployment of resources at night and the incentive of two hours off-duty to constables attending police court the following morning.\textsuperscript{53}

Both Birmingham and Leicester chief constables published their statistics as appendices to their annual reports. They presented these reports to the Watch Committee which invariably authorised their printing and circulation throughout the Council and local press before being sent to the Home Office for analysis by its statisticians.\textsuperscript{54} The publication of these statistics within the local press enabled the ratepayers to assess the efficiency of their force in clearing-up recorded crime. Press comment was normally scarce so that readers could draw their own conclusions on the state of crime within their

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{53} WMPM 1991.2128, Annual Police Report 1876, 6; 1884, 9; Birmingham City Archives [hereafter BCA] Watch Committee Minutes [hereafter WC Mins], 25 Nov. 1884, 241-2; offences against the licensing laws increased from a mean of 232 between 1874 and 1883 to 348 between 1884 and 1893, before falling to 104 for the remainder of the decade: Judicial Returns: 1884, P.P. 1884-85 (4518), LXXXVI; 1893, P.P. 1895 (7725), CVIII.
\textsuperscript{54} The Birmingham Annual Police Report was also circulated amongst the City Justices: BCA WC Mins, 10 Feb. 1904, 53; LRO CM42/29, WC Mins, 16 Feb. 1932, 268.
locality. Chief constables rarely commented on the nature of criminality in their annual reports before the 1950s, although comment on the rise in traffic congestion increased during the 1930s and was exploited to demand additional powers and resources to combat the burgeoning workload.

Where comment did exist, however, the peculiarities of local criminality were evident. Contemporary publications, for example, highlighted the dual impact of legislation and local initiatives on juvenile offenders in Birmingham. Street trading was jointly regulated by both the Police and Education Department through the establishment of a children's court in 1903, local byelaws, and the Children Act, 1908, which dealt with offenders under the age of sixteen. The extension of the age limit to seventeen in 1933, alongside the decision to withhold street trading licences from those under eighteen without municipal approval, caused an upsurge in the number of reported juvenile cases from 511 to 857 offences between 1930 and 1934. Leicester Police encountered similar variations in its treatment of juveniles, limiting the number of street trading licences from 1903 and establishing a Detention Home for Juvenile Offenders in 1916. The Children and Young Persons Act, 1933, had a similar impact on recorded crime rates, with 116 children responsible for 41 per cent of Leicester's recorded crimes during 1934. Almost half of these children had been previously cautioned by the Police or Magistrates. The Chief Constable used these figures and the fact that a third of all bicycle thefts were apportioned to boys under seventeen to demonstrate an alleged degeneration in the city's youth and a growth in gang culture. Such evidence, expressed through sections of his annual report specifically

---

55 For example, Leicester Daily Mercury, 9 Feb. 1898, 22 Feb. 1898.
57 Contemporary concerns at the perceived growth in juvenile crime and the means to reform juvenile offenders were evident in meetings between chief constables during the 1920s: ACPO, CCA Conference, 3 Jun. 1926, 22; 6 Jun. 1928, 22; CCA Conference, 15 Jun. 1932, 32-42.
59 The Detention Home was funded jointly by Leicester City Council and Leicestershire County Council: LRO L352.2, Annual Police Report 1911, 8-10; Annual Police Report 1917, 9.
60 The majority of these offences were for shop-breaking and theft: LRO 10D58/197, Annual Police Report 1935, 10-12.
devoted to juvenile delinquency, was used to support his strong views on birching, film censorship and 'the discipline of an approved school.'

The annual returns, therefore, shed light on the interaction between local and national strategies employed in the collation, recording and dissemination of information. They also reinforced the interdependence of central and municipal governmental and the increasing expertise of the Chief Constable during the first four decades of the twentieth-century. The Home Office compelled forces to return their annual aggregates in order to qualify for the Exchequer grant yet relied on individual forces to return them promptly and in an accessible form. The police maintained daily responsibility for recording crime and obtained extensive knowledge of the locality; by contrast the Inspectors of Constabulary visited once a year only, and inspected a range of forces within cumbersome districts and with diverse recording practices.

That forces maintained their own recording procedures in the statistical formats even beyond the procedural reforms of 1893 is evidence of the persistence of local peculiarities. Individual forces manipulated the recording and interpretation of their statistics to achieve predetermined objectives. For example, both Birmingham and Leicester Police exploited the returns to obtain an increase in their authorised strength, the former in 1927 from 1,417 to 1,587 men to police the expanding city; the latter in 1936 from 261 to 283 men to cope with additional pressures from traffic congestion, juvenile

---

61 Ibid; Leicester Daily Mercury, 2 Mar. 1937. The strong views of the Chief Constable and Watch Committee are outlined in: LRO CM42/31, WC Mins, 6 May 1932 which reports on a viewing of Frankenstein, where the Emergency Sub-Committee reported that the film was 'of a horrible and terrifying nature,' prohibiting its exhibition to children under the age of sixteen. This followed complaints from local residents urging the Watch Committee to refuse the film a licence: Ibid, 9 May 1932, 313; 12 Nov. 1935, 141; on the growth, real and perceived, of juvenile delinquency and 'gang culture', J. R. Gillis, 'The evolution of juvenile delinquency in England, 1890-1914', Past & Present, 67 (1975), 96-126; B. Weinberger, 'Policing juveniles: delinquency in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Manchester', Criminal Justice History (1993), 43-55; A. Davies, 'Street gangs, crime and policing in Glasgow during the 1930s: the case of the Beehive Boys', Social History, XXIII, 3 (1998), 251-67.

62 Historians also contend that scandals and other problems were invariably uncovered more by 'local public spirit' than by the annual inspection: P. J. Waller, Town, City and Nation: England 1850-1914 (Oxford, 1983), 267.

63 The Judicial Returns were criticised for wide discrepancies in the dates and details of their recording, the size and arrangement of tables and other miscellaneous details: Report of the Departmental Committee appointed to Revise the Criminal Portion of the Judicial Statistics, in Criminal Statistics for the Year 1893, P.P. 1895 (7723), CVIII, 9-43; Taylor, 'Rationing', 580-1.
delinquency, and the extension of the city boundaries the previous year. The annual returns awarded the Watch Committee and Police Force administrative and moral legitimacy respectively. Although the Watch Committee was not responsible for the collation and interpretation of statistics, it was always at the centre of the dissemination process, acting as the repository of municipal knowledge and power.

INFORMATION, TECHNOLOGY AND CONSENT IN THE FIRE SERVICE

A similar process of information gathering was identifiable within the fire service, albeit with one fundamental difference. The collation and publication of annual fire statistics was purely discretionary and obtained from local sources alone. It was, therefore, a local resource dependent solely on municipal deference. Sporadic attempts by central government departments to collate information on the thousands of fire brigades throughout the country from 1899 were dependent on local cooperation. The rising trend in reported fires in Birmingham and Leicester from the late 1870s and 1880s reflected more than a rise in the urban fire risk, particularly from new industrial practices and human behaviour (Figure 7.1). The rise in Birmingham during the 1880s coincided both with the separation of the Police and Fire Brigade in 1879 and the spatial distribution of street fire alarms. Jointly these developments imbued greater public faith in organised protection so that members of the public reported fires rather than attempting to extinguish the blaze themselves. It was a successful public relations exercise by the Town Council in reconnecting with the local electorate following the disastrous Digbeth fire in 1878. Public confidence was assisted with the substitution of horse power for manually-drawn engines to conserve the energy of firemen and make them more reliable within public consciousness.

---

64 Between 1922 and 1927 the authorised strength of Birmingham Police Force was frozen at roughly ten per cent below strength; the authorised strength of Leicester was frozen between 1922 and 1936 at 260 men: Jones, History Vol. V, 353-4; LRO 10D58/196, Annual Police Report 1934, 13-14; 10D58/197, Annual Police Report 1935, 6; LRO CM42/31, WC Mins, 19 Feb. 1935, 27.
65 Radzinowicz and Hood, Criminal Law, 53.
66 The home Office did not begin to collate national aggregates on fires until 1942.
Public legitimacy was further bolstered during the late 1870s with the introduction of the steam engine.\(^6^9\) This enabled both brigades to respond more quickly to fire calls and extended protection into their expanding suburbs. Steam engines also had far greater capacity for pumping water than manual engines. By the 1900s brigades had further professionalised with the substitution of petrol-driven for steam engines with Leicester and Birmingham purchasing their first motorised engines in 1904 and 1907 respectively.\(^7^0\) Both were replaced within five years by engines with greater capacity. This speed of technical development in engine design during the first two decades of the twentieth-century placed the fire service at the forefront of technological innovation, with municipal investment in transport infrastructure dependent on the retention of public support.

Figure 7.1 Reported Fires in Birmingham and Leicester per 10,000 Population, 1868-1940


Technological innovation also speeded up the information collation process, enabling brigades to respond quickly and the press to report on outbreaks based on accurate information provided by firemen at the scene. By 1909 Leicester's Chief Fire Officer confidently declared, 'I am fully convinced that motor power is the best, quickest, most efficient, and by far the most economical means of traction for brigade vehicles.' Professionalisation was, therefore, reinforced with the spread of technical knowledge throughout the service, enabling brigades and the public to ascertain information on the nature and causes of fires more quickly. As with the Judicial Returns, technology assisted the municipality in broadening its access to informational resources and also reinforcing its political legitimacy and local electoral mandate.

The localised nature of knowledge was reinforced by the information reported in both the local and technical press. Press reports of fires often described the fire and the response in detail, listing the number of appliances and the time taken to extinguish the flames, before stating the estimated loss from damage. This was only possible by having a journalist on the ground and liaising with the Brigade, yet Birmingham also maintained a Press Bulletin Board in its central station by the 1930s and permitted journalists, fire prevention companies and assessors to consult it. This readjusted the Brigade's relationship to both the public and private industry as an information-sharing exercise. For example, a fire in a boot and shoe factory fronting Leicester Street in February 1895 was extensively reported by the Leicester Daily Mercury, including the history of the building, the cause of the fire, the Brigade's response, and the difficult conditions posed by the freezing weather. The newspaper estimated the total loss at approximately £15,000, the factory having cost over £4,000 to build.

In return for information newspapers and periodicals boasted of the Brigade's effectiveness, despite its failure to prevent comprehensive damage. A fire at Leicester St George's church and the Midland

73 This was not a process restricted to England and Wales: Perthshire Advertiser, 30 Apr. 1924, 28 Feb. 1935, 8 Jun. 1935, 3 Jul. 1935, 10 Jul. 1935.
74 BCA MS13033/291, correspondence between Atlas Sprinkler Co. Ltd and Chief Fire Officer, 8 Jul. 1938.
75 Leicester Daily Mercury, 8 Feb. 1895.
Railway Goods Station in October 1911 was reported as totalling losses of £150,000. Faced with the choice of 'preserving intact' the factories or the church, the Chief Fire Officer, with the Lord Mayor's approval, 'naturally gave principal attention to the factories,' owing to the church being 'the less important risk from the ratepayers' and workers' point of view.\(^76\) The use of financial statistics reminded ratepayers that their consent to rising investment in fire prevention was repaid with maximum possible savings in fire loss. The protection of the factories demonstrated the entrepreneurial spirit of municipal culture by the Edwardian years. The reporting of fires in the local and technical press was a way of circulating detailed information, selling newspapers and reinforcing municipal authority. It was also used to justify financial investment in fire protection by stressing the financial repercussions of inadequate provision wherever possible.\(^77\) Such reporting was acceptable to both municipalities. It portrayed their firemen favourably, even when damage was extensive. Thus, the control and dissemination of information was a valuable resource exploited to represent a distinctively progressive form of municipal knowledge, and the local press was complicit in reinforcing public consent and municipal dominance in the fire policy community.

**SPATIAL NETWORKS**

Information was not solely circulated through the publication of annual statistical returns. It was also dependent on spatial networks, notably the construction of fixed stations in strategic locations. Stations had always provided political resources to the police and fire services, serving as the focal interface between both departments and the general public. Occurrence books were updated in stations, duty began and ended at stations, it was where orders were given and incidents reported, and where appliances were stored and maintained. The division of the urban landscape into divisions and beats facilitated greater operational authority over particular districts.\(^78\) By regulating 'policing' both temporally and spatially, resources and manpower could be deployed to different urban districts at

\(^{76}\) *Fire & Water*, Nov. 1911, 137.

\(^{77}\) See press reports on a fire in a hardware merchants and the local Birmingham News and Printing Company, where damage of almost £2,000 demonstrated the blanket threat of fire to ratepayers and local businesses: *Birmingham Mail*, 24 Mar. 1906; see also: *Birmingham Despatch*, 29 Apr. 1914; *Birmingham Mail*, 2 May 1914.

\(^{78}\) Police and fire divisions invariably overlapped, reflecting their common conception of urban space.
different times. The prominence of night beats in both municipalities ensured that private property received meticulous protection (Table 7.3). Furthermore, more firemen worked night duty when the risk of fire-related deaths was greater.

### Table 7.3 Allocation of Police Beats, 1911-1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of Day Beats</th>
<th>Number of Night Beats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham, 1920</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester, 1911</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Local businesses consented to the maintenance of spatial networks as a precautionary measure. Many entered voluntary schemes from the 1870s depositing spare sets of keys to their premises with the nearby police or fire station to facilitate easy access in cases of fire or burglary at night. Birmingham Police, for example, had 111 firms involved in the scheme by 1893 at an annual cost of twenty shillings each. Leicester Police extended its co-operation with local businesses. By 1911 it had adopted a strategy of marking premises by putting two pins at either side of the door and stretching a length of cotton across. The cotton was regularly examined to warn constables of unauthorised entry.

Night duty, therefore, demanded an acute knowledge of property and reinforced the entrepreneurial spirit of 'policing' and the consensual and interactive relationship between the municipality and ratepayers:

An officer on night duty should remember that he is in a great measure responsible for the safety of all property, lock-up shops, warehouses and private houses, in the district which he is detailed to patrol. If he is patrolling a locality in which the buildings are chiefly warehouses and factories, his first duty is to ascertain whether the doors, windows, etc., of these premises have been secured for the night. Should, however, any premises be found insecure, the owner ... should at once be communicated with; [and] the officer should ... search the premises to ensure that no evil-disposed person is concealed therein.

Spatial structures evolved in their construction and meaning over time. Management strategies, technological design, changes to land use and wider socio-economic pressures influenced the form and

---


81 LRO DE5491/307, J. Hall-Dalwood, *Byelaws, Rules and Regulations of the Borough of Leicester Compiled for the Use of the Police* (Leicester, 1911), 146-8, 154-5.

82 Ibid, 146.
character of municipal ‘policing’. As municipal boundaries extended in the second-half of the nineteenth-century, councils responded by extending their spatial networks from the centre to the periphery to reinforce networks of public support. This involved the construction of branch stations within districts deemed worthy of added protection and the diffusion of citywide communication networks, notably the electric telegraph, in sending and receiving operational information. For example, Birmingham’s police and fire stations were connected by telegraph during the 1880s to enable the Police to send early fire warnings and facilitate closer working relations between the two departments following a hostile separation of responsibilities in 1879. Constables and, by implication, the Chief Constable had been criticised by the Chief Fire Officer between 1880 and 1881 for delays in notifying the Brigade of fires discovered and attempting to extinguish fires themselves.

Leicester’s first branch police stations were opened to the north of the town centre at Sanvey Gate and Woodboy Street in the late 1870s (Figure 7.2). These dense areas, predominantly consisting of terraced working-class housing around Northgates and Frog Island, were the principal sites of the town’s Irish population. Deemed deviant within contemporary discourse, the streets were notorious ‘as centres of poverty, sickness and petty crime, often the scene of gang-fighting as racial prejudice fanned the flames of trivial disputes.’ Furthermore, the nearby development of Abbey Park and St Margaret’s pasture in the 1870s created a large public open space between the River Soar and Leicester canal that required the deployment of police resources to maintain respectable behaviour in the vicinity. Similar attitudes prevailed in Birmingham. Irish immigrants settled in the Digbeth and Sparkbrook districts, and contemporaries proclaimed that ‘the Irish in Birmingham are the very pests of society; they generate

---

83 On the relationship between municipal administration and urban planning: R. Broaderwick, An Investigation into the Location of Institutional Land Uses in Birmingham (Birmingham University Ph.D., 1981).
86 M. Elliott, Victorian Leicester (Chichester, 1979), 65, 118-21; LRO CM42/12, WC Mins, 4 Apr. 1877, 15 May 1877, 18 Sep. 1877, 17 Sep. 1878; CM42/12, WC Mins, 5 Aug. 1879, 30 Sep. 1879; HMIC Annual Report 1877-78, P.P. 1878-79 (41), XXXIII, 36.
87 J. Storey, Historical Sketch of Some of the Principal Works and Undertakings of the Council of the Borough of Leicester (Leicester, 1895), 121-9.
Coupled with the Fenian rising of the 1880s when five dangerous bombers were based in the city, such attitudes influenced the ‘policing’ of these districts with comparable recorded levels of Irish-born assaults on policemen with national levels.  

Owing to the early growth of the borough and the authority of ratepayers demanding public protection, Birmingham provided branch police stations from the 1850s, a little earlier than Leicester. Before the 1900s fire appliances were stored at the police stations with small groups of firemen attached to each station. The remainder of the firemen were based at the central fire station in the Upper Priory, adjacent to the newly constructed Corporation Street, opened in 1883 (Figure 7.3). Branch fire stations were provided under a citywide programme between 1902 and 1930 as a response to continued urban expansion. The extension of Birmingham’s boundaries in 1891 and 1911 led to the establishment of branch stations in the new suburban districts and the purchase of existing county stations, such as at Saltley and Balsall Heath to assist in the ‘policing’ of Adderley Park. Indeed, public parks, as in Leicester, were focal areas demanding additional resources for patrol and the maintenance of public decency. Stations were opened in Speedwell Road, adjacent to Calthorpe Park in Edgbaston, Moseley Street, near to Highgate Park in Deritend, and Victoria Road, in the vicinity of Handsworth and Soho Parks, between the 1870s and the First World War.

---

88 Quoted in G. Cherry, Birmingham: A Study in Geography, History and Planning (Chichester, 1994), 47, 187.
90 BCA Fire Brigade Sub-Committee Minutes [hereafter FBSC Mins], 23 Feb. 1880, 86; BCA MS1303/38, Annual Fire Brigade Report 1881, 6.
91 Journal of the Institution of Municipal and County Engineers, LVIII (1931), 115.
Figure 7.2: Leicester's Police and Fire Stations, c. 1890-94

Source: Map adapted from R. M. Pritchard, Housing and the Spatial Structure of the City (Cambridge, 1976), 193; station locations taken from LRO CM42/9-33, Watch Committee Minutes.
Figure 7.3: Birmingham's Police and Fire Stations, c.1890

Source: Map adapted from R. Padley (ed.), *City of Birmingham Annual Abstract of Statistics* (Birmingham, 1951), 6; station locations taken from BCA Watch Committee and Judicial Sub-Committee Minutes.
The construction of branch stations during this period coincided with municipal expansion more generally. The construction of new town halls, provision of public spaces and the municipalisation of utilities all aided in the imposition of urban order. Increased activity in the construction of grand public buildings was a symbol of emerging civic consciousness and local power over departments. Chief officers required the Council's approval for capital development and this was exploited to extend Watch Committee authority over operational policy as in the provision of a new police station and gaol in the basement of Leicester's Town Hall, opened in 1876, and subjected to the rigours of civic surveillance.

Institutional schemes were distinct from residential and commercial development in that they were influenced less by market forces, but were the outcome of policy initiatives formulated within government. This made capital development more susceptible to the organisational and financial interactions between central and municipal institutions, and the influence exerted by chief officials through their attendance at meetings and published reports. Although both services were dependent on public opinion for their accountability, they were influenced by the development of residential and commercial neighbourhoods in the fringe belt, and the availability of land and other resources within the existing built-up area. Thus, the annexation of the adjacent districts of Belgrave, Evington and Aylestone by Leicester Town Council in 1892 was preceded by a flurry of private development. Arthur Wakerley, a local architect and councillor, purchased the majority of land in North Evington, and development consisted of different land uses for industrial (engineering and printing works, boot and shoe factories), residential (working-class back-to-back housing) and public (Spinney Hill park) schemes through a Freehold House Society. Subsequently a joint branch police and fire station was opened in Asfordby Street to maintain operational authority for the annexed district (Figure 7.2). Planned control was reinforced through a complete ban on public houses within the suburb owing to Wakerley's strict temperance, serving as President of the Leicester Temperance Union. Similarly, the ancient village of Aylestone developed as an industrial suburb in the vicinity of the Corporation.

---

Gasworks, opened in 1877. The opening of the Wheatsheaf shoe factory in 1891 created a surge in employment and local building, and contributed to the establishment of a joint police and fire station in Landsdowne Road in 1894, with additional stations opened before 1914 in mixed residential and commercial suburbs (Appendix G).

COMMUNICATING INFORMATION

The provision of communication technologies enabling the public to contact either department in an emergency extended these networks. Introduced as a means to improve response rates to the outlying districts, street fire alarms soon spread throughout the urban landscape to provide immediate circulation of information to reduce the proportion of 'serious' fires (Table 7.4). In maintaining order they were assisted by hydrants and underground tanks installed in high risk areas to provide immediate access to high-pressure water. In Birmingham, hydrants were placed on footpaths on both sides of the streets and street corners, with double-headed hydrants strategically attached to large mains in the city's principal thoroughfares, vastly exceeding Leicester's hydrant provision (Table 7.4). This liberal provision was, however, not typical, with only seven county boroughs levying a rate exceeding four pence to support fire protection by the late 1930s compared to a mean of just over two pence for 83 county boroughs. Birmingham's high rate was in part due to its Brigade having full responsibility for hydrant provision, which was contrary to the procedure adopted elsewhere where water departments maintained such responsibility, often more cheaply.

In this respect, the fire service preceded the police in its creation of an interactive urban network that assisted in its operational duties. It also facilitated greater integration between the Chief Fire Officer and Fire Brigade Sub-Committee through their early negotiations over the provision of modern technologies. Even when requests for investment were rejected, this was invariably the result of

97 'Serious' fires refer to those where more than one-fifth of a property's value was destroyed: Fire & Water, Apr. 1884, 15; Jul. 1884, 61; Apr. 1888, 29; May 1888, 211-2; Aug. 1889, 93; Sep. 1892, 102; Jan. 1905, 172-3.
98 LRO CM42/23, WC Mins, 7 Dec. 1911, 124; Fire & Water, May 1898, 37; Birmingham Daily Mail, 18 Nov. 1922.
99 BCA FBSC Mins, 29 Mar. 1939, 24: of those seven authorities, Birmingham levied the second highest rate at 5.3 pence, with West Ham levying 7.1 pence.
Council parsimony, rather than Sub-Committee hostility towards expenditure. By officially recording requests for appliances and equipment, this protected the Chief Officer and Sub-Committee from the withdrawal of public legitimacy if fires caused extensive destruction.

**Table 7.4 Street Alarms, Hydrants and Underground Tanks in Birmingham and Leicester, 1891-1931**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Street Fire Alarms Per 1000 Acres</th>
<th>Fire Hydrants Per 1000 Acres</th>
<th>Underground Water Tanks Per 1000 Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>258.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>185.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>256.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BCA MS1303/26-29, 38-39, Annual Fire Brigade Reports; LRO CM42/18-28, Fire Brigade Sub-Committee Minutes, 1891-1931.

Experiments during the 1890s with police telephone posts in the Metropolitan district and Liverpool failed to alter the existing use of the telegraph system, widely adopted by provincial forces in the 1880s.100 The police service, compared to the fire service, slow to respond to the opportunities posed by new technologies. Although the service embraced the benefits posed by forensic medicine and 'police science' in recording readily identifiable recidivists, it did not welcome changes to working practices as wholeheartedly.101 Thus, most provincial forces established photography and finger-print laboratories between the 1900s and 1920s, and co-operation between forces and Scotland Yard's Habitual Criminal Registry radically altered scientific detection procedures, yet both national and municipal experts resisted the mechanisation of the police service until the inter-war years.102 Motor patrols, for example, were not initiated in Birmingham and Leicester until the 1920s owing to the


102 Cardiff established a small finger-print and photography laboratory in 1902, and Bradford established a finger-print department in 1906, yet Leicester Police did not establish similar facilities until the 1930s and preferred to liaise with existing laboratories when fingerprint analysis was required: LRO DE5491/318, Correspondence between Leicester Chief Constable, Registrar of Habitual Criminals Registry and Detective Inspector Green of Bradford Police; LRO CM42/29, WC Mins, 10 May 1932, 314; 6 Sep. 1932, 354; *Leicester Daily Mercury*, 1 Apr. 1935; see also Jones, *History Vol.V*, 355-6 for a brief history of the development of criminal investigation and forensic science in Birmingham.
overwhelming faith of the Watch Committee and Chief Constable in the traditional beat system. The spread of new technologies during the 1920s and 1930s owed much to the appointment of a new generation of chief constables with knowledge of the benefits of technology to police communications and efficiency, and the challenges posed to modern police patrol and mutual co-operation by continued urban expansion and rising traffic congestion. Furthermore, the enforced ban on the Chief Constables' Association from discussing pay and working conditions from 1919 created a policy vacuum to fill at its network of meetings.

Experiments in new technologies led to the adoption of citywide networks of police boxes during the 1920s. These TARDIS-style technologies were designed as 'miniature police stations', rather than the earlier pillar posts, and replaced many of the branch stations rendered obsolete. The box system was the brainchild of Frederick Crawley, Chief Constable of Sunderland, and was designed to decentralise police power within the modern city, saving time and resources in reporting and responding to incidents. It was, thus, an extension of existing urban networks (Figure 7.4), reinforcing the police's accountability within the city, enabling the public to contact headquarters immediately through the use of a free telephone, and providing first-aid equipment to assist the injured before qualified medical attendance arrived.

105 ACPO, CCA Conference, 1 Jun. 1923, 10.
By the early 1930s boxes had been installed in London, Manchester, Glasgow, Sheffield, Edinburgh, Newcastle, Northampton and elsewhere. Leicester replaced its branch stations with a network of 31 strategically-placed boxes and nine police houses in 1931 (Appendix H). The Chief Constable argued that the system augmented decentralisation, cost a fraction of the annual wage bill, and solved the problem that 'a Policeman can never be found when he is wanted.' That such schemes were deemed to be economical reflected the low capital costs and overheads involved in their provision:

---


109 Police houses, or cottages, were usually an individual policeman’s home in an outlying district that was connected with the nearest station by telephone.

It [the police box system] has enabled economies to be secured through the closing of police stations and in other ways, while still ensuring that any assistance that may be required is available not less speedily than was formerly the case.\(^{111}\)

Birmingham, meanwhile, resisted the appeal of the police box system, trusting its station network and installing a limited network of pillar-post telephones. These had a similar function to the boxes but did not serve as 'miniature police stations'. Indeed, Birmingham's Chief Constable argued that the box system would facilitate the 'disintegration' of the force's working relations, undermining its morale by creating alienating working practices.\(^{112}\) Although the interaction of chief constables facilitated the spread of modern technology during the inter-war years, leading officers maintained significant authority in resisting the standardisation of policing networks and defending their actions to their administrative and professional colleagues.

Urban networks remained important during the late 1930s, although concerns about cost and efficiency had surfaced within the Treasury, which was keen to reduce local expenditure. Fiscal constraints and public expenditure restrictions were widespread and neither service was insulated from these exogenous pressures, with the police facing particularly austere cutbacks in pay, working conditions and capital investment. Birmingham Police, however, continued to maintain its trust in the traditional network of beats, divisions and stations, separating the city into five divisions, 24 sub-divisions, 67 day beats, ninety night beats, and policed from 35 stations and a further 35 cottages (Appendix I).\(^{113}\) Its Fire Brigade maintained twenty stations in 1938 (Appendix J), twice as many as in Glasgow, though Birmingham's acreage to protect and the number of modern suburban housing estates was greater than that of Glasgow.\(^{114}\)

There were suggestions that the Brigade share space with the Police to augment economy, with the City Treasurer bemoaning the fact that 'each station involves upkeep, rates, separate equipment, including

\(^{111}\) Report of the Committee on Local Expenditure, P.P. 1932-33 (4200), XIV, 134; HMIC Annual Reports, 1926-7, 10-11; 1928-9, 14; 1931-2, 12; 1932-3, 10; 1935-6, 14-15; 1936-7, 17; 1937-8, 6-7.


\(^{114}\) For example, a new £26,500 district station opened at Witton in 1924 covered one-quarter of the Brigade's total call area: Fire, Dec. 1924, 126.
fire engines, and a definite number of men permanently available.\footnote{115} That the Watch Committee successfully resisted this policy after arguing that Birmingham faced a genuine threat from incendiary fires, indicated its leading role in municipal decision-making as late as 1939 despite the increasing authority of the Treasurer's Department. The political legitimacy of this decision, that future generations of city dwellers could be expected to contribute towards the cost of urban improvement, was predicated on Birmingham's reputation as a borrower, which dated from the last quarter of the nineteenth-century through investment in public utilities and street improvement. That 'civic debt' remained an accepted strategy into the inter-war years was evident with widespread capital borrowing not only for public protection, but also to improve police welfare through housing (Table 7.5).\footnote{116}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{lcccc}
\hline
Year & Fire Stations and Appliances & & Police Stations and Police Housing & \\
& Birmingham & Leicester & & \\
\hline
1900-01 & 25.2 & 14.7 & & 15.1 & 4.4 \\
1914-15 & 70.3 & 15.8 & & 67.6 & 2.4 \\
1935-36 & 344.5 & 80.5 & & 393.4 & 54.8 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Gross Capital Debt (£000s), 1900-36}
\end{table}

Despite the provision of district stations, police boxes and houses, there was a shift towards the centralisation of administrative power with the construction of new central stations in both cities between the wars. These were part of wider civic development schemes, although Leicester's £52,000

\footnote{115 BCA FBSC Mins, 29 Mar. 1939, 24.}

\footnote{116 On the relationship between urban debt and municipal enterprise, A. Offer, Property and Politics 1870-1914: Landownership, Law, Ideology and Urban Development in England (Cambridge, 1981), 226; on the growth in municipal capital debt between the 1870s and 1914, J. F. Wilson, 'The finance of municipal capital expenditure in England and Wales, 1870-1914', Financial History Review, IV, 1 (1997), 31-50. Almost all of the loans obtained for fire stations and equipment in Birmingham and Leicester were sanctioned by the Local Government Board (succeeded by the Ministry of Health in 1919) under the Public Health Act, 1875, which fixed low interest repayments spread over a maximum of sixty years to secure lower annual charges. Loan repayments on police stations were secured under either the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, or Local Government Act, 1888. Between the 1870s and early 1880s both municipalities depended largely on the issue of Corporation stock for stations, usually at 3 ½ per cent. Although, therefore, Birmingham City Council was noted for its use of stock issues and local Acts, the relatively low and manageable police and fire capital costs, particularly compared with the expensive and capital intensive public utilities, meant that it only raised two loans (both secured in 1924 to buy land in Steelhouse Lane and construct a new central police station under the provisions of the Birmingham Corporation Act, 1919) between the 1880s and 1930s through local legislation, in this case to spread repayments over eighty years: BCA L63.8, Annual Abstract of Accounts 1930-31, 368.}
‘model fire station’ was constructed in 1927 south of the centre due to a lack of space and an inappropriate and narrow medieval street-system for its motorised engines to navigate quickly.\footnote{Fire, Dec. 1924, 126; LRO 10D58/172, FBSC Mins, 28 Mar. 1923, 113; 27 Jun. 1923, 114-5; 26 Mar. 1924, 130-1; 5 Jan. 1925, 144; 28 Jan. 1925, 147-8.} This ultimately led to additional branch stations being opened in the new housing estates to the north of the city in the later 1930s to provide quick access in emergencies.\footnote{LRO CM42/31, WC Mins, 18 Jun. 1935, 79 identifies two new sub-fire stations in the north-eastern and north-western areas of Leicester, serving radial areas of two miles each, containing new housing development at Birstall, Beaumont Leys, Leicester Frith, New Parks, Thurcaston and Thurnby. The southern area and city centre was protected by the new headquarters at Lancaster Road.} These new stations were based on modern construction principles, with fire resistant materials and reinforced concrete poured \textit{in situ}, and operated by hi-tech communication systems to centralise authority over the sprawling suburban districts. Birmingham’s fire station, for example, utilised centralised electrical signalling and remote control to call the resident firemen immediately. Signal lamps and audible alarms were fixed in all public rooms and private quarters. This extended the Fire Brigade’s network of surveillance into the fireman’s private life, as it demanded an immediate response from all those on duty.\footnote{Municipal Journal, XLII, 28 Jul. 1933, 933-4; \textit{Electrical Times}, 16 Apr. 1936, 521-2; LRO 352.2, Opening of Leicester Central Police Station, Sep. 1932, 10-13; BCA Bham Corp Docs F/2, Opening of the Central Police Station and Offices, Steelhouse Lane, Birmingham (Birmingham, 1933), 12-14; \textit{New Central Fire Station: Souvenir of the Opening Ceremony} (Birmingham, 1935); A. Gooseman, ‘Urban improvement schemes – Leicester’, \textit{Town Planning Review}, XVI (1934-35), 221-6.}

\section*{INTERGOVERNMENTAL NETWORKS}

The possession of data and control over its collection and dissemination was a powerful resource deployed within the administration of municipal police and fire services between the 1870s and late 1930s. This was, in part, predicated on legal authority embedded within national statutes, as well as local conventions and peculiarities. The Home Office was dependent upon the municipality to record and submit criminal statistics. But since Home Office knowledge of local criminal justice was exposed to the statistical manipulations of successive chief constables, as they sought to improve their organisational resources and remuneration during the first four decades of the twentieth-century, better systems and controls were desirable. Furthermore, the absence of any centrally determined fire statistics increased the central government’s dependence on the Watch Committee for local data, and on professional associations for information collated for internal purposes, rather than as a response to...
The fire policy community, consisting of interdependent local and professional institutions, was consequently reinforced by the absence of central information on local fire protection.

Access to information was influenced by the creation and modification of distinct urban networks sensitive to urban expansion and intergovernmental interactions. Of course, 'the flow of information along urban networks evolves over time and is not a simple function of distance and physical movement.' Information was also circulated through non-physical networks, including centrally determined knowledge expressed through Home Office circulars, the publication of Judicial Returns, and the annual reports of the Inspectors of Constabulary. Other networks were locally driven and reflected relationships between watch committees and chief officials. Deputations of councillors and officials visited exhibitions to impart and obtain technical and administrative knowledge. Information, and the role of organisational resources in mobilising the collection and dissemination of data, was, therefore, central to the administration of both services, acting as a linking process between interested institutions. The emergence of central information collation agencies during the nineteenth century to collect taxes, standardise welfare, prevent and detect crime, protect property rights and register civil identification did not eradicate local dynamism. Information was circulated through both municipal and national networks with central government ultimately dependent on its collation and interpretation locally.

---

120 For example, National Fire Brigades Union Annual Report 1914, 44-63; Institute of Fire Engineers Annual Report 1932, 103-36; Fire & Water, May 1896, 37; May 1898, 35; Jun. 1912, 59; Jun. 1913, 61.


122 Higgs, 'Information', 175-6.
CONCLUSION:
CENTRAL-LOCAL RELATIONS AND URBAN 'POLICING'

Although many local decisions are influenced or indeed guided by the central government, the question of the distribution of power in and around the local council still arises. As long as the local government does in fact decide on problems, whether in the final analysis or with a view to making suggestions or proposals to the central government, the question of power does arise at the local level.

J. Blondel and R. Hall (1967)

THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF CENTRAL-LOCAL RELATIONS

The recurring theme within late nineteenth and early twentieth-century central-local relations, at least within the context of urban 'policing,' was that of interdependency. Neither central nor local government wholly dominated the administration of either the police or fire services between the 1870s and the outbreak of war in 1938. In this sense Rhodes' model of power-dependence withstands the rigours of historical analysis. The dispersal of administrative power throughout the British polity created a system of strong central government, but equally of strong municipal government. Police and fire departments not only shared the common objective of protecting against the risks of modern urban society, but also deployed similar strategies through a shared perception of the division of urban space.

Both Watch Committees placed remarkable emphasis on the importance of internal discipline, obedience and (self-) regulation, stressing the pivotal leadership role of the chief official. They also placed equal emphasis on the importance of decentralising operational authority as both cities continued to expand, adopting the principle of district stations during the second-half of the nineteenth-century, and experimenting with new technologies during the inter-war years. That the expansion of municipal services was similarly evident in transport policy, traffic control, council housing and public works during the inter-war years is further evidence of the interdependence of central-local relations.

1 J. Blondel and R. Hall, 'Conflict, decision-making and the perceptions of local councillors', Political Studies, XV (1967), 322.
2 On municipal expansion into these services, amongst others, during the inter-war years, A. Briggs, History of Birmingham Vol. II (Oxford, 1952), 248-63.
Funds were increasingly provided from the Exchequer, yet service delivery remained a quintessentially local responsibility. This ultimately contributed to the celebration of local government's centenary and local 'best practice' in the mid-1930s.  

Concern at the level of civic competence in administering public services was widespread from the 1890s, particularly in view of the decline in the numbers of large manufacturing proprietors on the Town Council in northern England. The withdrawal of traditional upper middle-class socio-economic elites from municipal life was the consequence of the diffusion of transport networks, their physical movement to the outlying suburbs and industrial villages, challenges to specifically local businesses, and the 'ever more complicated and irksome' practice of municipal negotiations and standing orders. Arguments that there was a 'social decline' in urban elites from the 1880s have, however, been challenged. Work on the Black Country, Norwich, Lancashire, and the Midlands has demonstrated that leading businessmen and social elites continued to serve on local councils. Although there was a greater proportion of less-wealthy elites and small property owners in the years leading up to the 1930s, 'social substance' was an increasingly marginal characteristic required for civic service. Moreover, the endurance of small-scale manufacturing in London and many Midland cities into the 1910s and beyond, as well as the increasing diversity of local economic activity, suggests that a sizeable proportion of manufacturers and diverse social elites retained their local identities and loyalties, and

---


7 Trainor, 'Decline', 33.
this was invariably reflected in their participation, in both a permanent or part-time capacity, in civic life.  

Similarly, the suggestion that the complexity of municipal administration and the increasing frequency of central-local and professional interactions contributed to a decline in the quality of the municipal cadre from the 1880s requires further reassessment. This thesis has proposed that the increasing complexity of work demanded the interaction of elected members and paid officials with the former group sharing a significant degree of administrative knowledge and specialised expertise with the latter. The wealth and social prestige of traditional upper middle-class elites did not automatically denote a higher standard of public service. Indeed the structure and resource-allocation of modern municipal government demanded additional skills beyond wealth and social networks, particularly as the extension of the municipal franchise during the late 1860s weakened the control of existing lower middle-class ratepayers. Local and technical knowledge, organisation, an ability to communicate with a variety of social classes and professional groups, and an awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of contemporary local government, were of greater relevance. An ability to connect with the local electorate, which invariably provided feedback on policy-making, was an additional skill demanded of civic elites.

Notwithstanding this complexity, by the 1930s civic elites, notably in non-county boroughs and smaller units of local government, were criticised for their lack of leadership, experience and technical knowledge of modern public administration. With an inherent desire to cut costs to appease disgruntled ratepayers, many councillors were singled out for their opposition to reform and investment, a recurring theme within modern reviews of the police and fire services. The inadequacies of civic elites were claimed to be acute in those services deemed 'national and onerous'.

---

This led central government to propose either national or regional approaches to service delivery in order to bypass inefficient units of administration, improve central control and boost the efficiency and productivity of modern local services.\footnote{J. Davis, 'Central government and the towns', in Daunton (ed.), Cambridge Urban, 280. This was a similar argument of notable contemporary academics: W. A. Robson, 'The central domination of local government', Political Quarterly, IV (1933), 85-104; G. D. H. Cole, 'The future of local government', Political Quarterly, XII (1941), 405-18; H. Finer, English Local Government, 3\textsuperscript{rd} ed. (London, 1946), 116-78.} The Royal Commission on Local Government, reporting in 1929, advocated the benefits of 'tactful and harmonious co-operation' between local authorities to mobilise resources regionally in tackling such problems as drainage, river pollution and sewerage. This, in conjunction with industrial depression and rate revenue shortages, contributed to the spread of borough extensions during the 1930s and the emergence of an alleged 'mutual antagonism' between county and county borough, with the counties deploring the loss of wealth and prestige during a decade of heavy agricultural and industrial derating.\footnote{Final Report of the Royal Commission on Local Government, P.P. 1929 (3436), XV, 35-7; B. Keith-Lucas and P. Richards, A History of Local Government in the Twentieth Century (London, 1978), 136-7; Finer, English, 120-5; V. Lipman, 'The development of areas and boundary changes, 1889-1939', in C. H. Wilson (ed.), Essays on Local Government (Oxford, 1945), 25-66; K. Young and N. Rao, Local Government Since 1945 (Oxford, 1997), 13-14; for a counter to Young and Rao's 'mutual antagonism' argument, S. Ewen, "Mutual antagonism'? An analysis of the relationship between Nottingham city and county council in the interim development of Clifton housing estate, 1943-51', Midland History, XXV (2000), 162-79.}

This thesis has demonstrated that civic elites continued to play pivotal administrative roles within the police and fire services. Many of the rules and conventions of municipal administration remained similar between the 1870s and 1930s. For example, the committee structure of municipal government provided the administrative link between the two services. The Watch Committee remained a pivotal member of the central, local and professional policy communities throughout the period despite sporadic changes to its size, membership and powers. The proliferation of single-issue sub-committees to deal with the minutiae of administration, particularly during the inter-war years, was a deliberate response to 'the [increasing] volume and complexity' of work.\footnote{K. B. Smellie, A History of Local Government, 5\textsuperscript{th} ed. (London, 1963), 99.} Sub-committees also pursued independent administrative strategies without the prior awareness of the full Committee, as in the case of the Leicester police inquiry in 1934 and the decision to recommend the appointment of policewomen in Leicester despite overwhelming opposition from both the Watch Committee and senior officers throughout the 1920s. The Watch Committee was unable to reject the recommendation having
devolved responsibility to a small clique of its members whose legitimacy ultimately forced the full Council to ratify the proposal.

That the Watch Committee was awarded additional responsibilities throughout the period by means of permissive and prescriptive legislation and local standing orders or byelaws demonstrated their enduring influence on policy-making. The extent to which Birmingham and Leicester Watch Committees maintained an important role in both the local community and the national decision-making process depended upon the personalities, skills and experience of their members. The Chairman and other experienced members were well-known individuals, regularly attending civic functions, parades and meetings. The Home Office, in recognising the extensive local knowledge and collective memory of the Watch Committee Chairman, encouraged his attendance at the annual inspection of the Inspectors of Constabulary despite concerns raised within the police profession at the influence of partisanship from the office. The Home Secretary, however, deemed it ‘in the interests of good administration’ for the Inspector to ‘confer personally’ with the Chairman, reinforcing the interdependency between national and local institutions.

Thus, the Watch Committee performed a managerial role within municipal administration, devolving much of the daily operation of both departments to the chief officials, yet retaining responsibility for their overall management. They were forced to respond to local crises such as the loss of public confidence in Major Bond as Birmingham Chief Constable during the late 1870s, Leicester’s Wimbledon Street fire in 1889, the Birmingham Police Strike in 1919, and Leicester’s police inquiry of 1934-35. They also responded to national dilemmas, notably the financial crisis of the early 1920s and 1930s, as well as the need to mobilise resources during the financial and manpower constraints of the First World War.

Where there were indubitable administrative differences between the two services, notably in funding and inspection, these were centrally prescribed and did not detract from specifically local attempts to seek alternative strategies. For example, chief officers conducted regular drills and inspections of the

---


CONCLUSION

firemen, including quarterly inspections of their uniform and a bi-annual assessment of brigade property, whilst both Watch Committees had instituted schemes of annual brigade inspections by the 1920s.17 Birmingham combined its inspection with inter-station competitions from 1924 to publicly demonstrate its Brigade's efficiency.18 At its annual inspection and competition at Handsworth Park in 1926, for example, the Lord Mayor, civic dignitaries, and a large gathering of 'enthusiastic citizens' witnessed 'an extremely instructive display of fire fighting apparatus.'19 Leicester's first inspection in September 1898 was conducted by leading local and professional elites in front of nearly 10,000 spectators.20 Such spectacles had a broader purpose than maintaining brigade efficiency. They were also civic functions deliberately designed to project a specific civic identity and represent broad public support for institutional protection. The enduring relevance of a distinctive municipal culture into the inter-war years was further evidence of the continued importance of the municipality and the projection of its administrative power to a wider audience. This counters the argument that civic culture was in absolute decline by 191421, with the Fire Brigade and Police featuring prominently in civic processions and church parades owing to their disciplined and hierarchical organisation.

The police and fire services remained formally integrated between 1870 and 1938. Although there had been a legal separation of powers in Leicester and Birmingham with the establishment of independent fire brigades in 1872 and 1878 respectively, operationally police forces continued to report fires and assist in controlling crowds assembling at fires. Integration continued into the 1930s as a precautionary wartime measure with police participation in air-raid precautions and anti-gas training.22 The police

18 BCA MS1303/26, Annual Fire Brigade Report 1924.
20 Conservative Councillor Samuel Faire and Colonel Seabroke, editor of the professional journal Fire and Chairman of the National Fire Brigades Union: Fire & Water, Oct. 1898, 125.

245
and fire services were not the sole integrated aspects of municipal administration, and academics agree
that the multifarious and fragmented nature of central-local relations influenced different committees or
departments to have conflicting working relations with central departments. The interdependency of
municipal administration continued into the 1950s and beyond. The increasing congestion of post-war
cities, as a result of the growth in commercial and private transport, posed challenges to road planners
and police authorities alike, whilst town planning and spatial engineering had implications for police,
fire and other local services in suburban housing estates. As noted in the 1930s by leading experts in
fire protection, 'It is of no use to spend money on town-planning unless steps are simultaneously taken
to protect the new homes, and their occupants, against the ravages of fire.' Integrated policy
networks of central, municipal and professional institutions extended throughout 'the national world of
local government' and continued to influence policy-making in post-war British cities.

THE PRESERVATION OF LOCAL AUTONOMY

The autonomy of large county boroughs was reinforced by the presence of relevant intergovernmental
resources within the municipal sphere. Resources were not monopolised by central government
departments, but could be centrally, locally or professionally defined. Central-local relations were not
tempered by a dominant centre and subservient locality. Academics contend that 'it is a mistake to
underplay the unique set of resources' possessed by central government, notably the power to impose
sanctions on the autonomy of local authorities to participate in policy communities and its control of 'a
number of mechanisms for reasserting control where necessary.' Although central departments
evidently had increasing access to a variety of regulatory mechanisms for controlling local 'police'

1938.

control freakery: redefining central-local government relations', British Journal of Politics and International
Relations, V, 3 (2003), 337-8.

24 S. Ewen, 'Policing, planning and the regulation of traffic in post-war Leicester', Midland History, XXVIII
(2003).

25 British Fire Services Association, Professional Fire Brigades Association Annual Report 1932, 19. This quote
was attributable to Sir Vivian Henderson, Conservative MP for Chelmsford (1931-35), who was President of the
Professional Fire Brigades' Association and a former Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Home Office.

26 D. Marsh, D. Richards and M. Smith, Changing Patterns of Governance in the United Kingdom (Basingstoke,
2001), 248; Wilson, 'Unravelling', 323.
administration during the first four decades of the twentieth-century, this did not denote an automatic decline in the level of local influence over policy-making and service delivery.

The Watch Committee worked within relatively narrow regulatory boundaries from the formation of the Inspectors of Constabulary and introduction of the central block grant in 1856. The growth of the professions, with the expert influence of the chief official and the mobilisation of the rank-and-file in support of improved working conditions, both of which accelerated during the first two decades of the twentieth-century, placed additional pressures on Watch Committee autonomy. Notwithstanding these pressures, the role of individual local personalities, the creation of a bi-partisan administrative consensus, the integration of chief officials within local decision-making structures, and the contingency of urban development reinforced the Watch Committee’s pivotal position within the central-local and intra-local government relationships. Intergovernmental relations were characterised by constant negotiations over policy and were reflected through a variety of networks of information and administrative expertise.

The dependency of the Home Office on the municipality for its access to information and administrative knowledge, for example, challenged assumptions about the increasing dominance of central government during and following the First World War. The Home Office frequently requested information on local issues from the Watch Committee, Town Clerk or chief official. Although the production of annual criminal statistics were compulsory from 1856, the Home Office statisticians depended on local collection and recording conventions for their accuracy. The exploitation of information and knowledge-based networks had a major impact not only on urban investment and economic growth, but equally on policy negotiations and the creation of a powerful municipal culture.\(^7\)

The possession of information and control over its recording and dissemination was inextricably linked with the influence of scientific and professional knowledge within policy-making. The ad hoc shift in authority from urban elites with ‘moral worth’ and ‘social status’ to bureaucratic and knowledgeable professional experts, however, misappropriates the elected councillor and alderman with their socio-

CONCLUSION

economic power, rather than their, often extensive, rational and technical knowledge. Scientific and professional knowledge was not solely the domain of the professional expert. Elected members were also knowledgeable experts in their chosen policy networks. Although Watch Committee members, unlike paid officials, did not devote their whole attention to 'police' issues, they evidently spent a considerable amount of their civic time preparing for, and attending, Committee and Sub-Committee meetings, participating in informal discussions and debates with their colleagues and officials, as well as attending related civic and professional functions or inspections.

Indeed, the Watch Committee, unlike other committees, met in secret and did not release its proceedings to the local press, thus it was not immediately open to public or Council scrutiny. This underlined the importance of the annual election procedure to ensure that experienced, knowledgeable, respected and trustworthy elites remained members. They were expected to be willing to co-operate with other committees that shared overlapping policy interests, and co-ordinate resources and time with the paid officials at their disposal. Communication, flexibility, and a willingness to share information were essential pre-requisites for successful Watch Committee membership. That annual turnover in its members was slight in both Birmingham and Leicester suggests that the full Council was keen to facilitate a relationship of mutual consent and trust in order to hold the Watch Committee accountable for its policy outcomes. Members were, of course, subject to rigorous internal and external checks through the professional expertise of the chief officials, the regulation of annual inspection and financial scrutiny, and co-ordination of 'national' policies through legal and national procedures. The ultimate legitimacy of the Watch Committee was derived from Parliament and, without the express co-ordination of resources between interested local and national institutions, as well as interested individuals and pressure groups affected by proposed policies, such legitimacy could be withdrawn.

Local and central government's capacity to formulate or implement policies depended on their financial resources. Recent studies have emphasised the impact of 'social capital' on the willingness of the public to participate in 'collective action' through its 'consent' to contribute financially towards the

---

28 This challenges assumptions that 'specialized knowledge' was 'largely unavailable to the urban squire, unless he had the time and inclination to make himself similarly expert.' Garrard, 'Squirearchy', 599; R. J. Morris, 'Governance: two centuries of urban growth', in idem and Trainor (eds.), Urban Governance, 9.
CONCLUSION

delivery of public services.\textsuperscript{29} This relationship of ‘trust’ ultimately extended into the institutions of local and central government. Academics note that democratic renewal is contingent upon trust between ‘the multifarious agencies of local governance.’\textsuperscript{30} The increasing financial support provided by the Exchequer towards the delivery of local services, through block grants, the assigned revenues or fixed-rate loans, justified central government’s demands for local authorities to earn the centre’s trust by maintaining minimum standards of service delivery and being committed to ‘efficient, remunerative and controlled spending.’\textsuperscript{31}

This was not a one-way relationship. Likewise, local authorities had to trust that central government would provide the necessary funds and legal powers to maintain such standards, as well as accept the presence of administrative leeway in reinforcing local heterogeneity. By focusing on general questions of economic efficiency and management between the 1910s and 1930s, central government largely left municipalities to make their own decisions regarding ‘trifling expenditure’ increases for specific areas of ‘policing’ providing that they did not exceed the limits imposed.\textsuperscript{32} This imbued the Watch Committee with greater flexibility to transfer resources across budget headings according to local circumstances and pressure for additional financial resources.

Although loans were negotiated with central departments, namely the Local Government Board and Ministry of Health\textsuperscript{33}, both Watch Committees explored alternative sources of finance until the financial crisis of the 1930s empowered the Ministry of Health to refuse all non-essential projects.\textsuperscript{34} That both Birmingham and Leicester constructed new central stations during the 1930s, costing £73,000 and £70,000 respectively, indicated that local administration consistently exerted pressure on central decision-making networks despite the deflationary policy pursued by the National Government. The Ministry of Health provided the funds, guaranteed against future local revenues, yet the people and

\textsuperscript{29} Daunton, Trusting Leviathan, 8-11.
\textsuperscript{30} Wilson, ‘Redefining’, 341; S. Goss, Making Local Governance Work (Basingstoke, 2001), 7.
\textsuperscript{31} Daunton, Trusting Leviathan, 269-85.
\textsuperscript{33} The Local Government Board was restructured as the Ministry of Health in June 1919.
skills were locally obtained. Central-local interdependence, therefore, was a combination of interactions between central, local and professional interests, rather than a centrally imposed discourse, with the level of municipal autonomy relative to the extent of organisation, experience and expertise within interested institutions.

**'POLICING' THE CITY**

Historians stress market failure, perceived or otherwise, as a factor in the emergence of an active municipal culture during the second-half of the nineteenth-century. When left to market forces, services responding to the urban problems of pollution, public health, poverty, education and public order, were exposed to 'increasing negative externalities' that restricted the emergence of a co-ordinated municipal strategy to regulate urban development and expansion.\(^{35}\) The erosion of the authority of parsimonious shopkeepers and small traders during the 1860s and 1870s through a combination of collective action, state intervention, electoral reform, and a wider tax base, contributed to a transfer of responsibilities from private control to municipal enterprise and an expansion in public investment. In return for his consent, the ratepayer expected the municipality to maintain high public standards and work ethic, and to 'police' itself by scrutinising public expenditure and publishing annual accounts and council minutes in the local press.

Urban 'policing,' therefore, extended beyond the traditional boundaries of preventing and detecting crime, and referred equally to the maintenance of public order, the protection of private property, and the embodiment of high standards of civility, public decency and civic pride. Although the police and fire services were not profit-making ventures, they had inherent economic concerns with protecting the urban economic and social fabric, reducing the risks to local insurance premiums, and protecting the system of 'municipal capitalism' embedded within other urban improvement schemes, notably the public utilities of the late Victorian period.\(^{36}\)

---

\(^{35}\) Morris, 'Governance', 4.

The beat constable and fireman were subjected to the rigours of 'policing' from senior officers, the Watch Committee and the public itself. They represented the public face of urban 'policing' and were expected to uphold the traditions of discipline, public service and the localised 'municipal culture' through their conduct and appearance. Offences against the disciplinary code were invariably harsh owing to the interdependence of 'policing' and civic authority. The conventions of urban 'policing' were embedded within the structures of municipal administration, and the rules governing public behaviour and administrative procedure were reinforced through a combination of local and national directives.

The organisation and 'policing' of authority pervaded the modern industrial city. The creation of local police forces in the expanding towns and cities of the 1830s and 1840s was deemed to be the foundation for the incorporated municipal corporations. Policing, order and discipline underpinned the successful delivery of local services. Public consent, expressed through the annual elections and payment of rates, was similarly dependent on the public projection of civility and order. The police was not, as has traditionally been considered by social historians including Robert Storch, a deliberate tool for social control employed by the state. Local and national policy-makers 'steered' the police and fire brigade into maintaining urban order, the presence of whom was often welcomed by diverse social groups. 'Policing' was a multi-faceted practice dependent on the interaction of local, national and professional institutions, which also incorporated the public through service delivery. Strategies and operations resulted from the negotiation of resources and skills at the local and national levels. Central government appointed agencies to oversee service delivery, yet was ultimately dependent on the trust forged between the Watch Committee, chief official and general public in maintaining order, and local interpretations of what constituted an 'efficient' standard of service.


38 Morris, 'Governance', 10; R. A. W. Rhodes, Understanding Governance: Policy Networks, Governance, Reflexivity and Accountability (Buckingham, 1997), 54.

'Policing' has always been an inherently political activity. Police policy-making demanded the interaction of political and administrative institutions, and the action of officers often reflected the policy outcomes of such interaction. The majority of 'police' duties were inimically related to political activity, fusing the 'high political' function of regulating political dissidence with the 'low political' function of maintaining order and promoting public decency and civility. The issue of accountability, in conjunction with changing funding relationships, reinforced the politicised nature of 'policing,' with policemen accountable to the law, enshrined in the doctrine of constabulary independence. That local government continued to share the financial burden of urban 'policing' was used as a counter to this argument. Local authorities contributed towards half of the policeman's pay and uniform, and covered a significant proportion of other administrative, operational and capital costs, which, whilst shared more equally between central and local government from 1918, reinforced the constable's administrative accountability to the Watch Committee during the inter-war years.

**CHALLENGES TO LOCAL AUTONOMY**

The independence of local government was increasingly challenged during the period with local administration identified as an increasing burden on the national purse. Historians and contemporaries alike have identified the first four decades of the twentieth-century as a period of flux for local government, witnessing a waning influence on central decision-making and, paradoxically, a 'golden age' of new or expanded responsibilities. By 1900 the majority of local services, including public health and medicine, elementary education, housing, town and country planning, road maintenance,

---


CONCLUSION

public utilities, policing and fire-fighting, were related to wider civic concerns about the ‘policing’ and ‘education’ of an expanding and increasingly amorphous urban society.42

Although local government remained responsible for the delivery of these services, by 1938 its control was increasingly subject to the regulatory powers of central government.43 The Home Secretary, for example, obtained extensive powers dealing with force strengths, pay and conditions of service in return for an expansion of the annual block grant under the Police Act, 1919.44 The creation of an independent Home Office Fire Division in 1936 preceded the introduction of inspection, central co-ordination and funding for air-raid precautions, along with the formation of the Auxiliary Fire Service and, ultimately, the wartime nationalisation of the service in 1941.45 The Electricity Commission, meanwhile, was established in 1919 to co-ordinate energy resources nationally, and the creation of the Central Electricity Board in 1926 extended this process, transferring the generating side of the industry to national regulation.46

The police and fire services were increasingly placed in the broader context of expanding central authority and complex central-local interactions. The Ministers of Health and Transport were authorised in 1929 to reduce the block grant payable to fund local health or road building schemes if satisfied that a local authority had failed to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of efficiency, or if its expenditure was deemed ‘excessive and unreasonable.’47 Poor Law Boards were replaced with a standardised system of public assessment, closely supervised by the Ministry of Health, with unemployment relief transferred to a central agency, the Unemployment Assistance Board, in 1934.48

The consolidation of the local government system during the 1930s, in combination with pressures to standardise national pay scales for public sector workers, including policemen, firemen and schoolteachers, forced municipalities to improve communicative networks between committees and

43 Davis, ‘Central government’, 282.
48 Keith-Lucas and Richards, Local Government, 44-5.

253
chief officials. The Town Clerk, in particular, emerged as the municipality’s main co-ordinating expert and exploited his extensive knowledge of local government law and procedure, his networks with other municipalities and central government departments, and his attendance (or that of his departmental clerks) at committee meetings, to reinforce his dominant position within municipal administration. 49

Much of this central intervention was, however, not new, nor did it signal a crisis of control for local government. The police service was subject to similar national controls from 1856, with the Home Secretary empowered to withhold the annual grant – by refusing to award a certificate of efficiency – if a local authority was deemed to be maintaining an inefficient police force. This constrained neither Birmingham nor Leicester, which often sought additional manpower resources to improve their operational efficiency. That this procedure was a last resort policy measure, rarely being utilised by the Home Secretary in the twentieth-century, spelled the end of the certification process in 1929. 50 The majority of police forces were ably administered locally to justify the end of this outdated regulatory mechanism and the retention of the annual block grant during the 1930s.

The fire service, on the other hand, was regulated from within through a combination of general orders, municipal regulations and professional standards subjecting professional brigades to a rigorous level of accountability not enforced in police or voluntary brigades. It was not until the mid-1930s that central government attempts to regulate the service on a regional and national basis were successful, and these were invariably couched in terms of the increasing threat of incendiary fires from aerial attack. 51 Regional co-ordination schemes were late arriving in the West Midlands during the First World War, whilst the East Midlands was not deemed to be under any threat to justify its own scheme. Central regulation, therefore, had little impact on either Birmingham or Leicester until the creation of regional schemes of fire protection in 1941. 52

49 Smellie, History, 95-106.
Municipal administration was a contingent process influenced by the interplay of the various municipal, national and professional institutions involved in service delivery. It was also contingent on the nature and development of the urban environment. Paradoxically, the urban environment was itself dependent on the interplay of these institutions. The high level of continuity within the nature of municipal administration and central-local power relations reinforced this interdependency, creating relatively stable administrative networks regulated by institutions with similar normative preferences. Administrative power was, thus, much more than an abstract concept used by political scientists and contemporaries to explore metaphorical central-local relations. Substantive historical research demonstrates the active and participatory nature of administrative power between and within such institutions. Power-dependence should ultimately be substituted with 'power-interdependence' to demonstrate the multifarious historical relationships at work within municipal administration. Further research into the nature of central-local relations and municipal administration between Midland and northern English county boroughs, for example, or between the county borough and non-county borough units of local government, would raise the profile of interdisciplinary research and explore differences in the socio-economic urban climate or legal powers of different local units.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

BIRMINGHAM'S BOUNDARY EXTENSIONS, 1838-1931

Source: Adapted from R. M. Pritchard, *Housing and the Spatial Structure of the City* (Cambridge, 1976), 193.
## APPENDIX C

### POLICE AND FIRE BRIGADE STRENGTHS, 1871-1939

#### (I) POLICE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1871</th>
<th>1891</th>
<th>1901</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1939</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>975</td>
<td>1887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Police – Population ratio</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>859.5</td>
<td>714.8</td>
<td>654.0</td>
<td>539.3</td>
<td>527.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>290.9</td>
<td>262.6</td>
<td>240.2</td>
<td>217.5</td>
<td>207.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### (II) FIRE BRIGADE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1891</th>
<th>1901</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1939</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Firemen – Population ratio</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>17703.7</td>
<td>8046.2</td>
<td>4264.0</td>
<td>4110.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>5468.8</td>
<td>6057.1</td>
<td>7827.6</td>
<td>5265.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX D

#### REAL WAGES IN BIRMINGHAM AND LEICESTER (AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS), 1905-26

*(July 1914 = 100)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>1905 (92)</th>
<th>1914 (100)</th>
<th>1917 (180)</th>
<th>1926 (170)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>Leicester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Constable</td>
<td>98.7</td>
<td>98.7</td>
<td>91.9</td>
<td>86.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fireman</td>
<td>85.1</td>
<td>88.5</td>
<td>79.7</td>
<td>87.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering Labourer</td>
<td>68.1</td>
<td>68.1</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>54.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitters &amp; Turner</td>
<td>122.6</td>
<td>115.8</td>
<td>102.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron Moulder</td>
<td>129.4</td>
<td>129.4</td>
<td>108.1</td>
<td>102.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing Compositor</td>
<td>117.5</td>
<td>114.1</td>
<td>101.3</td>
<td>97.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boot &amp; Shoe Clicker</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>98.7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>81.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framework Knitter</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>98.7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>87.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor Mechanic</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Cost of living included in parenthesis]

THE WATCH COMMITTEE'S DUTIES AND POWERS

(I) BIRMINGHAM WATCH COMMITTEE, DECEMBER 1874:¹

In addition to the power relating to the Police Force given by law, the committee have power to transact such other business as may be from time to time, committed to its care by the Council.

1. To have the care and management of all the Police stations and section houses and to cause the same to be kept in good condition and direct all necessary repairs.

2. To make provision for the refreshment of the Recorder during the holding of the Borough Sessions.

3. To take charge of, and examine the Returns furnished from time to time by the Justice's Clerk, the fees received by them, and to make such regulations with reference thereto as may from time to time be deemed advisable.

4. To carry into execution the powers of the Council as the Prison Authority under the provisions of "The Prison Act, 1865" and to examine the Prison accounts.

5. To carry out that part of the Report of the General Purposes Committee presented to the Council on the 5th August 1873, relating to the regulations of omnibuses...

6. Whenever there may be a greater number of Prisoners in the Borough Gaol than can be accommodated, to ascertain and report to the Council the terms upon which a contract ... may be entered into with the Justices or any County or Borough for the maintenance and care of such supernumerary Prisoners.

7. To carry into effect the Bye Laws for the regulation of Hackney Carriages.

8. To license all Proprietors and Drivers of Hackney Carriages, etc.

9. To carry into effect the provisions of the Act to regulate the use of Steam Whistles on certain manufactories.

10. To carry into effect the provisions of the Act to amend the law concerning the making, keeping and carriage of gunpowder and compositions of an explosive nature.

11. To issue licenses under "The Petroleum Acts, 1862, 1868" in such form and subject to such conditions as to the mode of storage, as to the nature of the goods with which Petroleum may be stored, as to the testing of such Petroleum from time to time, and generally as to the safe keeping of Petroleum, as they may deem expedient for ensuring the public safety.

12. To instruct the Borough Surveyor to erect the necessary works for giving effect to the provisions of the Birmingham Improvement acts, for preventing obstructions in the streets during public processions, and in any case when the streets are likely to be thronged or liable to be obstructed.

13. To establish and maintain an efficient Fire Brigade for the Borough.

¹ Birmingham City Archives, Watch Committee Minutes, 1 Dec. 1874, 81-5.
In addition to the general statutory duties and powers devolving upon them with regard to the management, control and direction of the Police Force be and they are hereby authorised:

1. To direct the carrying out of the provisions of The Prevention of Cruelty to and Protection of Children Act, 1889.

2. To consider all claims which may be made against the Corporation as the Police Authority under the Riot (Damages) Act, 1886, and any Regulations made by the Secretary of State under such Act with power to fix such compensation as appears to them just and with authority in their discretion to resist any claims which they may regard as illegal or excessive. The Committee from time to time to report to the Council as to their action under this statute as occasion may require.

3. To negotiate or direct arbitration with the County Council as to the amount to be paid by the Corporation for the acquisition of the Belgrave Police Station under The Leicester Extension Act, 1891.

4. To give effect and in accordance with the Standing Orders of the Council in that behalf to the provisions of The Local Government Act, 1888, and the Theatres Regulation Act in respect of the Licensing of Houses or places for the public performance of stage plays.

5. To direct the carrying out of the provisions of The Public Health Act, 1875, and any Acts incorporated therewith as to the granting of Licences for Hackney Carriages and Drivers and for Omnibuses and the Drivers and Conductors thereof; also of the provisions of the Tramways Acts with respect to the licensing of Tramway Cars, Drivers and Conductors.

6. To prepare and submit to the Council a draft of a revised Code of Bye-Laws as to Hackney Carriages and Drivers and or revised table of fares.

7. To exercise supervision and control over Cabmen’s Shelters within the Borough.

8. To direct the carrying out of section 85 of The Local Government Act, 1888, relating to Regulations for Bicycles etc and to direct prosecutions for offences under the said section.

9. To direct the carrying out of the provisions of the Petroleum and Explosives Acts as to the granting of licenses for the storage of Petroleum and Explosives.

10. To undertake the direction, management and control of the Fire Brigade.

11. To undertake the management and control of the Public Mortuary at the rear of the Town Hall.

12. To act as a Committee of the Council as the Urban Sanitary Authority for the purpose of managing the lighting of the town.

---

2 City of Leicester, *Published Minutes of Council*, 9 Nov. 1892, 505-7.
1. In addition to the general statutory duties and powers devolving upon the Watch Committee with regard to the management, control, and direction of the Police Force:

2. To carry out the provisions of the following Acts and any amendments thereto and any Regulations, Orders or byelaws made thereunder:
   (a) The Public Health Acts, the Town Police Clauses Acts 1847 and 1889, and the Leicester Corporations Acts 1913 and 1921 (with respect to hackney carriages and the drivers and conductors thereof, granting of licences, and the inspection and certification of taximeters, subject to the provision of the Roads Act, 1920).
   (b) The Road Traffic Acts.
   (c) The Petroleum and Explosives Acts (as to granting licences for the storage of petroleum and explosives).
   (d) Section 85 of the Local Government Act, 1888 (regulations for bicycles, etc.) and to direct prosecutions for offences thereunder.
   (e) The Leicester Improvement Act, 1846, the Dogs Acts, 1871 to 1928, and the regulation made under the Dogs Order, 1906, by the Council on the 29th January, 1907.
   (f) Steam Whistles Act, 1872 (regulating the use of steam whistles and trumpets in certain manufactories).
   (g) The Road Transport Lighting Act, 1927.
   (h) The Pharmacy and Poisons Acts.
   (i) The Cinematograph Act, 1909.
   (j) The Celluloid and Cinematograph Act, 1922.
   (l) The Factory and Workshops Acts (relating to the provisions of means of escape in case of fire; and to give certificates under Section 14 of the Act of 1901, under the hand of the Chairman or the Town Clerk for the time being).
   (m) The Shops Acts (with authority from time to time to appoint Inspectors for the purposes of the Acts, and to report and make recommendations to the Council with respect to the making of any closing or other Order thereunder).
   (n) The Hairdressers and Barbers Shops (Sunday Closing) Act, 1930.
   (o) The Fabrics (Misdescription) Act, 1913.
   (p) The Children and Young Persons Acts (except for any duties devolving upon the Education or Health Committees).

3. To execute all the duties and powers of the Council with respect to:
   (a) The licensing of gang masters.
   (b) Pawnbrokers' certificates.
   (c) The licensing of dealers in game.

---

3 Ibid, 9 Nov. 1934, 29-31.
(d) The licensing of passage brokers and emigrant runners.
(e) The licensing of street porters.
(f) Servants' registries.
(g) The registration of dealers in old metal and marine stores.
(h) The regulation of street traffic and the driving of animals in streets and to consider and deal with all cases of obstruction of the public thoroughfares.
(i) The prevention when required of obstruction of streets in times of public processions, etc., and in any case when streets are thronged or liable to be obstructed to make Orders under Section 21 of the Town Police Clauses Act, 1847, or Section 46 of the Road Traffic Act, 1930.
(j) Preventing overcrowding by carts, etc., when necessary by rules made under Section 36 of the Leicester Improvement, Drainage and Markets Act, 1868.
(k) The carrying or distribution of pictures, prints, boards, placards, or notices in streets under regulation 42 in the Schedule of the Leicester Improvement, Drainage and Markets Act, 1868.
(l) Street collections under regulations made by the Committee as the Police Authority.
(m) Securing ample safe and convenient means of ingress to and egress from places of public resort.
(n) Hackney carriage drivers shelters.

4. To consider all claims which may be made against the Corporation as the Police Authority, under the Riot (Damages) Act, 1886, and any Regulations made by the Secretary of State under such Act, with power to fix such compensation as appears to them just, and with authority, in their discretion, to resist any claims which they may regard as illegal or excessive.

5. To give effect, under and in accordance with the Standing Orders of the Council in that behalf, to the provisions of the Local Government Act, 1888, and the Theatres Regulation Act, 1843, in respect of the licensing of houses or places for the public performance of stage plays; also to undertake the duties of the Council with respect to the registration of theatrical employers and persons exhibiting or training performing animals.

6. To undertake the direction, management and control of the Fire Brigade and to control the administration of the Fire Brigade Pension Fund.

7. To act as a Committee of the Council acting as the Urban Sanitary Authority for the purpose of managing the lighting of the city.

8. To consider the question of the establishment of a Municipal Garage and to report to the Council generally on the subject.

9. To give general instructions under the Army Act (as amended from time to time) with respect to billeting soldiers, and the preparation of lists of persons liable to furnish carriages and animals.

10. To submit from time to time their proceedings to the Council for confirmation, so far as the same require confirmation [usually quarterly].

11. To authorise the fixing of the Common Seal to such licences and certificates granted by the Committee which it is necessary to seal.
### APPENDIX F

#### CHIEF OFFICERS

(I) BIRMINGHAM CHIEF FIRE OFFICERS 1879-1940

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Dates Served</th>
<th>Age on Appointment</th>
<th>Previous Positions</th>
<th>Reason for Leaving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. R. Tozer</td>
<td>1879-1906</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Supt Bristol</td>
<td>Deceased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. R. Tozer jnr.</td>
<td>1906-1940</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Second Officer Birmingham</td>
<td>Retired</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(II) BIRMINGHAM CHIEF CONSTABLES, 1860-1941

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Dates Served</th>
<th>Age on Appointment</th>
<th>Previous Positions</th>
<th>Reason for Leaving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G. Glossop</td>
<td>1860-1876</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Superintendent Birmingham</td>
<td>Retired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major E. Bond</td>
<td>1876-1881</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Cardiff CC</td>
<td>Resigned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Farndale</td>
<td>1882-1899</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Leicester CC</td>
<td>Retired ill-health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Rafter</td>
<td>1899-1935</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Royal Irish Constabulary Inspector (RIC)</td>
<td>Deceased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Moriarty</td>
<td>1936-1941</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Assistant CC Birmingham, RIC Inspector</td>
<td>Retired</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### (III) LEICESTER CHIEF FIRE OFFICERS, 1864-1940

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Dates Served</th>
<th>Age on Appointment</th>
<th>Previous Position</th>
<th>Reason for Leaving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G. Clamp</td>
<td>1864-1871</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Fireman in Metropolitan Fire Brigade Sun Office Fire Brigade</td>
<td>Asked to resign for theft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Johnson</td>
<td>1872-1887</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Superintendent Leicester Sun Office Fire Brigade</td>
<td>Retired ill-health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Swanton</td>
<td>1887-1889</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Fireman in Metropolitan Fire Brigade</td>
<td>Dismissed for incompetence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Ely</td>
<td>1889-1909</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Superintendent Chester Fire Brigade</td>
<td>Retired ill-health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Neal</td>
<td>1909-1938</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Superintendent Grimsby</td>
<td>Retired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Winteringham</td>
<td>1938-1940</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Chief Officer Bristol, Chief Engineer Leeds, Inspector Swansea</td>
<td>Appointed NFS Fire Force Commander</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### (IV) LEICESTER CHIEF CONSTABLES, 1871-1955

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Dates Served</th>
<th>Age on Appointment</th>
<th>Previous Position</th>
<th>Reason for Leaving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J. Farndale</td>
<td>1871-1882</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Chesterfield CC</td>
<td>Birmingham CC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Duns</td>
<td>1882-1894</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Durham CC</td>
<td>Retired ill-health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Lumley</td>
<td>1894-1907</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Superintendent Derbyshire</td>
<td>Retired ill-health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major J. Dalwood</td>
<td>1907-1913</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Deputy CC Kent, RIC Inspector</td>
<td>Sheffield CC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Allen</td>
<td>1913-1928</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Det. Superintendent Leicester</td>
<td>Retired ill-health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O. J. B. Cole</td>
<td>1929-1955</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Worcester CC</td>
<td>Retired</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX G
LEICESTER'S POLICE AND FIRE STATIONS C.1914

Source: As Appendix B.

267
TEXT BOUND INTO

THE SPINE
CONTAINS PULLOUTS
APPENDIX H

LEICESTER’S POLICE BOX SYSTEM, C.1933

- Police Box.
- Police House.
- Headquarters.

Source: As Appendix A.
APPENDIX J

BIRMINGHAM'S FIRE STATIONS, C.1938

Source: As Appendix A.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

ARCHIVAL SOURCES

Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO)
[Unreferenced]

Chief Constables' Association Annual Conference Reports, 1913-38
Chief Constables' Conference Minute Book c.1920s
County Chief Constables' Conference Minute Book 1922-1958

Birmingham City Archives (incorporating Birmingham City Library Local Studies Collection) (BCA)

Birmingham Corporation [partly unreferenced]:

Watch Committee Minute Books, 1860-1940
Judicial Sub-Committee Minute Books 1890-1936
Police Sub-Committee Minute Books 1936-1940
Finance and Fire Brigade Sub-Committee Minute Books 1878-1940
L63.8 Birmingham Corporation Annual Abstract of Accounts 1860-1940
L34.3: Borough Council Minute Books, 1870-1938

Birmingham Fire Brigade:

MS1303/1-18: Chief Officer's Report Books, 1879-1935
MS1303/26-9: Annual Reports 1921-39
MS1303/38-9: Annual Reports 1880-1916
MS1303/40-52: General Orders 1879-1940
MS1303/76-9: Defaulters' Books 1879-1935
MS1303/172-212: Record of Fires 1868-1939
MS1303/220-52: Press Cuttings 1878-1938
MS1303/273: Tozer Family Records 1895-1910
MS1303/277-81: Reports and Minutes Associated with the Extension of the City Boundary, 1911
MS1303/284-91: Records relating to Fire Insurance
MS1303/300-51: Personnel Files
MS1303/362: Souvenir Programme of Opening of the New Central Fire Station, Dec. 1935

Birmingham Police:

L14.11: Annual Church Parade of Birmingham City Police 1937
L42.2: Birmingham City Police E Division Athletic Club Programme 1922
LF42.2: Birmingham City Police Sports Proceeds and Donors 1928
C/T: Annual Police Concert Programme 1879-1999 (8 volumes)
LP42.2: Concert in Aid of the City Orchestra by Birmingham City Police Band 1928
BHAM CORP DOCS: Miscellaneous Police and Fire Records

Birmingham University Library Manuscripts Collection (BULMC)
[Unreferenced]

Association of Municipal Corporations Minutes
Association of Municipal Corporations Annual Reports
Association of Municipal Corporations Police Committee Minutes
British Fire Services Association (BFSA)  
[Unreferenced]

National Fire Brigades' Union/Association Annual Reports, 1888-1938  
National Fire Brigades' Union/Association Executive Council Minute Books, 1888-1912  
National Fire Brigades' Union/Association Midland District Minute Books, 1912-38  
Professional Fire Brigades' Association Annual Reports, 1909-38  
Widows and Orphans' Benevolent Fund Annual Reports, 1892-1938

Fire Service College Library (FSCL)

TH911.R: British Fire Prevention Committee Red Books and Annual Reports, 1897-1920  
FSC/1-32: Tozer Collection, 1862-1936

Institute of Fire Engineers (IFE)  
[Unreferenced]

IFE Minutes of Council Meetings  
IFE Annual Conference Reports, 1918-40  
IFE Letter Book, 1918-23

Leicestershire Record Office (LRO)

Leicester Corporation:  
CM42/9-33: Watch Committee Minute Books, 1863-1940  
CM1: Borough Council Minute Books, 1870-1938  
L352.2 Leicester Corporation Annual Abstract of Accounts

Leicester Police

DE3831/265-75: Chief Constable's Special Order Books, 1882-1930  
DE3831/276-6: Memo Books, 1907-1920  
DE3831/341-5: Miscellaneous Records, 1881-1960  
DE5491/259: Memos for Chief Constable from Watch Committee, 1928-30  
L352.2: Annual Reports, 1870-1929  
DE5491/260-7: Annual Reports, 1930-40  
DE5491/285-6: General Order Books, 1930-36  
DE5491/296-7: Standing Order Books, 1930-40  
DE5491/307-63: Miscellaneous Records  
DE5491/334-41: Personnel Records  
25D73/587-91: Account Books and Superannuation Ledgers, 1882-1944

Leicester Fire Brigade:  
10D58/1-54: Central Fire Station Call Room Occurrence Books, 1888-1938  
10D58/136-64: Chief Fire Officer's Letter Books, 1897-1939  
10D58/165-7: Agreements with private and other districts to extend fire protection, 1927-41  
10D58/172: Fire Brigade Sub-Committee Minute Book, 1909-31  
10D58/173: General Orders, 1909-38  
10D58/176-9: Requisition Books  
10D58/180-98: Annual Reports, 1928-39  
L352.2: Annual Reports, c.1920s  
25D73/571: Fire Brigade Pension Fund Register of Contributions 1909-34
Other Records:

DE3233: Records of the National Fire Brigades Union North Eastern District 1910-69
16D58: Records of the Leicester Branch of the National Council of Women, 1897-1950

Public Record Office (PRO)

HO45: Home Office Registered Papers, 1839-1979
HO144/22073-6: Central Conference of Chief Constables, 1917-37
HO187: Home Office Fire Brigades' Division and Fire Service Department records
HO158/2-30: Home Office (Police and Fire) Circulars
DSIR4: Department of Scientific and Industrial Research: Building Research Station Correspondence and Papers
DSIR36/4266-8: Department of Scientific and Industrial Research: Files on the British Fire Prevention Committee and related fire prevention records
MUN5: Ministry of Munitions' Fire Protection Advisory Committee Minutes, 1916-19
RECO 1/925: Post-war reconstruction and the fire service

West Midlands Police Museum (WMPM)

Birmingham Police:

1991.2128: Annual Reports, 1876-1945 (10 volumes)
1991.1225-31: General Orders, 1846-1940
1991.354: Watch Committee Reports, 1932-48
1991.356: Watch Committee Minute Books: Resolutions, 1890-1935 (7 volumes)
1991.357: Judicial Sub-Committee Minute Books, 1905-35
1991.358: Fire Brigade and Finance Sub-Committee Minute Books, 1924-34
1991.1480: Register of Police Officers Joining and Leaving, 1906-73
1991.110: Police Sports, 1901-36 (2 volumes)

OFFICIAL PAPERS

Reports of the Inspectors of Constabulary, P.P. 1857-1939

Judicial Statistics of England and Wales, P.P. 1857-1939

Hansard, House of Commons Debates, 1870-1938

Report from the Select Committee appointed to Consider the Expediency of Adopting a more Uniform System of Police in England and Wales and Scotland, P.P. 1852-53 (603), XXXVI

Report from the Select Committee on Fire Protection, P.P. 1867 (471), X

Report of the Select Committee on Local Taxation, P.P. 1870 (353), VIII

Metropolitan Water Supply and Fire Prevention, P.P. 1874 (408), LVII

Report from the Select Committee on Police Superannuation Funds, P.P. 1875 (352), XIII
Copy of Treasury Minute, Containing Regulations for the Administration of the Vote for Police Expenses, P.P. 1876 (403), LXI

Report of the Select Committee on the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, P.P. 1876 (371), XI

Report of the Select Committee on the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, P.P. 1877 (342), XIV

Report from the Select Committee on Police Superannuation Funds, P.P. 1877 (158), XV

Return Showing for each County in Great Britain, for 1875, 1876, 1877, 1878, and 1879, ending the 29th September, the Expenditure on Police; also Amount Paid by Government; Net Expenditure Defrayed by County; and Number of Police, P.P. 1882 (19), LIV

Return of the Cost of the Police in aid of each of the Boroughs in Great Britain of over 100,000 Inhabitants, P.P. 1886 (193), LIII; 1887 (284), LXVII; 1888 (326), LXXXII; 1889 (350), LXI

Memorandum in Explanation of the Police Bill, 1890, P.P. 1890 (6065), LIX

Distribution of Exchequer Contribution towards Police Superannuation, under the Police Bill, 1890, P.P. 1890 (6095), LIX

Return of Scales for Ordinary Pensions adopted under Section 3 of the Police Act, 1890, by Police Authorities in England and Wales, P.P. 1890-91 (142), LXIV

Statement as to the Distribution of Beer and Spirit Duties Proposed in aid of Local Taxation in addition to the amount proposed in aid of Police Superannuation Funds, P.P. 1890 (6113), LXIII

Return for England and Wales, of the Strength of the Various Police Forces; the Number of Pensioners; the number who have left the Force during the past five years; the Number of various ages and periods of service; the annual amount of Pensions; details of income and expenditure of the Police Superannuation Funds for the financial year 1888-89, P.P. 1890 (184), LIX

Report of the Right Hon. G. J. Goschen, President of the Poor Law Board, on the Progressive Increase of Local Taxation, with especial reference to the proportion of local and imperial burdens borne by different classes of real property in the United Kingdom, as compared with similar burdens in other European countries, P.P. 1893-94 (201), LXXVII

Report of the Right Hon. H. H. Fowler, President of the Local Government Board, to the Treasury, on Local Taxation, with especial reference to the proportion of local burdens borne by urban and rural ratepayers, and different classes of real property in England and Wales, P.P. 1893-94 (168), LXXVII

Return of the Number of Ex-Police Constables in the Counties of England and Wales in Receipt of Pensions on 1st January 1889 and 1893, P.P. 1894 (62), LXXI

Return Showing in respect of the Financial year ended 31st March 1891, total amount of the Local Taxation Licences and Probate Duty Grant paid into the Local Taxation (England) Account ... in aid of Police Superannuation Funds, P.P. 1892 (341), LXVIII; P.P. 1893-94 (338), LXXVII; P.P. 1894 (280), LXXIV Part I; P.P. 1895 (334), LXXXIV

Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Secretary of State to Revise the Criminal Portion of the Judicial Statistics, P.P. 1895 (7723), C

Return Showing, for the Financial year 1892-93 ... Net Expenditure Borne by Such Rates on the Police, P.P. 1896 (156), LXXII; P.P. 1896 (376), LXXIII

First Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation: Local Rates in England and Wales, P.P. 1899 (9141), XXXV

Return of Fire Brigades in England, P.P. 1899 (299), LXXXIII, Part I
Report of the Select Committee on Fire Brigades, P.P. 1899 (303), IX

Report of the Select Committee on Fire Brigades, P.P. 1900 (278), VI

Final Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation, P.P. 1901 (638), XXIV

Report from the Select Committee on Protection of Life From Fire, P.P. 1905 (254), VII

Return Relative to Fire Brigades and Fires in England and Wales, for the year 1903, P.P. 1906 (2914), XCVIII

Report of the Departmental Committee Appointed to Inquire into the Accounts of Local Authorities, P.P. 1907 (3614), XXXVII

Return Showing the Number of Persons in the Employ of the London County Council and the Council of Each Metropolitan Borough, and of Each County Borough in England and Wales, at any time during the week ended Saturday, 3rd November, 1906, P.P. 1907 (136), LXXII

Home Office Surveyor of Prisons, Memorandum on the Construction of Police Stations with Plans (London, 1907)

Report from the Select Committee on the Police Forces (Weekly Rest-Day), P.P. 1908 (353), IX

Report from the Select Committee on Police Forces (Weekly Rest-Day), P.P. 1909 (132), VIII

Return Showing the Remuneration Paid to Medical Officers for Attendance on the Police Staff in certain Towns and Districts, P.P. 1911 (273), LXV

Final Report of the Departmental Committee on Local Taxation, P.P. 1912-13 (6304), XXXVIII

Home Office Circulars (Police), A Selection for the Use of the Police of Circulars and Memoranda Issued from the Home Office, in the Years 1885-1912 (HMSO, 1912)

Return Showing to what extent steps have been taken for putting into force the Provisions of the Police (Weekly Rest Day) Act, 1910, and the estimated cost thereof, P.P. 1913 (243), LII

Report of the Departmental Committee on Electric Mains Explosions, P.P. 1914 (7481), XXIX

Final Report of the Departmental Committee on Local Taxation, P.P. 1914 (7315), XL


Report of the Committee appointed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to Conduct Experiments to test the Value of Dry Powder Fire Extinguishers, as compared with Water and Other “First-aid” Appliances for Extinguishing or Effectively Controlling Fires as are likely to be caused by Bombs, P.P. 1916 (8250), IX

Defence of the Realm Regulations Consolidated and Revised (HMSO, 1918)


Minutes of Evidence of the Committee on the Police Service of England, Wales and Scotland, P.P. 1920 (874), XXII

275
Return Showing the Age of all Pensioners of the various Police Authorities in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, under 50, from 50 to 55, 55 to 60, 60 to 65, 65 to 70, 70 to 75, and over, and the Rates of Pension, P.P. 1919 (241), XIII

Report of the Departmental Committee on the Superannuation of Persons Employed by Local Authorities in England and Wales, P.P. 1919 (329), XXIV

Report of the Committee on the Hours, Pay, and Conditions of Service of Firemen in Professional Fire Brigades in Great Britain, PP 1920 (710), XVI, 489; Minutes of Evidence, P.P. 1920 (876), XVI

Report of the Committee on the Employment of Women on Police Duties, P.P. 1920 (877), XXII

Memorandum of the Financial Effect of certain provisions of the Police Pensions' Bill, P.P. 1921 (1187), XXIX

First Interim Report of the Committee on National Expenditure, P.P. 1922 (1581), IX

Second Interim Report of the Committee on National Expenditure, P.P. 1922 (1582), IX

Third Interim Report of the Committee on National Expenditure, P.P. 1922 (1589), IX

Report of the Royal Commission on Fire Brigades and Fire Prevention, P.P. 1923 (1945), XI

Report of the Committee Appointed to Consider Possible Readjustments in the Standard Conditions of Service of the Police Forces in Great Britain, P.P. 1924 (2086), XII

Report of the Committee Appointed to Consider the Temporary Deductions from Police Pay and Allowances and the Rateable Deductions for Pension, P.P. 1924-25 (2444), XV

Report of the Departmental Committee on the Employment of Policewomen, P.P. 1924 (2224), XII

Report of Inquiry on the St Helens County Borough Police Force, P.P. 1928 (3103), XII

Statement of Government Grants to Local Authorities in Great Britain, P.P. 1928 (3157), XIX

Proposals for Reform in Local Government and in the Financial Relations Between the Exchequer and Local Authorities, P.P. 1928 (3134), XIX

Home Office, Fire Protection in Factories (HMSO, 1928)


Final Report of the Royal Commission on Local Government, P.P. 1929 (3436), XV

First Report of the Royal Commission on the Control of Traffic on Roads, P.P. 1929-30 (3365), XVII

Report of the Committee on National Expenditure, P.P. 1931-32 (3920), XVI

Report from the Select Committee on Police Forces (Amalgamation), P.P. 1931-32 (106), V

Report of the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis for the Year 1931, P.P. 1931-32 (4137), XII

Memorandum Explaining the Proposed Financial Resolution for General Exchequer Contributions, P.P. 1932-33 (4252), XXI

Report of the Committee on Local Expenditure, P.P. 1932-33 (4200), XIV

Report of the Committee on Police Pay of New Entrants, P.P. 1932-33 (4274), XV
Report of the Committee on Police Uniform Clothing, Non P.P. 1934 (34-244)

Home Office, Manual of Safety Requirements in Theatres and Other Places of Public Entertainment (HMSO, 1934)

Henry, E. R., Classification and Uses of Finger Prints, 7th ed. (HMSO, 1934)

Report of the Departmental Committee on Fire Brigade Services, PP 1935-36 (5224), X

Home Office Fire Brigades’ Division, Emergency Fire Brigade Appliances (1938)


Report of the Post-War Committee on the Higher Training of Police Officers, P.P. 1946-47 (7070), XIII

Report of the Committee on Police Conditions of Service Part I, P.P. 1948-49 (7674), XIX; Part II, P.P. 1948-49 (7831), XIX


NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS

Birmingham Evening Despatch
Birmingham Faces and Places
Birmingham Mail
Birmingham Gazette
Birmingham Post
Building
Engineering
Fire
Fire & Water
Justice of the Peace and Local Government Review
Leicester Daily Mercury
Leicester Daily Post
Leicester Journal
Leicester Mail
Perthshire Advertiser
Police Journal
Police Review and Parade Gossip
The Builder

277
TRADE DIRECTORIES AND YEAR BOOKS

Birmingham Corporation Annual Diary (Birmingham, 1867-1940)
Cornish's Birmingham Year Book and Who's Who (Birmingham, 1867-1940)
Corporation General and Trades Directory of Birmingham (Birmingham, 1861)
Great Central Railway Timetables Jul. – Sep. 1903 (London, 1903)
F. White's Commercial & Trades Directory of Birmingham (Sheffield, 1875)
Handbook of Birmingham Prepared for the Members of the British Association (Birmingham, 1886)
Leicester Corporation Annual Diary (Leicester, 1867-1940)
Leicester Mail Yearbook (Leicester, 1921-26)
Leicester Trade Protection Society Commercial and General Directory, 2nd ed. (Leicester, 1875)
Wright's Directory of Leicester (London, 1860, 1875, 1904, 1912)

BOOKS AND ARTICLES PUBLISHED PRIOR TO 1940

Anderson, J., 'The relation of central to local government', Public Administration, III (1925), 29-41
——— 'The police', Public Administration, VII (1929), 192-202
Anon., Leicester in 1891 (London, 1891)
——— '1921 fire accounts', The Insurance Record, 22 Nov. 1922, 599
——— 'Birmingham Fire Brigade', Journal of the Institution of Municipal and County Engineers, LVIII, 1 (1931), 115-6
——— 'Civic development at Birmingham', Municipal Journal and Public Works Engineer, XLII, 2113 (1933), 933-4
——— 'Birmingham's new central fire station', The Electrical Times, 16 Apr. 1936, 521-2
Birmingham, City of, Fire Brigade, Rules and Regulations, Conditions of Service, and Hints on Life Saving (Birmingham, 1903), revised 1914, 1924
Body, W. S. (ed.), Birmingham and its Civic Managers: The Departmental Doings of the City Council (Birmingham, 1928)

Brooke, J., 'The administrative control of road traffic', *Public Administration*, VIII (1930), 148-63


——— *History of the Corporation of Birmingham* Vol. II (Birmingham, 1885)

Cameron, A. M., *Chemistry in Relation to Fire Risk and Fire Extinction* (London, 1933)


———, 'Crime and unemployment', *Political Quarterly*, V (1934), 395-9


Clarke, J. (ed.), *Catalogue of the Leicester Commemoration Exhibition* (Leicester, 1897)


Collins, A., 'Local rating', *Public Administration*, I (1923), 286-97

Combe, B. M., 'The improvement of social and working conditions in relation to general efficiency in the public services', *Public Administration*, XVII (1939), 104-6

Cowell, F. R., 'The efficiency of public administration', *Public Administration*, XI (1933), 369-81

Crawley, F. J., 'Decentralization and the police box system', *Police Journal*, I, 1 (1930), 118-27

———, 'The police box system', *Safety First*, Apr. 1930, 3-4


——— *Rates and Rating* (London, 1923)

Delevigne, M., 'The place of the inspector in relation to central and local authorities', *Public Administration*, XI (1933), 236-45

Dicksee, L. R., *The True Basis of Efficiency* (London, 1922)


Falconer, G., 'The fire-fighters of Europe', *The Windsor Magazine*, XIII (1901), 499-514

Farrer, T., *Mr Goschen's Finance 1887-1890* (London, 1891)

Garnsey, G., 'Control of expenditure within government departments', *Public Administration*, II (1924), 138-41

Gibbon, I. G., 'Appellate jurisdiction', *Public Administration*, II (1924), 381-8

—– 'The official and his authority', *Public Administration*, IV (1926), 81-94

—– 'Types of administrative organization in local government', *Public Administration*, VI (1928), 204-20

—– 'Borrowing by local authorities', *Public Administration*, VI (1928), 16-23

—– 'Local Government Act, 1929: administrative measures', *Public Administration*, IX (1931), 120-3

—– 'Some problems of local government', *Public Administration*, IX (1931), 99-119

—– 'The centenary of local government: some reflections', *Public Administration*, XIII (1935), 327-31

—– 'Efficiency audit', *Public Administration*, XIII (1935), 332-3

—– 'The party system in government', *Public Administration*, XV (1937), 10-19

Gooseman, A., 'Urban improvement schemes – Leicester', *Town Planning Review*, XVI (1934-35), 221-6

Goschen, G. J., *Addresses on Educational and Economical Subjects* (Edinburgh, 1885)


Grosvenor, G., 'Statistics of the abatement in crime in England and Wales, during the twenty years ended 1887-88', *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, LIII (1890), 377-413


Hall-Dalwood, J., *Bye-Laws, Rules and Regulations of the Borough of Leicester Compiled for the Use of the Police* (Leicester, 1911)

Hammick, J. T., 'On the judicial statistics of England and Wales, with special reference to the recent returns relating to crime', *Journal of the Statistical Society*, XXX (1867), 375-426

Haward, H., 'Financial control in local government administration', *Public Administration*, II (1924), 153-71


Hough, W., *Fire as an Agent in Human Culture* (Washington, 1926)


Hunt, F., 'The practical limits of rateable capacity', *Public Administration*, X (1932), 242-60


Kenlon, J., *Fires and Fire Fighters* (New York, 1914)

Laski, H., ‘The growth of administrative discretion’, *Public Administration, I* (1923), 92-100

A Grammar of Politics (London, 1925)


Lee, H., ‘Economy in the local government services’, *Public Administration, X* (1932), 44-51

Leicester, Borough of, *Orders and Regulations for the Government of the Leicester Police, Appointed by the Watch Committee under the Provision of the Municipal Corporation Reform Act* (Leicester, 1836)

Return of Officers and Servants of the Corporation Engaged on its Clerical Staff, including the Chief Officers (Leicester, 1909)


Martin, G. E., ‘The technique of financial administration of a local authority’, *Public Administration, XI* (1933), 389-404

Martin, K., ‘Public opinion: crime and the newspapers’, *Political Quarterly, II* (1931), 428-32


Millar, D., ‘Right relations between the official and his council and their relative functions’, *Public Administration, VIII* (1930), 253-8

Minshull, F. C., ‘The departmental organization of the work of local authorities’, *Public Administration, VII* (1929), 296-311

Mitchell, J., ‘Some notes on the financing of capital expenditure of local authorities’, *Public Administration, XIII* (1935), 153-67


Police Law (London, 1929)

Police Procedure and Administration (London, 1930)

Questions and Answers on Police Duties (London, 1935)

Birmingham City Police Centenary: The Formation of the Force, and its Present Organisation (Birmingham, 1939)


281
Muirhead, J. H., *Birmingham Institutions* (Birmingham, 1911)


Pike, W. (ed.), *Birmingham at the Opening of the 20th Century: Contemporary Biographies* (Brighton, 1900)

Rawson, R. W., 'Fires and fire insurance', *Quarterly Review*, CXCI (1855), 1-43


Robson, W. A., 'The central domination of local government', *Political Quarterly*, IV (1933), 85-104

_____ *The Development of Local Government*, 2nd ed. (London, 1934)


_____ 'The truth about the rates', *Political Quarterly*, II (1940), 286-92

Rhodes, E. H., 'Personality in public administration', *Public Administration*, VIII (1930), 250-3


_____ 'Review of *The Development of Local Government*', *Political Quarterly*, II (1931), 284-7

_____ 'The practical working of city government in England', *Public Administration*, X (1932), 278-83


Smith, F., 'Administrative features of the Local Government Act, 1929', *Public Administration*, IX (1931), 124-31

Storey, J., *A List of the Mayors, Magistrates, Aldermen & Councillors of the Borough of Leicester Since the Passing of the Municipal Corporations Reform Act* (Leicester, 1879)

_____ *Historical Sketch of Some of the Principal Works and Undertakings of the Council of the Borough of Leicester Since the Passing of the Municipal Corporations Reform Act* (Leicester, 1895)


Tarry, F., 'Mechanization as an aid to police duties', *Police Journal*, VI, 2 (1933), 210-35


_____ 'The functions and organisation of the Home Office', *Public Administration*, IV (1926), 127-40

_____ 'Police administration: local and national', *Police Journal*, I (1928), 5-18

282

——. *History of the Corporation of Birmingham* Vol. IV (Birmingham, 1923)


Wetherall, R. V., ‘The report of the Committee on Local Expenditure’, *Public Administration*, XI (1933), 157-65

Whiteley, F. O., ‘Contributions from the central authority towards the cost of local administrative services’, *Public Administration*, I (1923), 259-82

Wiltshire, F., ‘The appellate jurisdiction of central government departments’, *Public Administration*, II (1924), 370-7


Young, C., *Fires, Fire Engines and Fire Brigades* (London, 1866)

**BOOKS AND ARTICLES PUBLISHED AFTER 1940**


——. *Forged in Fire: The History of the Fire Brigades Union* (London, 1992)


Banwell, H., 'The new relations between central and local government', *Public Administration*, III (1959), 201-12

Bannister, J., Fyfe, N. R. (eds.), *Urban Studies: Special Issue on Fear and the City*, XXXVIII, 5-6 (2001), 807-976


Beazley, B., *Leicester During the Great War* (Derby, 1999)

——— *Peelers to Pandas: An Illustrated History of the Leicester City Police* (Leicester, 2001)

Beckett, J. (ed.), *A Centenary History of Nottingham* (Manchester, 1997)

Beetham, D., *Bureaucracy*, 2nd ed. (Buckingham, 1996)


Bennett, R. J., *Central Grants to Local Governments: The Political and Economic Impact of the Rate Support Grant in England and Wales* (Cambridge, 1982)


——— 'Searching for civil society: changing patterns of governance in Britain', *Public Administration*, LXXXI, 1 (2003), 41-62

———, Weller, P., 'Traditions of governance: interpreting the changing role of the public sector', *Public Administration*, LXXXI, 1 (2003), 1-17


Blondel, J., Hall, R., 'Conflict, decision-making and the perceptions of local councillors', *Political Studies*, XV (1967), 322-50

Boaden, N., 'Central departments and local authorities: the relationship examined', *Political Studies*, XVIII, 2 (1970), 175-81

--- Urban Policy-Making (Cambridge, 1971)

---, Alford, R., 'Sources of diversity in English local government decisions', *Public Administration*, XLVII, 2 (1969), 203-23


--- The Treasury, 2nd ed. (London, 1966)


--- *Victorian Cities* (London, 1968)


--- *Territory and Power in the United Kingdom* (Manchester, 1983)


Cameron, D., 'The structures of intergovernmental relations', *International Social Science Journal*, LIll (2001), 121-7

Cannadine, D., 'Victorian cities: how different', *Social History*, II (1977), 457-87

In Churchill's Shadow: Confronting the Past in Modern Britain (London, 2002)


Birmingham: A Study in Geography, History and Planning (Chichester, 1994)

Chester, D. N., Central and Local Government: Financial and Administrative Relations (London, 1951)

'Council and committee meetings in county boroughs', Public Administration, XXXII (1954), 429-31


Cleve, G. D. H., 'The future of local government', Political Quarterly, XII (1941), 405-18

Colebatch, H. K., Policy (Buckingham, 1998)

Coleman, C., Moynihan, J., Understanding Crime Data: Haunted by the Dark Figure (Buckingham, 1996)


Corfield, P. J., Power and the Professions in Britain 1700-1850 (London and New York, 1995)


Croll, A., 'Street disorder, surveillance and shame: regulating behaviour in the public spaces of the late Victorian British town', Social History, XXIV, 3 (1999), 250-68


Cullen, M., The Statistical Movement in Early Victorian Britain (New York, 1975)


Daunton, M. J., Coal Metropolis: Cardiff 1870-1914 (London, 1977)


Elliott, M., *Victorian Leicester* (London and Chichester, 1979)


---

Mother, what did policemen do when there weren't any motors? The law, the police and the regulation of motor traffic in England, 1900-1939', *The Historical Journal*, XXXVI, 2 (1993), 357-81

---


---


---


---


---


---


---


---

Ethington, P. J., 'Mapping the local state', *Journal of Urban History*, XXVII, 5 (2001), 686-702

---


---


---


---

Central government and the modernisation of the British fire service, 1900-1938', *Twentieth Century British History*, XIV, 4 (2003), 317-38

---


---

Fear, J., 'The lumber piles must go': Ottawa's lumber interests and the Great Fire of 1900', *Urban History Review*, VIII, 1 (1979), 38-65

---


---


---

288

Flanagan, M. A., 'The disorderly urban community', *Journal of Urban History*, XXV, 5 (1999), 725-33


——— 'Governmentality', *Ideology and Consciousness*, VI (1979), 5-22


——— *Power and Authority in the Victorian City* (Oxford, 1979)

——— 'Politics and the Victorian city', *Urban History Yearbook* (1979), 32-45

——— (ed.), *Cities, Class and Communication* (Hemel Hempstead, 1990)


Fry, G. K., 'More than 'counting manhole covers': the evolution of the British tradition of Public Administration', *Public Administration*, LXXVII, 3 (1999), 527-40

Fyfe, N., 'Space, time and policing: towards a contextual understanding of police work', *Environment & Planning D: Society and Space*, X, 4 (1992), 469-81


——— 'Urban elites, 1850-1914: the rule and decline of a new squirearchy?', *Albion*, XXVII, 3 (1995), 583-621

——— 'The history of local political power: some suggestions for analysis', *Political Studies*, XV (1997), 252-69

Geddes, M., Martin, S., 'The policy and politics of Best Value: currents, cross-currents and undercurrents in the new regime', *Policy and Politics*, XXIII, 3 (2000), 379-95


Goss, S., *Making Local Governance Work* (Basingstoke, 2001)


Green, C., 'Birmingham's politics, 1873-1891: the local basis of change', *Midland History*, II, 1 (1973), 84-98


, Taylor, R., 'Political science and the three new institutionalisms', *Political Studies*, XLIV (1996), 936-57


Hall, R. H. et al, 'Patterns of inter-organizational relations', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, XXII (1977), 457-74


Harris, J., *British Government Inspection: The Local Services and the Central Departments* (London, 1955)


Harrison, M., ‘The ordering of the urban environment: time, work and the occurrence of crowds’, *Past & Present*, 110 (1986), 134-68

Hart, J., ‘Reform of the borough police, 1835-1856’, *English Historical Review*, LXX (1955), 411-27

———, ‘The County and Borough Police Act, 1856’, *Public Administration*, XXXIV, 4 (1956), 405-17

———, *The English Police* (London, 1951)


———, ‘Civic perceptions: housing and local decision-making in English cities in the 1920s’, *Urban History*, XXVII, 2 (2000), 211-33


Headrick, T. E., ‘The training of town clerks’, *Public Administration*, XXXI (1953), 13-16

———, ‘The town clerk as co-ordinator’, *Public Administration*, XXXVI (1958), 335-50

———, *The Town Clerk in English Local Government* (London, 1962)


What are the key themes or topics discussed in the document? The document appears to focus on topics related to urban government, central/local government relations, and the role of policing and state medical statistics in England. It also touches on the diffusion of innovations and the historical context of urbanization.


How is the information structured in the document? The information is structured in a list format, with each entry formatted as a citation, including the title of the work, the author, and the publication details. This allows for easy referencing and further exploration of the topics discussed.


'Review of Urban Governance', Urban History, IXXX (2002), 146


Jones, H. S., Victorian Political Thought (London, 2000)

Jones, L., 'The municipalisation of the electricity supply industry in Birmingham', West Midlands Studies, XIII (1980), 19-33

'Public pursuit or private profit? Liberal businessmen and municipal politics in Birmingham 1865-1900', Business History, XXV, 3 (1983), 240-59


Jones, T., Newburn, T., 'Local government and policing: arresting the decline of local authorities', Local Government Studies, XXI, 3 (1995), 448-60

Jordanova, L., 'The social construction of medical knowledge', Social History of Medicine, VIII (1995), 361-81


Judge, T., The Force of Persuasion: The Story of the Police Federation (Surbiton, 1994)

Kargon, R. H., Science in Victorian Manchester: Enterprise and Expertise (Manchester, 1977)

Kavanagh, D., 'Why political science needs history', Political Studies, XXXIX (1991), 479-95


Keith-Lucas, B., 'The independence of chief constables', Public Administration, XXXVIII (1960), 1-11

English Local Government in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries (London, 1977)


Kellett, J., 'Municipal socialism, enterprise and trading in the Victorian city', Urban History Yearbook (1978), 36-45


Nicholls, D. (eds.), The Making of the British Middle Class? Studies of Regional and Cultural Diversity Since the Eighteenth Century (Stroud, 1998)

(ed.), Gender, Civic Culture and Consumerism: Middle-Class Identity in Britain 1800-1940 (Manchester, 1999)


Kingdom, J., Local Government and Politics in Great Britain (Hemel Hempstead, 1991)


Klopper, H., Birmingham's Fire Brigade: One Hundred Years of Service, 2nd ed. (Birmingham, 1974)

Laffin, M., Professionalism and Policy: The Role of the Professions in the Central-Local Relationship (Aldershot, 1986)

Laffin, M., Young, K., Professionalism in Local Government (London, 1990)


Lancaster, B., Radicalism, Co-operation and Socialism: Leicester Working-Class Politics 1860-1906 (Leicester, 1987)


Leach, S., Wilson, D., 'Rethinking local political leadership', Public Administration, LXXX, 4 (2002), 665-89


Leighton, D., 'Municipal progress, democracy and radical identity in Birmingham, 1838-1886', Midland History, XXV (2000), 115-42

Levine, P., "'Waling the streets in a way no decent woman should": women police in World War I', Journal of Modern History, XLVI, 1 (1994), 34-78

Lilley, S., In the Best Traditions of the Service: A 121 Year History of the Fire Brigade in Handsworth (Birmingham, 1999)

Loader, I., Mulcahy, A., 'The power of legitimate naming: chief constables as social commentators in post-war England', British Journal of Criminology, XLI (2001), 41-55

'The power of legitimate naming: making sense of the elite voice', British Journal of Criminology, XLI (2001), 252-65


Luckin, B., 'Accidents, disasters and cities', Urban History, XX (1993), 177-90


Mackenzie, W. J. M., 'Committees in administration', *Public Administration*, XXXI (1953), 235-44


McLeay, E., 'Defining policing policies and the political agenda', *Political Studies*, XXXVIII, 4 (1990), 620-37

McShane, C., 'The origins and globalisation of traffic control signals', *Journal of Urban History*, XXV (1994), 379-404


Maehl, W. H., 'Gladstone, the Liberals and the election of 1874', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, XXXVI (1963), 53-69


Maltby, J., 'A sort of guide, philosopher and friend?: the rise of the professional auditor in Britain', *Accounting, Business & Financial History*, IX, 1 (1999), 29-50


Smith, M., 'Understanding policy networks: towards a dialectical approach', *Political Studies*, XLVIII, 1 (2000), 4-21

'There is more than one way to do political science: on different ways to study policy networks', *Political Studies*, XLIX (2001), 528-41


*Police and Government* (London, 1965)


——— *European Cities 1890-1930s: History, Culture and the Built Environment* (Chichester, 2001)

——— ‘From Dyos to Daunton: The Cambridge Urban History of Britain’, *Urban History*, XXVIII, 2 (2001), 269-77


Moran, M., ‘The rise of the regulatory state in Britain’, *Parliamentary Affairs*, LIV (2001), 19-34


Morris, R. J., ‘Externalities, the market, power structure and the urban agenda’, *Urban History Yearbook* (1990), 99-109

——— *Class, Sect and Party: The Making of the British Middle Class, Leeds 1820-50* (Manchester, 1990)


Nash, D., Reeder, D. (eds.), *Leicester in the Twentieth Century* (Stroud, 1993)


——— ‘Ordering the city: surveillance, public space and the reform of urban policing in England 1835-56’, *Political Geography*, XII, 6 (1993), 505-21


Pacione, M. (ed.), *Britain’s Cities: Geographies of Division in Urban Britain* (London and New York, 1997)

Padley, R. (ed.), *City of Birmingham Annual Abstract of Statistics* (Birmingham, 1951)


——— *Winston Churchill* (London, 1974)


Pritchard, R. M., Housing and the Spatial Structure of the City (Cambridge, 1976)

Provan, K. G. et al, 'Environmental linkages and power in resource-dependence relations between organizations', Administrative Science Quarterly, XXV (1980), 200-23

Pugh, D., Hickson, D., Organizational Structure in its Context (Farnborough, 1976)

Pyne, S. J., Fire: A Brief History (Washington, 2001)


Rawlings, P., Policing: A Short History (Devon, 2002)

Read, R. E. H., A Short History of the Fire Research Station (Watford, 1994)


Reilly, J. W., Policing Birmingham (Birmingham, 1989)


'Refrom sacred to profane: the thirty years' war of the British police', Policing and Society, V, 2 (1995), 121-8


Control and Power in Central-Local Government Relations (Farnborough, 1981)

Power-Dependence, Policy Communities and Intergovernmental Networks (Colchester, 1985)


Beyond Westminster and Whitehall: The Sub-Central Governments of Britain (London, 1988)


'The new governance: governing without government', Political Studies, XXXIV, 4 (1996), 652-7

Understanding Governance: Policy Networks, Governance, Reflexivity and Accountability (Buckingham, 1997)

(Ed.), Transforming British Government Vols I and II (Basingstoke, 2000)

'Putting people back into networks', Australian Journal of Political Science, XXXVII, 3 (2002), 399-416

, Dunleavy, P. (Eds.), Prime Minister, Cabinet and Core Executive (London, 1995)

Roberts, S., 'Politics and the Birmingham working class: the general elections of 1900 and 1906 in East Birmingham', West Midlands Studies, XV (1982), 12-17

'Independent labour politics in Birmingham, 1886-1914', West Midlands Studies, XVI (1983), 9-15


'The study of public administration then and now', Political Studies, XXIII (1975), 194-201

Rodger, R., 'The building cycle and the urban fringe in Victorian cities: a comment', Journal of Historical Geography, IV (1978), 72-7

'Urban History: prospect and retrospect', Urban History, IXX, 1 (1992), 1-22

The Transformation of Edinburgh: Land, Property and Trust in the Nineteenth Century (Cambridge, 2001)


The Limits of Power: Great Fires and the Process of City Growth in America (Cambridge, 1986)


Rubinstein, W. D., 'Britain's elites in the inter-war period 1918-39', Contemporary British History, XII, 1 (1998), 1-18


Savage, M., 'The rise of the Labour Party in local perspective', Journal of Regional and Local Studies, X, 1 (1990), 1-16


Scott, D., Fires and Fire-Raisers (London, 1974)

Scott, P., 'Towards the 'cult of the equity'? Insurance companies and the interwar capital market', Economic History Review, LV (2002), 78-104


Sharp, I. G., Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration in Great Britain (London, 1950)


——— 'Central co-ordination and the policy network', Political Studies, XXXIII, 3 (1985), 361-81


Simmons, J., Leicester: Past and Present Vol. II Modern City (London, 1974)


——— Street Violence in the Nineteenth Century: Media Panic or Real Danger? (Leicester, 1990)

Skipp, V., The Making of Victorian Birmingham (Birmingham, 1983)


Smith, J. B., 'Urban elites c.1830-1930 and urban history', *Urban History*, XXVII, 2 (2000), 255-75

Smith, P. *Disraelian Conservatism and Social Reform* (London, 1967)


'Sections on the attempt to rationalize the distribution of police in England and Wales, 1942-1974', *Twentieth Century British History*, VI, 1 (1995), 56-77


——— 'Intergovernmental relations', *Public Administration*, LXXIII, 1 (1995), 101-22


Szreter, S., 'The GRO and the public health movement in Britain, 1837-1914', *Social History of Medicine*, IV, 3 (1991), 435-63


Tarr, J., 'A note on the horse as an urban power source', *Journal of Urban History*, XXV, 3 (1999), 434-48


——— *Policing the Victorian Town: The Development of the Police in Middlesbrough c. 1840-1914* (Houndmills and New York, 2002)


——— 'Forging the job: a crisis of 'modernization' or redundancy for the police in England and Wales, 1900-39', *British Journal of Criminology*, XXXIX, 1 (1999), 113-35


——— *Old Age in English History: Past Experiences, Present Issues* (Oxford, 2000)


Tovey, M., *Leicester's Battle Against Fire* (Leicester, 1982)

Trainor, R. H., 'Urban elites in Victorian Britain', *Urban History Yearbook* (1985), 1-17


Vree, W. van, Meetings, Manners and Civilization: The Development of Modern Meeting Behaviour (London and New York, 1999)


The English Urban Landscape (Oxford, 2000)


, Walvin, J. (eds.), Leisure in Britain 1780-1939 (Manchester, 1983)


‘A policewife’s lot is not a happy one: police wives in the 1930s and 1940s’, Oral History, XXI, 2 (1993), 46-53


Whitaker, B., The Police (London, 1964)


------ The Making of the Urban Landscape (Oxford, 1992)

------ , Larkham, P. J. (eds.), The Urban Landscape: International Perspectives (London, 1992)

Whitehead, T., Fire Engines (Buckinghamshire, 1997)


Williams, D. R., Cinema in Leicester 1896-1931 (Loughborough, 1993)


Woods, R., 'Mortality and sanitary conditions in the “best governed city in the world” – Birmingham, 1870-1910', Journal of Historical Geography, IV, 1 (1978), 33-56


Wright, B., Fire-fighting Equipment (Buckinghamshire, 1989)

Wright, D. S., Understanding Intergovernmental Relations, 2nd ed. (California, 1982)


UNPUBLISHED WORKS


Beckert, S., Gräser, M., Roth, R., 'Who was running the cities? Elites and urban power structures, 1700-2000', 6th International Conference on Urban History: 'Power, Knowledge and Society in the City' Major Session, Edinburgh University, 6 Sep. 2002


Broaderwick, R., An Investigation into the Location of Institutional Land Uses in Birmingham (Birmingham University Ph.D., 1981)


Ewen, S., 'The city as palimpsest: the morphology of the modern British city from a police perspective', in Douthwaite, A., Jones, P. (eds.), The City as Text: Multi-Disciplinary Approaches to Urban Form (unpublished conference proceedings, Birmingham University, 2002), 43-54

Floy, G., Policing Birmingham: A Study of a Borough Police Force, 1839-1914 (Birmingham University M.Phil., 1997)


Hayes, N., 'Things aren't what they used to be! Elites, and constructs of consensus and conflict in twentieth century English municipal politics', paper presented to Urban History Group Conference, Durham University, 3 Apr. 2003


Jones, P., Office Holding Politics and Society: Leicester and Peterborough c.1860-1930 (Leicester University M.Phil., 1983)

Klein, J. M., Invisible Working-Class Men: Police Constables in Manchester, Birmingham and Liverpool, 1900-1939 (Rice University Ph.D., 1992)

Millward, R., Local Government Expenditure in Britain, 1870-1914: An Economic Analysis (Manchester University Working Paper in Economic and Social History No. 27, 1994)

Sheard, S., Government Expenditure on Social Overheads and the Infrastructure in England and Wales, 1870-1914 (Manchester University Working Paper in Economic and Social History No. 23, 1993)

Moore, J., The Transformation of Urban Liberalism: Liberal Politics in Leicester and Manchester 1885-1895 (Manchester University Ph.D., 1999)

Niemi, M., Health, Experts and the Politics of Knowledge: Britain and Sweden 1900-40 (Leicester University Ph.D., 1999)

Pemberton, H., 'Lock-in, or lock-out? Path dependence and British pensions', paper presented at Political Studies Association Annual Conference, Leicester University, 17 Apr. 2003

Powner, J. R., Provincial Fire-Fighting in England 1666-1941 (Keele University Ph.D., 1991)


Smith, J. B., The Governance of Wolverhampton, 1848-1888 (Leicester University Ph.D., 2001)


——— 'The political 'castration' of criminal justice history', paper presented at British Society of Criminology Conference, Leicester University, 5 Jul. 2000


Wright, R. A., Liberal Party Organisation in Birmingham, Coventry and Wolverhampton 1886-1914, with particular reference to the Development of Independent Labour Representation (Birmingham University Ph.D., 1977)